

**HUMOR, COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN  
IRANIAN ELECTRICAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY**

by

Nader Sheykh Al Eslami Kandlousi

**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

June 2010

## DEDICATION

*To my lovely wife; "Anahita",*

*To my Daughter "Arnika"*

*And*

*To my family*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Praises to Al-Mighty Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most  
Merciful, for His Blessing*

First and foremost, I wish to acknowledge my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Anees Janee Ali, for his continues guidance, patience, and rendering advices and input that encourage me to complete this study. I would also like to express my special thanks to the examiners of this thesis: Associate Professor Zainal Ariffin Ahmad, Associate Professor Khulida Kirana Bt. Ahmad and Dr. Daisy Kee Mui Hung for their invaluable comments. In addition, I would like to extend special thanks and appreciation to Associate Professor Dato Ishak Ismail (the Dean), staff, and professors of school of management for their kindness, warmth, and help during my study in Universiti Sains Malaysia.

I would also like to convey thanks to the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) for providing the financial means (fellowship).

My deepest appreciation, thanks and gratitude goes to my beloved wife, Anahita Abdollahi, for supporting me and providing endless love during the difficult times. I would also extend my love and appreciation to my dearly loved parents for being supporting, understanding, and lending me help to assist me to complete this study.

Nader Sheykh Al Eslami Kandlousi

January 2010

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENT	iii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF APPENDICES	viii
ABSTRAK	xi
ABSTRACT	xiii
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	4
1.3 Problem Statement	8
1.4 Objectives of the Present Study	12
1.5 Research Questions	13
1.6 Significance of the Present Study	13
1.7 Definitions of Key Variables	14
1.8 Organization of Chapters	15

## **CHAPTER 2 BACKGROUND OF IRAN**

2.1	General Information about Iran	17
2.2	The New Iran	19
2.3	Electrical Manufacturing Companies in Iran	22
2.4	OCB, Communication satisfaction and Humor among Iranian Employees	24

## **CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW**

3.1	Introduction	30
3.2	Social Exchange Theory (SET)	30
3.3	Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	35
	3.3.1 OCB; In-role Behavior or Extra Role Behavior?	37
	3.3.2 Conceptualization of OCB	38
	3.3.3 Job Satisfaction and OCB	45
	3.3.3 OCB and Job Performance	47
3.4	Communication Satisfaction	49
	3.4.1 Importance of Communication Satisfaction	56
	3.4.2 Antecedents of Communication Satisfaction	57
	3.4.3 The Outcomes of Communication Satisfaction	58
3.5	Communication in General	60
	3.5.1 Communication and OCB	71
	3.5.2 Formal, Informal, and Non-Verbal Communication	72

3.5.2.1	Formal Communication in an Organization	75
3.5.2.2	Informal Communication	79
3.5.2.3	Non-verbal Communication	77
3.5.2.3.1	Dimensions of Non-verbal Communication	89
3.6	Humor	93
3.6.1	Benefits of Humor	97
3.6.2	Communication and Humor	99
3.6.3	Use of Humor in Formal and Informal Communication	101
3.6.4	Humor and Communication Satisfaction	103
3.7	Gap in the Literature	104
3.8	Theoretical Framework of the Present Study	106
3.9	Hypotheses Development	108
3.9.1	Communication and Communication Satisfaction	109
3.9.2	Humor and Communication Satisfaction	114
3.9.3	Communication Satisfaction and OCB	116
3.10	Summary	120

## **CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY**

4.1	Introduction	121
4.2	Research Design	121
4.3	Variables	122

4.4	Populations and Sample Size	123
4.5	Procedures	124
4.6	Research Instruments/Measurements	126
	4.6.1 Communication	128
	4.6.1.1 Construct of Communication Measurement	129
	4.6.2 Humor	131
	4.6.3 Communication Satisfaction	132
	4.6.4 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	133
4.7	Data Analysis	134
4.8	Tests for Underlying Assumptions	134
4.9	Basic Statistics	135
4.10	Summary	137
 <b>CHAPTER 5 RESULT</b>		
5.1	Introduction	139
5.2	Profile of the Respondents	139
5.3	Goodness of Measurement	142
	5.3.1 Factor Analysis	142
	5.3.1.1 Factor Analysis of Communication dimensions	143
	5.3.1.2 Factor Analysis of Humor	146
	5.3.1.3 Factor Analysis of Communication Satisfaction	148

5.3.1.4	Factor Analysis of OCB	150
5.3.2	Reliability	152
5.4	Restructuring of the Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses	153
5.5	Correlation Analysis	160
5.6	Hypotheses Testing	162
5.6.1	Communication and Humor to Interpersonal Dimension of Communication Satisfaction	162
5.6.2	Communication and Humor to Group Dimension of Communication Satisfaction	164
5.6.3	Communication and Humor to Organizational Dimension of Communication Satisfaction	167
5.6.4	Communication Satisfaction to Sportsmanship	169
5.6.5	Communication Satisfaction to Conscientiousness	171
5.6.6	Communication Satisfaction to Courtesy	172
5.6.7	Communication Satisfaction to Civic Virtue	173
5.6.8	Communication Satisfaction to Altruism	174
5.7	Summary	183

