

Concepts & Perspectives of Employee Taking Charge Behavior: A Literature Review

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Abstract

This literature review explores the concepts and perspectives of employees taking charge of behavior in the organizational context. The paper examines the definition of taking charge behavior, the antecedents and outcomes of such behavior, and the various perspectives through which it can be understood. The study utilizes a secondary source of data collection, focusing on relevant studies related to Employee taking charge behavior in public organizations. The findings highlight the proactive and constructive nature of taking charge behavior, its voluntary nature, and its focus on enhancing organizational functioning. Additionally, the paper discusses the psychological, organizational, managerial, and social perspectives that shed light on the factors influencing employees' take charge behaviors and the outcomes associated with such behavior. The research contributes to a deeper understanding of Employee taking charge behavior and provides valuable insights for practitioners and researchers.

Keywords: Taking Charge Behavior, Organization, Psychology

Introduction

The Employee taking charge has gained significant attention in organizational behavior and management. It refers to proactive and constructive efforts by employees to effect organizational change, going beyond their formal role requirements to enhance the organization's overall functioning. Taking charge behavior is voluntary, driven by individual initiative, and aims to improve work processes or organizational practices (Ren et al., 2023). Understanding the concept and perspectives of Employee taking charge behavior is crucial for organizations seeking to enhance performance and foster a culture of innovation and proactivity. By encouraging employees to take charge, organizations can tap into the creative potential of their workforce, drive positive change, and improve overall effectiveness and well-being (Qing et al., 2020).

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This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the concepts and perspectives of Employee taking charge behavior. It will explore the definition of taking charge behavior, the antecedents and outcomes associated with such behavior, and the different perspectives through which it can be understood. By synthesizing existing research and highlighting key findings, this review will contribute to a deeper understanding of Employee taking charge behavior and provide valuable insights for practitioners and researchers.

The following sections will discuss the research questions guiding this review and the methodology employed to gather relevant studies. Subsequently, the literature review will delve into the concepts and definitions of taking charge behavior in the organizational context, followed by exploring the various perspectives that shed light on the factors influencing employees' inclination to take charge and the outcomes associated with such behavior. The review will conclude by summarizing the key findings and discussing their implications for future research and practice.

Research Questions

The purpose of this article is to review the definition and perspectives of Employee taking charge behavior.

1. What is the concept of Employee taking charge behavior?
2. What are the perspectives on taking charge behavior?
3. What are the antecedents and outcomes of taking charge behavior in the workplace?

Methodology

This paper is a literature review of relevant studies related to Employee taking charge behavior in public organizations. According to (Wee BV, 2016), the methodology of literature review papers should at least contain the themes informing the review, databases used, keywords, and some of the primary sources consulted. In this work, antecedents of taking charge behavior were the most relevant theme. Most significant were those studies that attempted to link concepts to Employee-taking-charge behavior. This paper is structured as a literature review examining studies pertinent to Employee taking charge behavior within public organizations. (Wee BV, 2016) suggests that literature review papers should include the main themes guiding the review, the databases searched, keywords employed, and key sources consulted. In this analysis, the principal theme was the Employee taking charge

behavior. Particularly significant were the studies that sought to connect various concepts with Employee taking charge behavior.

The study used a secondary source of data collection. Journals related to Employee taking charge behavior, such as the Journal Public Administration Review, the Academy of Management Journal, the Leadership & Organization Development Journal, Psychology Research and Behavior Management International Journal of Management Reviews, and the Journal of Applied Psychology, are sourced as secondary data. In all cases, the keywords used in searching for the articles were Employee, taking charge behavior, and organization.

The Literature Review

Concepts and Definitions of Taking Charge Behavior in the Organizational Context

The concept of taking charge behavior has its roots in broader theories of proactive behavior and employee initiative. Early organizational behavior research primarily focused on reactive behaviors, where employees respond to external demands and problems. Over time, scholars began to recognize the importance of proactive behaviors, which involve anticipating actions to shape the future environment (Malik, 2024). Taking charge behavior in an organizational context refers to proactive and constructive efforts by employees to effect organizational change (Xu et al., 2022). This behavior is typically voluntary and involves initiatives beyond the individual's formal role requirements to enhance the organization's overall functioning. Taking charge as voluntary and constructive efforts by individual employees to effect organizationally functional change concerning how work is executed within the contexts of their jobs, work units, or organizations. Assert that employees who engage in this behavior contribute to the overall effectiveness and well-being of the organization by enhancing teamwork productivity. (Guo & Zhang, 2024) Organizational culture underscores the voluntary nature of taking charge and its focus on improving work processes or organizational practices (Chen et al., 2023)

