

Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Impacts on Knowledge Sharing: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Purpose –This study attempted to examine the Influence of Organizational Citizenship Behavior by five dimensions: (altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue) on Knowledge Sharing in the Jordanian business environment – Specifically in pharmaceutical industry companies.

Design/methodology/approach – For this purpose, a questionnaire was developed and distributed to (205) employees were selected from the population of pharmaceutical industry companies. Number of (193) questionnaires were returned, (4) were rejected due to incomplete responses and (189) responses which comprises (92 %) of the target sample.

Findings –The most important findings of the study revealed that dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior (respectively: Sportsmanship, Conscientiousness, and Altruism) had more impact on the knowledge sharing are.

Originality/value – The paper contributes to previous research by adding to existing knowledge regarding Knowledge Sharing. The paper makes key recommendations towards development of Citizenship organizational behavior in Jordanian pharmaceutical industry companies and consequently enhancing knowledge sharing.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship, Knowledge, Pharmaceutical industry, Jordan

1. Introduction

Jordan is seeking to shift from an economy based on agriculture to an economy based on the industry in order to stand up to the challenges of the twenty first century.

In today's knowledge-intensive economy, knowledge management plays an important role in an organization and knowledge management has become very popular. According to Nonaka & Konno (1998) knowledge management is defined as a method for simplifying and improving the process of sharing, distributing, creating, and understanding company knowledge. Knowledge is considered as an asset which has to be valued, developed, and managed (Bogdanowicz & Bailey, 2002). The sharing of knowledge between individuals and departments in the organization is considered to be a crucial process here (O'Dell & Grayson, 1998).

Knowledge sharing is a process where the individual exchange his/her knowledge and ideas through discussions to create new knowledge or ideas. Hislop (2002) argued that the relationship between attitudes and behaviors of workers to knowledge sharing and the workers who are willing to share their knowledge are a two way reciprocal process between attitudes and behavior of the relationship between the workers' willingness to engage in the knowledge sharing.

This is a crucial process for an organization to become successful. Recently many organizations are encouraging the knowledge sharing behavior among their employee in order to meet the organization's objective and goals. There are some organizations which gain benefit after implementing knowledge sharing (Alam & et al, 2009).

Cheng (2002) stated that, knowledge sharing can help employees to better understand their jobs and bring personal recognition within the department. Once the knowledge is built, companies will be able to have sustainable competitive advantage.

There are many employees who are unwilling to share the knowledge they have (Chow, & et al, 2000). They added that this phenomenon happens because the employees scared of the loss of valuable knowledge and their jobs.

Although many organizations apply technology to support knowledge sharing behavior, the problem still exists and is far from being successful (Grumbley, 1998).noted that this represents a formidable challenge for most managers.

This paper addresses this gap. It focuses on the Citizenship Behavior and their Impact on knowledge sharing in Jordan. This study provides empirical evidence and discusses the dimensions influencing knowledge sharing behavior.

We investigate a relationship between these dimensions and knowledge behavior. Pharmaceutical industries were chosen for this study. The results of this study indicate dimensions that have clear impact on knowledge sharing behavior, and this study aimed to achieve several objectives: 1. Explore the levels of organizational citizenship behavior as perceived by employees of Pharmaceutical industry companies in Jordan. 2. Find out the organizational citizenship behavior dimensions and their impact on knowledge sharing. 3. Investigation of the level of influence organizational Citizenship Behavior dimensions on the knowledge sharing.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Knowledge

(Burke, 2000) defines knowledge recursively as "meaning derived from information and other knowledge". (Knapp, 1998) sees knowledge as "information in action, where information is mindfully applied for a specific purpose and/or during a specific task". This perspective is supported by (Davenport & Prusak, 1998) described knowledge as "a fluid mix of framed experience, value, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. In organization, it often becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms".

(Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) offer two dimensions of knowledge: explicit and tacit, many researchers classified knowledge into there two dimensions for example (Von Krogh et al., 2000; Snowden, 2000). The tacit dimension refers to the knowledge residing in the heads of people that is not codified and articulated. A good idea or example of tacit knowledge is amplified by (Dixon, 2000). "If we could describe how to ride a bike perfectly, describing it would never be the same as doing it". Moreover the Explicit dimension, in contrast, is formalized; articulated, codified, and communicated using symbols (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Explicit knowledge is easier to document and share, contributes to efficiency, and easier to replicate. It comes in the form of books and document, formulas, project reports, contracts, process diagrams, lists of lessons learned, case studies, white papers, etc.

