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ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR OF MEMBERS OF SELF HELP GROUPS AND ITS IMPACT ON GROUP PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to evaluate impacts of group performance by examining the Group Organizational Citizenship Behavior (GOCB) of selected SHG's engaged in Group based (GB) and Individual based (IB) in Coimbatore city. Out of total 120 SHG members, 60 each from Group Business (SHG-GB) and Individual Business (SHG-IB) were personally interviewed. There is significant difference between the performance of SHG (GB) and SHG (IB). The influence of attributes such as Altruism, Individual initiative, and Courtesy were high for SHG (GB) whereas in case of SHG (IB), it was of civic virtue and conscientiousness. For individual based SHG, creating awareness about the success stories of group based SHG, importance of group/team dynamics, and group behaviors for better performance of SHG need to be conducted. Interventions like trainings need to be organized for all the members at regular intervals for developing team work, leadership skills and taking group initiative. In case of Group based SHG, capacity building activities like trainings need to be conducted to develop the recent technical knowhow, entrepreneurial marketing, communication skills and confidence about the particular business.

KEYWORDS

Group behavior, Performance, Self Help Group.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) acts as an invisible catalyst and influences the performance of any organization. The concept of OCB was first introduced by Smith et al (1983) through an empirical study to explore various causes of OCB. Later, Organ (1988) conceptualized OCB as individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and in aggregate promotes effective functioning of an organization. In recent years, even groups in organization are emerging as important managerial tools and as a result scholarly attentions are being devoted to group effectiveness and its performance (Gersick, 1988). Many organizations have also recognized the importance of small groups owing to increased complexities of internal and external environments, where the organization competes (Kearney et al., 2009). As the influence of groups on organizational outcome increases, research on group dynamics has increased dramatically. A potential explanation provided by the literature and various research studies has shown that group can perform better when group members contribute above their formal role requirements like "Extra Role Behavior" (ERB). This particular outcome from the group has generally been labeled as Group Organizational Citizenship (GOC) behavior.

Thus Group Organizational Citizenship Behavior (GOCB) is normative level of organizational citizenship behavior performed within a group (Ehrhart, 2004). Basically OCB encompasses five different attributes of a member in a group namely Altruism (helping selfless concern for the welfare of others), Civic virtue (developing oneself knowledge, skill, and attitude attending meeting/function of common interest), Conscientiousness (working extra long days, never bending the rules and regulations), Courtesy (preventing work related problems with others), and Sportsmanship (complaining about trivial matters always focuses on what's wrong, rather than the positive side).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A large body of literature theoretically and empirically documented that there is a strong positive relationship between OCB and unit level performance. Research has also shown that OCBs helped the managers to assess managers' decision regarding training, promotion, reward and perception. This also influenced in how much an employee's performance contributed to the financial performance of an organization (Allen and Rush, 1988). Managers evaluated the performance of employees; they apparently factor citizenship behavior into their assessments (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Chen et al (2005) found that GOCB is positively associated with group performance and negatively related to turnover intentions. According to Fleenor (2006), there is a relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational performance because, without changing the behavior of employees, no organization can perform well and particularly civic virtue is related to organization's performance. Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1994) have done research on OCB dimensions like altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and objective performance and found that they were all significantly related to manager's ratings of overall performance of sales agents in case of insurance industry. Podsakoff et al (2009) performed a meta analysis and observed a strong positive relationship between OCB and unit level performance and also examined the consequences of OCB at the individual and organizational level. Thus the above past studies revealed that there exists a positive relationship between GOCB and group performance.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

There are many researches on the application of GOC behavior concepts to public and private organizations, but very little work has been done in case of Self Help Groups (SHG). This study thus assesses the extent by which the behavioral factors like OCB would contribute to group performance and how it leads to the sustainability of the SHGs. The present study has been attempted in Coimbatore district with the following specific objectives:

1. to analyze the relationship between GOC behavior attributes and group performance of SHG's engaged in group as well as individual businesses; and
2. to compare and measure the GOC behavior between the SHG (Group Business) and SHG (Individual Business)

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Coimbatore city. There were about 20,000 SHG's functioning in the city. For this study, 5 SHG's in each category were purposively selected based on the secondary details obtained from the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, Coimbatore. There were 120 group members in the 10 SHG's selected @ 12 in each SHG involved in Group Business (SHG-GB) and Individual Business (SHG-IB).

