



Original Article (Quantified)

The effect of intellectual capital and strategic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior with the moderating role of employees' professional ethics

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Abstract

The aim of the current research is to investigate the effect of intellectual capital and strategic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior with the moderating role of professional ethics of employees in the General Department of Education of Kermanshah province. The research is applicable in terms of purpose and causal in terms of descriptive-survey nature. The statistical population of the research was the employees of the General Department of Education of Kermanshah province, and the sample size was determined using the Cochran formula of 304 people. A simple random sampling method was chosen. The data collection method was field data collection, and the required tools were Bontis's (1998) intellectual capital, Lear's (2012) strategic leadership, Oregon and Kanowski's (1988) organizational citizenship behavior, and researcher-made professional ethics questionnaires. The method of data analysis was descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling using Spss26 and Amos24 software. The findings showed that intellectual capital has a significant and positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior by 66%. Strategic leadership predicted changes in organizational citizenship behavior by 46%, Also, the moderating role of professional ethics of employees between intellectual capital and strategic leadership with organizational citizenship behavior was confirmed, and the moderating rate of this variable was equal to 5% and 3.2%, respectively. The results showed that intellectual capital has a greater effect on organizational citizenship behavior than strategic leadership. Therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to intellectual capital in order to improve organizational citizenship behavior in the organization.

Keywords:

intellectual capital,
strategic management,
organizational citizenship
behavior,
professional ethics of
employees

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Extended abstract

Introduction

Organizational citizenship behavior is a unique, voluntary and extra-task behavior that is effective in increasing the efficient performance of the organization and is directly or indirectly organized by the organization's formal reward system (Baharond et al, 2018). Organizational citizenship behavior is an extra-task behavior that exists in the organization among employees, which makes organizational communication stronger in order to solve internal organizational problems. In other words, employees who have good citizenship behavior voluntarily try to solve organizational problems and challenges and reduce the amount of organizational anomalies. Therefore, intellectual capital and strategic leadership can be used to improve and upgrade this important organizational component. Organizations use various resources to grow and improve in the competitive arena and increase their value, because knowledge is considered the most important capital of the organization. As a result, intellectual capital is considered a main and important element in the management of organizations (Peralta et al, 2018). The intellectual capital of a company's employees combines knowledge, experience, intellectual property and information that can be used to create long-term value (Minoja & Romano, 2021). In addition to the many effects of intellectual capital, strategic leadership is of great importance in improving organizational citizenship behavior. Strategic leadership is conceptualized as the process of forming a vision for the future, rendering it to subordinates, stimulating and motivating followers, and participating in strategy-supportive exchanges with peers and subordinates (Malkawi et al, 2017). Despite the high effects of intellectual capital and strategic leadership in organizations, as well as organizational citizenship behavior, it can be said that the professional ethics of employees can be considered a moderating factor. Professional ethics is a set of rules that people must follow voluntarily and based on the call of their conscience and nature in doing professional work; without having an external requirement, or suffer legal punishments in case of violation (Jeong et al, 2017). In line with the stated content, it can be said that the absence or low level of professional ethics of employees can play a moderating role and reduce the effects of strategic leadership and intellectual capital, and on the other hand, the existence of professional ethics of employees with their clients and colleagues within the organization can improve organizational citizenship behavior. According to the stated contents, this research tries to answer the question: what is the extent of the effects of intellectual capital and strategic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior with the moderating role of professional ethics of employees in the General Department of Education of Kermanshah province?

Theoretical Framework

The term intellectual capital was first expressed by John Kenneth Galbraith (1969) (Bellucci et al, 2020). He not only mentions intellectual capital as a fixed asset, but also considers it an ideological process and a means to achieve a goal. Since 1982, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has conducted many researches in the field of intellectual capital, and many researches have been conducted in European countries such as the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, etc (Hemati & Mehrabi, 2011). Intellectual capital is generally divided into three dimensions: human capital, structural capital, and communication capital. Human capital is the most valuable asset of the organization, and the source of creativity and innovation. Human capital is considered a basic and primary part for the components of intellectual capital activities. Human capital includes knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom of people (Beattie & Smith, 2010). Strategic leadership is the ability to create a strategic vision for the organization and motivate others to accept that vision. Its



