



A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR (With Special Reference to Public Sector Employees in Anuradhapura District, Sri Lanka)

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Abstract

Asia is the world's fastest-growing economic area, with tremendous economic and infrastructure growth. The public sector is critical to maintain environmental sustainability increasing the importance of public sector entities to a country. Because organizational competitiveness is tied to effective work behaviors embraced by empowered employees, the most important tool a company has to achieve this is its people. New managerial practices like employee empowerment must be used in the government sector. As a result, the emphasis of this study is on the influence of employee empowerment on the organizational citizenship behavior of public sector employees in Sri Lanka's Anuradhapura area. And a widespread literature evaluation identified accountability, leadership, commitment, responsibility, and ability as independent variables and organizational citizenship behavior as a dependent variable. For data collection, the sample size (381) was determined using the KREJCIE and MORGAN Sampling Method from a population of public sector employees. In all, 313 responses were obtained from the sample. The data was gathered with the use of a standardized questionnaire the evaluation measure in the questionnaire was a five-point Likert scale, which was used by the researcher. The researcher used the SPSS 21 version for the statistical analysis of structured questionnaire data. And the findings showed that accountability, commitment, responsibility, and ability have a significant impact on public sector employee Organizational citizenship behavior.

Keywords: Employee Empowerment, Organizational citizenship behavior, Public Sector, Sri Lanka

INTRODUCTION

The public sector is the segment of the economy made up of all levels of government and government-controlled firms, excluding private businesses, non-profit organizations, and households as a result, the public sector encompasses government products and services such as public education, health care, law enforcement, military, physical infrastructure, and those who work for the government. Rather than just performing service activities, the public sector reflects government ownership and control over issues such as exerting public power and implementing public policies. Public businesses, on the other hand, are government-owned, self-financing commercial companies that function on a commercial basis and sell private goods and services (Statistics, 2021).

According to the Central Bank of Sri Lanka's Annual Report (2020), issued on Friday (30 April), the employed population declined to 7.999 million in 2020 from 8.181 million in 2019, a decrease of 182,000 (2.22%). However, overall public sector employment climbed by 61,000 at the end of 2020, to 1.528 million, up from 1.467 million in 2019.

Employees in ministries, departments, district secretariats, divisional secretariats, provincial councils, and semi-government organizations are included in this category.

Asia is the fastest-growing economic region that has attracted significant economic and infrastructure development. The public sector plays a significant role in ensuring environmental sustainability (de Silva et al., 2020). Furthermore, to attain strong local community management, public service economic performance becomes necessary. And the performance of the public sector depends on its employee's behaviour.

With time, the number of public sector employees in Sri Lanka has risen. According to Senior Deputy Minister Dr. Sarath Amunugama, despite an increase in employment in the sector, Government sector service in Sri Lanka has dropped. He also stated that the quality of government service has not improved in tandem with the growth in the number of public employees. "There was some level of excellence in the service when there were a tiny number of public officials," he noted. It was discovered that about 75% of government personnel were working on non-administrative tasks, and those superfluous laws had lowered the quality of the country's government service.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to the behaviours of individuals that promote effectiveness in organizational functioning. OCB accomplishes this effectiveness by providing a positive social and psychological environment in which task work can flourish. OCB is important to employees insofar as it enhances social connections that influence job performance (Jeff LePine; Daniel Newton; Ji Kounng Kim, 2016).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is an important employee behavior to maintain the growth and success of the organization. OCB is where the employees act beyond their work-related roles. This kind of behaviour is not compulsory to possess but it plays a major role in the success of the organization. This behavior is a substantial factor in determining the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of the organization (Noranee et al., 2018).

