**MANAGING CUSTOMER PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL SERVICES – A ROAD TO VALUE CREATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of organisational citizenship on customer participation and the impact of customer participation on value creation.

**Design/Methodology/Approach** –Data was collected from 498 research scholars from two higher educational Universities operating in Northern India that is; University of Jammu and Guru Nanak Dev University. The study uses EFA, reliability analysis, CFA and SEM for modeling and to analyse the proposed model.

**Findings –** The results of the study show that OCB has a positive impact on customer participation and customer participation further produces positive effects on value creation.

**Practical implications** – This study suggests that OCB and customer participation together can be a great strategy to create value for the service firm. Oragnisations who create value with their customers effectively build and maintain long-term relationships.

**Originality/value –** The findings highlighted the role of the customer and indicated that value creation is a consequence of OCB and customer participation. This can enhance the understanding of how customers participation should be encouraged to enhance the creation of value.

**Keywords- Organisational Citizenship Behaviour, Customer Participation, Value creation, Higher Education.**

**1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES FORMULATION**

**1.1 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour**

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) has undergone many definitional revisions since the term was coined in the late 1980s, but the construct remains the same at its core (Mahajan (2017); Ingrams (2020) and Dierdorff et al; (2021). OCB is a set of discretionary workplace behaviours that exceed one’s basic job requirements (Chuin & Ramayah, 2009; Nga et al., 2010; Acaraya & Akturan, 2015). The term Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), initially coined by Bateman and Organ (1983), has gained enormous importance in recent times across various fields such as marketing, community psychology, industrial and labour law, human resource management etc. and sectors such as health sector, education, banking, tourism etc (Liu et al. 2008 and Wang et al; (2021). It is well established now in the literature that organisation of any nature cannot survive or prosper unless its employees engage in activities that reflect positive organisation relevant behaviours (Hustedh 2001). Jahangir et al. (2004) and Jung and Hong (2008) remarked that only those organisations can be successful whose employees go beyond their formal job responsibilities and freely provide assistance in terms of their time and energy to help the stakeholders to accomplish the organisational objectives. Organ (1983), major contributor in the area of OCB, opined that OCB maximises the efficiency and productivity of the employees and ultimately contributes to the creation of value for the organisation (Jahangir et al. 2004). In simple words, employees derive practical importance from OCB concept on the basis that it represents contributions that do not relate to formal role obligations (Podsakoff and Mackenzie 1997). This is also supported by researchers such as Bommer, Miles and Grover (2003), Chuin and Ramayah (2009) and Nga et al., (2010). Ellinger et al., (2013), Nurrohmat; (2021). also remark that OCB is the key factor for achieving organisational effectiveness. Since these efforts are made beyond the requirements specified in the job description, their presence cannot be enforced and similarly their absence cannot be penalised (Buentello et al., 2008).

Groth (2005), Chan, et al; (2022) and Peng, Jacobs, and Cambre (2022) identifies that customer participation can be influenced and encouraged by the OCB. They recommend the need for organisations to adopt strategies such as good communication between service providers and customers, customer empowerment, customer satisfaction etc. to improve customer participation. The same is also suggested by Dong, Evans and Zou (2008) and Hsieh (2011).

**1.2 Customer Participation**

Customer participation refers to the customer behaviour wherein customers participate within an organisation defined parameters (Dong, Evans & Zou, 2008; Saxena, 2010; Hsieh, 2011). It relates to mental and physical aspects of behaviour in the service production and delivery process (Dong, Evans & Zou, 2008). The customer participation behaviour refers to the actions and resources supplied by customers for service production and delivery. If customers do not participate in the required action properly, the delivery of service will not succeed (Chan, Yim & Lam, 2010) and Chan, et al; (2022). Customer participation thus enhances relationship of customers with the organisation and subsequently improves the quality of the product or service by involving in more interactions with the service provider (Flint, Blocker & Boutin, 2008; Hoyer et al., 2010; Hsieh, 2011; Anker et al., 2015). Customer participation tends to lead to more role clarity of customers, more satisfied with service recovery and tend to co-create value in future as remarked by scholars like Dong, Evans and Zou (2006), Payne, Storbacks and Frow (2008), Hoyer et al (2010) and Hsieh (2011). In addition, it has positive effects on service quality perception and customer satisfaction. As such, customers play key role in co-creating value during their interaction and participation. Groth (2005) in his study on customer participation, in the domain of OCB, remarked that customer participation is significantly related to OCB as it enables customer to provide mental and physical satisfaction. Further engaged customers can lead to increased organisational performance to increase organisational productivity on a whole (Ofir, Simonson & Youn, 2009; Saxena, 2010; Yi, Nataraajan & Gong, 2011). Customer participation thus has become a major frontier for competitive advantage as firms that develop and deploy it produce better customer and employee satisfaction levels than those with no such capabilities (Mahajan, 2017).