## **CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

6.1	Introduction	184
6.2	Recapitulation of the Research Finding	184



6.3	Discussion	186
	6.3.1 Communication and Communication Satisfaction	187
	6.3.2 Humor and Communication Satisfaction	197
	6.3.3 Communication Satisfaction and OCB	203
6.4	Implications	211
	6.4.1 Theoretical Implications	211
	6.4.2 Practical Implications	212
6.5	Limitations	215
6.6	Suggestion for Future Research	217
6.7	Conclusion	218
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	221
	<b>APPENDIX</b>	viii
	<b>LIST OF PUBLICATIONS</b>	viii

## LIST OF TABLES

	<b>Page</b>
4.1 Survey Questionnaire Employed in the Present Research	127
5.1 Profile of Respondents	141
5.2 Result of the Communication Factor Analysis	145
5.3 Result of Humor Factor Analysis	147
5.4 Result of Communication Satisfaction Factor Analysis	149
5.5 Result of the OCB Factor Analysis	151
5.6 Reliability Coefficients for Model Variables	153
5.7 Inter-Correlation of Research Variables	160
5.8 Standardized Beta for the Communication and Humor to Communication Satisfaction	169
5.9 Standardized Beta for the Communication Satisfaction to OCB	176
5.10 Summary of Hypotheses testing	177

## LIST OF FIGURES

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 3.1      Theoretical Framework of the Present Study	108
Figure 5.1      Posited Relationship among all Variables (Confirmed)	154

**JENAKA, KEPUASAN KOMUNIKASI DAN ORGANISASI  
KEWARGANEGARAAN KELAKUAN DALAM  
INDUSTRI PEMBUATAN ELEKTRIK IRAN**

**ABSTRAK**

Kajian ini bertujuan: (1) mengkaji perkaitan di antara dimensi komunikasi pekerja Iran dengan kepuasan komunikasi di tempat kerja, (2) menyelidik perkaitan di antara humor pekerja Iran dengan kepuasan komunikasi di tempat kerja, dan (3) menilai perkaitan kepuasan komunikasi pekerja dengan OCB. Secara khususnya, kajian ini menyelidik perkaitan tiga dimensi komunikasi (formal, tidak formal, dan bukan lisan); dua dimensi humor (keberkesannya serta kekerapan ia digunakan); tiga dimensi kepuasan komunikasi (interpersonal, kumpulan dan organisasi); dan yang terakhir, lima dimensi OCB [sopan-santun (courtesy), sikap sukan (sportsmanship), sivik yang baik (civic virtue), altruisme, dan berhemat (conscientiousness)]. Tiga hipotesis utama telah dibangunkan untuk menilai perkaitan di antara pembolehubah. Hipotesis ini diuji dalam kajian lapangan dengan sampel seramai 231 orang pekerja daripada 20 buah syarikat pembuatan elektrik di seluruh Iran, yang mempunyai kadar tertinggi perdagangan antarabangsa dalam kalangan syarikat lain yang terlibat dalam industri ini. Hampir seribu set soal selidik diagihkan kepada pekerja syarikat elektrik di Iran. Selepas 3 bulan, 348 set soal selidik yang lengkap diisi telah dikembalikan kepada penyelidik (34%), dan 231 daripadanya boleh digunakan (23%). Unit analisis adalah individu dan

penyertaan adalah secara sukarela. Dapatan analisis regresi pelbagai menunjukkan perkaitan yang positif di antara pembolehubah.

Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa komunikasi dan humor adalah peramal kepuasan komunikasi, sedangkan perkaitan di antara kepuasan komunikasi dan OCB merupakan penentu yang lengkap. Berdasarkan skop perkaitan di antara dimensi komunikasi dan kepuasan komunikasi, didapati bahawa komunikasi formal adalah berkaitan dengan dimensi komunikasi interpersonal dan organisasi daripada kepuasan komunikasi. Manakala, komunikasi tidak formal dan satu dimensi daripada komunikasi bukan lisan (rupa fizikal) adalah berkaitan dengan dimensi interpersonal daripada kepuasan komunikasi. Yang menariknya, ditemui bahawa humor boleh meramal kepuasan komunikasi jika ia digunakan secara efektif. Sebagai kesimpulan, semua dimensi kepuasan komunikasi (interpersonal, kumpulan, dan organisasi) secara positifnya adalah berkaitan dengan semua dimensi OCB (sopan-santun, sikap sukan, sivik yang baik, altruisme, dan berhemat). Dapatan kajian ini menyediakan maklumat berguna untuk industri di Iran. Bagi mana-mana organisasi di Iran yang berhasrat meningkatkan sumbangan pekerja mereka terhadap OCB, disarankan agar jabatan sumber manusia mempertimbangkan secara serius segala cadangan yang diutarakan (komunikasi, humor, dan kepuasan komunikasi)

**HUMOR, COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN IRANIAN  
ELECTRICAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY**

