

“The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation in organizations (case study: Agricultural Jihad Organization of Mazandaran Province)”

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The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation in organizations (case study: Agricultural Jihad Organization of Mazandaran Province)

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is analyzing the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation. This study is an applied research in terms of the purpose based on a descriptive correlational method. The statistical population included all employees of Agricultural Jihad Organization of Mazandaran province consisting of 1923 persons. 391 people (male and female) were selected using random stratified sample. Data were collected through two standard questionnaires: Podsakoff's (2003) organizational citizenship behavior and Kohli, Jaworski, Narver, and Slater's (1990) market orientation. Validity of questionnaires was confirmed by experts and reliability of them was confirmed using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Cronbach's alpha for the organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation was calculated by 0.80 and 0.91. Components of organizational citizenship behavior included civic virtue, altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and courtesy. Components of market orientation included customer orientation, competitor orientation, and intra-functional coordination. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through SPSS software. The results of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation in organizations.

Keywords: organizational citizenship behavior, market orientation, employees, Agricultural Jihad, Mazandaran Province.

JEL Classification: D23, M10, M12, M31.

Introduction

Today, success of companies and institutions depends on knowing customers, competitors and other factors affecting the market. Customers' needs and demands are always changing and the company can succeed only through knowing these changes. The competitors seek to attract more customers and, in this way, they will not condone any effort. Changing market conditions and the rules governing them, such as technological change, legislation, etc., can also affect success of institutions in a market. Understanding and predicting these factors and provide a suitable way to deal with them will play a key role in the success of the institution in the target market, so the market trends and customers' needs are the first feature for new marketing (Dehghan Dehnavi et al., 2011). Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is an extra-role behavior through which employees improve the organizational performance. Several studies have been carried out about the relationship between OCB and organizational performance. These studies generally argue that OCB is positive for the organization and has enormous advantages for both managers and employees of the organization. Managers who believe in OCB provide a desirable environment for cooperation of the members of the organization. OCB helps managers to spend less time on how to direct employees to perform their duties and focus on

opportunities to improve organizational performance (Turnipseed & Rassuli, 2005).

1. Theoretical foundations

1.1. Organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is set of behaviors that are not part of the formal requirements of the job, but helps the effectiveness of work and organizations. Employees often consider these behaviors optional. Therefore, they cannot be officially recognized. The definition of organizational citizenship behavior represents the fact that these behaviors have a certain impact on the effectiveness of the organization through adding social framework to the workplace. There are several reasons to justify why organizational citizenship behavior affects the effectiveness of the organization: increasing management productivity, reducing the need to extend scarce resources, creating an environment that increases employee morale (Organ, 1995).

The concept of organizational citizenship behavior was first proposed by Batman and Organ in the early 1980s. Most of initial researches on organizational citizenship behavior were to identify responsibility or behaviors of employees in the organization, but they were often ignored. Although these behaviors were partially measured for the traditional evaluation of job performance and sometimes were neglected, they were effective in improving organizational effectiveness (Bienstock et al., 2003, p. 360). The actions that occur in the workplace are defined as follows: A set of voluntary behaviors that are not part of the official duties of the individual, but improve the organizational roles (Appelbaum et al., 2004, p. 19).

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Graham (1991) believes that there are three types of OCB: (1) Organizational compliance: This term describes the behaviors whose necessity and desirability are identified and they are accepted in a rational structure of discipline. Indicators of organizational compliance include behaviors such as respecting the organizational rules, performing tasks, and carrying out the responsibilities with regard to organizational resources. (2) Organizational loyalty: The loyalty to the organization is different from the loyalty to other individuals and organizational sectors and represents the dedication of employees in the organization to defend the interests of the organization. (3) Institutional partnerships: This term will emerge from its involvement in managing the organization, such as attending meetings, sharing their beliefs with others and an awareness of current issues of the organization (Appelbaum et al., 2004, p. 19).

