Investigation of Simultaneous Occurrence of Citizenship and Dysfunctional Behaviours within an Educational Context

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Abstract

Student Citizenship and dysfunctional behaviour impact the performance of higher educational institutions. Furthermore, some students can display both behaviours due to various antecedents. There has been some debate on the occurrence of both behaviours from same individuals within a business context. However, this phenomenon has not been investigated within Pakistani higher educational context. The objective of this research is to investigate these behaviours through accounts of students who are experiencing the behaviours withy in Pakistani higher educational context. Qualitative approach was used by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews to capture in-depth experiences of students related to SCB and SDB The findings of the study suggest that students may exhibit both behaviours simultaneously under same and different stimulus. Furthermore, these behaviours are influenced by rewards and justice perception of the students.

Keywords: *Citizenship Behaviour, Dysfunctional Behaviour, Phenomenology, Social Exchange Theory, Qualitative.*

Introduction

OCBs can be defined as "an individual's behaviours that in the aggregate aids organizational effectiveness, but that is neither a requirement of the individual's job nor directly rewarded by the formal system" (Organ, 1988:101). While Harris and Reynolds (2003) define dysfunctional behaviour as 'an action by customers [students] who intentionally or unintentionally, overtly or covertly, act in a manner that, in some way, disrupts otherwise functional service encounters" (2003:144).

While good student citizenship behaviour (SCB) is considered vital for academic success, future employability and society in general (Allison *et al*., 2001; Hwa & Ramayah, 2010; Ueda & Nojima, 2012), student dysfunctional behaviour (SDB) is recognised as being responsible for poor academic environments, which negatively impact on other students, the academic and non-academic staff, and thus the academic institution as a whole (Feldmann, 2001; Hirschy & Braxton, 2004; Kearney *et al*., 2006; Johnson-Bailey, 2014)

Dysfunctional behaviour and citizenship behaviour are often considered as being opposite and negatively proportional to each other (Fox *et al*., 2012), and it is advocated that a person who is involved in displaying citizenship behaviour will not display dysfunctional behaviour (Hafidz *et al*., 2012). However, Dalal

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(2005), in his meta-analysis, objected to the strong negative relationship between dysfunctional and citizenship behaviour, with Spector and Fox (2010) arguing that one individual may show both types of behaviour in a particularly given context. To examine the positive relationship between dysfunctional and citizenship behaviour, Fox *et al.* (2012) collected data from students with work experience and, based on this data, claimed that:

> "…behaviours can occur for a variety of reasons, and the same individual might engage in an act of OCB in response to one situation and CWB (counter-productive work behaviour) in response to another, or both OCB and CWB in response to the same situation" (Fox *et al.*, 2012:216). The objective of this paper to investigate link between these two behaviours within higher educational context

Literature Review

Hafidz *et al.* (2012) conducted a study to ascertain the relationship between citizenship behaviour and other negative types of behaviour. They gathered data from students with work experience, reporting that the same students could be seen to show both negative and positive behaviours at the same time. Oshin and s Seema (2018) conducted a study to understand the moderating role of emotional intelligence on organisational citizenship and counterproductive behaviours by collecting from 110 participants. Researchers confirm the moderating role of emotional intelligence on OCB and CWB. In addition, Ike,Ezeh and Etodike (2017) revealed that participation in decision-making has a positive relationship with citizenship behaviour and has a negative relationship with counterproductive work behaviour.

To summarise, this evidence collectively suggests that along with citizenship behaviour, people can also show dysfunctional behaviour Simultaneously due to a variety of reasons.

The Theory of Social Exchange

In a decision-making process, people select the option that suits them best. Likewise, student*s* have to consider the potential costs and benefits when they decide to become involved in citizenship behaviour and/or dysfunctional behaviour. To understand SCB, I decided to adopt SET as a suitable theoretical framework. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005:874) note that "Social Exchange Theory is among the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace behaviour" and it has been used to understand an individual's relationship with the organisation, colleagues and managers (Tekleab *et al.*, 2005). Various researchers have adopted and/or adapted SET to explain pro-social behaviour and/or counter-productive work behaviour (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007). SET has also been used to understand concepts such as social power (Molm *et al.*, 1999), networks (Cook *et al.*, 1993), organisational justice (Konovsky, 2000) and psychological contracts (Rousseau, 1995).

Homans states that "exchange theory is based on the premise that human behaviour or social interaction is an exchange of activity, tangible and intangible" (1961:212-213) and consists "particularly of rewards and costs" (ibid.:317-318).