**1.3 Value Creation**

Value is determined in and by the customers’ use situation and not accumulated by refining raw material in a production process. Normann and Ramirez (1993) called this the ‘company’s offering’ and proposed that the value arises from a “value constellation” rather than accumulates in a value chain. Organisation is a network of individuals that influences achievement of organisational goals and outcomes, both formally and informally (Podsakoff et al., 2000; Bowler, 2006; Cabiddu, Lui & Piccoli, 2013). OCB give rise to favourable performance evaluations and creation of value for the organisation (Joensson, 2008; Chou, Lin & Huang, 2016). OCB refers to voluntary behaviour and management has a great deal of indirect influence of OCB on organisational performance (Bowler, 2006). OCB benefits individual growth as well as paves way to inculcate team spirit among employees (Walz & Neihoff, 2000; Buentello et al., 2008). This consequently is significant for the overall organisational growth (Podsakoff et al., 2000) and ultimately leads to value creation for the organisation (Buentello et al., 2008). Therefore combined student collaborative attitude (customer participation) and OCB are the key factors for successful value co-creation and subsequently leads to long-term organisation success.

Against this background, the purpose of this paper is to present the development of a psychometrically sound measure of OCB and its impact customer participation to enhance value creation. Per se, we frame the following hypotheses,

**H1 OCB is a significant predictor of customer participation**

**H2 Customer participation significantly contributes to value creation**

**2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**2.1 Sample**

The data for the study was collected with the help of questionnaires from research scholars of two higher educational state level institutions namely, University of Jammu and Guru Nanak Dev University. A total of 498 sample consisted of 119 male (UOJ=66, GNDU=53) and 379 female (UOJ=202, GNDU=177). Majority of scholars are in the age group of 28-37 years that is, 479 (96.58), followed by the age group 38-47 years with 18 scholars (3.61%) and in the age group 48 years and above only one scholar 1 (0.2%). Further, the researchers are also classified on the basis of qualification, of which 33.13% are Mphil (165) and 50% Phd (249) and 16.86% NET (84).

Academic contribution of researchers is also quantified in terms of publications, paper presentations, participation in seminars, workshops etc The study reveals that majority of the scholars of both the universities are enthusiastically involved in research activities through active participation and paper presentation in seminars, workshops and conferences. Specifically, maximum participations were made in regional seminars (51.80%) while maximum workshops were attended at national level 222 (44.57%). Results reveal active paper presentation of research scholars in seminars (48.39%) and conferences (56.62%).

**2.2 Methodology**

After reversing response scores of negative items outliers from various constructs are identified and subsequently removed from the UOJ and GNDU datasets. The final combined (498) sample comprised of 268 (UOJ) and 230 (GNDU) research scholars. Further, skewness and kurtosis tests along with normal probability plots are also examined that confirmed that data is normally distributed. The data purification and finalisation is done using EFA, item analysis, and CFA of OCB, customer participation and value creation..

**3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

The scale development procedure establishes OCB as a four factor solution namely, altruism, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue which reflect significant SRW values ranging between .545 and .881. Further both the dimensions of customer participation namely, individual participation (SRW= .870) and organisational participation (SRW= .750) are robustly contributing towards it. The CFA on the value creation resulted in retaining all the four dimensions of value creation that recorded significant SRW values .856 (teaching), .871 (research), .818 (coordinated services) and .849 (administrative services).

**3.1 Hypothetical Relationship of OCB with Customer Participation and Value Creation**

The overall SEM relationship is examined by taking into consideration the summated mean of various constructs. The overall result reveals significant relationships of OCB with customer participation. Further customer participation is also predicting value creation significantly. The results indicate that all the relationships are significantly contributing as their p- values (p <.05) are as per the set criteria. The model fitness is also satisfactorily attained (χ2/df=2.767, RMSEA= .059). Thus OCB is found to significantly contributing towards customer participation in the higher education sector leading to value creation. As such hypotheses H1 and H2 stands accepted.

**4. IMPLICATIONS**

Customer participation through its two dimensions that are, organisation participation and individual participation reflect that scholars are performing all tasks and responsibilities effectively. Research work competencies, friendly attitude towards scholars and providing suggestions to others reflect the supportive nature of the scholars in general.

Research scholars of both the universities add value to their respective universities in teaching through attending inter and intra university programmes, adequate academic environment and considering faculty as asset towards organisation and in research through getting their research work published in reputed journals, collecting and disseminating right information, using updated softwares etc. It will ultimately provide satisfaction to researchers regarding performance of the universities and hence lead to value creation.

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