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**Article**

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## **RELATIONS BETWEEN OCBs, ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE, WORK MOTIVATION AND SELF-EFFICACY**

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### **Abstract**

The importance of **organizational citizenship behaviors** (OCBs) in organizations is well documented, and studies that originate from the interactionist perspective and combine personal and situational factors in predicting OCBs are needed. Toward this end, and based on a recent theoretical model, the current study attempted to predict OCB by organizational justice, work motivation, and self-efficacy.

A research questionnaire measuring the three predictors was administered to 151 employees, and a measure of their OCB was provided by their supervisors.

Whereas OCBs were found to be positively correlated with the three predictors, a hierarchical regression analysis revealed that only organizational justice and work motivation were significant predictors of OCBs.

The study emphasizes the importance of using an interactionist perspective integrating endogenous and exogenous forces in studying the antecedents of OCBs. OCBs may be closely related to task performance and may be predicted by motivation related variables. Organizations may facilitate OCBs by improving organizational justice and raising work motivation among employees.

**Keywords:** organizational citizenship behavior (OCBs), organizational justice, work motivation, self-efficacy

**JEL Classification:** D23, M12

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### **Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCBs)**

Researchers contend that organizations benefit when their employees are willing to contribute to the organization above and beyond the formal definition of their job

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requirements (Organ et al., 2006), that is, when they display what is known as organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). Organ et al. (2006) define OCBs as individual behaviors that are discretionary, that are not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promote the effective functioning of the organization. OCBs are considered a form of job performance or contextual performance that is separate from the in-role task performance that employees are outwardly rewarded for (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997; Organ, 1997). In the increasingly dynamic and competitive environment in which organizations operate today, OCBs are considered a highly valuable contribution to the organization. It is therefore not surprising that interest in OCBs has been rising, with Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff and Blume (2009) noting that over 400 articles on OCBs and related constructs have been published in the 2000s

OCBs may benefit organizations in a variety of ways. They have been found to be related to efficient allocation of scarce resources by simplifying maintenance functions and freeing up resources for productivity (Organ et al., 2006). In addition, they have been shown to be associated with improved ability of coworkers and managers to perform their jobs through more efficient planning, scheduling, and problem solving (Podsakoff et al., 2009), as well as with improved service quality (Lin et al., 2008). Furthermore, studies show that organizations that foster good citizenship behaviors are regarded as more attractive places to work, and are therefore able to hire and retain the best people (e.g., George and Bettenhausen, 1990). Yet, although OCBs are associated with the effective functioning of the organization, they remain discretionary, so that a major focus of research attention is to identify the factors that are related to employees' OCBs.

Research has traditionally attempted to predict OCBs by studying direct relationships from affective evaluations of managers, the job, or organization (e.g., leader-member exchange quality, organizational justice), work context factors (e.g., leadership behaviors, job characteristics), and dispositional influences on OCBs (Van Dyne et al., 1994; MacKenzie et al., 2001; Moorman and Blakely, 1995). A few recent studies, however, demonstrate the utility of adopting an interactionist perspective in predicting OCBs, whereby these behaviors are seen as a consequence of the interaction between the relevant person and situational factors. For example, Wat and Shaffer (2005) found that empowerment and higher-quality LMX relationships with supervisors partially mediated the relationship between organizational justice and OCBs, and concluded that in addition to perceived fairness, employee's feelings of being "willing and able" are also necessary to facilitate employees' performance of OCBs. Tziner, Fein and Oren (2012) suggested a model to predict job performance, including OCBs. *The novelty of the current study lies in its attempt to find support for several of the propositions of this model related to three variables: organizational justice, work motivation and self-efficacy.*

### **Organizational Justice**

Justice-related consequences include some of the most important outcomes studied by management researchers. For example, perceptions of unfair or unjust treatment have been associated with many harmful effects including negative health outcomes, intentional deviant behaviors, and withdrawal behaviors (Pinder, 2008). To explain the power of justice-related phenomena, we must recognize that employees in organizations tend to constantly examine the actions taking place within the organization, in an attempt to

determine whether the action was fair, or in other words, whether justice exists within the organization. To this end, they explore according to three types of criteria:

