

Fostering Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment in Promoting Employee Green Behavior at the Workplace

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Abstract: Malaysians generate 37500 tons per day and involving RM 2.0 billion a year for solid waste management (SWCorp Malaysia, 2017). Thus, environmental sustainability issues are one of the significant topics that should be concerned by the organizations. Encouraging pro-environmental or green behavior at workplace can result in an employee responsibility to reduce environmental problems. Therefore, there is a need to emphasize on the study of employee behavior toward sustainability. Hence, the aim of this is to propose the new framework of employee green behavior (EGB) for the organization based on organizational citizenship behavior for environment (OCBE). Implications of this study are useful for the employer as a guideline to encourage pro-environmental behavior at the workplace.

Key words: Employee Green Behavior, Organizational Citizenship Behavior for Environment, Sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Climate change and dealing with waste among one of the environmental issue around the world. Therefore environmental sustainability is one of the significant topics need to be concerned. Many organizations are facing with this critical issue in their daily operation. Hence one of Malaysian government objective is to reducing the environmental problems. In the Eleven Malaysia Plan (2016 - 2020) government has been outlined to pursue green growth for sustainability and resilience which represent commitment to the environment. The commitment by the government alone would not be sufficient and must involve long-term commitment from all stakeholders, business and society.

Encouraging pro-environmental or green behavior at workplace can result in an employee responsibility to reduce environmental problems. The environmental issues such as urban air and river quality, deforestation, households' waste, and hazardous waste are some of the serious and worrying problems [1].

Green awareness issues and awareness about the need to maintain environment had increased among society, nevertheless the level of their involvement in green activities still at low level. People recognize the existence about environmental issue in general but their attitude and behavior are not at the high level [2]. In organization employees had a good

awareness about environmental problems but yet had no changes and less practice in the workplace.

Therefore, there is a need to change human behavior towards the environment. Some concepts such as employee green behavior (EGB) are employed to educate employee to practice green activities in workplace. Most companies are now have been making tremendous improvements in applying green practices and implementing green measures because they need to improve company's corporate image, shows they care to the environment, and this is what customers demand in the competitive advantage. Considering that one third of employee's time spend in the workplace, thus, organizational practitioners are encouraged to show more environment friendly behavior [3] and possibly will influence others colleague with the support of management. One of the most significant current discussions is the initiative made by employees, which have a significant impact on greening the organizations; apart from the initiatives taken by the formal management systems, procedures or technologies, [4].

A number of studies have found that individual employee green behaviors significantly contribute to the wider environmental sustainability outcomes of the organisation, mainly when combined with established environmental management systems and innovations [5][6]. For example, organisation might direct resources towards improving efficiencies in their supply chain (e.g. a manufacturer) or their built

environment (e.g. a school) but if at the same time they are not changing the staff attitudes and behaviours, that business or organisation will not realise the full potential of their capital improvements. The findings show that management always organize awareness program among employees in order to educate and bring awareness on the important environmental sustainability. Organization reward and acknowledge their employee and giving strong performance practices [7]. This initiative taken by some organization could be implementing and to be one of the indicator for each employee performance evaluation. The enforcement will encourage and motivate employee to do green activities in their workplace that value to the organization.

Recently, researchers have emphasized the need to examine employee green behavior (EGB) and its individual and contextual predictors from a multilevel perspective which is to see their behavior and attitude toward environmental issue in organization perspective [8][9]. Increases in knowledge and awareness on green concept do not mean it lead to pro-environmental behavior among people [10]. This means individual perception on green does not guaranteed employee to perform and participate the green activities in organization.

People have positive perception towards green concept and they agreed that going green could improve human health due to the environment has a direct impact on the human life condition [11]. Consequently, this study is to look at the employee green behavior (EGB) based on organizational citizenship behavior for the environment in the organization context at the individual level perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Organizational citizenship behavior for the environment

Employee willingness to utilize effort beyond their formal responsibilities has been acknowledged as necessary element of effective organizational performance. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is referred as set of discretionary workplace behaviors that exceed one's basic job requirements and often described as behaviors that go beyond the call of duty [12]. OCB is the work behavior of employee extra role and commitment whereby employee become more self-driven and to be resourceful that can benefit the organization. There are five common types of OCB including altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue. Many studies have revealed the association between employee initiatives and voluntary towards environmental performance of organizations [13]. Study found that positive relationship between OCB and the performance of the

organization occur and when the OCB antecedents are known, managers would be able to promote OCB among their employees for better performance [14]. It is important for managers to monitor employee work behaviors that are not listed in their job description and are important contributors to the effectiveness of the organization. Environmental OCBs are become a crucial role in creating awareness on environmental issue in the workplace thus promoting corporate greening. Boiral, O. (2009) explained the characteristics of environmental management justify a more systematic consideration of OCBs in both research and practice such as

- Diversity and complexity of environmental issues;
- Limitations of formal management systems;
- Role of tacit knowledge;
- Importance of helping relationships and collaboration in the prevention of pollution; and
- Social legitimacy and the civic nature of voluntary ecological initiatives [15].

