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Teachers' organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification in public and private preschools

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to compare organizational identification and organizational citizenship behaviors of public and private preschool teachers. Participants included 159 teachers from diverse school backgrounds with a wide range of teaching experience. The data of the research were collected with Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Organizational Identification Scales. Differences in organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification between public and private school teachers were tested using Multivariate Analysis of Variance. The results of the study indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers’ organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification based on their job status.

Keywords: Organizational citizenship behaviors; organizational identification; job status, preschool teachers

1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification influence the social and psychological environment of schools, since these involve perceptions of oneness with the school and teachers’ extra role behaviors toward school. These teachers help students with class materials, acquire expertise in new areas that contribute to their work, prepare special assignments for higher or lower level students, volunteer for school committees, help absent colleagues by assigning learning tasks to their classes, and work collaboratively with others (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Organization Citizenship Behavior is defined by Organ (1988, 4)

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as “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” This definition stresses three main features of organizational citizenship behavior. First, the behavior must be voluntary; that is, neither role-prescribed nor part of the formal duties. Second, the behavior benefits the organization from the organizational perspective. The important point here is that organizational citizenship behaviors do not simply occur haphazardly within an organization, but are behaviors directed towards, or seen as, benefiting the organization. Third, organizational citizenship behavior has a multidimensional nature (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Somech & Ron, 2007; Belogolovskya & Somech, 2010; Podsakoff, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Maynes., 2014).

Several researchers have postulated that organizational citizenship behavior is likely to result in higher levels of organizational performance and task effectiveness. According to Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach. (2000), organizational citizenship behavior provides a means of managing the interdependencies among members of a work unit, which increases the collective outcomes achieved; reduces the need for an organization to devote scarce resources to simple maintenance functions, which frees up resources for productivity; and improves the ability of others to perform their jobs by freeing up time for more efficient planning, scheduling, problem solving, and so on. Oplatka (2009) also stated that activities such as volunteering, persisting, helping, following rules and endorsing organizational objectives are conceived of as increasing employers’ productivity and contribution to organizational success.

Podsakoff et al. (2000) reviewed organizational citizenship behavior studies, and identified over 30 different forms of organizational citizenship behavior. After comparing those, they proposed seven common dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior: helping behavior, sportsmanship, organizational loyalty, organizational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue and, self-development.

As Somech and Ron (2007) pointed out that determining the reasons why individuals engage in organizational citizenship behaviors has attracted a substantial amount of research attention. Attempts to understand the correlates and causes of organizational citizenship behavior frequently focus on individual characteristics. However, recently scholars have argued that these behaviors might be further understood by an investigation of how they are embedded in different contexts, such as job status.

Compared with organizational citizenship behaviors, organizational identification has received little attention as a unique research topic until recently. Researchers in organizational behavior, social psychology, and communication re-discovered organizational identification as a unique construct in the late 1980s (Riketta, 2005). To date, the concept of organizational identification has played a significant role in organizational research during the past 20 years. There is a large and growing body of literature focusing on this construct (Johnson, Johnson & Heimberg, 1999). Organizational identification is defined by Mael and Ashforth (1992) as a perceived oneness with an organization and the experience of the organization’s successes and failures as one’s own. Dutton and Dukerich (1991) is defined organizational identification as shared beliefs and attitudes among employees on the central, enduring, and distinct characteristics of the organization, which is one of the most crucial factors holding employees together and committed to the organization.

One of the key theoretical bases for understanding organizational identification is social identity theory that people use groups as sources of information about themselves and individuals may use their status or social standing in their organizations to enhance their self-worth (Cheung & Law, 2008). Organization identification is a specific kind of social identification which serves the individual’s needs for belonging, safety, or self-enhancement (Pratt, 1998; Kane, Magnusen, & Perrewe, 2012). Thus, an individual who identifies more strongly with an organization, the more they think and act from the organization’s perspective and the more effort they expend on behalf of the organization.

Organizational identification has emerged as a predictor of various individual and organizational level outcomes (Rousseau, 1998), such as organizational citizenship behaviors. Organizations with high levels of employee identification, therefore, can be expected to benefit from a more cohesive work atmosphere and greater levels of cooperation, altruism, participation and exertion of effort on behalf of the organization, including greater levels of citizenship behavior (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Cheung & Law, 2008; Gonzalez & Chakraborty, 2012). Many studies demonstrated organizational identification is positively related to organizational citizenship behavior. Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) and Dukerich, Golden, B.R., and Shortell (2002) found that organizational identification has a significant positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior. Meta-analysis from Riketta (2005) also indicated
a positive correlation between organizational identification and extra-role behavior. Members who have a high level of organizational identification will think and act from the angle of group norms and values, even if the work contract or control mechanism does not require explicitly, they have fused the group norms and values with their self-concept.