- The first criterion relates to practical implications, i.e. personal gain or loss, which derive from the employee's feeling that the decisions reached were just and right. This fairness is examined in the Distributive Justice Theory (Adams, 1965).
- The second relates to the way in which the decision to take action was made: the employee assesses whether the processes that led to the decision were fair (Thibaut and Walker, 1975; Leventhal, 1980).
- The third relates to the approach adopted during planning and application (Sheppard et al., 1992), i.e. the treatment employees receive during implementation, their feeling that the organization imparted new information and treated them sensitively and fairly. This fairness is examined in the Interactional Justice Theory (Tyler and Bies, 1990).

These three dimensions reflect, each in its own way, the degree of respect that employees feel they command from the organization and their employers. With regard to OCBs, numerous studies reported positive associations between organizational justice and OCBs (e.g., Oren et al., 2012). This relationship was explained according to the social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), namely that when employees perceive that they receive fair treatment from their organization they are motivated to reciprocate by OCB contributions (Van Dyne et al., 1994; Organ, 1988, 1990). Therefore, *we hypothesized that organizational justice would be positively related to OCBs, so that the higher the perception of organizational justice, the higher the OCBs.*

#### *Work motivation*

Work motivation is defined as "a set of energetic forces that originate within the individual as well as in his environment to initiate work-related behaviors, and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration" (Pinder, 2008, p.11). It thus follows that work motivation results from the interaction of an individual's characteristics and outward environment components, both societal and work-organizational (Latham and Pinder, 2005). This psychological force generates complex cycles of goal-directed thought and behavior, ultimately directed toward the achievement of the fundamental goal of inclusive fitness (Bernard et al., 2005), where individuals strive to match their internal needs to actual or potential resources in their life space. Indeed, numerous studies (e.g., Blau, 1993; Gardner et al., 1989; Pierro et al., 2006) found positive associations between work motivation and job performance.

Research relating work motivation to OCB is surprisingly rare, yet there appear to be natural links between the two constructs. It is likely that individuals execute discretionary behaviors that go beyond the formal requirements of a job to satisfy some higher-order individual need or to align work behavior with individual values. Because such behaviors are less likely to be enforceable and formally rewarded than required job behaviors (Organ, 1997), they are presumably performed for self-generated, intrinsic reasons. To the extent that motivated employees invest themselves more fully at work than do those who are less motivated, they should be more willing to step outside the bounds of their formally defined jobs and engage in acts that constitute OCB. Moreover, to the extent that motivation is reflected by connectedness to one's work, it may foster a mental frame in which one's role

is perceived to include a wider array of behaviors that could ultimately benefit the organization.

Although the relationship between organizational justice and motivation is well established (e.g., Adams, 1965), it should be noted that with regard to OCBs the two constructs represent different models. The relationship between OCBs and organizational justice is based on the Social Exchange Model claiming that employees will perform OCBs as a way to reciprocate their organization and/or superior for fair treatment (Van Dyne et al., 1994). In contrast, the relationship between motivation and OCBs is based on the Motivational Model which holds that providing employees with a good work environment (e.g., intrinsic rewards) may result in improved job performance including OCBs (Tziner et al., 2012). To the best of our knowledge, no studies have compared the relative explanatory power of the two models in predicting OCBs. *Our second hypothesis is that work motivation would be positively related to OCBs, so that the higher the level of work motivation, the higher the OCBs.*

#### *Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy is defined as the perceived ability to achieve a desired outcome, based on evaluating different sources of information about one's own competence at the task (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy is likely to play a motivational role and to influence the choice of the complexity of the goal one accepts and commits to, affecting the mobilization of efforts and the perseverance with which goals are pursued. Also, invoking Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977, 1982), high self-efficacy employees can be expected to perform their goals more conscientiously. Self-efficacy has been shown to relate positively to a wide range of outcomes, including job performance, satisfaction and commitment (Maddux, 2002; Schmidt and DeShon, 2010; Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998a).