One of the ways for an organization to respond to an increasingly complex and competitive external environment is by practicing employee empowerment. Employee empowerment is necessary for the success and survival of organizations (Huq, 2015 as cited in Noranee et al., 2018). One of the concepts in line with the development of human resources is the empowerment of human force. Empowerment increases employees' willingness, sense of belonging, and internal incentive for positive conduct and independence in shaping and controlling operations, resulting in the organization's success. Empowerment refers to the distribution of decision-making authority to individuals who do not have it in an organization, as well as the provision of prospective capacity for human capability development. Theoretically, human resource empowerment has a significant impact on organizational and managerial effectiveness and creativity (Foy, 1997; Scott, 1991; as cited in Zohrabi, 2017).

As empowerment is regarded among the most recent approaches for increasing efficiency and effectiveness via improved commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, it is believed that successful companies are made up of powerful and devoted people resources.

As mentioned above, the public sector performances are mostly referred to as low, since the performance depends on the behavior and the effort of its employees. The problem can be seen in the citizenship behavior of those employees who are in the public sector. Therefore, the research is conducted to find the impact of employee empowerment on the organizational citizenship behavior of employees in the public sector, Sri Lanka.

Problem Statement

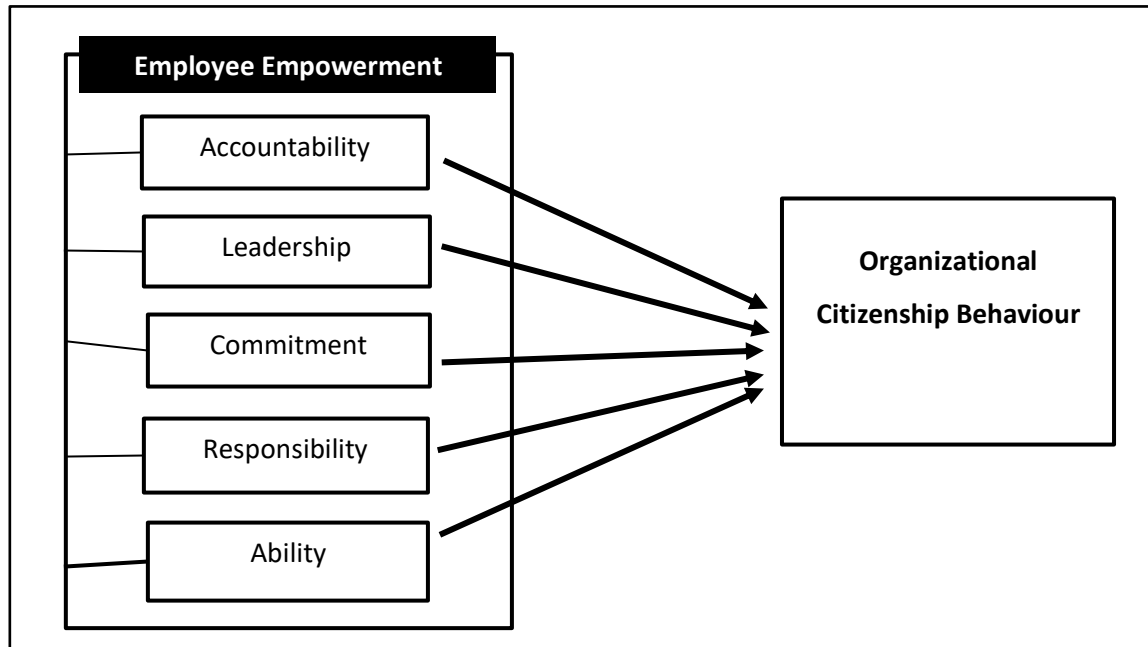
For the advantage of their colonial masters, the Sri Lankan government services were established in the nineteenth century to collect taxes and maintain law and order. From then on, Sri Lanka's government and semi-government sectors have been developed to the current extent where they offer a wide range of critical services. With the years passing by, the number of public sector employees in Sri Lanka has increased beyond the requirements, with recruits every year. However, even though the government sector employs a significant number of people, consumers are unsatisfied with the service they receive. The quality of government service has not increased in line with the number of public employees, which is one of the reasons for this predicament. The public sector now has been identified as inefficient, buck-passing, insensitive, rigid, wasteful and full of red tape (de Silva et al., 2020). Subramaniam Sri Ramalu and Nadeera Janadari (2022) argue that OCB demonstrated by public sector personnel in Sri Lanka will be the solution to great service delivery and high-performance public-sector organizations. As a result, a study on the factors of OCB among Sri Lankan public sector personnel is timely (Ramalu & Janadari, 2022).