Based on literature review, OCB can be categorized into seven types (Podsakoff et al., 2000): (1) help-oriented behaviors, (2) sportsmanship, (3) individual growth, (4) organizational commitment, (5) individual innovativeness, (6) civic virtue, (7) self-satisfaction. Bolino and et al (2002) introduced six components for OCB: Loyalty, Dutifulness, Participation (social, supportive, and civic), Attention and courtesy, Sacrifice, Sportsmanship (Bolino and et al., 2002). The most valid classification of OCB dimensions might be related to Organ which has being applied in various researches. The dimensions are:

- ◆ Civic virtue reflects behaviors which indicate responsibly participation of individual in organization affairs and valuing of the organization.
- ◆ Altruism is a discretionary behavior which by considering organization relations and tasks, aims to assist others.
- ◆ Conscientiousness is a discretionary behavior to assist organization which employees normally go beyond their duties.
- ◆ Sportsmanship is employees' tendency to tolerate the condition which is the least condition for them, without complaining.
- ◆ Courtesy includes activities which help to avoid emergence of probable issues which is due to interaction with others.

Civic virtue refers to the constructive involvement in the political process of the organization and contribution to this process by freely and frankly expressing opinions, attending meetings, discussing with colleagues the issues concerning the organization, and reading organizational communications such as mails for the wellbeing of the organization. Organ defined conscientiousness

as dedication to the job which exceed formal requirements such as working long hours, and volunteer to perform jobs besides duties.

Organ also believes that people with progressive citizenship behavior continue their work in the worst conditions and even in the case of sickness and disability. Altruism in simple words means helping or helpfulness. Altruism means helping other members of the organization in their tasks. For, e.g., voluntarily helping new employees, helping co-workers who are overloaded, assisting workers who were absent, and guiding employees to accomplish difficult tasks. Sportsmanship and courtesy represents avoiding the damage to the organization. Sportsmanship is defined as a willingness to tolerate the inevitable inconveniences and impositions of work without complaining. Courtesy refers to the gestures that help others to prevent interpersonal problems from occurring, such as giving prior notice of the work schedule to someone who is in need, consulting others before taking any actions that would affect them (Mostabsary and Nejabaty, 2008; Rezaee Kelid Bari and Bagher Salimi, 2008; Eslami, 2008).

1.2. Market orientation. Market orientation can be defined as a stage of development of the organization, or as a surface which reflects organizational maturity. Kotler (2000) considers market orientation as the final stage of a business organization and believes that market orientation is along the development of commercial trends. Market orientation is based on the idea of marketing thinking and marketing thinking forms the philosophical foundation (Narver and Slater, 1990, pp. 20-36). However, marketing thinking as a fundamental philosophical thinking is not enough. The Market orientation focuses not only on consumers, but also on competitors, various organizational issues, and external factors which are effective also in the needs and preferences of customers (Kook, 2002, pp. 21-28).

Narver and Slater (1990) defined market orientation as "the organization culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviors for the creation of superior value for buyers and, thus, continuous superior performance for the business" (Narver and Slater, 1990, pp. 20-36). Although the market orientation concept was first developed in the 1950s but in the 1980s, significant progress was made in the development of the concept of Market orientation and analytical attempts were made to define, conceptualize and operationalize it (Agrawal et al., 2003, pp. 68-82).

There are two categories of studies on market orientation that are considered as the basis for many research on market orientation. The studies have been carried out by (Narver and Slater, 1990, pp. 20-36 and Kohli and Jaworski, 1990, pp. 44-47). Narver and

Slater (1990) proposed culturally based behavioral perspective based on three main components, including customer orientation, competitor orientation, and intra-functional coordination. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) proposed market intelligence perspective based on intelligence generation, intelligence dissemination, responsiveness to the generated and disseminated intelligence. There are several criticisms of these perspectives.

Lado (1998) believes that Kohli and Jaworski ignored intra-functional conflict and the role of competitors. However, these two studies are similar to each other to some extent. Harris et al. believe that these two studies are similar in 4 cases: first, both of them consider knowledge of customers and competitors (the market) and intra-functional coordination as the focus of market orientation; first, both of them recognize the nature of market orientation in the shape of a continuum rather than two separated dimensions; third, they consider market orientation at the level of a business unit; fourth, both can be classified behaviorally. In fact, both imply that market orientation is related to behavior management (Harris et al., 1999, pp. 113-131). Thus, despite differences in the name of the components, we can clearly conclude that competitor-orientation and customer-orientation proposed by Slater Narver are consisted with Kohli and Jaworski's perspective (Lancaster, 2004, pp. 343-365). Intra-functional coordination proposed by Narver and Slater responsiveness to the generated and disseminated intelligence proposed by Kohli and Jaworski demonstrate the ability to act on the collected and distributed data (Lancaster, 2004, pp. 343-365).