**ABSTRACT**

The purposes of the present study were to: (1) to study the relationship between Iranian employees' communication dimensions with their communication satisfaction at the work place, (2) to examine the relationship between Iranian employees' humor with their communication satisfaction at the work place, and (3) to assess the relationship of employees' communication satisfaction with their OCB. Specifically, the present study examines the relationship of three dimensions of communication (that are, formal, informal, and nonverbal communication); two dimensions of humor (that are, how effectively it is used and how often it is used); three dimensions of communication satisfaction (that are interpersonal, group and organizational dimensions); and lastly, five dimensions of OCB (namely courtesy, sportsmanship, civic virtue, altruism, and conscientiousness). Three main hypotheses were developed to assess the relationship between the variables of the present research. The hypotheses were tested in a field study with a sample of 231 employees in 20 electrical manufacturing companies across Iran, which have the highest rate of international trade among the other companies participating in this industry. One thousand questionnaires were distributed among employees (workers) of electrical companies in Iran. After a period of time (3 month) 348 completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher (34%) of which 231 were

usable (23%). The unit of analysis of the present study was individual and the participation was voluntary. The results of multiple regression analysis indicated positive relationships between variables. The result showed that communication and humor were partially predictors of communication satisfaction while the relationship between communication satisfaction and OCB was fully supported. At the scope of the relationship between communication dimensions and communication satisfaction, it was found that formal communication was related to both interpersonal and organizational dimensions of communication satisfaction. While informal communication and one dimension of nonverbal communication (physical appearance) were related to interpersonal dimension of communication satisfaction. The fascinating issue that has been found in the present study was that humor would predict communication satisfaction if humor was being used effectively not so often. Finally, all the dimensions of communication satisfaction (interpersonal, group, and organizational) were positively related to all the dimensions of OCB (courtesy, sportsmanship, civic virtue, altruism, and conscientiousness). The findings of the present study provide useful information for the industry and practitioners in Iran. For Iranian organizations that desire to improve their employees' contribution on OCB, the human resource departments of the companies are recommended to take serious views of communication, humor, and communication satisfaction that clearly contribute to employees' OCB.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction

Communication refers to the process by which information is transmitted and understood between two or more people (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). This process is social (Griffin & Moorhead, 2004, p. 250), since personal communication involves incident of exchange of information and feelings in which human being engage in whenever they are in contact with each other. Interestingly, human beings are social animals. Thus, they have a need to communicate, and they will communicate even if they have little or nothing to express in whatever the situation is (Diwan, 1999, pp. 38-39).

Ceyhan (2006) in his research noted that communication is the most important element of human social behavior. The power of communication with others and having good approach and behavior and the way a person interact with people are more important and worthful than ones' knowledge and skills (Mirkamali, 1999, p. 16). In agreement with Guimera, Danon, Diaz-Guilera, Giralt, and Arenas (2006), new connections are made between individuals all the time because of a variety of reasons such as resolving problems of an unexpected nature, personal and cultural similarities, and political motives. These new connections evoke a shared or common meaning in other persons (Nelson & Quick, 2003).



An organization is a small model of society and individuals are the entity of an organization. As noted earlier, communication links individuals and groups in a social system. Therefore, the process of communication is one of the crucial processes that plays an important role in the organization effectiveness (Daniels, Speaker, & Papa, 1997). Chester Barnard mentioned that in each in-depth theory of organization, communication would occupy a central place (as cited in Evertt & Rekha, 1976). In line with that, in a study based on responses from 65 companies throughout the UK economy, employees were asked to state the most important influences on their working environment (Villegas & Cerveny, 2004). More than two third responded that they were mostly affected by their relationship with their managers and supervisors (Villegas & Cerveny, 2004). In summary, the incredible significant role of communication in organizations, as social entities is great and cannot be neglected.

When people involved in any group task, they have their needs for inclusion, control, and affection. In this case, they are more likely to stay in their groups, work through the process, and build relationships. If these needs are fulfilled, then satisfaction will emerge. Conversely, dissatisfactions are likely to occur when these needs are not met. How does one go about meeting these needs? One way is by being more competent in communicating and interacting with others (Anderson & Martin, 1995). In other word, satisfaction in communication in general is an outcome of communication process if the communication process goes well.

Membership satisfaction is an important outcome variable since it means that relationship needs were met and that the group was a good one in terms of productivity (Cragan & Wright, 1990). Satisfaction in work and membership has been repeatedly

mentioned as crucial elements in organizational setting. For instance, Pincus (1986) surveyed 327 hospital nurses and found out that communication satisfaction was related significantly to both job satisfaction and job performance. Some research in social psychology showed that individuals that were artificially put into a positive mood often perform better (Ashby, Isen, & Turken, 1999). In addition, there are some evidences that communication satisfaction enhance the sense of membership and identification toward the organization (Putti, Aryee, & Phua, 1990), which would motivate people to do something in the favor of the organization out of than their own official duty. This act of contributing their time and energy beyond their official job description is known as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

Another variable that is going to capture researchers', scholars', and practitioners' attention in organizational context is humor, laughter, or fun. Gallagher (2001) as cited in Lee and Kleiner (2005, p. 181) noted, "work is serious for most people. However, people do not have to be serious all the time. A pleasant workplace can establish a strong team spirit, hence increases productivity." Gallagher (2001) also mentioned, "Seriousness pushes people away, yet humor can bring people closer." To conclude, humor brings color to life and makes the job more meaningful. The sense of meaningfulness of job will help employees to have more positive attitudes toward their job (Liu, Fu, & Zhang, 2008). Positive attitudes (like communication satisfaction) will make people to be less money driven (Liu, Fu, & Zhang, 2008; Spreitzer, 1995). Instead, positive attitudes lead people to carry out something that make them feel good (Liu, Fu, & Zhang, 2008; Spreitzer, 1995) like participating in OCB.