Recently many studies are to look at the behavioral aspects and employee voluntary initiatives toward environmental. The concept of organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (OCBE) is mostly embedded form the OCB and being mentioned in previous studies that contribute to the managerial implications. Employers should be concerned and create awareness among employees to be more environmental conscious. Organizational citizenship behaviors for the environment have been defined as "voluntary behaviors", which are not specified in official job descriptions that, through the combined efforts of individual employees, help to make the organization or society more sustainable" [16]. Encouragement from employers to their employees in order express their ideas and opinions on environmental issues and participate pro-environmental events organized by the organization are needed. Besides, employees need to practice more environment friendly actions in their day today office activities, and decrease energy consumption when the equipment is not in use. Past research is using the OCBE scale to determine level of EGB at manufacturing and service sector [17].

Based on general exploration on organizational citizenship behaviors, six possible forms of OCBEs including helping (collaboration and encouraging other workers to consider environmental issues), sportsmanship (positive attitude toward the inconveniences associated with environmental practices), organizational loyalty (support to the environmental policies and actions of the organization), organizational compliance (compliance with environmental practices and procedures), individual initiative (discretionary suggestions and initiatives in the workplace), and

self-development (acquisition of environmental knowledge) [15].

A list of items describing typical OCBEs that includes few activities employees can practice in their workplace such as recycling, using scrap paper for notes, printing double-sided, turning off lights when leaving the office and motivating coworkers to do green activities. These items are relevant and useful to measure certain types of OCBEs [18]. Nevertheless, they are restrictive and essentially focus on daily deskwork. Hence, it is presumed that regardless of the organizational and employee profile, OCBEs can be described through a small number of very specific behaviors that essentially seem to be an addition of environmental behaviors practice at home. Likewise, this list does not consider the important types of environmental behaviors, such as those intentional influences of others and to support the environmental commitment of organizations [19][20]. Previous study proposed OCBE a more inclusive measurement scale based on three dimensions' eco-initiatives, eco-civic engagement, and eco-helping to examine the green behavior among employees which is based on the five common types of OCB (altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, courtesy, sportsmanship and civic virtue) that might be applied to the environmental issue in organization [21]. This will be a good indicator for the manager that will clarify what are the employees' voluntary initiatives for the environment and the characteristics for this initiative. To that it also can be used by the management due to monitors their employee voluntary green behavior in the workplace. Employees are more committed and satisfied to engage in OBCEs when organization supported them [22], thus, this indicate that perceived organizational support and job satisfaction have an indirect effect on OCBE. Therefore, in order to encourage employee to perform green activities in the workplace, the management and leaders should portray example of environmental friendly behavior in organization.

Leadership role are being influence to motivate employee through OCBE. In the organization context employer can provide support to their employee, considering their followers' needs, listening to their new ideas, and encouraging personal growth. As the end result, a trusting, and responsible relationship make employees feel valuable to engage in OCBE [23]. With the increasing concern on the environment, some organizations expect more from their employees in terms of performing extra-role or voluntary perform the tasks, such as OCBE.

Study of eco-civic engagement which is one of OCBE dimension revealed that rewards and perceived organization support, and perceived supervisory support does effects the determinants of pro-environmental behaviour therefore enhances

OCBE demonstrated by employees. It is shows that employee are environmental friendly if they are consistently rewarded for their voluntary effort and received support from their employer[9].

	Eco-initiatives	Eco-civic engagement	Eco-helping
Definition	Discretionary behavior and suggestions to improve environmental practices or performance	Voluntary participation in an organization's environmental programs and activities	Voluntarily helping colleagues to better integrated environmental concerns in the workplace
Main focus	Personal initiatives	Support for organizations commitment	Mutual support among employees
Relevance	Improve internal practices	Improve organization image	Empower new employees
Examples	Make suggestions to reduce paper consumption	Participate in a green committee	Explain environmental procedures to new employees
Limitation	Depends on organizational culture and attitudes	Conflicts arise between environmental values of individuals and organization	Some colleagues may show a lack of awareness or openness

Table 1: Three main categories of OCBE. Adapted from Boiral & Paillé, [28]