According to Kohli, Jaworski, Narver and Slater, the three factors, including production and exchange of information, customer and competitor orientation, are considered in market orientation.

1.2.1. Production and exchange of information. "Production of information" is considered as the starting point for market orientation of data collection in the market. Although market data are related to the preferences and needs of our customers, it includes investigating the effect of external factors, such as government regulations, on needs. Activities related to environmental surveillance is part of the market data. The important thing to note in the data collection is to collect information on the future needs of customers in addition to the current needs. Prediction of customer needs is vital. Proposing a new product often takes years. Market data may be reached by formal or informal ways (such as informal discussions with trade partners). The basic information and counseling resources are considered as formal and informal ways, respectively. These mechanisms include dialogue sessions with customers and business partners (e.g., distributors), analysis of sales reports, analysis of

global database about customers, market research on consumer attitudes, and sales results on the test market (Narver and Slater, 1990). "Distribution and exchange of information": Studies have shown that effective response to the needs of customers requires participation of all units of the organization. Many managers believe that market data should be organized to fit the needs of the market. This is the main task of the marketing unit to distribute data between different units of the market. Effective dissemination of information is important, because it provides a common base for coordinated action all units. Formal procedures of distribution and dissemination of market data are important, but interviews with managers showed that informal discussions and information play an important role in the tendency of organization toward its customers and their needs (Narver and Slater, 1990).

1.2.2. Customer orientation. To achieve an optimal performance, a business must develop and maintain its competitive advantages. Today, the emphasis of the international business is consistently on creating values for its customers. A business is considered market-oriented when its culture systematically creates value that customers expect. All research conducted in the field of market orientation have a strong relationship between market orientation, profitability, customer retention, increasing sales, and the success of new products. In a market-oriented business, employees spend considerable time with the customers and are looking for new ways to satisfy their needs (Narver and Slater, 1990). George Cox (2000) believes that we should move towards customer orientation, not only because the terms is a beautiful one, but also because customer orientation is now considered as a necessity and obligation for the organizations. We live in a world that has become dynamic more than ever and businesses often face competition. In the past, you aware of your competitors, their strengths and weaknesses and areas of activity were completely obvious to you and basically competitions were locally taken. But today everything has changed. There is no such thing as a border of activity and competitors simply enter your borders. On the other hand, simultaneously, products, competitors and markets are being globalized (Cox, 2000).

1.2.3. Competitor orientation. In addition to considering customer, we need to ask ourselves who are our competitors that our customers can refer to them. A producer must have a sensitive approach to the current and prospective competitors. This information is very effective in developing competitive strategies (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). In a market-oriented business, all employees distribute information related to the competitors at all levels to each other. For example, for the unit of research and development,

collecting information from about technological change of competitors is vital. Senior managers regularly discuss strategies of competitors and exchange information about potential competitive threats. One of the important reasons for the success of Japanese companies is that they teach managers the ability to understand the competitive factors and it is considered as part of the job of a manager. Market-oriented businesses often consider competitive opportunities with respect to their strengths and weaknesses of competitors and create competitive advantage for themselves (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990).

1.2.4. Inter functional coordination. The purpose of inter functional coordination is the coordinated use of organizational resources to create superior value for customers. Every person in the organization has the potential to create value for the customer. Harmonious integration of organization resources leads to the creation of the relationship between customer orientation and competitor orientation. The production of information, distribution of information and coordinated use of resources lead to the inter-functional coordination (Tsai et al., 2000).

2. Literature review

In studies conducted by Evan et al. (2015) and Zare (2014), it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between market orientation and organizational citizenship behavior. Moreover, there

was a significant relationship between internal marketing and market orientation, as well as a significant relationship between internal marketing and organizational citizenship behavior. The results of these studies could shed light on current research results. Hadjali and Salimi (2013) concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and customer orientation. Awwad and Agti (2011) concluded that internal marketing, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior have a direct and positive effect on market orientation of banks. Hassan Gholipour and et al. (2012) concluded that there is a significant relationship between internal marketing and market orientation in Bank Mellat in Tehran city. Furthermore, there was a significant positive relationship between internal marketing, organizational behavior, and organizational commitment in Bank Mellat in Tehran city. There was a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment by mediation of market orientation.