Comprehensive definition about knowledge provided by (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) stated that the personal knowledge in general and can be defined as " The theoretical Know-what and the practical know-how companied with personal values and believes in reached by accumulated experience, that direct individual decision". In summary data refers to the facts without processing and without specific contexts; information is embedded with different contexts of different data so that it is logical and corresponds with specific contexts; knowledge includes past experiences and the combination of specific personal information and tasks, enabling people to make decisions and actions accordingly.

Although explicit-tacit dichotomy of knowledge is widely cited, other classifications of knowledge have also been presented. For instance, (Zack, 1998) categorized knowledge into declarative know-what (important factual information that does not change quickly), procedural Know-how (skill & procedures) and causal know-why (understanding cause and effect relationships).

2.2 Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing at work is the dissemination or exchange of explicit or tacit knowledge, ideas, experiences, skills, or technology among individual employees or groups of employees (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2002; Wang & et al, 2008). Knowledge may be transferred through top-down, bottom-up, or horizontal interchanges (Mom & et al, 2007). Knowledge sharing requires participants to interact with each other, either face-to-face or through non-contact means (such as written documents, virtual communities); by definition the act requires a transfer of knowledge from one individual to another individual or group (Behnke, 2010).

Knowledge sharing at work may entail know-what, know-how, know-when, or know-why (Blumentritt & Johnston, 1999). It may include job-related documents, organizational rules, working procedures, or personal experience (Lu et al., 2006). It may also involve know-who, in forms such as organizational contacts, personal contacts, or networking. Storytelling, apprenticeship, and face-to-face meetings are some common methods of traditional knowledge sharing, though with the explosion of technology IT tools such as collaborative software, e-mail, and online communities (discussion forums, weblogs, wikis, etc.) have created additional avenues for sharing over time and space (Behnke, 2010).

Knowledge sharing has been associated with innovation performance (Saenz & et al, 2009). Meanwhile, a lack of knowledge sharing leads to knowledge leaks, and ultimately results in organizational inefficiency.

Knowledge sharing process can be considered as a sub system within the knowledge management process on one hand, and as a system by itself on the other hand. As a sub system of knowledge management, knowledge sharing process extracts its importance from the mother field –Knowledge Management- that has become a "hot issue" since the early 1990s (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). As a system by itself, knowledge sharing does not only include communicating and sharing ideas but extends to encompass sharing of needs, successes and problems.

2.3 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Smith & et al (1983) seminal proposition of Organizational citizenship behavior outlined a two-dimension framework including altruism (behavior targeted specifically at helping individuals) and generalized compliance (behavior reflecting compliance with general rules, norms, and expectations). Altruistic behaviors are not normally expected such as aiding a coworker or assisting a manager.

Compliance, on the other hand, is an expected behavior such as following the rules or showing up to work on time (Truckenbrodt, 2000). Organizational citizenship behavior goes beyond the formal job requirements and is difficult to enforce or even encourage. Organ (1988) later proposed an expanded five dimension model of Organizational citizenship behavior consisting of altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy, and sportsmanship. Organ (1988) defined Organizational citizenship behavior as an “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in aggregate, promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization”.

These five dimensions reflect Organ’s (1988) original concept of Organizational citizenship behavior. Continued research (Podsakoff, et al., 1997) found support for a three-dimension model. Conscientiousness is eliminated and altruism and courtesy are combined to create the helping behavior dimension (Lievens & Anseel, 2004; MacKenzie & et al, 1993; Podsakoff, & et al, 1997). This study used this three dimensional characterization of Organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is demonstrated willingly and any attempt to prescribe it is the wrong strategy (Sloat, 1999). Individuals who are fundamentally motivated to realize a shared vision without expecting immediate personal and tangible gains are more inclined to contribute toward achieving the shared workplace goal in ways that their roles do not stipulate. Followers make these contributions because of their senses of self-worth are enhanced by making these contributions (Gaa, 2010).