Employee Green Behavior

Employee green behavior (EGB) is defined as a workplace-specific forms of pro-environmental behavior in which it is categorized into requiring employees green behavior and voluntary employees green behavior a workplace-specific form of pro environmental behavior; and as any measureable individual behavior that contributes to or detracts from environmental sustainability goals in the work context. EGB refers to "scalable actions and behaviors that employee engage in that are linked with and contribute or detract from environmental sustainability" [6]. Example of EGB that might occur in the workplace are recycling paper, printing double-sided, switching off lighting if not using and avoiding waste. Previous studies have observed the antecedents of EGB such as individual-level predictors (personality, affect and motivation) and also contextual predictors (organizational policies, climate and leadership

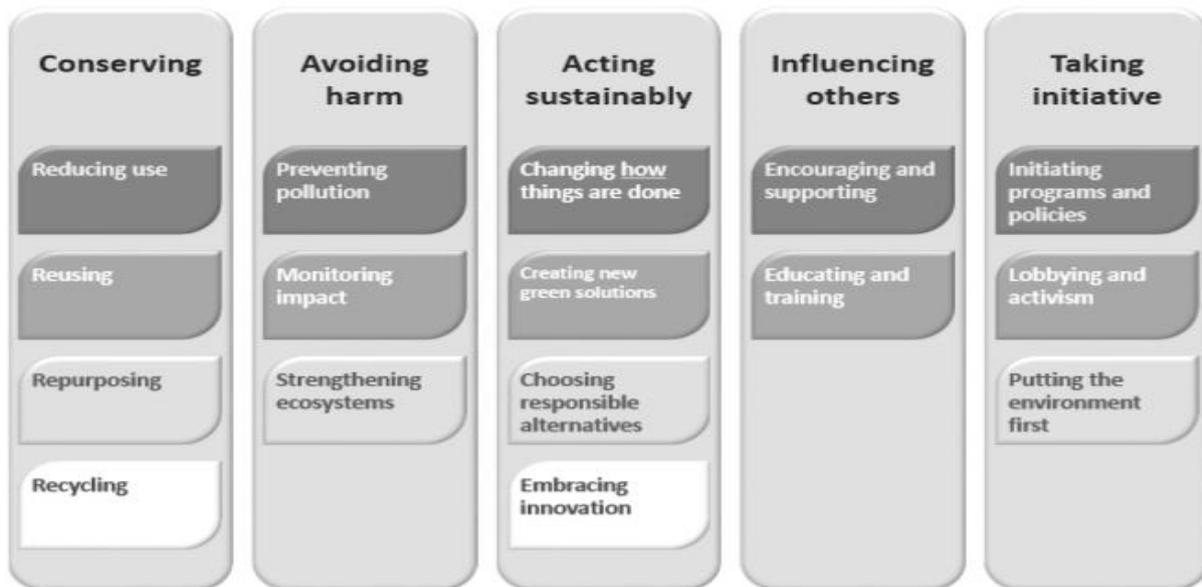


Figure 1: The Green Five. Ones & Dilchert, [18]

behavior) [5]. Study of EGB have started to be focused by the organization since it can be part of employee's evaluation that may contribute to the overall job performance [6][9].

The green five taxonomy indicates five categories of employee green behavior in organization including conserving, avoiding harm, and acting sustainability, influencing others and taking initiatives [18]. This green five initiated by Ones and Dilchert, 2012 has been significant to the coverage of possible EGB.

There are two ways employee green behavior can be studied depending on the type of industry where employees work. In the green industry, green behavior is an integral part of work tasks whereby in the traditional jobs, green behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (OBCE), is a reflection of employee willingness to protect the environment by avoiding waste or by implementing recycling in the workplace. Majority of the manufacturing sector companies emphasized on sustainability and environmental friendly activities in the workplace but green behavior of the employees has been reduced with the tenancy of the organization. This indicates that the management of the service sector and the manufacturing sector should motivate employees and develop training program to initiate green behavior especially to the new employees [24]. Study of EGB at manufacturing and service sector in Sri Lankan shows that employee at the manufacturing are greener than employees from service sector [17] because of the effort taken by the manufacturing sector which comply with strict environmental rules and policy. Another example is

Air Asia which one of service industry that looking sustainability is not only because of the environmental impact but also in term of cost savings, and increasing revenue thus with the technology and other infrastructure green practices at their company could be seen as an example to the others organization [7].

The higher education level respondents have a stronger intention to change their behavior as the result of go green campaign [20] similar to [17] which indicated that when employee level of education increased the level of green behavior get increased. When pro-environmental behavior is carrying out in relation to individuals' jobs, employees become more pro-environmental behavior at workplaces [18] and this will become an organizational culture in environmental awareness, which have influence on pro-environmental behavior at workplace [19].