The present study is going to consider the relationship between employees' communication satisfaction - as an outcome of communication process and humor - with

organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). In addition, different dimensions of employees' communication and the relationship that they have with their communication satisfaction will be studied. Humor as an initiative claim would be considered as predictor of communication satisfaction. The present study will also examine whether satisfied employees with communication will contribute more of OCB in an organizational setting.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

The concept of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in recent years has generated high interest among organizational researchers and practitioners. OCB is all efforts that employees make on behalf of their organization (Bolino & Turnley, 2003). Bolino and Turnley (2003) further added that OCB refers to the duties and activities, which go above and beyond the call of duty. Good citizenship includes a variety of employee behaviors. For instance, taking on additional assignments, voluntarily assisting other people at work, keeping up with developments in one's field or profession, following company rules even when no one is watching, promoting and protecting the organization, and keeping a positive attitude and tolerating inconveniences at work (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, & Bacharach, 2000). All these parameters are vital in organizational accomplishment and clearly show how importance OCB is to an organization.

The traditional definition of OCB says that OCBs are not required as a part of a job specification (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988); therefore, they are not

enforceable. Another point, which should be considered in this conceptualization of OCB, is that they are representative of the special or extra efforts that organizations need from their workforce in order to be successful. These two features are the main and common characteristics of citizenship behaviors (Bolino & Turnley, 2003). Therefore, OCB has long been considered as an essential feature in the success or failure of any organization.

The traditional conceptualization of OCB, which was introduced by Bateman and Organ (1983) and Organ (1988), has remained untouched until 1997 when Organ published a new definition of OCB. The new conceptualization of OCB contains employees' in-role behavior besides the extra-role behaviors of employees. This redefinition was based on some empirical studies such as Morrison (1994), which Organ used as evidence for his new conceptualization. Regarding to this conceptualization, OCB can be measured as an aspect of job performance (Koys, 2001), since OCB contains both in-role and extra-role behaviors. As Organ (1997) argued, a consistent and positive relationship exists between satisfaction and broader conceptualizations of performance. Regarding to the new conceptualization of OCB by Organ (1997), OCB is an aspect of job performance (Koys, 2001). Beside, literature supported the relationship between satisfaction and performance (Fisher, 2003). Then, it can be concluded that satisfaction at the workplace would lead to engagement in OCB, since satisfaction has been found as an originator of job performance (Koys, 2001).

OCB can be considered as either an independent or a dependent variable in an organizational setting. This variable, as noted previously, plays a considerable role in organizations accomplishment. For the past twenty years, management scholars have examined OCB primarily under the assumption that such behavior promotes

organizational goals and effectiveness. For instance, the relationship between OCB and firm performance has long been studied. Some recent studies suggested that OCB produces tangible benefits for organizations. For example, Bolino and Turnley (2003) mentioned that OCB contributed to organizational competitiveness and performance. Bolino and Turnley (2003) further explained that in some empirical studies, OCBs were positively related to several indicators of organizational performance, product quantity and product quality, organizational effectiveness, competitive advantages, and work group performance. Recently, it has been argued that one of the primary ways that citizenship behaviors contribute to organizational performance is through the creation of social capital, that is, strong interpersonal connections among employees (Bolino, Turnley, & Bloodgood, 2002). Interpersonal connection among employees involves communication, which is the topic that is going to be emphasized and examined in the present thesis.

Considering the importance of OCB in an organizational setting drives managers and scholars to investigate for the predictors of this variable. This process leads managers and scholars to consider OCB as a dependent variable that would be affected by some other variables in an organizational setting. Furthermore, social exchange theory suggests that satisfied people have high tendency to do something in the favor of the organization (Organ, 1988). People who are satisfied with their company are assumed to be satisfied with their job and other circumstances. Consequently, one of the outcomes of satisfied employees presumably is the high level of OCB performances (Organ, 1988; Bateman & Organ, 1983).

Koys (2001) who used social exchange theory in his research has made an excellent conceptualization of the relationship between employee's attitude and behaviors at workplace. He noted that employee's attitudes itself could not influence organizational effectiveness, except when it goes under appropriate behaviors. Job performance is an important employee behavior in an organizational setting and organizational citizenship behavior is an aspect of job performance (Koys, 2001). Therefore, it can be summarized that positive attitude towards work (in terms of communication satisfaction) will produce organizational citizenship behavior (as an aspect of positive performance). Besides, OCB as an aspect of job performance will lead to organizational effectiveness (Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002). In fact, past research has consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between positive job attitudes and citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988).