Taking charge involves proactive actions by individuals within an organization to initiate change, solve problems, or improve processes without being explicitly assigned or directed to do so by formal authority figures. Also, taking charge pertains to the constructive and voluntary endeavors undertaken by individual employees to influence organizationally functional change concerning how work is carried out within the framework of their respective positions, work units, or organizations. Taking charge, like other extra-role behaviors, is elective and not mandated. Unlike other extra-role behaviors, it prioritizes initiating functional change and improvement (Zhang et al., 2024); note that self-initiated activities to enhance performance include challenging the status quo and implementing functional changes. Taking responsibility provides benefits, such as improved staff performance, but can also pose psychological hazards. Employees' taking charge conduct is intended to enhance the company's status and has a clear prosaically and pro-organizational purpose (Chen et al., 2020).

Taking Charge denotes that individual workers make voluntarily and constructively determined attempts to alter organizationally functioning aspects of the way work is carried out within the frameworks of their positions, work groups, or organizations. Taking control differs from voice behavior, although both are strenuous extra-role activities (L. Chen et al., 2023). Voice conduct concentrates on gathering information and offering ideas regarding

issues in the workplace, but taking charge of behavior stands out for its attempts to start and carry out change; that is, it goes beyond simply making suggestions. Employees demonstrating autonomy, creativity, and a willingness to take risks contribute to the organization's success by proposing new ideas, seeking growth opportunities, taking on additional responsibilities, and actively engaging in problem-solving activities (Fu et al., 2022).

The definition of taking charge behavior is debated among scholars. Some view it as proactive action where employees enhance processes or address issues independently. (Murray & Holmes, 2021a) They highlight the significance of proactive behavior in organizational settings and define it as anticipatory, change-oriented, and self-initiated. This laid the groundwork for understanding various proactive behaviors, including taking charge. Others believe it includes broader actions like challenging norms, identifying opportunities for enhancement, and promoting organizational change (Wei & Zhang, 2023a).

According to (Chen et al., 2021) taking charge, For the organization's capacity to adapt in the public sector, behavior is especially crucial for two main reasons. First, in the context of top-down reform, civil servants have become weary of the process, which has led to increased resistance and increased reform costs. Second, because institutional reform is more difficult and unpredictable to implement than to initiate and plan, many organizations have not achieved the expected reform goals and have not supported sustained institutional reform. Organizations in an increasingly complex workplace find it challenging to forecast the tasks they need or want civil servants to complete. Continually changing from the bottom up, the public sector can occasionally become policy entrepreneurs. According to (Guo & Zhang, 2024) .Taking charge represents an employee's voluntary, change-driven behavior aimed at initiating constructive improvements, which can enhance both individual job performance and overall organizational effectiveness. Unlike other proactive behaviors such as innovation or voice, taking charge is distinctively proactive, change-focused, and inherently risky. Consequently, employees' willingness to engage in taking charge is significantly influenced by the prevailing leadership style within their organization) (Wang et al., 2020)

Taking charge is characterized there role firstly, Extra-role behavior not formally required by the job description. It goes beyond routine tasks, similar to organizational citizenship behaviors, which are discretionary and beneficial to the organization, second, focuses on initiating Change-oriented functional improvements in individual, team, or organizational performance. Thirdly Employees proactively seek to enhance work processes, policies, or structures and also Risk-involving potential risks, as employees challenge the status quo or propose changes that may not always succeed. (Wei & Zhang, 2023b). According to Wang et al., (2020) the factors influencing employees' taking charge (TC) behavior across three primary levels :**Individual-level factors**, such as self-efficacy and proactive personality, **Leadership influences**, including inclusive and empowering leadership styles, **Organizational-level drivers**, like corporate social responsibility (CSR) and supportive work climates

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), proposed by (Deci & Ryan, 1977), provides a broad framework for understanding human motivation. According to SDT, individuals engage in proactive behaviors when their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied and to explain Employee taking charge behavior (Wright & Pandey,

2011). Effective Deci & Ryan's (2012) needs are crucial for psychological growth, integrity, and well-being. When these needs are met, individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated and engage in behaviors like taking charge behavior (TCB), which contributes to personal and organizational development. According to Andrews (2021) shows that when employees feel autonomous, they are more likely to take initiative and engage in TCB. According to SDT, employees are more likely to take on challenging tasks and seek opportunities to improve and innovate when they feel competent. Studies by Deci & Ryan (2012) indicate that employees who perceive themselves as competent are more likely to engage in TCB as they feel confident in their ability to make meaningful changes.