It is found in the recent literature evidence for personality factors and behavioural intentions effects toward voluntary EGB. This could suggest that employees engage in required EGB is more dependent on perceptions of the organization environmental issue and activity within it, or it may reflect an assumption that employees comply strictly with organizational requirements [9].

Theoretical background

In study the employee green behavior, many researchers are using Theory of Planned behavior (TPB) [25]. TPB describe behavioral intention is an important predictor of actual behavior. According to this theory, behavioral the three influences intention factors namely attitude, subjective norm, and behavioral control. These factors work together to form a complete theoretical framework for predicting human behavior in engaging green practices [26]. Beside, theories such as attitudinal,

normative, exchange and motivational have been related with EGB and also adopted a broad range of literature to explain EGB [27][9]. EGB is also being measured using integrated model based on person–environment interaction, job performance, and motivational theories to structure employee green behavior [28]. It is to identify how normative, exchange, and motivational theories are taking places. Additionally, norms within organizations outline the activities of leaders, teams, and employees. Additionally, employees also have their own personal norms towards EGB. Thus, norms can constitute context (i.e., societal, organizational, group) and person factors that lead to motivational states required to perform EGB.

Employees' green behavior and organizational commitment are linking in the public organization and has significant predictor of eco-initiative [29]. Another related theory found that social exchange theory (SET) is a reliable theory in predicting the OCBE - eco initiatives at a workplace [30]. Social exchange proposed that human behaviours in humanity are the product of an exchange process and this theory argued that all human interaction is formed based on the cost-benefit analysis carried out in an organization. It is used to explain the relationship of support and affective commitment between the organization and its subordinate.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

With the current issue of global warming, environmental degradation, and waste management, employee green behavior (EGB) concept has been debated. As extensive literature and research reports described a study on OCBE and its implementation on EGB at the workplace with various relationships including leadership and age. This implies that there is the impact of other factors on employees' green behavior. The study of green perception and behavior in the workplace in relation to the green practices is still an area of long-standing discussion. This issue has led to the unresolved problem for the organization in understanding employee behavior. It is important to understand the reasons for employees' green initiatives towards the organization. Many voluntary green behaviors initiated by employees haven't taken into the consideration by the formal management system, while most of environmental management studies have failed to distinguish between employees' voluntary involvement, and involvement based on compliance with organizations policies [13]. Therefore, there is a need to explore the factors affecting employee green behavior (EGB) in the workplace by taking organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (OCBE) into consideration.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

On the basis of OCB theory, the following framework is proposed. Five main categories of OCB namely helping (altruism), sportsmanship, organizational loyalty, individual initiative, and self-development being applied to determine possible relationships of EGB. This application of OCB will then use to generate OCBE which comprise eco-initiatives, eco-civic engagement and eco-helping. Previous research recommends to enhance the relationship between OCBE and employee green behavior with the influence of organization policy in predicting employee environmental friendly behavior in the workplace [19][31]. One of the EGB antecedents is contextual predictors which include the organizational policies [5]. This will give the implications to the employers and employees in aiming the individual and organizational goal whereby to develop procedure in encouraging green behavior at the workplace.

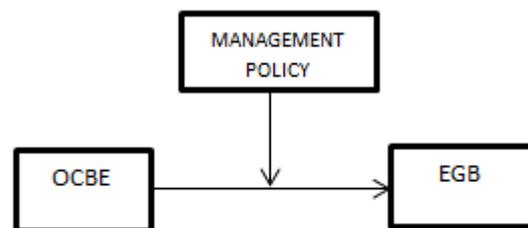


Figure 2: Proposed framework

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

Recently the importance of employee green behavior study and related theories are being vital to the organization. Employees' environmental perception and behavior have great concern in order to decrease the impact of companies on environment. Employee green behavior (EGB) can be classified of task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB), or even counterproductive work behaviors (CWB). Understanding how and why employees in the workplace are difference in terms of behaviors with an environmental impact should be one of the focus to the organizations which aiming to operate in environmentally sustainable ways. Employee green behaviors can also be undertaken outside of formal duties and responsibilities in work settings and OCB are not part of core task performance, but may help to organizational operation [12]. Hence study of EGB and OCBE will contribute to the understanding of employee voluntary green behavior and the role of employer in emphasizing pro-environmental activities in the workplace.

CONCLUSIONS

Concern should be given to the environmental issue in the workplace since it is less emphasized by employers and employees. Employee green behaviors contribute to different job performance domains.

This study will enhance the body of knowledge of employees' green practices that the organizations will benefit from with a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship.

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