

Role of organizational climate and organizational justice in predicting employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior

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ABSTRACT

Organizational citizenship can help organizations to improve performance and gain competitive edge as it motivates employees to perform beyond the formal job requirement. Many have claimed that employee engagement predicts employee outcomes, organizational success, and financial performance. This study determines the extent to which organizational climate and fairness plays a role in employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior. Also, the crucial link of organizational citizenship behavior with employee engagement is also analyzed. The data have been collected from employees working in the IT industry. The results revealed that employee engagement fully mediated the relationship between organizational climate and organizational citizenship behavior. Employee engagement only partially mediated the relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior. The study reinforces the need for organizations to review its workplace climate based on the employee perceptions and strive for creating a work environment that motivates employees to become committed and effective performers by fulfilling their needs.

Keywords: *Employee Engagement, Organizational Climate, Procedural Justice, Distributive Justice, Organizational Citizenship Behavior*

In recent times immense attention is being given to extra-role behavior that is OCB for the fact that it leads to better organizational performance and employee retention (Podasakoff, Ahearne & Mackenzie, 1997; Podasakoff, & Mackenzie, 1997; Walz & Niehoff, 2000). Another reason behind OCB's popularity is that organizations have realized the importance of extra-role behavior and the fact that those organizations which totally rely on written roles and behaviors are actually weak and cannot survive in today's dynamic time where innovation and being spontaneous is hour's need (Wyss, 2006). Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) reveals that the behavior is co-operative with the organization, but it is not the condition for an office job. It is the matter of individual to select the OCB, but failure to do this is not punished. In recent years, the topic of organizational citizenship behavior has

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Received: September 9, 2019; Revision Received: December 6, 2019; Accepted: December 25, 2019

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been adequately researched and these behaviors help effective functioning of the organization (Podsakoff et al., 1997; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997).

Organizational justice refers to the perceived fairness of how an employee is treated in terms of procedures (procedural justice), rewards (distributive justice), information exchange (informational justice), and interpersonal treatment (interpersonal justice) (Colquitt, 2001). There is a limited research in understanding how organizational justice can be used to create employee engagement and in turn organizational citizenship behavior, especially in the Indian context. To be successful, organizations need employees who are both cognitively and emotionally engaged in their work and organization, hence, organizations try to create a work environment that is supportive, motivating, encouraging and in short a more positive one. Though research has proved a variety of organizational characteristics to play an influential role in creating employee engagement, this research focuses on organizational justice and organizational climate. Organizational justice has been proven to play a major role in determining employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior (Lim & Loosemore, 2016; Moliner, Martinez-Tur, Ramos, Peiro & Cropanzano, 2008; Saks, 2006). The primary objective of the current study was to contribute to the engagement literature by examining two contextual variables predicting engagement, specifically organizational justice and organizational climate. Examining the relationship between positive organizational climate and employee engagement is new, as there is a paucity of work in this area. A study on examining the psycho-social safety climate and employee engagement has proved a positive relationship between the two. Psychosocial safety is a construct of organizational climate which is taken from the literatures of organizational climate (Law, Dollard, Tuckey and Dormann, 2011). Psychosocial climate is something similar to the safety dimension of organizational climate. Majorly, the components of organizational climate are viewed as job resources, and research linking one or more components of job resources with employee engagement and OCB is attempted (Saks, 2006), but considering a holistic, positive organizational climate encompassing the dimensions of achievement, influence, extension, control, affiliation and dependency is still an unexplored area. This study attempts to fill this gap by taking organizational climate as a motivational construct and finding its impact on employee engagement and OCB.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Walz and Niehoff (1996) defined OCB as a set of desirable organizational behaviors that illustrate multi-dimensional relationships with positive organizational outcomes. Numerous measures and OCB dimensions have been explored such as altruism, sportsmanship, loyalty, civic virtue, voice, conscientiousness, functional participation, courtesy and advocacy participation (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch 1994). However, there are five measures of OCB that are well documented in research (LePine, Erez & Johnson 2002). These are altruism (helping colleagues who have heavy workload), conscientiousness (punctuality at work), sportsmanship (willingness to tolerate less than perfect circumstances without complaining), courtesy (notify before taking any actions), and civic virtue (attends functions which are not important, but helps the image of the organization).