Studies indicate that employees frequently perceive presumed OCBs as role prescribed, nondiscretionary, and/or rewarded (Morrison, 1994; Organ et al, 2006), and that supervisors factor in OCBs when evaluating and rewarding performance (MacKenzie et al., 1991, 1993). However, OCBs are not promised to succeed and can be seen as an attempt by employees to manage impressions, essentially seeking to improve their status over other employees (Bolino, 1999; Rioux and Penner, 2001). Thus, it seems logical to assume that perceived personal control and sense of competence may induce individuals to meet the challenges of going beyond task completion, as characterized by OCBs. Self-efficacy resembles the expectancy component in Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory of Motivation (i.e., one expects that he/she can perform successfully if he/she try). Another theoretical basis for the connection between self-efficacy and OCBs is Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, claiming that two important predictors of behavior are control beliefs and perceived behavior control. Self-efficacy should also relate to intentions. The higher one's self-efficacy for performing a behavior, the more one should intend to do it (Gist, 1987; Gist and Mitchell, 1992; Sadri and Robertson, 1993). Although rarely studied, several studies found positive associations between self-efficacy and an employee's propensity to engage in OCBs (Haworth and Levy, 2001; Todd and Kent, 2006). *Our third hypothesis is that self-efficacy would be positively related to OCBs, so that the higher the level of self-efficacy, the higher the OCBs.*

To sum up, the following hypotheses were formulated for the current study:

H1: Organizational justice would be positively related to OCBs, so that the higher the perception of organizational justice, the higher the OCBs.

H2: Work motivation would be positively related to OCBs, so that the higher the level of work motivation, the higher the OCBs.

H3: Self-efficacy would be positively related to OCBs, so that the higher the level of self-efficacy, the higher the OCBs.

## **Method**

### *Participants*

Participants, who volunteered to take part in the study, were 151 employees (106 men, 45 women; mean age = 37.0,  $SD = 10.08$ ). The mean period of employment was 9.89 years ( $SD = 9.8$ ) and mean education level was 13.8 years ( $SD = 2.4$ ). Most of the participants reported their income to be average (30%) or above average (41%).

### *Procedure and measures*

The participants signed up for a study examining "issues regarding work places". An experimenter explained that the study would involve answering questionnaires and that the participants were expected to give honest answers representing their actual feelings and thoughts. After completing the measures, all participants were debriefed.

We first assessed perceptions of organizational justice, self-efficacy and work motivation. Then, an OCB measure was distributed to the employees' supervisors, who were asked to evaluate each employee's organizational citizenship behavior.

*Organizational justice* perceptions were assessed using the 20-item scale employed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). Sample items include "I think that my level of pay is fair." Participants indicated the degree to which they believed each statement was descriptive of the reality in their organization, marking their responses on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha for the scale in the current sample was 0.87 ( $M=3.96$ ;  $SD=0.69$ ).

*Work motivation* was measured by means of a 9-item scale. Participants responded to items such as "When you are at work, how much effort are you willing to make?" marking their responses on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*very little*) to 6 (*very much*). Cronbach's alpha for the 9 items was 0.92 ( $M=4.75$ ;  $SD=0.86$ ).

*Self-efficacy* was assessed by means of a 10-item scale developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). Participants responded to items such as "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough," marking their responses on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha for the 10 items was 0.93 ( $M=4.71$ ;  $SD=0.75$ ).

*Organizational citizenship behaviors* (OCBs) were measured by means of the 20-item scale employed by Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1989). Items were slightly changed to allow supervisors to assess their employee's OCBs. Supervisors responded to items such as "He helps other employees who have heavy workloads." Responses were marked on a 6-point

scale ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (always). Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the 20 items was 0.87 (M=4.27; SD=0.62).