The findings of the study conducted by de Geus, Christa J.C.Ingrams, Alex Tummers, Lars Pandey and Sanjay K.(2020), stated that although OCB is gaining more attention in the public sector, research often does not take specific public sector characteristics or concepts into account such as employee empowerment And there have only been a few studies conducted on the impact of employee empowerment on organizational citizenship behavior in Sri Lanka (de Geus

et al., 2020) The dilemma arises from the empirical gap produced by the absence of such research on the government sector. And the following study intent to address this issue.

Concept Framework Model

The methodical inquiry and study of materials and sources to establish facts and reach new conclusions are known as research. The completion of the literature review provides an opportunity to identify some significant variables. In following conceptual framework, it has drafted both independent and dependent variables to achieve research objectives.



Research Hypotheses

Six hypotheses were developed in this study to investigate the link between the dependent variable and the independent variable.

H0: Employee empowerment doesn't have significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

H1: Employee empowerment has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

H2: Accountability has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

H3: Leadership has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

H4: Commitment has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

H5: Responsibility has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

H6: Ability has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public sector organizations and their importance to the country

According to Bouckaert, Geert Peters, B. Guy Verhoest, Koen (2010), organizations are identified as the building blocks of governments. The role of organizations, formal and informal, is most readily apparent in the public bureaucracy, but all the institutions of the public sector are composed of organizations, or have some organizational characteristics that affect their performance (Bouckaert et al., 2010).

The public sector is a part of the economy that is responsible for delivering various government services. The development of productivity in all areas is crucial to a country's economic prosperity. In the context of Sri Lanka, the country operates with a greater public sector basis at various levels. If the public sector is poorly managed and performs, it will be unable to contribute significantly to the country's objectives (Kappagoda, 2020).

Sri Lanka's Public Sector

In the case of Sri Lanka, the need for public sector quality and productivity has been talked about very much, not just over the past few years, but over decades. At the same time, everyone is equally convinced that, unless and until public sector quality and productivity has been substantially improved, people shall continue to remain a clumsy, lethargic and graceless nation forever (Amaradasa, 2012 as cited in Kappagoda, 2020).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

In recent years, many industrial and organizational psychologists have shown interest in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Borman & Penner, 2001 as cited Rioux & Penner, 2001). And organizational citizenship is believed to be originated in the early 1980s to characterize employee behavior inside the social networks of various enterprises. Since then, it has grown into an important topic of study as the significance of autonomous and team-based work has grown in place of tight, traditional hierarchies (Lepine et al., 2002). The Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) that started in earlier 1980 has been rapidly expanding; it has become a term that describes how and why employees contribute positively to their organizations beyond prescribed work positions. The study of OCB asks basic issues about the circumstances in which people “go the extra mile” at work (“Organizational Citizenship Behaviours: Definitions and Dimensions — Economics of Mutuality,” 2019).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) can occur at the individual level and involves demonstrating positive behavior beyond expectations, such as assisting a colleague even if it is not required, volunteering for extra jobs, adhering to the organization’s rules and regulations, and tolerating minor work-related impositions and annoyances (Robbins, 2013 as cited in Basirudin et al., 2016). Podsakoff (2000), reviewed previous research and discovered that OCB could improve coworker and managerial productivity, free up resources to be used for more productive purposes, reduce the need to devote scarce resources to purely maintenance functions, help to coordinate activities both within and across workgroups, strengthen an organization’s ability to attract and retain the best employees, increase the stability of an organization’s performance, and enable an org to be more innovative (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