SHG (GB) is defined as a Self Help Group with members who help mutually and collectively among themselves in order to accomplish the tasks or business in group. In case of SHG (IB), members instead of helping each other, behave independently in carrying out their own independent businesses. Even though each member needs cooperation, members did not seek for help and were not willing to support their colleagues. Members joined together only for the purpose of getting loan from bank. Once the bank loan is obtained, these group members carried out their businesses individually. While selecting the SHG group, it was ensured that all selected SHG groups were in performing stage of Group development process as indicated by Chou (2011) where one could expect high levels of GOCB in the performing stage of a group.

MEASUREMENT AND RELIABILITY

Group Organizational Citizenship Behavior was measured with the organizational citizenship behavior scale developed by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1989). Later, a modified version of the measure was used and validated by Podsakoff et al (1990). The items included in this scale were based on the definitions of the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior as described by Organ (1988), namely altruism, civic virtue, courtesy, conscientiousness, and sportsmanship.

Regression analysis was done to identify the relationship between dependent variable "Group performance" and independent variable defined as the dimensions of Organization Citizenship Behavior". Koys (2001) also in his study used OCB as an independent variable and organizational performance as the dependent, rather than organizational performance influencing employee's behavior.

Functional form of the regression analysis indicating the relationship between dependent and independent variables are given below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \sum_{i=1} \beta_i X_i$$

where dependent variable Y is the performance of SHG and independent variables were Altruism, Civic Virtue, Conscientiousness, Courtesy, Individual initiative and Sportsmanship which are represented as X_1 , X_2 , X_3 , X_4 , X_5 and X_6 respectively. β_0 is intercept and β_1 to β_6 coefficients to be estimated.

The variables were measured using a five point rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with neither agree nor disagree as the middle point. The score values obtained from member of SHG was considered. The instruments developed by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1994) and Fiedler (2004) respectively were used in this study. The measurement items for different dimensions are listed in Annex. I.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of the group members indicated that all the respondents were female members. In terms of the age of the sample respondents, majority of them (50 per cent) were in the age group of 40 to 49 years in both SHG (GB) and SHG (IB).

TABLE 1: Z-TEST: PERFORMANCE OF SELF HELP GROUPS

Particulars	SHG (GB)	SHG (IB)
Mean	4.5375	4.1875
Variance	0.08	0.05
Observations	60	60
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Z score	7.64	

Parametric test statistics (Z test) to compare means of both the SHG (GB) and SHG (IB) presented in Table 1 shows that there is significant difference between the performance of SHG (GB) and SHG (IB). The mean value of the performance of SHG (GB) is greater than that of SHG (IB) implying a better performance of SHG (GB) than SHG (IB). This might be due to the fact that the higher level of group cohesion, helping behavior and team network existed in case of group business based SHG than that of SHG (IB). This was also supported by Chang and Bordia (2001) that group performance is positively related to group cohesion. According to Enricoesevi (2010), Organizational citizenship behavior leads to performance improvement only if the level of effort is high. On contrary, as effort decreases, the Organizational Citizenship Behavior produces a loss in effectiveness. The best performance is reached by the group which is able to judge the colleagues and to reserve help, only toward those members providing more effort. Ng and Van Dyne (2005) examined a cross level and group level model of helping behavior in work groups and discovered that co-operative norms influenced helping behavior.

Table 2 exhibits the regression estimates and coefficients for Organizational Citizenship behavior with performance of SHG (GB).

TABLE 2: GOCB AND PERFORMANCE IN SHG (GB) (n=60)

Variables	Coefficient	Standard error	t value
Intercept	0.526	0.301	
Altruism	0.244**	0.066	3.690
Civic virtue	0.085 ^{NS}	0.073	1.162
Conscientiousness	0.175**	0.067	2.621
Courtesy	0.221**	0.075	2.939
Individual initiative	0.271**	0.088	3.080
Sportsmanship	0.028 ^{NS}	0.066	0.418
R ²	0.87		
F	57.04**		

** Significance at 1 per cent level, NS – Non significant

Among the different dimensions of GOCB, Altruism, Individual initiative, Courtesy, and Conscientiousness were significant at one percent level and influence more towards performance of group based SHG. Civic virtue and Sportsmanship behavior were found to be insignificant. The coefficient of multiple determination was 0.87 and it indicated that 87 percent of the variation in the dependent variable was influenced by the independent variables included in the model.