However, Blau (1994) articulates that SET neither depends entirely upon economic terms of exchange nor on pure emotions (love); rather, it takes a middle approach. Blau states that in the social exchange process, the nature and level of future rewards are not specified, as in economic exchange. In addition, in social exchange, the people involved are in the exchange process for longer (Cook, 2000). Homans (1961; 1974) provides five basic propositions about human behaviour during the social exchange process.

1. If a person is rewarded for a particular action, then that person will repeat that action (success proposition).

2. If a person has been rewarded in the past for a particular action in a particular situation and due to a particular stimulus, then it is a possibility that the person will become involved in the same action if under the same kind of stimulus (stimulus proposition).
3. The more that a person has been rewarded for a specific action in the near past, the less he will act for that reward (deprivation-satiation proposition).
4. If the result of an action is more valuable to a person, then he will do more of that action (value proposition).
5. A person will choose an action from those alternatives whose results have more value for him (rationality proposition).

However, Perugini et al. draw our attention to individual difference and reciprocated behaviour:

"On closer inspection, however, this assumption becomes more problematic. First, it is not obvious that everybody would reciprocate in several circumstances. Are there different propensities to reciprocate in different individuals? If so, is there any personality dimension that can explain and consistently predict these differences? Would this personality dimension be an overall factor or composed of different aspects?" (2003:251).

Perugini et al. (2003) developed the Personal Norm of Reciprocity scale and tested it in two different cultures (British and Italian). They report that positive reciprocity and negative reciprocity behave in different manners due to individual difference. In addition, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) note that people could reciprocate due to folk (folklore) beliefs. Shore and Coyle-Shapiro (2003) also point out that reciprocity could be the result of the cultural norms of the particular culture, and thus they depend on the personal orientation of the actor (Perugini et al., 2003).

"There are three types of incentives that govern the behaviour of individuals in society: (i) private rewards such as wages and profits, (ii) social rewards such as prestige and status, (iii) rules and laws that enforce a certain type of behaviour and penalize deviations" (Fershtman & Weiss, 1998:53).

Love, status, power, information, service, goods and money have been identified as potential mediums of exchange in the exchange relationship (Foa & Foa, 1980). The value of intangible resources depends on the source (for example, the value of love depends on the source person, while the value of money is source-free). During the social exchange process, rewards also depend on elements of power.

"…broadly defined, power refers to all kinds of influence between persons or groups, including those exercised in exchange transactions, where one induces others to accede to his wishes by rewarding them for doing so" (Blau, 1964:115-116).

The preceding discussion reveals the significance of SET to understand human behaviour at the micro-level. In this study, students and their actions are the units of analysis. Because of all that has been mentioned so far, SET is a reliable tool by which to understand the dynamics of SCB and SDB.

Research (e.g., Allison *et al*., 2001; Chen & Carey, 2009; Zettler, 2011) suggests that when in an academic setting, students will participate in various positive types of behaviour that contribute to the academic development of their classmates and benefit the academic institution as a whole. Furthermore, evidence from other research (e.g., Burgess *et al*., 2004; Mardhiah, 2010) has outlined the role of reward in student motivation.

Similarly, other research studies (e.g., Alexander *et al*., 2009; Goodboy, 2011; Sprunk *et al*., 2014) reveal that student dysfunctional behaviour can take various forms. It can be directed toward individuals and organisations, representing the interactions of students with their surroundings. Several researchers (e.g., Hirschy & Braxton, 2004; Swinney *et al*., 2010; Bolkan & Goodboy, 2013) have studied the various

elements governing SDB. It would be interesting to explore the link between SCB and SDB within the context of Pakistani higher education.

Aim of Research

Aim of this research is to understand the concurrent existence of citizenship behaviour and dysfunctional behaviours

Objective of research

- To understand citizenship behaviour of students who show dysfunctional behaviour.
- To understand the dysfunctional behaviours of students who show citizenship behaviour.

Research Questions

- Do students involve in citizenship and dysfunctional behaviour simultaneously?
- Why students involve citizenship and dysfunctional behaviour Simultaneously?

Research Methodology

The ontological and epistemological positions guide the researcher to choose between using a qualitative or quantitative methodology. Quantitative research prefers numeracy in the data collection and data analysis, employing the deductive approach to test the theory (Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, it adopts the norms of science to maintain objectivity. The research design is structured and formal, aiming to develop generalisations (Matthews and Ross, 2010).