3. Theoretical framework and analytical model of research

The theoretical model was proposed by summing up the theories and empirical research findings. The research conceptual model derived from the research literature is presented as follows:

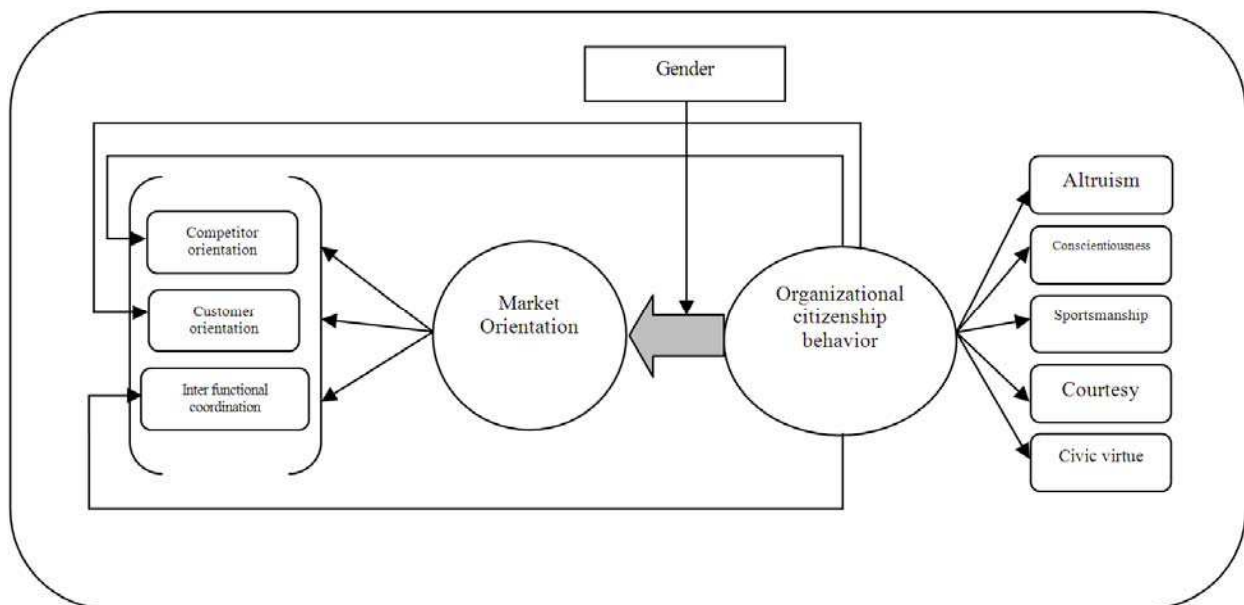


Fig. 1. Research conceptual model

This study seeks to answer the main question: “Is there a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation?” Thus, the following hypotheses were posed:

- ◆ First hypothesis (main hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation.
- ◆ Second hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and competitor orientation.
- ◆ Third hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and customer orientation.

- ◆ Fourth hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between inter-functional coordination and organizational citizenship behavior.
- ◆ Fifth hypothesis: There is a difference between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation in terms of gender.

4. Methodology

This study is an applied research in terms of the purpose based on a descriptive correlational method. The statistical population included all employees of Agricultural Jihad Organization of Mazandaran province consisting of 1923 persons. 391 people (male and female) were selected using random stratified sample. Data were collected through two standard questionnaires: Podsakoff’s (2003) organizational citizenship behavior (24 questions) and Kohli, Jaworski, Narver, and Slater’s (1990) market orientation (13 questions). Validity of questionnaires was confirmed by experts and reliability of them was confirmed using Cronbach’s coefficient alphabet. Cronbach’s alpha for the organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation was calculated by 0.80 and 0.91. Components of organizational citizenship behavior included civic virtue, altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and courtesy. Components of market orientation included customer orientation, competitor orientation, and intra-functional coordination. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through SPSS software. The descriptive statistics included frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation and inferential statistics included Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient, Fisher’s z-distribution using SPSS software.

5. Findings

Table 1. Distribution of the percentage frequency of respondents in terms of gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage frequency
Men	260	66.5
Women	131	33.5
Total	391	100

As shown in Table 1, 66.5% of respondents were male and 33.5% of them were female.