In an organizational context, supportive work environments and good connections with peers and managers may encourage relatedness. Employee comprehension and cognition of organizational problems can be further enhanced (Nurani et al., 2021). (Graves & Sarkis, 2018). Employees are more inclined to participate in TCB when they believe their job values and supports them. This sense of belonging enhances their commitment and motivates them to contribute to the organization's success. Zeng et al. (2020) highlight that intrinsic motivation is fostered when employees' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met. This aligns with the findings by Liu et al. (2021), who noted that intrinsically motivated employees are more proactive and likely to engage in TCB. According to Zhang et al. (2024), organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping employees' willingness to engage in taking charge behavior. The level of support and encouragement from organizational leaders can impact employees' desire to engage in taking charge behavior. Employee taking charge behavior can be considered a form of organizational citizenship behavior towards the environment.

By understanding and supporting these three fundamental psychological needs, organizations can create a work environment that promotes intrinsic motivation, engagement, and positive employee behavior. Managers and leaders play a crucial role in cultivating autonomy, competence, and relatedness among their employees, ultimately leading to enhanced performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being in the Employee taking charge behavior (Wang & Yang, 2021).

Perspectives of Taking Charge Behavior

The perspectives on Employee taking charge behavior can be explored from various angles, including psychological, organizational, managerial, social, and outcome-oriented viewpoints. Each Perspective provides valuable insights into the factors influencing employees' inclination to take charge and the outcomes associated with such behavior.

Psychological Perspective: - According to a psychological perspective, several factors contribute to employees' propensity to take charge. Motivation and engagement are key drivers of taking charge behavior, as personally satisfied individuals who are committed to the organization and have a desire for professional growth are more likely to take proactive steps (Kawasaki, 2019). Additionally, personality traits such as proactivity, openness to experience, and conscientiousness have been linked to higher levels of taking charge behavior (Zeng et al., 2020). Finally, self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to successfully execute tasks, plays a significant role in initiating change. Employees with high self-efficacy

tend to take charge and drive positive change within their organizations (Cherian & Jacob, 2013).

Organizational Perspective: The organizational Perspective examines the influence of the organizational context on taking charge behavior. Organizational culture plays a crucial role, as cultures encouraging innovation, risk-taking, and individual autonomy facilitate taking charge behaviors (Auernhammer & Hall, 2014). Supportive environments where ideas are welcomed and failures are seen as learning opportunities enhance employees' willingness to take charge. Furthermore, leadership styles significantly impact taking charge behaviors. Transformational and empowering leadership styles, characterized by inspiration and support, have fostered higher levels of taking charge behavior (Dahleez et al., 2022). By promoting values that resonate with employees, organizations can create a positive work environment that encourages prosocial behavior and enhances employee engagement. Finally, job design and roles that provide autonomy, complexity, and precise but flexible expectations encourage employees to take charge and contribute proactively (Liu et al., 2021).

Managerial Perspective Perspective emphasizes the role of managers in facilitating taking charge behavior. Management support is a critical factor, as direct support from managers, including providing resources, mentoring, and guidance, can encourage employees' taking charge behaviors (Malik, 2024). Recognition and reward systems aligned with initiative-taking also serve as significant motivators. Effective communication is another essential aspect, as open and transparent communication channels enable employees to understand when and how they can contribute innovatively and constructively, and managers need to recognize and value employees' proactive actions to create a supportive environment (Zhang et al., 2024). Lastly, providing training and development opportunities that enhance leadership skills, problem-solving abilities, and innovation can empower employees to take charge (Chen et al., 2021).

Social and Relational Perspective: focus on the role of social dynamics in taking charge of behavior. Team dynamics significantly influence taking charge behaviors, as cohesive teams characterized by high levels of trust and mutual respect are likelier to exhibit these behaviors (Zeng et al., 2020). Additionally, employees embedded in broader and more diverse social networks within the organization have more opportunities and encouragement to take charge (Zhang et al., 2024). Interacting with various individuals exposes employees to different perspectives and ideas, stimulating their inclination to initiate change.