In a quantitative study, the purpose of the literature review is to develop the hypothesis. The quantitative researcher gathers data in an unnatural setting (Corbetta, 2003). However, in quantitative research, it is difficult to develop variables that cover all of the aspects under study (Yin, 2011). Obtaining an adequate response rate from the sample is also a problematic issue in quantitative research. The continuing debate between quantitative and qualitative research does not aim to label one particular approach as superior (Silverman (2005). The researcher should decide which research approach or approaches (quantitative, qualitative, or a mixture of both) serves him/her best to understand the phenomena under study.

It was decided that the qualitative approach was the most appropriate tool to understand research questions. In this study, followed the advice of Yin (2011), who suggests that if you want to understand phenomena in the natural setting and through people's experiences, you need to select a qualitative approach.

Research Methods

Qualitative research assists researchers to explore phenomena in-depth within a particular setting. Five small size focused groups and twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand and capture students experience about citizenship and dysfunctional events.

Sample Size

Five small size focus group and 20 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to achieve saturation level of themes.

Sampling Strategy

Participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Furthermore, all participants were current senior students of both genders of different years of public sector higher educational institution.

Before the commencement of the field research, all necessary approvals were taken. Focus groups were conducted initially to capture a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Besides, the focus group assists to prepare an interview guide. Furthermore, nominations for the participants of the semi-structured in-depth interviews were requested at the end of each focused groups from the participants. Afterwards, twenty semi-structured in-depth interviews were arranged on neutral places to avoid any influence. All focused groups and semi-structured in-depth interviews were audio-recorded and translated into English for data analysis purpose. The average time of focus groups and interviews were sixty minutes.

Data Analysis

Firstly, to familiarise with data, transcripts were read recurrently. Secondly, citizenship and dysfunctional incidents were highlighted particularly of the same participants. Furthermore, accounts of participants were divided into categories of citizenship and dysfunctional behaviours. By adopting the deductive and inductive analysis approaches initial themes were identified. Later, through focused coding data was re-organised into super themes and sub-themes.

Findings

In the coming section, we have cited various accounts of the same student that may reflect both behaviours of the students within Pakistani higher educational context**.**

In the following extracts research participant, Mr Dodo highlights the need for information sharing is the class size. In the business faculty, the average class size is more than one hundred students. One respondent described this situation *as:*

> *"Due to the large student population in the classes, it is not possible for teachers to communicate with all students at once. My teacher usually asks me to share information, like assignment topics and submission dates, and distribute subject notes among students"* (Mr Dodo, interviewee).

> *"When I was coming to this university, my father advised me, "Son always show respect to your elders and love to your co-students". He further advised that "remember you are our family's representative on the campus, people will judge us by your actions". Now I always act in a way that could positively contribute to my fellow students, teachers and the institution"* (Mr Dodo, interviewee).

While interviewee Mr Dodo has shown citizenship behaviours, meanwhile he favoured self- granted leaves. Self-granted leave is a phenomenon within UOSJP whereby students jointly decide to take unofficial leave from the university, which can range from one to two weeks. During this period of self-granted leave, no student is allowed to attend classes. One respondent justified this action, saying that:

> *"In the hostel, we get half-cooked food, there is no control of food quality. Believe me, one cannot regularly take hostel food for a month and it is necessary to visit home to keep our health in control"* (Mr Dodo, interviewee).

Similarly, Mr Dodo has shown reservation over the attitude of the staff.

"Students' bad behaviour is due to the staff. When you visit the staff, they straight away say 'no' or they ask you to visit them again, and then the student becomes hyper and misbehaves with the staff. When I applied for the internship letter for one organisation, the clerk threw my application away. Naturally, one cannot tolerate such behaviour" (Mr Dodo, interviewee).

In the next extract interviewee, Miss Marvi has participated in the charity within the university. Charity actions are one type of student supporting behaviour by which they help to support staff. An Interviewee said that:

"I was part of the students' 'Go Green' campaign. In that campaign, we did significant advocacies to develop awareness among students about climate change. We also organised tree planting, in which students, staff and teachers planted a tree/plant, as a part of the 'Go Green' campaign" (Miss Marvi, interviewee).

Likewise, Miss. Marvi has exhibited citizenship behaviour cum dysfunctional behaviour through -silent voice. The silent voice is one type of voice-related SCB. In this behaviour, whenever students were not satisfied with a situation or event, they would discontinue their participation or input in that activity or event. One respondent explained that

"Actions speak louder than words. One faculty member always expressed his view openly about the status of the class. According to him, we are very incompetent, lazy and we do not have any future. That ill behaviour of the teacher developed retaliation among us, and we ignored him throughout the semester by not participating in the class" (Miss Marvi, interviewee).