There is a substantial relation established in the literature between organizational citizenship behavior and employee engagement. The more dynamically an employee is engaged in his work there will be greater chances to reveal citizenship behavior and ultimately effective

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performance. Various studies report a significant relation between the two constructs (e.g., Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Employee Engagement

Macey and Schneider (2008) view employee engagement as possessing a few origins of both the attitudinal and behavioral variables. They offer a series of propositions about (a) psychological state engagement (feelings of energy, absorption, satisfaction, involvement, commitment, and empowerment); (b) behavioral engagement (extra role behavior, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), proactive/personal initiative, role expansion and adaptive); and (c) trait engagement (positive views of life and work; proactive personality, autotelic personality, trait positive effect, conscientiousness).

Employee engagement is defined as the amount of performance an employee is willing and able to engage in. Accordingly, the level of engagement among employees has a direct impact on the quality, quantity and manner in which services are provided to the public we serve. Previous researches suggested that employee engagement has three primary elements: (1) emotional and rational commitment to the job and the organization; (2) discretionary effort that produces sustained goal-directed performance; and (3) satisfaction from the job and its context. Employee Engagement is something that employees offer voluntarily in direct response to their organizational experience (for example, leadership, infrastructure, resources and so on) and therefore cannot be a simple part of the formal employment contract.

Organizational Climate

Forehand and Von Haller (1964) defined Organizational Climate (OC) as a set of characteristics that describe the organization and distinguish it from other organizations and such characteristics influence the behavior of people in the organization. According to Pareek (2002) climate can be defined as perceived attributes of an organization and its subsystems, as reflected in the way organizations deals with its members, groups and issues.

Dimensions of organizational climate are mixed. Likert (1967) proposed six dimensions of organizational climate (leadership, motivation, communication, decisions, goals, and control), whereas Litwin and Stringer (1968) proposed seven dimensions (conformity, responsibility, standards, rewards, organizational clarity, warmth and support, and leadership). Hence, this study has taken many such views and had postulated from the motivational aspect of positive climate. Litwin and Stringer (1968) were the first to demonstrate that employees with a given motive/needs (motives that were earlier suggested by McClelland) are most effective when OC is conducive for that motive. OC has important outcomes at individual, group and organizational levels and can greatly influence job satisfaction, individual job performance, and organizational performance. OC also helps in determining organizational success, and is important for achieving organizational effectiveness.

Organizational Justice-Procedural and Distributive Justice

Organizational justice refers to the perceived fairness of how an employee is treated in terms of procedures (procedural justice) and rewards (distributive justice)The effect of justice perceptions on various outcomes might be due in part to employee engagement. In other words, when employees have high perceptions of justice in their organization, they are more likely to feel obliged to also be fair in how they perform their roles by giving more of themselves through greater levels of engagement. On the other hand, low perceptions of

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fairness are likely to cause employees to withdraw and disengage themselves from their work roles. Fairness and justice is also one of the work conditions in the Maslach et al. (2001) engagement model.

Distributive justice deals with decisions taken or the content of fairness, whilst procedural justice is associated with the ways used to take those decisions for instance how decisions are made or the process of fairness. Distributive justice is considered to predict satisfaction with the outcome (i.e., pay satisfaction), while procedural justice influences the assessment of the organization and its authorities (i.e., trust in supervision) (Sweeney and McFarlin 1993;). Fairness and justice is the work condition identified in the Maslach et al. (2001) engagement model. Saks (2006) stated that employees who have higher perceptions of procedural justice are more likely to respond with higher organization engagement. Hence, employees having a higher perception of justice in their organization are expected to feel gratified to be fair with performing their roles through greater levels of engagement. Saks (2006) investigated the antecedents and consequences of two types of employee engagement: job and organization engagements. Previous research has focused primarily on engaging in one's job. However, there is evidence that one's degree of engagement depends on the perceptions of justice in the organization.

Distributive justice is the fairness of output in term of contribution, needs and equity perspective. Procedural justice is the fairness of the means or procedures by which decisions are made or outcomes are achieved. According to researchers, procedural justice was focused on results and procedures of the organization, some described as procedural regulations to evaluate the fairness of events. These rules were steadiness, unfair repression and correctness of information, reliability and ethicality.