Although the study of citizenship behaviors has increased remarkably in the past few years, little work has focused on the relationship with organizational identification. Also, studies that compare organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification levels for teachers employed on public schools with private school teachers are few in number. In Turkey, preschool education is offered in both public schools and private schools. While the job status of teachers working in state schools is permanent, the job status of teachers in private schools is contracted. Honingh and Oort (2009) have stated organizational behavior of employees in public sector and private sector organizations differs. Hence, teachers’ organizational citizenship behaviors and identification with their schools also may differ according to job status. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to compare organizational identification and organizational citizenship behaviors of state and private preschool teachers.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

Participants included 159 preschool teachers from diverse school backgrounds with a wide range of teaching experience. Data for this study were collected via a survey of preschool teachers, who participated in a professional development seminar. The teachers who participated in the survey from two different school-types (public school, n=75, and private school, n=84). On average, their teaching experience was 6.7 years (standard deviation [SD] 6.24, median 5, range 1–40).

2.2. Measurement

The data of the research were collected with Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (DiPaola, Tarter, & Hoy, 2005) and Organizational Identification Scale (Mael & Ashforth, 1992): The Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale is a 12-item Likert-type scale that measures the degree to which the teaching faculty of a school engages in organizational citizenship behavior; the higher the score, the greater the extent of organizational citizenship of the school. Two negatively worded items were reverse coded. Each item was answered by using a 1–5 rating scale numbered from 1 (Strongly agree) to 5 (Strongly disagree). Example of items is: ‘Teachers volunteer to support extra-curricular activities’ (DiPaola, Tarter, & Hoy, 2005). The scale was adapted to Turkish by Tasdan and Yılmaz (2008). Total variance explained by the Turkish version of scale 46.39%. The internal reliability of the scale (Cronbach’s alpha) was 0.85. In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha inter reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.90.

The strength of organizational identification was measured with a six-item Likert-type scale developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992), adapting it for the school context. The scale was adapted to Turkish by Tak and Aydemir (2004). Example of items is: ‘This school’s successes are my successes’. Each item was answered by using a 1–5 rating scale numbered from 1 (Strongly agree), through 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), to 5 (Strongly disagree). Total scores could range from 6 to 30 with higher scores indicating stronger organizational identity (alpha=.85). Factor loadings of the items in the scale are larger than 0.63, and the total variance explained by the scale is 56%. In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.83.

3. Result

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between teachers’ organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) and organizational identification (OI). This analysis was found to be statistically significant, $r_{159}=0.52, p <0.01$, indicating a moderate positive relationship between organizational citizenship behaviors ($M=45.08$) and organizational identification ($M=23.91$).

Differences between public and private school teachers in organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification were tested using Multivariate Analysis of Variance. The Box’s Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices checked the assumption of homogeneity of covariance across the groups using p <0.001 as a criterion. It
was observed that Box’s M (5.958; p=0.12) was not significant. As indicating that there are no significant differences between the covariance matrices. Therefore, the assumption is not violated and Wilk’s Lambda is an appropriate test to use. The Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances was not significant for both dependent variables (OCBs, p=0.52; OI, p=0.97), which means the variances of each variable are equal across the groups.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

| Job Status | N  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------|----|------|----------------|
| Public     | 75 | 43.32| 7.13           |
| Private    | 84 | 46.67| 8.12           |
| Total      | 159| 45.08| 7.82           |
| Public     | 75 | 22.91| 4.80           |
| Private    | 84 | 24.80| 4.99           |
| Total      | 159| 23.91| 4.98           |

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics of study variables for each group taken separately. According to the results the organizational citizenship behaviors levels of private school teachers (M=46.67) were higher than public school teachers (M=43.32), while organizational identification level of private school teachers (M=24.80) were higher than public school teachers (M=22.91).