most important characteristics are: 1) foresight, eloquence and stability; 2) commitment; 3) ability to receive information; 4) willingness to delegate authority and power; 5) political shrewdness" (Jaliliayn, 2021). The main goal of strategic leadership is the long-term survival of the organization in line with the main business goals. However, it also aims to achieve above-average profits at the same time. Therefore, the primary goal of strategic leadership is to gain profit (Tutar et al, 2011). Oregon et al (1988) used the term organizational citizenship behavior for the first time and defined it as follows: conscious and insightful individual behavior that is not directly and explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and generally improves the organization's functions. Researchers found that many factors influence organizational citizenship behavior; factors such as commitment, satisfaction, organizational justice, leadership style, personality traits, job characteristics and organizational characteristics (MohammadKhani et al, 2013). At first, the concept of professional ethics was used to mean work ethics and business ethics. Even today, some writers of professional ethics use the primary meaning of this concept to define it (Abbaspour & Hosseinzadeh, 2019). Professional ethics has many benefits for the organization from the internal aspect in terms of improving relations, improving the atmosphere of understanding and reducing conflicts, increasing the commitment and more employees and reducing costs due to control, and from the point of view of social responsibility, affects moral commitment in Paying attention to the importance of stakeholders, profitability increase, and competitive advantage by increasing the legitimacy of the organization and its actions (Chokprajakchat & Sumretphol, 2017).

Methodology

The current research is applicable in terms of purpose, and causal type of descriptive-survey in terms of nature. The type of data is quantitative and the required tool is a questionnaire. The method of collecting information is library-type, and the required tool is to scan books, articles and theses. The statistical population of the research is the employees of the General Department of Education of Kermanshah province. The size of the population is 1450 people; from which, by using Cochran's formula, 304 people were selected as a sample. The sampling method is simple due to the lack of access to the entire random statistical population. The data collection method was field data collection, and the required tools are questionnaires of intellectual capital of Bontis (1998), strategic leadership of Lear (2012), organizational citizenship behavior of Organ & Kanoski (1988), and researcher-made professional ethics. The data analysis method is descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and structural equation modeling. The test to check the normality of the data is Kolmogorov-Smirnov. The software used is Spss26 and Amos24.

Discussion and Results

1. The results of structural equation modeling and model fitting showed that intellectual capital predicts changes in organizational citizenship behavior by 66%.
2. The results of structural equation modeling and model fitting showed that intellectual capital predicts changes in organizational citizenship behavior by 46%.
3. The significance level of 0.019 and the positive figure of 2.355 (which is more than 1.96) of the t-statistic indicates the significant and incremental effect of professional ethics as a moderating variable. Therefore, the third hypothesis of the research regarding the impact of intellectual capital on organizational citizenship behavior with the moderating role of professional ethics is confirmed.
4. The significance level of 0.019 and the positive figure of 2.365 (which is more than 1.96) of the t-statistic indicates the significant and incremental effect of professional ethics as a

moderating variable. Therefore, the third hypothesis of the research regarding the effect of strategic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior with the moderating role of professional ethics is confirmed.

Conclusion

One of the most important organizational variables is organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior is defined as the positive and constructive communication and interaction between employees and their managers, which can improve morale and teamwork in the organization. Organizational citizenship behavior requires special attention to satisfaction, job security and etc. in employees so that they can have an acceptable relationship with their colleagues and support each other in dealing with organizational problems. Organizational citizenship behavior is more observed in organizations where conflicts are at their lowest level and organizational knowledge and management knowledge are at a high level. Therefore, it can be said that intellectual capital as an efficient and effective approach can improve organizational citizenship behavior, in the sense that organizations that have sufficient knowledge and experience can solve their internal problems in a peaceful way. Employees with knowledge and experience often do not have many problems with each other, and if a conflict arises, they can easily resolve it. This is where intangible assets such as intellectual capital can help a lot in solving intra-organizational disputes and improving organizational morale and culture, so that employees can belong to the organization and be committed to organizational activities.

The existence of organizational citizenship behavior makes employees have extra-duty interactions and communication with each other and help each other in dealing with problems. These factors make employees treat their clients more favorably and consider answering them as a matter of course. Organizational citizenship behavior creates a mutual and peaceful relationship between employees with each other, employees with managers and employees with clients. Therefore, strategic leadership as an efficient approach can improve organizational citizenship behavior to an acceptable level. Strategic leadership envisages a vision for the organization and tries to achieve this vision by motivating employees. Achieving the vision in any organization requires motivation, morale, efficiency, mobilization of resources and facilities, communication and constructive interactions in the organization and so on. Without these factors, it is not possible to achieve the developed vision. Therefore, it can be said that due to the nature of strategic leadership, which has the role of formulating a vision in the organization by creating motivation and working spirit in its employees and tries to improve communication between employees, it can have an effect on organizational citizenship behavior.

One of the variables that can moderate the effect of intellectual capital on organizational citizenship behavior is the professional ethics of employees. Although there is a high level of intellectual capital in the organization, the lack of professional ethics of the employees in the organization causes unfavorable behavior of organizational citizenship, and intellectual capital cannot play a significant role in improving the behavior of organizational citizenship. Therefore, the professional ethics of employees is very effective and important and can determine the fluctuation of organizational citizenship behavior. Also, the professional ethics of employees can moderate the effect of strategic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior. The existence of professional ethics of employees in all departments of an organization has a significant impact, and its absence can create organizational challenges, one of which is the weakening of strategic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.