Table 2. Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to for normal distribution of data

Component	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	DF	Probability value
Customer orientation	0.083	391	0.000
Competitor orientation	0.114	391	0.000
Intra-functional coordination	0.122	391	0.000
Market orientation	0.062	391	0.001
Organizational citizenship behavior	0.049	391	0.027

The normality of data of was examined by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (k-s). As displayed in Table 2, normality assumption was not confirmed at the error level of 0.05, because the probability value was lower than 0.05.

First hypothesis (main hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation.

$H_0: r = 0$

$H_1: r \neq 0$

Table 3. The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation

Predictor variable	Indicator	Criterion variable
		Market orientation
Organizational citizenship behavior	Correlation coefficient	0.97
	R ²	0.94
	Probability value	0.000
	Number of samples	391

As shown in Table 3, there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation. The correlation coefficient between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation is 0.97 and it has a positive direction. This correlation is significant at the error level of 0.05, because the probability value was lower than 0.05. According to the above table, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is confirmed. On the other hand, taking into account the coefficient of determination (R^2), it can be said that 0.94 of changes in market orientation are related to organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, it is expected that market orientation increases by strengthening organizational citizenship behavior.

Second hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and competitor orientation

$H_0: r = 0$

$H_1: r \neq 0$

Table 4. The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and competitor orientation

Predictor variable	Indicator	Criterion variable
		Market orientation
Organizational citizenship behavior	Correlation coefficient	0.74
	R ²	0.54
	Probability value	0.000
	Number of samples	391

As shown in Table 4, there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and competitor orientation. The correlation coefficient between organizational citizenship behavior and competitor orientation is 0.74 and it has a positive direction. This correlation is significant at the error level of 0.05, because the probability value was lower

than 0.05. According to the above table, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is confirmed. On the other hand, taking into account the coefficient of determination (R^2), it can be said that 0.54 of changes in competitor orientation are related to organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, it is expected that competitor orientation increases by strengthening organizational citizenship behavior.

Third hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and customer orientation.

$H_0: r = 0$
 $H_1: r \neq 0$

Table 5. The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and customer orientation

Predictor variable	Indicator	Criterion variable
		Market orientation
Organizational citizenship behavior	Correlation coefficient	0.84
	R^2	0.70
	Probability value	0.000
	Number of samples	391

As shown in Table 5, there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and customer orientation. The correlation coefficient between organizational citizenship behavior and customer orientation is 0.84 and it has a positive direction. This correlation is significant at the error level of 0.05, because the probability value was lower than 0.05. According to the above table, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is confirmed. On the other hand, taking into account the coefficient of determination (R^2), it can be said that 0.70 of changes in customer orientation are related to organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, it is expected that customer orientation increases by strengthening organizational citizenship behavior.

Table 7. Relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation in terms of gender

Group	Predictor variable	Indicator	Criterion variable	Fisher z	probability value
			Market orientation		
Women	Organizational citizenship behavior	Correlation coefficient	0.96	7.797	0.000
		Probability value	0.000		
		Number of samples	260		
Men		Correlation coefficient	0.99		
		Probability value	0.000		
		Number of samples	131		

As shown in Table 7, there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation among men and women. The correlation coefficient between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation is 0.96 and 0.99 among women and men, respectively, and it has a positive direction. This correlation for men is higher than women. According to the above table, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is confirmed.

Fourth hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between inter-functional coordination and organizational citizenship behavior.

$H_0: r = 0$
 $H_1: r \neq 0$

Table 6. The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and inter-functional coordination

Predictor variable	Indicator	Criterion variable
		Market orientation
Organizational citizenship behavior	Correlation coefficient	0.71
	R^2	0.50
	Probability value	0.000
	Number of samples	391

As shown in Table 6, there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and inter-functional coordination. The correlation coefficient between organizational citizenship behavior and inter-functional coordination is 0.71 and it has a positive direction. This correlation is significant at the error level of 0.05, because the probability value was lower than 0.05. According to the above table, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is confirmed. On the other hand, taking into account the coefficient of determination (R^2), it can be said that 0.50 of changes in inter-functional coordination are related to organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, it is expected that inter-functional coordination increases by strengthening organizational citizenship behavior.