Table 2. Results of one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA)

| Source              | Dependent Variable | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F    | Sig.  | Partial Eta Squared |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|-------|---------------------|
| Corrected Model     | OCB                | 443.781^a       | 1   | 443.781     | 7.546| .007  | .046                |
|                     | OI                 | 141.679^b       | 1   | 141.679     | 5.878| .016  | .036                |
| Intercept           | OCB                | 320848.309      | 1   | 320848.309  | 5455.784| .000 | .972                |
|                     | OI                 | 90169.201       | 1   | 90169.201   | 3741.257| .000 | .960                |
| Job Status          | OCB                | 443.781         | 1   | 443.781     | 7.546| .007  | .046                |
|                     | OI                 | 141.679         | 1   | 141.679     | 5.878| .016  | .036                |
| Error               | OCB                | 9232.987        | 157 | 58.809      |      |       |                     |
|                     | OI                 | 3783.906        | 157 | 24.101      |      |       |                     |
| Total               | OCB                | 332913.000      | 159 |             |      |       |                     |
|                     | OI                 | 94791.000       | 159 |             |      |       |                     |
| Corrected Total     | OCB                | 9676.767        | 158 |             |      |       |                     |
|                     | OI                 | 3925.585        | 158 |             |      |       |                     |

As shown table 2, there was a statistically significant difference in a linear combination of organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification based on a teachers’ job status (F (2, 156) = 4.194, p<0.05; Wilk’s Λ = 0.949, partial η² = 0.05). Teachers’ job status has a statistically significant effect on both organizational citizenship behaviors (F (1, 157) = 7.546; p<0.01; partial η² = 0.46) and organizational identification (F (1,157) = 5.878; p<0.05; partial η² = 0.36). The findings of this research clearly revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers’ organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification based on job status.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to compare organizational identification and organizational citizenship behaviors of state and private preschool teachers. Differences between public and private school teachers in organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification were tested using Multivariate Analysis of Variance. The study findings show that teachers’ organizational citizenship behaviors had a moderate positive
relationship to organizational identification. This is consistent with previous studies. For instance, according to Riketta (2005), the motivation for organizational citizenship behaviors may stem from internalization of organizational norms and emotional attachment to the organization. These two variables, however, are at the core of most definitions and measures of OI. Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) and Dukerich et al. (2002) also found that organizational identification has a significant positive relationship to organizational citizenship behavior.

The results of the study also indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers’ organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification based on job status. Teachers’ job status has a statistically significant effect on both organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational identification. Honingh and Oort (2009) have stated organizational behavior of employees in public sector and private sector organizations differs. For instance because of difference in monitoring and evaluation of performance, the visibility of individual efforts in private schools is higher than public schools. This may make public school teachers less inclined to expend extra-role effort because they feel that their individual contributions cannot be identified. Organizational citizenship behaviors are based on the principle of reciprocity or social exchange (Kamdar, McAllister, & Turban, 2006; Wat & Shaffer, 2005). Social exchange theory is a model of human behavior; employees’ desires to maximize rewards and minimize losses support the interactions between them and the organization or its representatives (Wat & Shaffer, 2005). Generally, high quality social exchange relationships are likely to motivate employees to engage in behaviors that have favorable consequences for the organization (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Sluss, Klimchak, & Holmes, 2008). On the other hand, private schools are generally considered more prestigious in Turkey. According to Dutton et al. (1994), members may feel proud to belong to an organization that is believed to have socially valued characteristics. They stated that individuals identify with an organization partly to enhance their self-esteem: the more prestigious one perceives one's organization to be, the greater the potential boost to self-esteem through identification. The private schools operate in a highly competitive sector. Mael and Ashforth (1992) asserted that perceived competition is antecedent of identification with organization. They noted that during competition, group boundaries are drawn more sharply, values and norms are underscored, and increase school spirit.

Organizational citizenship behaviors levels of private school teachers were found higher than public school teachers in this study. Similarly, the strength of organizational identification of private school teachers also was higher than public school teachers. The findings of this study also show that the o were higher, while. Goulet and Frank (2002) compared employees in public, non-profit and for-profit organizations, and found that private sector employees were the most identified with their organizations. Similarly, Honingh and Oort (2009) found that teachers in privately funded schools in the vocational sector identified with their schools more than their colleagues working in publicly funded schools. Feather and Rauter (2004) also found that organizational citizenship behavior was higher in private schools in comparison to that of the public schools. Thus, these findings of the study confirm results obtained in prior studies.

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