In line of the relationship between attitudes and behavior, the result of Smith' (1997) study provide an explanation of this concept. Smith (1997) found that satisfaction was a stronger predictor of job attendance in a place with a severe winter storm than in a different place with pleasant weather. When the weather is very bad, absence is somewhat more justifiable than common. Then, attendance at work in a bad weather is more likely to be attributed to internal forces rather than external one. In other word, struggle to be present at work through bad weather represent more of a citizenship behavior and is more likely to be recognized and appreciated by the responsible officials. This statement is emphasizing on the relationship between internal factors (attitudes) and engaging in OCB since OCB typically tends to be originated from internal factors (positive attitudes) rather than external factors (Organ, 1988).

The term of human satisfaction in an organizational setting is covering a broad range of parameters and communication satisfaction could be categorized under this range of factors. Communication satisfaction refers to the total satisfaction that employees have with the communication process in their organization (Nakra, 2006). The communication comporment or the way that employees relate to each other has an essential role in an organization and undoubtedly, as Orpen (1997) noted, it is vital in the failure or success of any organization. Since, the transmission and reception of information play such an important role in an organizational life, effective communication ought to be related to employees' work attitudes (Schuler, 1979). Satisfaction, which is an attitude toward work condition, drives people to take some actions. Therefore, it can be summarized that communication procedure, if it is going well, will produce the sense of satisfaction and this sense of satisfaction motivates people to participate actively in the OCBs.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The researcher initially wanted to know actual challenges that have faced by the Iranian electrical manufacturing industry. Therefore, several interviews with experienced managers and supervisors who were working in the Iranian electrical manufacturing industry were conducted. The results of the interviews highlighted that the companies, which were practicing in the electrical industry, were successful and established compared to the other industries in Iran. Nevertheless, the interviews highlighted that the managers and supervisors complained about some facets of their organizational

performance. They agreed that “quantity” and “quality” of products were not satisfactory. In addition, they mentioned that the companies did not have sufficient amount of “competitive advantages” compared to foreign competitors in terms of employee performance. Furthermore, the managers and supervisors wished to enhance their “organizational effectiveness” since they believed that organizational effectiveness is seriously needed to be improved. The managers shared the same opinion that the industry has potentials to improve in producing better quality and quantity of end products, progress better competitive advantages, and lead to higher organizational performance.

The failures and weaknesses of quantity and quality of products, competitive advantages, and organizational effectiveness are the symptoms of a bigger dilemma behind them. To find out the reasons of these deficiencies and failures has persuaded the researcher to look closely at the related literatures and theories. The examined literatures proposed OCB, especially as the imperative variable that may contribute to these failures and weaknesses (for example, see Bolino & Turnley, 2003). Bolino and Turnley (2003) clearly mentioned that quantity and quality of products, competitive advantages, and organizational effectiveness are the outcomes of OCB in any organizations.

During the interview, the researcher mentioned to the managers and supervisors that their companies may be suffering from low OCB among employees. When clearly discussed and emphasized about the concept of OCB to them, the managers and supervisors then agreed with the researcher that OCB performance exist among their employees. They mentioned that some employees’ performance was over the expectation while mostly were performing lower than expectation. They further



emphasized that most of the employees did not contribute to the OCB of the companies. Usually, the employees would come to work at the allocated time and leave the working place when the working time was over and even some employees terminate the work before working hours was over. Therefore, by referring to the theory and literature, and also the outcomes of the interview we come to the conclusion that the problem is regarding to the OCB among employees in the companies. The low rate of OCB among Iranian Electrical Manufacturing employees may lead to the low satisfactory in quantity and quality of products, low competitive advantages, and low organizational effectiveness.

Literature strongly correlated a positive relationship between attitude and OCB (e.g. Koys 2001). Since the present study is conducted in Iran, referring back to the Iranian culture would provide useful information to find out what sort of attitude are important and vital in Iranian daily life. Interpersonal relationship and interaction exchange are very important and essential in Iranian daily life. However, most of the organizations in Iran do not have concern on this issue. Formal communication is the most valued method of communication in Iranian organizations while informal communication is being neglected (please refer to chapter 2). Considering the importance of communication in Iranian daily life, stimulate the researcher to look closely at the variables related to communication function in organizational setting that encourage performing in OCB.

However, in contrast with the large number of studies that concerning the relationships between job satisfaction (a positive attitude toward job) and OCB (e.g., Bateman & Organ, 1983; Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993; Motowidlo, Packard, &

Manning, 1986; Organ, 1988; Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983; Williams & Anderson, 1991), literature is in a short supply to support the relationship between communication satisfaction (as a positive attitude) and OCB. The proposition of this claim (relationship between communication satisfaction and OCB) originated from the logical relationship between attitude and behaviors (Koys, 2001). In brief, a person with positive attitude towards his or her organization will produce some behaviors in the favor of the organization. This state, as noted earlier, is originated from the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which says that people reciprocate when they are satisfied (Bolino, 1999; Organ, 1988). Thus, it can be argued that when people are satisfied with the communication manners in their organization, they will reciprocate it by engaging in OCBs. Therefore, one purpose of the present study is to fulfill the theoretical gap that exists in literature considering the relationship between communication satisfaction and employees' OCB.