3. Problem Definition

The study was conducted to address certain key issues about Organizational Citizenship Behavior in the pharmaceutical industry companies. It would be worth examining the normal influence of dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior (altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue) on the knowledge sharing. Other questions include the following:

- To what extent is the level of organizational citizenship behavior in the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry?
- Are there any impact organizational citizenship behavior dimensions on the knowledge sharing?
- Is the impact of dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior on the knowledge sharing at the same level?

4. Research Hypotheses

In order to achieve the research objectives, the following main hypotheses and their sub-hypotheses are developed for testing:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant effect of organizational citizenship behavior dimensions on knowledge sharing.

Hypothesis 1-a: There is no significant effect of altruism on sharing knowledge.

Hypothesis 1-b: There is no significant effect of courtesy on sharing knowledge.

Hypothesis 1-c: There is no significant effect of sportsmanship on sharing knowledge.

Hypothesis 1-d: There is no significant effect of conscientiousness on sharing knowledge.

Hypothesis 1-e: There is no significant effect of civic virtue on sharing knowledge.

5. Methodology

5.1 Data and Sample

To gather data for this study, a random sample of (205) employees was selected from the population of pharmaceutical industry companies, the number of workforce in these Companies in 2011 is (2051) employees. Of

the (193) questionnaires returned, (4) were rejected due to incomplete responses and (189) responses (92 percent response rate) were used for data analyses.

It should be noted that every questionnaire was personally handed and instructions were given to each employee before completing the questionnaire. In terms of demographic findings, (67%) of respondents were males, and the remaining (33%) were females. In terms of the age group of respondents, it is interesting to note that (7%) of them are less than (25) years, whereas (24%) fell into the (25-34) age group, whereas (49%) fell into the (35-44) age group, only (20%) are above this group. As for the educational levels of these employees, the majority (57%) were university certificate holders, and some those (21%) of these, have Higher Education degree. In terms of the Experience years of respondents, (24%) of them have less than (6) years, whereas (39%) have (6 - 10) Experience years, whereas (24%) have (11 - 15) years of experience, only (13%) have more. See table (1).

5.2 Measures

Organizational citizenship behavior was measured with the Organizational citizenship behavior scale, recently developed by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1989). The survey is a modified version of the measure used and validated by Podsakoff & et al (1990). The items include in this scale were based on the definitions of the five dimensions of Organizational citizenship behavior described by Organ (1988), namely, altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue. And the Knowledge sharing was measured by the recently developed scale by Alam & et. al (2009)

Table 2 shows the number of items comprising each scale: the reliability reported by Moore and Benbasat (1991) for the scale and Cronbach's alpha for scale reliability obtained for our sample. Reliability from our sample showed a reasonable level of reliability ($\alpha > 0.70$).

6. Results and Discussions

The strength of the proposed impact was assessed using the respective statistical analyses summarized in Tables 3.

The results of this study show that the impact of altruism on the knowledge sharing is significant. The multiple regression result shows altruism has $\beta = 0.481$; $p\text{-value} = 3.816$. The results prove that, the null hypothesis that there is no significant effect of altruism on the sharing knowledge can be rejected.

In this situation, the employees who are working in Pharmaceutical Industry Companies perceived altruism an important factor for knowledge sharing.

Courtesy is one of the factors that would encourage staff to share knowledge with each other in the organization. Results of this study show that there is an effect of the compliment on the sharing of knowledge. The regression result ($\beta = 0.474$, $t\text{-value} = 2.309$, $p\text{-value} = 0.024$) indicates that the effect of courtesy on the sharing knowledge is significant at (0.05) level ($p = 0.024$). The result shows that there is a positive direction between the two constructs. Accordingly, the hypothesis is rejected 1 - b

Researches have investigated the importance of sportsmanship. It is one of the main factors that make management and knowledge sharing successful in an organization (Gaa, 2010; Moorman, 1991). Sportsmanship dimension is an important dimension that has a positive effect on knowledge sharing behavior. Referring to Table 3, the 1-c hypothesis tested the no significant effect of sportsmanship on the sharing knowledge. The regression result ($\beta = 1.026$, $t\text{-value} = 5.624$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$) indicates that the effect of sportsmanship on the knowledge sharing is significant at .01 level ($p = .000$). In term of direction, the result shows that there is a positive direction between the two constructs.