According to Podsakoff (2000), review of the literature, about 30 different types of citizenship behavior have been discovered. However, there is a significant amount of conceptual overlap between the ideas. This is captured in the research by grouping them into seven similar themes or dimensions: (1) Helping Behavior, (2) Sportsmanship, (3) Organizational Loyalty, (4) Organizational Compliance, (5) Individual Initiative, (6) Civic Virtue and (7) Self Development are the seven characteristics (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Employee Empowerment

Jeong, Yunduk Kim, Euisoo im, Minhong Zhang and James J. (2019), defined empowerment as the process of granting people in an organization the authority, power, responsibility, resources, and independence to make decisions and solve work-related problems. They are given sufficient authority and resources to pursue such initiatives and judgments. This authority distribution is not based on the idea of a "delegation" relationship. It is a "trust-based connection" that is developed between management and employees in empowerment. It is an ongoing process. Employees who are empowered become "self-directed" and "self-controlled." Employee empowerment encourages them to reach their greatest potential. On the other hand, empowerment entails relinquishing authority over personnel and allowing each individual to make decisions, create objectives, achieve outcomes, and get incentives. It entails preparing a person to manage on his or her own. It is a procedure that assists the appropriate people at the right levels in making the correct decision for the right reasons (J, 2019).

Employee empowerment has been acclaimed as a management method that can be used across all industries and across all organizations to address the demands of modern global companies (Barry, 1993; Johnson, 1993; Foy, 1994 as cited in Lashley, 1999). Investigation of the use of empowerment in service sector organizations reveals several different forms of empowerment being applied in practice. These different approaches evidence a range of managerial meanings being applied which are based on different perceptions of business problems, motives for introducing empowerment and perceived benefits to be gained from empowerment. The fact that empowerment can be used as a term to describe different initiatives provides convenient rhetoric which suggests that empowerment is “in principle a good thing” and produces a “win-win” situation for employees and managers. In part, these different perceptions of the service need and the appropriate match with the management of employees are a consequence of the different service offers being made to customers. Some service offers require employees to exercise discretion in detecting and delivering customer service needs (Lashley, 1999).

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to broaden understanding of contemporary concerns through a data-gathering approach. So it is a descriptive study in which the behavior of a sample population is described based on variables that are necessary to perform the investigation. According to this study, the unit of analysis is the public sector workers in the Anuradhapura district. This unit was chosen based on Census Reports, which reveal that the Anuradhapura district has the fourth-highest number of public sector workers in Sri Lanka when compared to all other districts. This study was a cross-sectional study that gathered data just once, over a period of time, to answer the research questions because it was judged adequate to investigate the influence of employee empowerment factors on organizational citizenship behavior. According to the Department of Census and Statistics (2016), the Anuradhapura district recorded the fifth highest number of public sector employees in Sri Lanka with 55,554 employees (Department of Census and Statistics, 2016). The employees in the Anuradhapura district were chosen as the demographic for the research after considering the ease

of data collection because it had to be done physically and there weren't many studies completed with the same population. Participants are chosen at random with the expectation that the study's findings would be perceived as representative of a larger group. So to select the sample size the researcher has used the Sampling Method of KREJCIE and MORGAN (1970) which determine the sample size (381) from the population of public sector employees. In this study, the survey approach was utilized to obtain primary source data through the use of a structured questionnaire. For statistical analysis of data acquired via structured questionnaire, the researcher employed the SPSS 21 version.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Regression analysis is a reasonable method for determining which factors affect a certain topic of interest. The involvement in completing a regression confidently determine which factors are most important, which factors can be overlooked, and how these variables influence one another.