The safety dimension identified by Kahn (1990) involves social situations that are predictable and consistent. For organizations, it is especially important to be predictable and consistent in terms of the distribution of rewards as well as the procedures used to allocate them. While distributive justice pertains to one's perception of the fairness of decision outcomes, procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of the means and processes used to determine the amount and distribution of resources (Colquitt, 2001). A review of organizational justice research found that justice perceptions are related to organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, withdrawal, and performance (Colquitt, 2001). Perceptions of procedural fairness could have an impact on the evaluation of the organization by the employee and affect the discretionary actions of the employee. Understanding the impact of procedural justice on job and organization related attitudes are a key management issue (El Akremi, Vandenberghe, & Camerman, 2010; He, Zhu and Zheng, 2014). Procedural justice has found to be a major motivating factor that results in enhanced performance and OCB (Brebels, De Cremer & Van Dijke, 2014), but only handful number of attempts had been made in understanding the relationship among procedural justice, distributive justice, employee engagement and OCB.

Hypotheses

- H1: Employee Engagement is positively related to Organizational Citizenship Behavior
- H2: Organizational Climate, Procedural Justice and Distributive Justice have a positive impact on Employee Engagement.
- H3: Organizational Climate, Procedural Justice and Distributive Justice have a positive impact on Organization Citizenship Behavior.

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- H4: Employee Engagement mediates the effect of Organizational Climate on Organization Citizenship Behavior.
- H5: Employee Engagement mediates the effect of Procedural Justice on Organization Citizenship Behavior.
- H6: Employee Engagement mediates the effect of Distributive Justice on Organization Citizenship Behavior.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The data for this study was collected using a questionnaire from employees working in four major software firms.. The questionnaire was distributed to 500 employees with a consent letter. Out of the 500 questionnaire distributed, only 223 questionnaire was returned, making the response rate to be 44.6%. After cleaning the data, the analyses were conducted on 200 datasets. Demographics of respondents reveal that men (46%) and women (54%) were present in the sample. 43% of the employees were married and 57% were single. Most of the employees (about 80%) were below the age of 30 years. 50% of the employees had a work experience of below 3 years, 23% had 3 to 5 years of experience and 27% had above 5 years of experience.

Measures

Questions were adapted from standard measures to measure all the study variables. The details are given below.

Organizational citizenship behavior: Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) was each measured by eight items of Lee and Allen (2002). Participants responded using a five-point Likert-type scale with anchors (1) never to (5) always.

Employee engagement: Employee engagement (EE) was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) developed by Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá and Bakker (2002). All the 17 items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 =strongly agree).

Organizational Climate: Organizational Climate (OC) is measured using the Motivational Analysis of Organizational Climate Questionnaire developed by Pareek (2002). The purpose of this instrument is to arrive at the dominant motivational profile on six motives, namely achievement, affiliation, extension, influence, control, dependency. The instrument is used in this study by using a summated score of all the items and higher the values indicating a more positive motivating culture in the workplace.

Procedural Justice: Procedural Justice (PJ) was measured using a 3 item questionnaire designed by Joy and Witt (1992). It was rated from 1- Definitely agree to 5- Definitely disagree.

Distributive Justice: Distributive Justice (DJ) was measured using a 3 item questionnaire designed by Joy and Witt (1992). It was rated from 1- Definitely agree to 5- Definitely disagree.

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha and correlation between the study variables are given in table 1.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Validity & Correlation

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha	EE	OCB	PJ	DJ	OC
EE	3.279	.5770	0.880	1	0.903	0.849	0.838	0.880
OCB	3.276	.5536	0.799		1	0.807	0.806	0.781
PJ	3.220	.5484	0.797			1	0.769	0.749
DJ	3.271	.6156	0.807				1	0.771
OC	3.323	.5263	0.752					1

Table 1 shows that all the variables have their mean values around the mid range values. The internal reliability of the items used in this study is tested using Cronbach's alpha and the value for all the study variables were found to be more than 0.7, suggesting that there is internal validity and hence, the data set could be used for further analyses. All the correlational values are significant at 95% confidence level.

Hypothesis H1 was tested using simple regression analysis and the results are given in table 2. In harmony with Hypothesis 1, employee engagement is positively related to OCB. From the table 2 it is clear that employee engagement accounts for 81.5% variance in OCB and the relationship is significant ($p < 0.05$).