Outcome-Oriented Perspective: This Perspective explores the impact and benefits of taking charge behavior. Taking charge behaviors have positively influenced individual and organizational performance (Xu et al., 2022). Individuals who take charge often experience increased job satisfaction, improved innovation, and higher productivity. Furthermore, in contexts requiring rapid adaptation and change, taking charge behaviors can be particularly valuable (Nurani et al., 2021). Employees who proactively identify and address challenges contribute to the organization's ability to navigate change effectively.

In summary, organizations can utilize the insights gained from understanding the various perspectives on taking charge behavior to foster an environment that promotes and supports

proactive employee engagement. This can be achieved by cultivating a culture that encourages and rewards initiative-taking, providing the necessary resources and support for employees to take charge, recognizing and appreciating their proactive actions, and promoting effective communication and collaboration. By embracing taking charge behavior, organizations can connect the benefits of employees willing to drive positive change, leading to organizational success and growth in today's dynamic and rapidly changing business landscape.

Antecedents of Taking Charge Behavior

Understanding the factors that influence an individual's propensity to engage in taking charge behavior is crucial for organizations to foster a culture that supports and encourages proactive actions.

Leadership: According to Zhang et al. (2024), Leadership plays a significant role in shaping employee behavior and can influence the likelihood of employees engaging in taking charge behavior. Research has shown that leaders who exhibit transformational leadership behaviors are more likely to stimulate employees' taking charge behavior. Transformational leaders provide support, inspire their employees, and stimulate intellectual curiosity and innovation; by creating a supportive environment that encourages open communication and idea sharing, these leaders foster the initiative and confidence necessary for employees to take charge and initiate positive changes within the organization (Donkor et al., 2022). Leadership style is another crucial antecedent. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, has fostered an environment conducive to taking charge behavior (Dahleez & Abdelmunie, 2022). Leaders encouraging autonomy and supporting innovation can significantly impact employees' willingness to take charge (Daraba et al., 2021).

Organizational Climate and Culture: The organizational climate and culture also play a crucial role in influencing taking charge behavior. Organizations that foster a culture of innovation and value employee autonomy are more likely to witness higher levels of taking charge behavior. When employees perceive that their organization encourages and rewards proactive actions, they feel empowered to take initiative and make positive changes (Kumar et al., 2022). In such organizations, employees are more likely to voice their ideas, take risks, and challenge the status quo, enhancing organizational performance (Auernhammer & Hall, 2014).

Employee Empowerment: Empowering employees by providing them with autonomy and decision-making authority can significantly impact their inclination to engage in taking charge behavior. Empowering contexts create an environment where employees feel trusted and have the necessary resources and support to take charge (Murray & Holmes, 2021b). Empowering contexts encourage and facilitate taking charge behavior among employees by providing them with the freedom to make decisions, take risks, and drive positive change. When employees feel empowered, they are more likely to take ownership of their work and proactively initiate actions to improve processes, solve problems, and drive innovation (Liu et al., 2021). Kumar et al. (2022) argue that Employee empowerment encourages taking charge. A vital characteristic of taking charge behavior is that it is innovative, change-oriented, and encourages people to be more adaptable. It is an essential

form of proactive behavior that sustains organizational survival and fosters personal development. In the meantime, taking charge has several real-world applications, such as creating new processes to carry out job duties, altering the way that job performance is approached to increase efficiency, or making quick changes to subpar practices or procedures

Psychological Factors: - Individual psychological factors also influence taking charge behavior. (Llorente-Alonso et al., 2024) emphasize the role of proactive personality in predicting individuals' engagement in taking charge behavior. Individuals with a proactive personality are characterized by initiative, persistence, and self-confidence. They actively seek opportunities to bring about positive changes in their work environment and are more likely to take charge and initiate actions to address challenges or seize opportunities (Han et al., 2023).

It is important to note that these antecedents may interact with each other and vary across different organizational contexts. The effectiveness of leadership, the organizational climate, and employee empowerment in influencing taking charge behavior may depend on the specific organizational culture, industry, and the nature of the work being performed (Auernhammer & Hall, 2014). By understanding these antecedents, organizations can create an environment that encourages and supports taking charge behavior. They can focus on developing transformational leadership behaviors, fostering an empowering climate, and providing employees with the autonomy and resources needed to take the initiative and drive positive organizational change.