To generate positive communication satisfaction (positive attitude), literature proposed communication as an inevitable dimension (Carriere & Bourque, 2009) which is a great predictor of communication satisfaction. Nevertheless, literature mostly suggests a general picture of communication and in other word, communication has not been broken down into different dimension (for example see, Carriere & Bourque, 2009; Goldhaber & Rogers, 1979). In the present study, communication has been broken down into formal, informal, and non-verbal communication to see which of these dimensions of communication has stronger predictability of communication satisfaction. This relationship would be another contribution of the present study to close the theoretical gap that by now exists in the literature.

Moreover, humor and laughter has been defined as a communication activity (Smith, Harrington, & Neck, 2000; Frew, 2006) that stimulate a positive frame of mind or positive attitude (McGhee, 2000). The importance of this variable in Iranian daily life is explained in Chapter 2. Considering the importance of this variable in Iranian culture, and the ability of this variable to create positive attitude (McGhee, 2000) and performance (Fisher, 2003), the present study is going to fill up the gap that already exist in the literature regarding the relationship between humor and communication satisfaction. Chapter 2 and 3 will provide explanatory justifications on this claim.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Present Study**

The main challenge of the present study is to shed light on the gap between communication satisfaction and OCB in Iranian workplaces. In addition, humor, which is considered as a feature of communication, and three dimensions of communication (formal, informal, and non-verbal) are considered as antecedents of communication satisfaction. The relationship between humor and communication satisfaction is another contribution of the present study to the literature.

In summary, the present study wants to explore the correlation between communication satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. At the next step, the present study is going to consider the relationship between communication cues and humor with communication satisfaction. Thus, to summarize, the objectives of the present study are:

1. To study the relationship between Iranian employees' communication dimensions with their communication satisfaction at the work place
2. To examine the relationship between Iranian employees' humor with their communication satisfaction at the work place, and
3. Finally, to assess the relationship of employees' communication satisfaction with their OCB.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

There are three main questions and three sub questions in the present study. The main questions and the sub questions are:

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between communication and communication satisfaction?
- 2- Is there a significant relationship between sense of humor and communication satisfaction?
- 3- Is there a significant relationship between communication satisfaction and OCB at the work places in Iran?

### **1.6 Significance of the Present Study**

The findings of the present study may contribute to the practical and theoretical perspective in organizational behavior context. From the theoretical perspective, the present study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, the present study

attempts to develop a new model based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Second, the present study is one of the earliest researches, which theorizes and tests on how employees' communication satisfaction affects their participation in OCB. Finally, the present research is probably the pioneer in exploring the effects of humor at work place and relates it to employees' communication satisfaction.

From the practical view, there is a potential contribution of the present research to highlight the connection of Iranian employees' engagement to OCBs by their level of communication satisfaction at workplaces. The present research may have evidence that Iranian employees need to have more "informal connection" and "humor" at their work places. In summary, if any tangible relationships among various communication dimensions (formal, informal, and non-verbal) and humor with communication satisfaction and also between communication satisfaction and OCB can be found in the subordinated organizations, we thus hopefully, may suggest some improvements of communications functions in the Iranian organizations. Later organizations can use to increase the quality of their communication policies.

## **1. 7 Definitions of Key Variables**

A few key words that are extensively used in the present study are:

**Organizational citizenship behavior:** Organ (1988, p. 4) defined OCB as a behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of an organization

**Communication satisfaction:** Communication satisfaction refers to the degree of satisfaction that an employee holds with the organization's total communication (Nakra, 2006).

**Formal communication:** Formal communication is a kind of communication that follows the formal structure or hierarchy of the organization (Guffy, Rhoddes, & Rogin, 2005, p. 22).

**Informal communication:** This kind of communication is usually based on social relationships in which individuals talk about work and other things, everywhere that they meet each other (Guffy, Rhoddes, & Rogin, 2005, p. 25).

**Non-verbal behavior:** Nonverbal communication contains all factors related to human communication, which are not communicated orally or in writing (Griffin & Moorhead, 2004, p. 225).

**Humor:** Humor is any communication (joke, witticism, pun, etc.) that result in laughter or amusement (Smith, Harrington, & Neck, 2000, p. 607).

## **1.8 Organization of Chapters**

There are six chapters in the present study. The beginning chapter presents a brief introduction on the research. It contains a background of the study, statement of the problem, research objective, research questions, definition of key variables, and significant of the study. Chapter 2 is going to present some information about Iran, where the present study is going to be carried out. Chapter 3 will review relevant theory and related literature from the previous studies and then will provide theoretical

framework and will be followed by pertinent hypotheses. Chapter 4 explains research methodology, sampling procedures, measurement instrument, and statistical analysis. In chapter 5 the surveys, finding, and analysis will be presented. Finally, in chapter 6, the concentration will be on discussion of the findings, limitations, suggestions and conclusion, for the future research.

## Chapter 2

### BACKGROUND OF IRAN

#### 2.1 General Information about Iran

Before going into depth of literature review of previous related publications of the issues, the researcher would like to introduce some general information regarding Iran and its people. This chapter serves as a background to the importance of the studying Iranian employees OCB, communication style, and humor at their work place.