Table 2: Simple Linear Regression

Variable	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
OCB	.903 ^a	.815	.814	.2386 *

a. Predictors: (Constant), EE, * $p < 0.05$

To test hypothesis H2, multiple regression analysis is used and the results are given in table 3. In harmony with Hypothesis 2, organizational climate, procedural justice and distributive justice have a positive impact on employee engagement. From table 3 it is clear that organizational climate, procedural justice and distributive justice accounts for 87.6% of impact on employee engagement. Further, analysing the individual role played by the three independent variables, we can infer from table 3 that organizational climate ($\beta=0.452$, $p < 0.05$) plays a significant role in predicting employee engagement followed by procedural justice ($\beta=0.331$, $p < 0.05$) and distributive justice ($\beta=0.235$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 3 Multiple Regression on Employee Engagement

Variables	Standard Beta	t-value
Procedural Justice	0.331	7.777**
Distributive Justice	0.235	5.295**
Organizational Climate	0.452	10.585**
R ²	0.876	
Adjusted R ²	0.874	

*** p value less than 0.001

To test hypothesis H3, multiple regression analysis is used and the results are given in table 4. In harmony with Hypothesis 3, organizational climate, procedural justice and distributive justice have a positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior. From table 4 it is clear that organizational climate, procedural justice and distributive justice accounts for 77.3% of impact on organizational citizenship behavior. Further, analysing the individual role played by the three independent variables, we can infer from table 3 that organizational climate

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($\beta=0.397$, $p<0.05$) plays a significant role in predicting employee engagement followed by procedural justice ($\beta=0.261$, $p<0.05$) and distributive justice ($\beta=0.202$, $p<0.05$).

Table 4 Multiple Regression on OCB

Variables	Standard Beta	t-value
Procedural Justice	0.261	7.230**
Distributive Justics	0.373	4.295**
Organizational Climate	0.397	8.324**
R ²	0.876	
Adjusted R ²	0.874	

*** *p value less than 0.001*

It could be inferred that organizational climate, procedural justice and distributive justice have a positive impact on both employee engagement and organizational citizenship behavior. Looking into the relationship between employee engagement and OCB, it is seen that employee engagement predicts OCB. Hence, there is a possibility that employee engagement mediates the relationship between the independent variables organizational climate, procedural justice and distributive justice and OCB. Hypotheses H4,H5 and H6 was tested using Baron and Kenny's procedure and bootstrapping was done using Sobel's test. The results are given in table 5. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), the following four conditions must be met to establish mediation: (a) The predictor variable must be related to the potential mediator (path *a*), (b) the predictor must be related to the criterion variable (path *c*) and when the criterion variable is regressed on both the predictor and mediator variables, (c) the mediator must be related to the criterion variable (path *b*), and (d) the previously significant relation between the predictor and criterion variables (path *c*) is attenuated. The Sobel (1982) formula was used to test the significance of the indirect effect.

Table 5: Mediated Paths

Model Tested	Path a	Path b	Path c	Path c'	Indirect Effect	CI- LL	CI- UL
OC – EE - OCB	0.781 (0.3466)*	0.880 (0.2747)*	0.903 (0.2386)*	-0.063 (0.068)	0.8884	0.7272	0.7614
PJ – EE - OCB	0.807 (0.3279)*	0.849 (0.3060)*	0.903 (0.2386)*	0.145 (0.058)*	0.6881	0.5322	0.5606
DJ – EE - OCB	0.806 (0.3284)*	0.838 (0.3157)*	0.903 (0.2386)*	0.149 (0.049)*	0.5305	0.4054	0.4385

NOTE: OC = Organizational Climate; EE = Employee Engagement; OCB = Organizational Citizenship Behavior; PJ = Procedural Justice; DJ = Distributive Justice; CI – LL = Confidence interval Lower Limit; CI –UL = Confidence interval Upper Limit, * $p<0.05$

Standard errors are in parentheses. Unstandardized regression coefficients, their standard errors, indirect effects, and significant tests of the indirect effect for each mediated path are reported.

For Hypothesis 4, the first hypothesized path from Organizational Climate to OCB was found to be significant; the second path from Organizational Climate to employee engagement was also significant. The third path from employee engagement to OCB was also significant and in the final path the positive relationship between Organizational Climate and employee engagement (Beta value: - 0.63, p value: 0.354) was reduced to be insignificant with the beta value being reduced and has become insignificant, confirming full mediation. From table 5, the value for the indirect effect using Sobel's test was found to be 0.8884 and the Confidence

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interval (LL: 0.7272, UL: 0.7614) did not include zero. This shows that the indirect effect is significant at 95% confidence interval.

For Hypothesis 5, the first hypothesized path from Procedural Justice to OCB was found to be significant; the second path from Procedural Justice to employee engagement was also significant. The third path from employee engagement to OCB was also significant and in the final path the positive relationship between Procedural Justice and employee engagement (Beta value: 0.146, p value: 0.0117) still remained significant with the beta value being reduced confirming partial mediation. From table 5, the value for the indirect effect using Sobel's test was found to be 0.6681 and the Confidence interval (LL: 0.5322, UL: 0.5606) did not include zero. This shows that the indirect effect is significant at 95% confidence interval.