Similarly, Mr Shah indicated that a lack of computer and library skills is a major problem with the more junior students. One respondent revealed that:

"The majority of the students come to this institution from the countryside and have little knowledge of computers and computer packages such as Microsoft and Internet services. There is no introduction to computer subjects in the first year syllabus, so I also sometimes teach computer skills to students" (Mr Shah, interviewee).

On the other hand, Mr Shah has mentioned about dysfunctional behaviours and their antecedents.

"My senior student advised me that if you want a peaceful time in this institution, always say 'yes' to your teacher and support him whenever needed, otherwise be ready to face the music" (Mr Shah, interviewee).

Besides, study participants reported fake attention as an action-related type of SDB. In the class setting, respondents revealed that students gave the impression to the teacher that they were interested in the lecture, taking notes on their tablet or notebook. However, in reality, they were doing some other job of their interest. Respondents spoke about how they gave such a fake impression to faculty members. One respondent shared that:

"We kept our notebooks open during the lecture so that the teacher felt that we were noting important facts. But we were just playing games" (Mr Shah, interviewee).

Furthermore, many participants spelt out that staff and faculty members do not always show polite and courteous behaviour towards the students. One respondent shared that:

"Once I had a word with the clerk, I even spoke to him in a very polite manner, but he answered me in a very rude manner and ignored my request. It suddenly shot up my blood pressure. I started

shouting at him. I was about to hit him, but some students stopped me. I will not show good behaviour to anyone who does not show me respect" (Mr Shah, interviewee).

Following extract displayed citizenship and dysfunctional behaviours of the interviewee Mr.Qamar

"I always help a fellow student in the preparation of assignments. The majority of the students at this institution came from far-flung areas of Sindh and their basic educational foundation is not good. Therefore, the concept of the assignment is new for many students. In this situation, my friends and I arrange study sessions for students in which we guide them how to prepare the assignments, from where and how they have to search useful material for the assignments" (Mr Qamar, interviewee).

"Last year, nearly 25 students submitted an examination form to the clerks to send to the examination branch. However, what happened was that the examination branch returned our forms with a rejection stating that we had to submit within a particular period. The clerk had not informed us in time and as a result, all those students could not sit the examination" (Mr Qamar, interviewee).

"We are studying business. We know that in the market, the customer is king. We are a customer, but no-one gives us any importance so we are compelled to show bad behaviour" (Mr Qamar, interviewee).

"Faculty members influence institutional heads. If teachers recommend a student for a job, that student has more possibility to get the job" (Mr Qamar, interviewee).

In the following extracts, Mr Hamoon has shared his experiences of citizenship and dysfunctional behaviours. Students in these institutions organise various events with or without the help of the institution. One respondent stated that

"During the last semester, we did planting along with the help of the staff. These planting events bring awareness and unity among students; they make them more creative and develop a spirit of teamwork. My friends, teachers and the Head of the Department encouraged me and appreciated my efforts in the planting event. Now I am inclined to do something more for the institution. There is too much wall-chalking at our institution and in the next semester I, with the help of co-students and staff, will clean and repaint the walls of the institution" (Mr Hamoon, Focus Group).

"In the admission prospectus, it stated that all classrooms are equipped with multimedia equipment. However, in reality, we are getting an education by using the traditional old blackboard" (Mr Hamoon, Focus Group).

Many participants spelt out that staff and faculty members do not always show polite and courteous behaviour towards the students. One respondent shared that:

"Staff do not show courteous or good behaviour to the students and that develops negative behaviour among students. If some employees are not ready to hear our views or issues, we can bear such occasional behaviour, but we cannot tolerate the continuous negative behaviour of the staff. Besides, sometimes being a human being we are also not in a good mood, so the negative behaviour of the staff ignites us. Even we do not like to go and talk with such rude persons. Some of the staff always say 'no' to our every request, so we become angry and feel dishonoured" (Mr Hamoon, Focus Group).

"Teachers do not cooperate with us, in that they expect to take a full class on Fridays. Due to this, we cannot travel to our native towns. In our institution, teachers are not willing to provide any relaxation to the students. They treat students like prisoners and order us to do whatever they say.