**Results**

Table no. 1 shows the means, standard deviations, Cronbach’s alphas, and correlation coefficients among all the variables.

**Table no. 1: Means, standard deviations, Cronbach’s alpha levels and Pearson zero-order correlations among study variables (n = 151)**

Variable	M	SD	Alph a	1	2	3	4
1. OCBs	4.28	.63	.87	1.00			
2. Organizational justice	3.63	.88	.93	.43***	1.00		
3. Work motivation	4.76	.87	.92	.39***	.53***	1.00	
4. Self-efficacy	4.71	.75	.93	.27**	.34***	.52***	1.00

\*\*=  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*=  $p < .001$

The findings uphold the anticipated positive relationship of OCBs with organizational justice ( $r = 0.43, p < .001$ ), work motivation ( $r = 0.39, p < .001$ ), and self-efficacy ( $r = 0.27, p < .01$ ). Moreover, the findings indicate that work motivation links substantially with self-efficacy ( $r = 0.52, p < .001$ ) and organizational justice ( $r = 0.53, p < .001$ ). Additionally, self-efficacy is connected positively with organizational justice ( $r = 0.34, p < .001$ ).

In order to examine the relative contribution of each of the dependent variables (e.g., organizational justice, work motivation, and self-efficacy) to the prediction of OCBs, a hierarchical regression analysis was employed. Organizational justice was entered in the first step, work motivation was entered in the second step and self-efficacy was entered in the third and last step. The results are displayed in Table no. 2.

**Table no. 2: Hierarchical regression results for variables predicting OCBs (n = 151)**

Variables	B	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	F
Step 1				
Organizational justice	.31	.43***	.18	33.38***
Step 2				
Work motivation	.17	.23**	.03	20.94***
Step 3				
Self-efficacy	.06	.07	.00	14.14***

Note: N = 151; \*\*=  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*=  $p < .001$

As can be seen, organizational justice, entered in the first step, accounted for 18% of the variance of OCBs; work motivation, entered in the second step, accounted for a significant addition of 3% of the variance of OCBs and, lastly, self-efficacy, entered in the third step didn’t contribute to the explained variance of OCBs.

**Discussion**

The purpose of the current study was to explore the relationships of potential antecedent variables to Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Two factors have emerged as potent

predictors: organizational justice and work motivation. Unsurprisingly, when employees experience that they are treated fairly and equitably, they feel compelled to reciprocate by exhibiting behaviors that contribute to the progress of their organization, beyond formal job requirements (Organ, 1988, 1990). Equity Theory (Adams, 1965), posits that people are basically driven by a constant search for balance between their inputs, investment in their work (e.g., efforts, knowledge) and outcomes (e.g., monetary and non-monetary rewards), and tend to contribute proportionally to what they get. Being treated fairly and equitably may be regarded as a sort of benefit or compensation which calls for reciprocation. Otherwise, the subsequent unbalance leads to an unbearable feeling of dissonance due to being over-rewarded. To restore equity and to undo dissonance, the individual must make appropriate contributions to the organization, for instance enhancing performance to higher levels, or getting involved in activities not prescribed by formal work obligations (e.g., aiding with induction of newly recruited employees although this does not constitute a work duty). This is comprised by OCBs (Moorman, 1991; Podsakoff et al. 2000; Van Dyne et al. 1994).

Work motivation is what fuels our behavior and performance at work. So, if we are highly driven to excel, it may reflect in our tendency to pursue courses of action which are not necessarily rewarded formally and/or prescribed by our formal work obligations. Consequently, work motivation as a factor promoting OCBs should not be construed as an unexpected finding. To the contrary, it holds a great deal of good sense that highly motivated employees may also be likely to exercise behaviors indicative of high OCB that go beyond the formal requirements of their job. The extant research on OCBs supports the claim that these behaviors are more volitional than task behaviors and, therefore, are more likely to vary as a function of self-generated, intrinsic reasons. Interestingly, researchers (e.g., Finkelstein and Penner, 2004; Rioux and Penner, 2001) investigated the motives for OCBs, but the association between work motivation and OCBs has rarely been studied.