Fifth hypothesis: There is a difference between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation in terms of gender.

$H_0: r_1 = 0$
 $H_1: r_1 \neq 0$

Conclusion

The results of this research showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and market orientation. The increasing trends of voluntary behavior or organizational citizenship behaviors by employees can positively increase market orientation. Moreover, the increasing trends of voluntary behavior or organizational citizenship behaviors enhance the component of customer orientation more

than other components of market ordination. This indicates that OCB has a positive impact on customers and this trend is evident in increasing organizational performance. These results are consistent with the results of the studies conducted by Evan et al., (2015), Zare (2014), Hadjali and Salimi (2013), Awwad and Agti (2011), Hasangholipour et al. (2012); they concluded that OCB has a positive and significant impact on market orientation.

Drucker (1954) believes that there is a valid definition about the purpose of business that is making customer. Theorists of market orientation such as Narver and Slater (1990), Gainerand Pandany (2005) and Kar and Lopez (2007) believe that the root of market orientation is placed in the concept of market and market orientation has an impact on the overall commercial strategy. Marketing concept focuses on customer, competitiveness, innovation, and profit as an incentive to make the customers satisfied. Various researchers have given priority to market and call it as implementation of the marketing concept (Vahabzadeh Monshi et al., 2012).

Customers ensure the survival of commodity producers and service providers. From the perspective of managers, marketing is considered as growing the customer, the attention to satisfaction and quality from the perspective of customers, customer loyalty, and an effective communication with them. Thus, organizations are trying to have loyal customers (Heidarzadeh and Hosseini Firuzabadi, 2008). In addition, organizations pay attention to market orientation as a marketing concept (Nikomaram and Heidarzadeh, 2006). Lack of attention to the customer is the path to destruction for any business. Thus, market orientation is a prerequisite for successful operation of a business. According to market orientation and innovation, companies can enhance superior value for consumers and thereby improve customer loyalty. This enables companies to achieve a competitive advantage in comparison with other companies, and accordingly gain performance better than the competitors (Dehghan Dehnavi et al., 2011).

Organizational citizenship behavior is an extra-role behavior through which employees improve the organizational performance and it is not directly or indirectly organized by the official reward system. For as much as increasing effectiveness has always been one of the issues and concerns of managers, organizational citizenship behavior and areas of deployment can be considered as an effective and helpful step in this way. Organizational citizenship behavior is a typical behavior for employees beyond what is officially described as arbitrary and is based on individual interests. Organizational citizenship behavior is a behavior that does not directly have a reward and is not appreciated through formal

organizational structure. it is very important to organizational performance and success of organizations. Thus, it can be said that organizational citizenship behavior is very important to improve organizational performance.

Suggestions

- ◆ It is suggested that managers involve employees in setting goals and decisions of organizations and institutions to develop the organizational citizenship behavior, because the organizational citizenship behavior has a positive impact on some variables of organizations, especially organizational performance.
- ◆ Managers should give importance to employees' suggestions for improving procedures and organizational tasks. Managers should clearly define inter and intra functional roles.
- ◆ Managers must move toward the direction of development and enrichment of job and be involved in meaningful tasks and provide their employees with essential feedbacks.
- ◆ The establishment of suggestion system is essential for improving organizational citizenship behavior.
- ◆ Managers sometimes try to hold informal meetings for employees and managers and provide the employees with function and objectives of the organization.
- ◆ Employees and managers should have positive attitudes toward the organization which lead to promoting conscientiousness and loyalty within the organization.
- ◆ Managers and employees should try to create confidence in the workplace, because confidence leads to the improvement and development of organizational citizenship behavior and, ultimately, results in performance improvement and organizational efficiency.
- ◆ It is suggested that organizations implement plans based on the market orientated culture in addition to relational capabilities in order to improve business performance.
- ◆ To understand customer orientation in organizations, it is suggested the necessity and importance of focusing on customers' demands by providing a direct or indirect conflict and training the employees on these factors.
- ◆ Holding training courses for managers and company officials on inter organizational communication and training employee on the client tribute, dealing with customers, identifying the demands and needs of customers and solving their problems.
- ◆ Creating functional networks and involvement of employees in programs and organizational goals which strengthen intra organizational communication.

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