For Hypothesis 6, the first hypothesized path from Distributive Justice to OCB was found to be significant; the second path from Distributive Justice to employee engagement was also significant. The third path from employee engagement to OCB was also significant and in the final path the positive relationship between Distributive Justice and employee engagement (Beta value: 0.306, p value: 0.000) still remained significant with the beta value being reduced confirming partial mediation. From table 5, the value for the indirect effect using Sobel's test was found to be 0.5305 and the Confidence interval (LL: .4054, UL: 0.4385) did not include zero. This shows that the indirect effect is significant at 95% confidence interval.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Due to the increasing importance of human capital, study on employee engagement and OCB is warranted among software employees. This study was conducted to find the role of organizational climate and organizational justice, measured as procedural and distributive justice in predicting employee engagement and OCB. Organizational climate is conceptualized as the motivational, positive climate in the organization. The results showed that both organizational climate and organizational justice predicted employee engagement and OCB. This study corroborates with many research findings (Saks, 2006; Ehrhart, 2004; He, Zhu and Zheng, 2014; Farh, Earley and Lin, 1997). In the Indian banking sector similar results had been reported by Ghosh, Rai and Sinha, (2014) and among the professionals working in the Indian subsidiaries of MNCs by Gupta and Kumar (2013). Embedded in the Indian context, this study extends the limited set of studies that have focussed on engagement and organizational climate and organizational justice.

Social exchange theory has postulated that higher levels of justice is always reciprocated by the employees, in a way that the organization can benefit (Blau, 1968). This study results also confirm the postulate of social exchange theory. When employees perceive their organization to be fair, they reciprocate it with their energy, time, resources and trust, which is developed as engagement and OCB. At the same time, if the organization is motivating and a positive climate is maintained, employees perform effectively and gets emotionally attached to the organization. This in turn produces engagement and discretionary behavior or OCB.

The findings of this study suggest that organizational justice plays important role in promoting employee engagement in IT organizations. Kahn (1990) reported that people vary in their engagement as a function of their perceptions of the benefits they receive from a role. Therefore, one might expect that employees' will be more likely to engage themselves at work to the extent that they perceive a greater amount of fair rewards and recognition for

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their role performances. For organizations, it is especially important to be fair and consistent in terms of the distribution of rewards as well as the procedures used to allocate them. While distributive justice pertains to one's perception of the fairness of decision outcomes, procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of the means and processes used to determine the amount and distribution of resources. The results of the study are also consistent with the research findings and we can see that higher the levels of procedural and distributive justice, higher will be the levels of engagement displayed by the employees.

A review of organizational justice research found that justice perceptions are related to organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (Colquitt, 2001). This study has also found a direct relationship between the procedural justice and distributive justice and OCB. So the amount of fairness displayed by the organization also tends to affect the behavior of the employee towards their co-workers and the organization as a whole.

Employees who perceive positive organizational climate are more likely to reciprocate with greater levels of engagement in their job and in the organization and employees who have higher perceptions of procedural justice are more likely to reciprocate with greater organization engagement. Engaged employees are also more likely to have a high-quality relationship with their employer leading them to also have more positive attitudes, intentions, and behaviors.

Organizational programs that address employees' needs and concerns (e.g. Surveys, focus groups, and suggestion programs) and demonstrating caring and motivating climate (e.g. Flexible work arrangements) might cause employees to reciprocate with higher levels of engagement. In addition, engagement needs to be viewed as a broad organizational and cultural strategy that involves all levels of the organization (Frank et al., 2004), a series of actions and steps (Shaw, 2005) that require the input and involvement of organizational members (Robinson et al., 2004), and consistent, continuous, and clear communications (Kress, 2005).

Though the study has theoretical and logical reasons for establishing causal relationship between organizational climate and justice with employee engagement and OCB, the cross sectional nature of the study limits the inferences of causality. Hence, further study could be attempted by collecting data over multiple periods of time. Another limitation of this study is the nature of data. Only self reports are used in this study, multiple sources of data, for example data from immediate superiors or others, would have resulted in a more robust findings.

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Acknowledgements

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interests.

How to cite this article:T Arunachalam(2019).Role Of Organizational Climate And Organizational Justice In Predicting Employee Engagement And Organizational Citizenship Behavior.*International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 7(4), 295-305. DIP:18.01.032/20190704, DOI:10.25215/0704.032