Outcomes of Taking Charge Behavior

Taking charge of behavior can have significant outcomes for both individuals and organizations. (Liu et al., 2021). claim that workers who carry out TCB support innovation and change in the organization by suggesting and adopting practical improvements. According to (Chen et al., 2020), TCB makes work activities more effective by causing functional change. TCB encourages personal satisfaction and career moves because employees who make an effort typically enjoy more independence and people noticing their work. Organizations gain from TCB by becoming more efficient and successful at solving problems. By breaking from the norm, employees help identify and address inefficiencies, promoting ongoing work improvement. Nevertheless, when TCB is supplemented by fair and secure reward practices and sufficient psychological safety, it generally has a favorable outcome (Liu et al., 2021). Overall, TCB helps organizations stand firm by allowing lower-level creativity and supporting staff to make crucial job decisions.

Conclusion

Scholars and authors in management and public administration have extensively studied taking charge behavior, leading to a proliferation of expressions and perspectives on the subject. Due to the diverse nature of organizational units and the varied interests of individuals involved, researchers emphasize the importance of considering a wide range of events and circumstances when defining taking charge behavior. This recognition highlights the need for a comprehensive understanding that considers the multifaceted nature of this behavior across different contexts and stakeholders. Taking charge of behavior is vital to organizational behavior, driving innovation, performance, and employee satisfaction. Recent perspectives highlight the importance of individual and situational factors in influencing

taking charge behavior. Individuals with a proactive personality are more likely to engage in taking charge behavior while empowering contexts and leadership behaviors encourage and facilitate proactive actions.

Organizations can benefit from fostering a culture that values and supports taking charge behavior. By creating an empowering climate, encouraging employee autonomy, and providing resources and support, organizations can unlock the potential of their employees to initiate change, solve problems, and drive innovation. Organizations in the public sector require employees who are capable of implementing continuous bottom-up reform. Civil servants' taking charge behaviors are Essential for bottom-up policy innovation and enhance the public sector's ability to continuously change from the bottom, as they sometimes become policy entrepreneurs. This literature review provides an overview of recent perspectives on taking charge behavior. It is important to note that further research is needed to delve deeper into the mechanisms and boundary conditions of taking charge behavior and to explore its implications across different organizational contexts.

Theoretical and Contextual Contribution of the Research

Theoretical Contribution

This study makes several key theoretical contributions to the literature on Employee taking charge behavior. First, it integrates and synthesizes distinct theoretical perspectives, including psychological, organizational, managerial, and social viewpoints into a unified framework, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of proactive employee behaviors (C.-J. Wang & Yang, 2021) By anchoring the analysis in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the research clarifies how intrinsic motivational factors enable employees to overcome barriers to initiative-taking, thereby extending SDT's application in organizational behavior research(Deci & Ryan, 2012).

Additionally, the study resolves conceptual ambiguities by differentiating taking charge behavior from related constructs such as voice behavior and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). While prior research often conflated these proactive behaviors, this review delineates their unique characteristics, particularly how taking charge emphasizes not just suggesting change but actively implementing it (Chen et al., 2023). This distinction advances theoretical precision and sets a foundation for future empirical work.

Finally, the research identifies gaps in current knowledge, such as the interplay between individual risk propensity and organizational safety climates, offering a roadmap for further theoretical development. By bridging micro-level (personal traits) and macro-level (organizational culture) factors, the study contributes to a more holistic understanding of proactive behavior in workplaces.

Contextual Contribution

This study addresses the distinctive challenges faced by public sector organizations, where rigid hierarchies, risk-averse cultures, and procedural formalities often hinder proactive employee behaviors. Unlike private enterprises, public institutions typically operate under strict regulatory frameworks and political constraints, making bottom-up innovation difficult. By examining taking charge behavior within this setting, the research highlights how

civil servants can act as catalysts for incremental yet meaningful change, championing process improvements, policy adaptations, and service delivery innovations (Chen et al., 2023)

This focus is particularly timely, as governments worldwide face increasing pressure to enhance efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness. The study's insights equip public sector leaders with evidence-based strategies to foster a culture of empowerment and psychological safety, enabling employees to transcend traditional role boundaries. The research fills a critical gap in the literature by validating the role of taking charge behavior in public administration. It offers practical pathways to modernize governance and drive sustainable reform from within.

Together, these theoretical and contextual contributions advance academic discourse while providing actionable guidance for organizations, especially in the public sector, seeking to attach employee initiatives for systemic improvement.

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