> *Even if you try to convince teachers, they consider it as an insult. Teachers' behaviour is very bossy. It develops irritation among students"* (Mr Hamoon, Focus Group).

Most of the interviewed respondents indicated that a lack of computer and library skills is a major problem with the more junior students. One respondent revealed that:
One respondent claimed that:

Miss Noori has revealed her ideas about citizenship and dysfunctional behaviours. The majority of participants claimed that members of staff are not providing timely feedback or information concerning students' requests. One respondent shared his experience regarding this aspect:

> *"Staff use delaying tactics while working and ask the students to visit them again and again. In an organisation where things do not proceed smoothly, naturally, the students will show negative behaviour"* (Miss Noori, interviewee).

> *"On our campus, there is a huge central library. However, students still have to use the traditional card method to search for books and other academic material. We guide newcomers on how to search for material in the library and about its various sections"* (Miss Noori, interviewee).

These all accounts reveal that the same students have narrated various incidents of citizenship and dysfunctional nature.

Conclusion

This current study adopts SET as a theoretical framework to understand the simultaneous occurrence of SCB and SDB. This study has demonstrated that SET is an appropriate lens to explain SCB and SDB within the Pakistani higher education context. SET encompasses the exchange process while people interact with each other in a social setting. The exchange process consists of the following common elements:

- It must be between two parties.
- There must be tangible or intangible resources (reward) used for exchange; offering the resource is termed as a cost and receiving the resource as an outcome.
- There must be a dependent relationship.
- Parties should become involved in the interaction to complete the exchange (Hall, 2001).

The findings of this study suggest that students are in an exchange relationship with co-students, staff, faculty members and the institution within the context of Pakistani higher education. Furthermore, academic services cannot be delivered without the support of students, staff and faculty members, so in this way, there are dependent relationships between these parties.(point *A* in Figure).

Foa and Foa (1980) recognise money, love, status and power each as a potential resource in the exchange process. In the current study, students reported various instances when they displayed SCB towards co-students, staff, faculty members and their institution (points *B* in Figure). Besides, students shared the type of intrinsic rewards they received while performing citizenship behaviour by investing their time, effort and money.

This finding indicates that rewarding the self is one of the most important components of SCB within the Pakistani higher education context. Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) reveal that individuals with low social exchange orientation do not expect rewards for their input from others. However, the findings of this current study suggest that students have a high level of exchange orientation and they feel that the rewarding of themselves are valuable.

While some students claimed self-rewarding orientation for their citizenship behaviours, other students aligned their citizenship behaviour with various extrinsic rewards. The students explained how their actions were shaped by extrinsic rewards received from others, even though the other parties (co-students, staff, faculty members and the institution) with whom the students were in an exchange relationship were not offering any formal list of extrinsic rewards. However, the findings of this study also reveal that students, based on their experiences and social cues, were investing their resources in the shape of SCB to obtain extrinsic rewards.

The findings of this study recognise that there is a reciprocal exchange among students, faculty members, staff and the institution. Molm *et al*. (1999) maintain that, in the reciprocal exchange where participants are not bound to show citizenship behaviour to each other, the role of power is not significant, but in the negotiating type of exchange where people become bound to show citizenship behaviour towards each other due to some negotiated contract, power plays a vital role. However, in this study, it seems that power also plays a vital role in the reciprocal exchange, as the study participants were anticipating rewards from co-students, staff, faculty members and the institution due to their ability and authority to provide such rewards.

Researchers (in particular, Podsakoff *et al*., 1993; Van Dyne *et al*., 1995; Bolino *et al*., 2004; Bolino *et al.,* 2013) state, concerning OCB in the business context, that an employee could express OCB due to rewards that are only beneficial for that employee and not for the organisation. This current study found various dark rewards that incline students to participate in citizenship behaviour within the context of Pakistani higher education. The results also indicate that various dark rewards may be beneficial for the students in question, but not for the institution as a whole.

The use of SET has shed light on why students engage in dysfunctional behaviour. Also, the students' responses show that they considered the various acts of staff, faculty members and the institution to be responsible for their SDB. Data analysis indicated that students apply their input (in the shape of money and fees) intending to acquire quality education, appropriate academic services and proper accommodation facilities. Besides, students put their efforts into the assignments and via examination activities to achieve good grades.

However, the students claim that they are not receiving output according to their input when comparing it with others (distributive justice), their academic inputs do not evaluate fairly according to standards (procedural justice) and they are not treated respectably by staff, faculty members and their institute's administration (interactional justice) (point *C* in Figure).