The results of this study show that the impact conscientiousness on the knowledge sharing is significant at 0.01 level. The multiple regression result shows conscientiousness has $\beta = 0.423$; $p\text{-value} = 5.068$ ($p = 0.000$). The results prove that, the null hypothesis that there is no significant effect of conscientiousness on the sharing knowledge can be rejected.

In this situation, the employees who are working in Pharmaceutical Industry Companies perceived conscientiousness as important factor for knowledge sharing.

Civic virtue is one of the factors that would encourage staff to share knowledge with each other in the organization. Results of this study show that there is an effect of the civic virtue on the sharing of knowledge. The regression result ($\beta = 1.124$, $t\text{-value} = 2.211$, $p\text{-value} = 0.014$) indicates that the effect of civic virtue on the sharing knowledge is significant at (0.05) level ($p = 0.024$). The result shows that there is a positive direction between the two constructs. Accordingly, the hypothesis is rejected 1- e.

From the above results, we can say that the objectives of the study have been achieved, for the first goal, the results indicate that there is a good level of organizational citizenship behavior among employees in companies that the pharmaceutical industry of Jordan. As for the second objective, it became clear that all the dimensions of

organizational citizenship behavior had a positive impact in achieving the knowledge sharing among employees. Finally, for the third objective and the impact on the level of dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior to achieve the knowledge sharing, the level of influence over well among employees in the pharmaceutical industry in Jordan.

7. Conclusion

The research was done under theoretical framework developed based on the previous study. The multiple regression analysis shows that altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue are significant dimensions that have an influence on knowledge sharing behavior of the employees in the pharmaceutical industry companies in Jordan.

The most important findings of the study that more dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior had an impact on the knowledge sharing are, respectively: Sportsmanship, Conscientiousness, and Altruism.

As we know exchanging knowledge with other people will indirectly help the management to create some new idea or knowledge and Corporations in Jordan trying to develop knowledge based management, an understanding of the factors that influence knowledge sharing behavior is invaluable. Knowledge is also very crucial in order to compete among business Corporations in today's world.

An assessment of the validity of the findings presented in this paper would be especially valuable. Like other empirical studies, this study is not without its limitations. The study can be strengthened by increasing the sample size and including participants in other geographical areas. With an increased sample size, a more detailed empirical analysis among the independent variables and the variables that have multiple categories can be performed. Potential correlations between some of the independent variables (e.g. gender, Age, working experiences, educational level) need to be reported in a future study.

8. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

As with any research, our study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The first limitation of this study is that of the data collected which was self-reported, thus, common method bias may be present. Second, the sample size was small, due to the presence of restrictions by the companies did not gain access to a larger number.

Third, the study was conducted for pharmaceutical industry companies in private sector in the city of Amman, so that results can not be generalized to all companies in other cities.

Future studies should go beyond this to assess the possible cause and impact of the relationship between the organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing, this study also suggests more research is needed to examine the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and other variables, such as organizational commitment. Therefore, the recommendation is for further researches to be applied to other regions and an environment is needed:

- In other private sector organizations in Jordan.
- Not for profit and government organizations in Jordan.
- Also, scholarly attention needs to be directed to the assessment of effects that experience, level of skills, career aspirations have on perceptions of organizational citizenship behavior and knowledge sharing.

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Table 1. Characteristics of the Sample (N=189)

Items	frequency	Percent
Gender:		
Male	127	67
Female	62	33
Age:		
Less than 25 year	14	7
25 – 34 Years	45	24
35 – 44 Years	92	49
45 and more	38	20
Educational Level:		
Secondary	42	22
University	108	57
Higher Education	39	21
Experience Years:		
Less than 6 years	46	24
6 – 10 Years	73	39
11 – 15 Years	46	24
16 and more	24	13

Table 2. Reliability Analysis

Variables	Coefficient Alpha
Knowledge sharing	0.814
altruism	0.765
courtesy	0.831
sportsmanship	0.783
conscientiousness	0.802
civic virtue	0.817

Table 3. Regression Results

Variables	Beta	t-value	p-value
Altruism	0.481	3.816	0.000
Courtesy	0.474	2.309	0.024
Sportsmanship	1.026	5.624	0.000
Conscientiousness	0.423	5.068	0.000
Civic virtue	1.124	2.511	0.014