Model Summary				
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
.684 ^a	.467	.459	.19847	2.081

Source: Analyzed Data (2022)

Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.465	.180		8.121	.000
Accountability	-.078	.016	-.250	-4.969	.000
Leadership	-.036	.036	-.064	-.990	.323
Commitment	.143	.034	.291	4.163	.000
Responsibility	.145	.031	.225	4.593	.000
Ability	.367	.034	.629	10.919	.000

Dependent Variable: Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Source: Analyzed Data (2022)

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5$$

$$Y = \alpha - 0.078X_1 - 0.036X_2 + 0.143X_3 + 0.145X_4 + 0.367X_5$$

The regression analysis is done using the linear regression method. According to the analysis, the R square value is 0.467 which is around 46.7%. The 46.7% change in organizational citizenship behaviour change is significantly explained by the considered variable (Employee Empowerment). And other elements that exist outside of the scope of the research continue to describe 52.3% of organizational citizenship behaviour.

The Durbin Watson statistic is a test for autocorrelation in the results of a regression model. The DW statistic has a value between 0 to 4, with a value around 2.0 representing no autocorrelation. According to the table, the Durbin-Watson value is 2.081 which indicates that there is no autocorrelation in the study. The table shows that four of the five variables have a significant impact on organizational citizenship behaviour. The significant values of four factors in the investigated data are less than 0.05, suggesting a substantial impact on organizational citizenship behaviour. Only leadership has a far more significant value of 0.323. Accountability, commitment, responsibility, and ability all have a significant positive influence on organizational citizenship behaviour.

ANOVA Analyze

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.610	5	2.122	53.893	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.088	307	.039		
	Total	22.698	312			

a. Dependent Variable: OCB
b. Predictors: (Constant), AB, AC, LS, RB, CM

Source: Analyzed Data (2022)

In the ANOVA test, the significant value should be less than 0.05 so the model can be identified as correct. This means the considered independent variables have the power to explain the variance of the dependent variable (Organizational citizenship behaviour).

Summary of Pearson's Regression Analysis		
Variables	Sig. Value	Regression Results
H0: Employee empowerment doesn't have significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.000 Significant	Significant (Rejected)
H1: Employee empowerment has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.000 Significant	Significant (Accepted)
H2: Accountability has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.000 Significant	Significant (Accepted)
H3: Leadership has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.323 No Significant Impact	No Significant Impact (Rejected)
H4: Commitment has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.000 Significant	Significant (Accepted)
H5: Responsibility has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.000 Significant	Significant (Accepted)
H6: Ability has a significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior in Public Sector.	0.000 Significant	Significant (Accepted)

Source: Analyzed Data (2022)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The overall goal of this research is to investigate the elements that influence the organizational citizenship behavior of public sector workers working in the Anuradhapura district. Furthermore, to determine whether the chosen independent variable, employee empowerment, has any effect on the said population and to what amount. Using the collected data, a multiple regression analysis was performed. The r square value was 0.467, indicating that the independent factors (accountability, leadership, commitment, responsibility, and ability) represented a 46.7 % variance in employee empowerment on the dependent variable (Organizational citizenship behavior) of the research. Furthermore, according to the Sig. Value four of the five factors have a substantial influence on corporate citizenship behavior. The significant values of four components in the analyzed data are less than 0.05, indicating a significant influence on organizational citizenship behavior. Only leadership didn't have a significant impact since the sig value was recorded higher than the acceptable value of less than 0.05 which was 0.323. Accountability, commitment, responsibility, and ability all have a strong beneficial effect on corporate citizenship behavior.

Recommendations

OCB is commonly used to assess what an excellent employee should appear. This makes it critical for every company. The researcher suggests the following broad guidelines to increase organizational citizenship behavior: Make the organization's atmosphere one that actively promotes good OCB. One method of generating favorable OCBs is to track them through frequent performance reports. Motivate employees by providing non-monetary rewards for proper behavior. Promote OCB to employees through training. Specifically, by teaching them the value of strong connections and chemistry in the workplace.

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