Iran is a country with 1.6 million sq. km. (636 294 sq. mi.) with large desert and mountains ground and a semiarid climate that is subtropical along the Caspian coast. The capital city of this country is Tehran and some other important cities are Isfahan, Tabriz, Mashhad, and Shiraz. The people are called as Iranian(s) and almost two – thirds of Iranian people are of Iranian origin – their ancestors migrated from centered Asia (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5314.htm>).

This country has a population around 69 million with 0.86% of population growth rate (2005 estimation). The ethnic groups of this population are Persian (51%), Azari (25%), Gilaki and Mazandarani (8%), Kurd (7%), Arab (3%), Lur (2%), Balouch (2%), Torkmen (2%), and others (1%). The official religion is Islam with distribution of Shia Muslim (89%), Sunni Muslim (9%), Zoroastrian, Jews, Christian, and Bahai (2%). The official language is Persian which is used by (58%) of its population. Other important languages are Turkic and Turkic dialects (26%), Kurdish (9%), Luri (2%),



Balouchi (1%), Arabic (1%), Turkish (1%), and others (2%). (79.4%) of Iranian population is literate and the rate of infant mortality is 41.58 deaths/ 1000 live births. Around (30%) of work forces are distributed in agriculture section, 25% in industry, and (45%) in services (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5314.htm>).

With an area of (1,648,000 sq. kms), Iran is the second largest country in the Middle East and the sixteenth largest country in the world. The country enjoys some rich resources including oil, natural gas, lead, zinc, copper, iron coal, etc ([http://www.world\\_news.org/Persian/iran/tour/about\\_iran.htm#](http://www.world_news.org/Persian/iran/tour/about_iran.htm#)). Iran is situated at the heart of the Middle East and, as a bridge, links the Caspian Sea, the largest land-located body of water in the world, to the Persian Gulf. It is also a crossroad between the east and the west. Historically, Iran has been in the juncture of cultural, intellectual, and political manifestation of both the east and the west, while preserving its unique identity.

Unique landscape, such as limpid water springs, pomegranate orchards, pistachio gardens, rows of tall poplars, different kinds of nomads in different seasons, stelliferous nights, rocky mountains, endless high and low lands, dead snow-clad volcanoes, dense forests of the Alborz and Zagros Mountains Range, and coastlines of the Caspian sea, the Persian Gulf and the sea of Oman are all eye-catching and memorable (Zendehdel, 2001). In the winter, swimming and water skiing are possible in the warm waters of the Persian Gulf, and the same time winter sports, like skiing are possible in the northern and western mountains of the country, while one can enjoy the pleasant spring weather along the shores of the Caspian Sea, at the same time of the year. The high Alborz Mountains, sealing off the narrow Caspian strip, are covered with dense forests and

green vegetation, which have to be crossed when traveling to northern Iran (Zendehdel, 2001).

Iran is a country with an ancient background, the age of that is comparable to the age of history. Iran has a great civilization, the prestigious record of which is full with great thinkers and intellectuals. The ancient nation a major empire in its own right, has been overrun frequently and has had its territory altered through the centuries. Invaded by Arabs, Seljuk, Mongols, and others – and often caught up in the affairs of larger powers, Iran has always reasserted its national identity and has developed as a distinct political and cultural entity.

Geographically, because of located in the strategically determining region of the Middle East and having long coasts on the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea, Iran has a full dominance over the most important oil routes, that is the Hormoz strait ([http://www.world\\_news.org/Persian/iran/tour/about\\_iran.htm#](http://www.world_news.org/Persian/iran/tour/about_iran.htm#)). The 1979 Islamic revolution and the 1980–1988 war with Iraq transformed Iran's class structure politically, socially, and economically. In general, however, Iranian society remains divided into urban, market – town, village, and tribal groups.

## **2.2 The New Iran**

The Islamic revolution in 1979 had transformed Iranian wealth from the private sector to the state. The transfer involved huge confiscation and nationalization of properties. Therefore, the economy went under the control of the state institutions to run. Today, the government has realized the importance of privatization and is trying to privatize the

industry but there are still several problems to be overcome such as the lagging corruption with the public sector (and therefore, nationalized industries) and lack of competitiveness.

Another important issue in today's Iran is unemployment. Unemployment, a major problem even before the revolution, is created by the rapid population growth, the war with Iraq, and shortages of raw materials and well-trained and skilled managers (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5314.htm>). The population pyramid in Iran is literally referred to "time bomb" because the economy has one of the youngest populations in the world with approximately 40 per cent under 15 years of age. During the period 1996-2000 on average only 250,296 new jobs were created every year, whereas the rate of new job seekers entered the labor market over the same period, on average, was 692,750 (Valadkhani, 2004). During the years after revolution, the government has tried to reduce the rate of unemployment. After 1979 Islamic revolution, three development plans had been conducted that the main concern of the third Five-Year Development Plan (2000/01-2004/05) pertained to a growing rate of unemployment among youth (Valadkhani, 2004). Nevertheless, this problem seems to be unsolvable. It is almost the main complication of the country that affected the shape and combination of work forces. Because of the limitation in work opportunities, persons who are looking for jobs will get the first chance to work without considering the correspondence between job and themselves. They just accept whatever job they are offered to (<http://www.parstimes.com/news/archive/2004/rfe/unemployment-thrate.html>). However, their motivation and job satisfaction in work places, in a large scale, are affected by confirming between job and persons characteristics (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984)

People in Iran like other countries in Asia, have a high concern on interpersonal relationship. Social interaction between people in this country is very high. Interest of interchange of visit among friends and families is an element that can be seen in daily life activities. With a brief look at the background, traditions, and culture of this country, it is obvious that this characteristic (social interaction) plays an essential role in Iranian social life. Iranians are famous for their hospitality, compassions, and generosity. It is easily possible to visit Iranians homes, even being slightly acquainted with the families, and become familiar with their life style, attitudes, livelihood, and many of their characteristics (Zendehdel, 2001, p. 59).