Table 3 exhibits the summary of the regression statistics for Group organizational Citizenship behavior and performance in SHG (IB).

TABLE 3: GOCB AND PERFORMANCE IN SHG (IB) (n=60)

Variables	Coefficient	Standard error	t-value
Intercept	0.947	0.447	
Altruism	0.083 ^{NS}	0.089	0.935
Civic virtue	0.362**	0.083	4.348
Conscientiousness	0.246*	0.107	2.299
Courtesy	0.112 ^{NS}	0.064	1.758
Individual initiative	0.081 ^{NS}	0.064	1.264
Sportsmanship	0.055 ^{NS}	0.091	0.602
R ²	0.59		
F value	12.63**		

** Significance at 1 per cent level

* Significance at 5 per cent level

NS – Non significant

Among the different dimensions of GOCB, Civic virtue and Conscientiousness were significant at one per cent and five per cent levels respectively and their influence were more towards performance of individual based SHG. Altruism, Courtesy, Individual initiative and Sportsmanship behavior were found to be insignificant. The coefficient of multiple determination was 0.59 and F value was significant at one per cent level.

From Tables 2 and 3, it could be inferred that there existed differences in the attributes of GOC behavior of members in SHG (GB) and SHG (IB) influencing performance of the group members. It could also be observed that influence of attributes such as Altruism, Individual initiative, and Courtesy were high for SHG (GB) whereas in case of SHG (IB), it was of civic virtue and conscientiousness. Subsequently, group performance level differs according to the increase or decrease in the different attributes of GOC behavior. It could also be inferred that in either of the groups, GOC behavior influenced the level of group performance of SHGs.

IMPLICATIONS

The study indicated possibilities of improving the performance of both types of Self Help Groups. For individual based SHG, creating awareness about the success stories of group based SHG, importance of group/team dynamics, and group behaviors for better performance of SHG need to be conducted. Interventions like trainings need to be organized for all the members at regular intervals for developing team work, leadership skills and taking group initiative. In case of Group based SHG, capacity building activities like trainings need to be conducted to develop the recent technical knowhow, entrepreneurial marketing, communication skills and confidence about the particular business.

CONCLUSION

Different dimensions of GOCB viz., altruism, Civic virtue, Conscientiousness, Courtesy, Individual initiative and Sportsmanship are influencing the performance of members of Self help Group. GOC Behavior not only contributes to achieve group performance but also helps in sustainability of the group through empowerment among the members in the group.

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ANNEXURE**ANNEXURE I: MEASUREMENT ITEMS OF DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AS USED BY PODSAKOFF AND MACKENZIE (1994) AND FIEDLER (1993)**

Sl. No	Particulars	SA	A	NA nor DA	DA	SDA
Altruism						
1	Help others who have been absent					
2	Help others who have heavy work load					
3	I help orient new people even though it is not required					
4	Willingly help others who have work related problems					
Civic virtue						
1	I attend functions that are not required, but help the group image					
2	I keep abreast of changes in the group					
3	I read and keep up with group announcements, memos and so on					
4	I often assess what is best for the group					
Courtesy						
1	I try to avoid creating problems for group members					
2	I consider the impact of my actions on group members					
3	I attend voluntary functions					
4	I help organize get-togethers					
Conscientiousness						
1	I don't spend time on personal calls during group meeting and work time					
2	I don't engage in non work related talk					
3	I will come to work early if needed					
4	I obey group rules and regulations even when no one is watching					
Sportsmanship						
1	I often consume a lot of time focusing about trivial matter					
2	I often focus on negative side, rather than the positive one					
3	I tend to make "Mountains out of mole hills"(make problems more than they are)					
4	I often find fault with what the group is doing					
Performance indicators						
1	Regular saving activities and proper repayment of loan					
2	Improvement of technical skills					
3	Attending meeting/training					
4	Stayed in the group over a long period of time					

SA- Strongly Agree, A-Agree, NA nor DA- Neither Agree nor Disagree, DA- Disagree, SDA- Strongly Disagree

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