Contrary to expectations, self-efficacy was not found to be associated to OCBs. Several explanations may account for this. Firstly, researchers contend that self-efficacy is a motivational variable because it resembles the expectancy component in the Expectancy Theory of Motivation (Judge and Bono, 2001; Locke et al., 1984). Thus, it may be that including work motivation and self-efficacy as predictors can explain this non-significant result. Secondly, Domain-specific conceptualizations of self-efficacy may be better predictors of work related variables (i.e., OCBs) than general measures of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1998). Accordingly, perhaps using a domain-specific measure of self-efficacy, instead of a general measure, would have resulted in positive findings (Todd and Kent, 2006). Thirdly, the magnitude of the relationship between efficacy and job performance has been shown to be weakest in studies examining highly complex jobs (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998). The senior and mostly academic employees in the current sample may have held relatively complex jobs, relative to the average employee. Lastly, as several researchers argued (e.g., Organ and Ryan, 1995), OCBs may not require specific knowledge, skills, and abilities and, therefore, are not related to self-efficacy.

This study was based on the theoretical model suggested by Tziner et al., (2012) that focused on the complex interplay between endogenous forces, such as internal drives and beliefs, and exogenous forces within the work environment. Indeed, we found that organizational justice - as an exogenous force, and work motivation - as an endogenous force, were both predictors of OCB. It is noteworthy that organizational justice and



motivation are related. An employee may be motivated to do a good job; however, if he perceives that OCBs are not recognized in his organization (i.e., organizational justice), he may conclude that “they are worthless in this organization, they are simply a waste of time, and I am not going to do them” (cf. Folger, 1993; Podsakoff and Mackenzie, 1993) and, rightly, invest more in his job.

#### **Limitations of the study and future research**

The present research has limitations that should be addressed by future studies. First, we used cross-sectional correlational data, which constrains the ability to draw causality inferences from the findings. Thus, future research employing a longitudinal design is required before conclusions regarding causality can be derived. However, in contrast to most of the studies in this field (Hoffman et al., 2007), data from different sources was used. Data on organizational justice, work motivation and self-efficacy were collected from the employees, and data on employees’ OCBs were collected from their immediate supervisors. This greatly reduced the problems of common-source variance, thereby increasing the internal validity of the study. Second, the sample size was relatively small. Third, we employed a general measure of self-efficacy. Future studies should employ a domain-specific measure of self-efficacy (e.g., job self-efficacy).

#### **Conclusions**

Following the general recommendations of interactionists, we assessed a predictive model of OCBs including both situational and person-centered antecedents. This study has several implications for our understanding of OCBs. An important question raised by several researchers is the distinction between OCBs and job performance. Researchers (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993; Organ, 1988; Organ and Ryan, 1995) suggested that if OCBs are different from job performance, then these behaviors should have different antecedents. OCBs should be determined by personality and dispositional variables rather than by ability and motivational factors. Thus, our finding that OCBs are predicted by work motivation may suggest that OCBs are not different from job performance and emphasize the possibility that task variables (e.g., task feedback, task identity), which received scant research attention (Podsakoff et al., 2000), may also be antecedents of OCBs.

The finding that OCBs are predicted by work motivation also raises new research directions. For example, throughout the motivation literature three primary goals that have emerged are: achievement striving, status striving, and communion striving (Barrick et al., 2002; McClelland et al., 1953). Future studies should investigate the associations between these motivational goals and OCBs. The lack of relationship between self-efficacy and OCBs adds support to researchers’ (e.g., Organ and Ryan, 1995) claims that OCBs do not require specific knowledge, skills and abilities.

With regard to practical implications, our findings indicate that enhancing organizational justice may strengthen OCBs. Perceptions of organizational justice may also make organizations more attractive to prospective high-capability and highly motivated employees, thus further fostering their success. Raising work motivation may also be related to higher levels of OCBs.

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