These traditional characteristics have mixed well with Islam tenets. The religion of Islam has emphasized the values of interchange of visits and hospitality. With these characteristics, communication is very imperative, especially at the work places. Sadly, this “friendly” culture is not embedded in most of Iranian organizations. Employees are expected to be serious at work place and communication satisfaction would be left out of the work places. Informal communication among coworkers, which is very essential and vital, is neglected in the organizations. The word “neglected” means managers do not give attention on shaping and managing the informal communications in organizational setting. Since, these kinds of communication sometimes are not given attention thus, would damage organizational goal attainability.

### **2.3 Electrical Manufacturing Companies in Iran**

Undoubtedly, electrical energy has an underlying role on all activities in Iran. Appropriate use of this energy has a great effect on extension of the country's economy. The companies which actively participate in electrical manufacturing industry have focus on manufacturing different kind of products which contain a range of simple to complex products. Some kinds of these products are; low and medium voltage panels, low and medium voltage transformers, low, medium, and high voltage switchgears, protection relays and control equipments, cable, lights and so on (Abhari, 2002).

Electrical manufacturing industry in Iran is known as one of the most successful industry in Iran, which achieves one of the greatest growing rates among industries after the Islamic revolution in Iran (Abhari, 2002). In the Middle East region, Iran is one of the countries that have high capability in producing electrical instruments and devices (Abhari, 2002). Iran has performed well in manufacturing and constructing electrical instruments that encompasses a high rate of exporting of these products to other countries like European countries (Abhari, 2002). According to the report of Tavanir (2009), the average annual installed capacity of power plant increased was about 7.8% for last decades. Beside, average annual actual capacity of power plant increased for last decades was about 7.2% (Tavanir, 2009). Finally, according to Tavanir (2009) the average annual electrical consume increased was about 7.6%. All these facts show the growing rate of manufacturing electrical instrument in Iran. Therefore, the increase in installed capacity of power plant, electrical consumption and manufacturing electrical instrument are all reasons on amplifying and raising the activity of Electrical Manufacturing Industry in Iran.

As mentioned before, electrical manufacturing industry is one of the main businesses in Iran, which actively participate in the international business. This industry has been chosen as the population of the current research because of its international identity. The well-shaped structure, the maturity of the organizational culture and well-managed system, the huge number of employees, the high standard of quality system, the huge investment, and the great future ahead are some of the reasons that grab the researcher's desire to conduct the present study in this industry in Iran. These reasons also have been supported by Abhari (2002) who had conducted a research on the Iranian electrical manufacturing industry.

Considering the high rate of international trade of electrical manufacturing companies in Iran, and the fact that their products are exported to some parts of international market and other accomplishments of this industry in business, still there are some rooms for this industry to improve and perk up its performance. For instances, Abhari (2002) in his research showed that most of the electrical manufacturing companies in Iran are not using their full capacity in manufacturing. In addition, a few informal interviews with the managers and supervisors that the researcher had conducted illustrated that they were not satisfied with some aspects of organizational practices (for example OCB, as was discussed in the problem statement). All these evidences show that there are a few gaps and spaces, which should be filled in order to improve their organizational performance. These facts have caught the researcher's obligation and drove the researcher to carry out a research in this industry. The present research may contribute and reciprocate to the researcher's country and contributes to the development

of the Iranian electrical manufacturing industry, which is supposed to have a great future ahead.

Another issue that motivate researcher to carry out this research in electrical manufacturing industry is that this industry is mostly a private-based industry. Undoubtedly, private-based companies are more interested to learn from the result of scientific researches than governmental-based. Therefore, the result of the present research would have more potential to be used by the private-based industry compared to other industries.

#### **2.4 OCB, Communication Satisfaction and Humor among Iranian Employees**

The researchers working experience and a few interviews with some managers of different companies in Electrical Manufacturing Industry in Iran showed that the rate of OCB in Iranian workplace is low. In other words, the Iranian managers are not satisfied with the employees' participation in OCBs. Thus, the actual situation in the Iranian workplace has inspired the researcher and has created interest to run a research in this issue and try to find out a solution for this problem.

The assumption of the importance of implementation of OCB in Iranian companies originates from the relationship between culture-related variables and OCB. The relationship between culture-related variables and OCB has been hypothesized by some researchers. Moorman and Blakely (1995), for example, argued that individuals from collectivist cultures would exhibit higher levels of OCB than those from individualist cultures, based on the assumption that individuals in collectivist cultures