Students claim that the combined actions of staff, faculty members and the institution thus developed their anger and a sense of detachment among themselves and they have thus shown negative behaviour. The use of SET explains that in an exchange relationship when an individual puts in some effort with the expectation of rewards equal to the effort (point *D* in Figure) if the actual outcome is less than the expected outcome, the individual will consider it unfair and display dysfunctional behaviour to equate this (Yi & Gong, 2008; Cohen -Charash & Mueller, 2007)

This research concluded that the narratives of research participants confirm the association between SCB and SDB within the Pakistani higher education context. The preceding discussion has revealed that the same students can display SCB and SDB under the influence of the stimuli of rewards and their perceptions of justice. These findings are consistent with those of Dalal (2005), Fox *et al.* (2012) and Hafidz *et al*. (2012), who found that individuals could exhibit both citizenship and dysfunctional behaviours under the influence of the same or different stimuli.

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Limitations

One of the key limitations of this research that its findings are context-bound. Secondly, being qualitative research, its finding cannot be generalized.
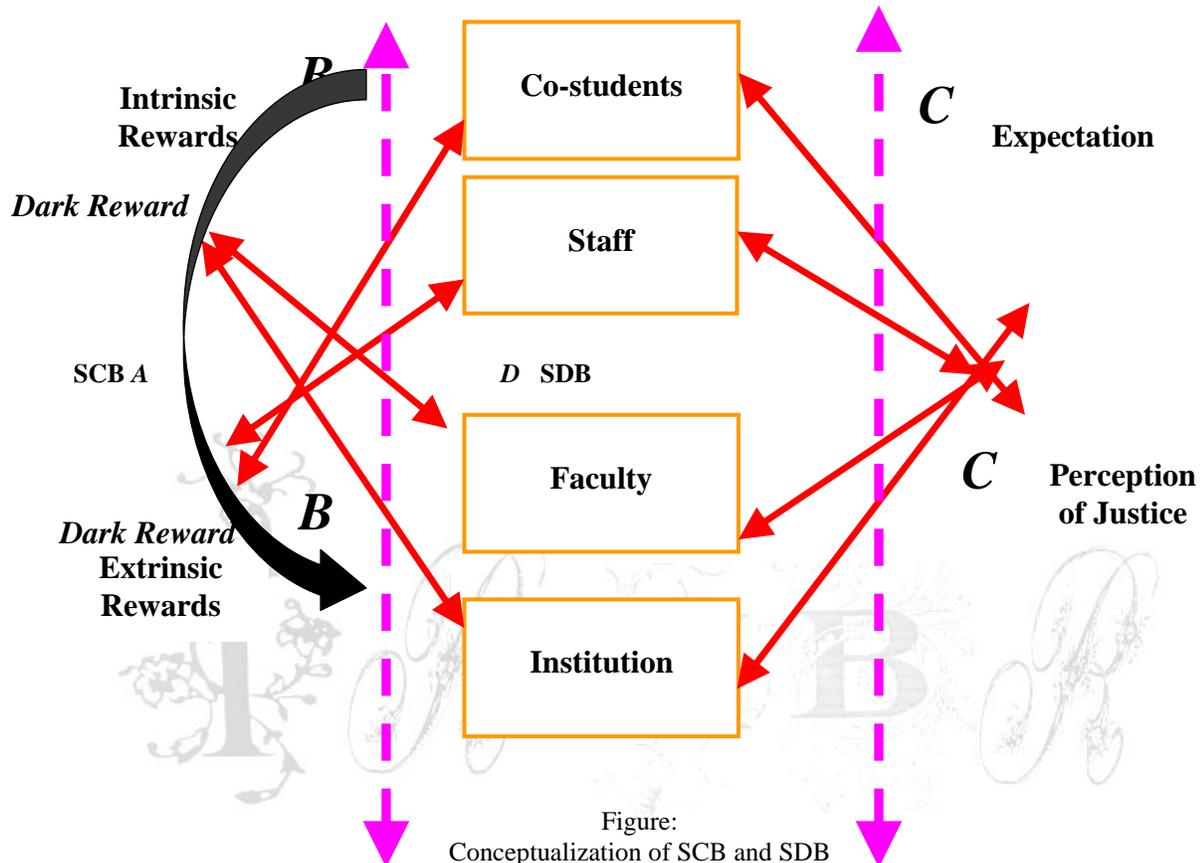

Figure:
Conceptualization of SCB and SDB
Source: Author

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