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Linking Organizational Citizenship Behavior to Job Involvement: The Role of Leader-Member Exchange

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1. INTRODUCTION

With increasing changes in engineering and construction sector, corporations face more international challenges and competitiveness in their industry. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is one of the big challenges to management since employee practices can be a critical issue in human resources management. Organ (1997, p.95) defined OCB as the performance that supported the social and psychological environment in which task performance took place. Podsakoff *et al.* (2009) stated that OCBs were related to a number of individual-level outcomes, including managerial ratings of employee performance, reward allocation decisions, and a variety of withdrawal-related criteria, employee turnover intentions, actual turnover, and absenteeism. Employees with OCB are expected to not only carry on what is been typed in job descriptions, but also to act beyond that for the interest of the organization (Judeh, 2014). In general, OCB refers to extraordinary efforts done by the employees for the interest of an organization without expecting any rewards.

However, the complexities and dynamics of tasks require employees to engage in OCB to assist coworkers to improve organizational functioning (Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007). Employees having OCB are more prone to keep good relations with customers, and in turn render better services.

The link between OCB and other variables, such as LMX and job involvement may be explained by the social exchange theory. If employees have a high quality of social exchange relationship with their organization which is characterized by mutual trust and reciprocity, they are more likely to voluntarily demonstrate behavior beyond their formal roles (Van Dyne *et al.*, 1994). Social exchange is premised on a long-term exchange of favors that is based on a diffuse obligation to reciprocate (Lee, 2004). Employees tend to reciprocate the treatment they receive from the management of their organization. High involvement

and good relations between subordinates and their managers can lead to positive OCBs, which will be reflected on job performance.

Howell and Hall-Merenda (1999) contended that leader-focused research implicitly assumes a relationship of some sort between leader and follower, and that implied relationship is fundamental to the link between leader behavior and follower response.

Researches on the relationships between job involvement at work and the practices of OCB have not received much attention by scholars. The current research aims to discuss whether employees can enhance their OCB through practices associated with their involvement at work. The major contribution of the present research is linking both job involvement and LMX to OCB and studying the potential role of LMX in the relationships between the two variables. Consistently with this reasoning, the researcher developed and tested a structural equation model in which LMX mediates between job involvement and OCB.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Job Involvement

Job involvement is defined as the extent to which an individual identifies psychologically with his/her job (Blau, 1985). The concept of job involvement refers to the degree to which employees relate to their jobs as comprising their lives in total, so that an employee who exhibits high job involvement identifies strongly with his or her job and thinks about the job even when outside of work (Kanungo, 1982). Job involvement can be viewed as a cognitive state of psychological identification with work; therefore, the degree of involvement varies from person to person and from an organization to another.

It is assumed that individual's perceptions of working conditions and individual's owncharacteristics may foster psychological conditions that affect the individual's willingness to get involved in work. Although there aren'tmany studies on the antecedents of job involvement, it is possible to identify a number of potential antecedents other scholars' models and works.

Antecedents that can influence job involvement may include job characteristics such as autonomy, skill variety, task identity and significance (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), supervisorybehaviors such as consideration (Lance, 1991) and participation (Smith &Brannick, 1990).

According to Kanungo (1982), job involvement can be classified into three categories, including "work concentration", "work evaluation" and "work identification". Cai (2001) divided employee involvement into five dimensions: "work concentration", "work evaluation", "work identification", "work participation" and "fun from work". Alternatively, Yang et al (2006) divided employee involvement into four dimensions, consisting of "fun in work", "work evaluation", "work identification", and "work concentration".

To be more effective, job involvement needs to be tied to monetary or nonmonetary incentives. Rewarding highly-involved persons may have a powerful effect on employees' work attitudes.

Scholars have argued that highly-involved persons will exert substantial effort towards achieving organizational objectives and are less likely to turnover (e.g. Kahn, 1990; Kanungo, 1979). Chu *et al.* (2005), and Chughtai's (2008) results showed a significant relationship between employee involvement and

organizational citizenship behaviors. The result of Amah and Ahiauzu's (2013) study show a positive significant relationship between employee involvement and productivity.

Given the above argument, it is expected that job involvement will be a primary determinant of OCB.

H1: OCB will be positively related to job involvement.

2.2. Organization Citizenship Behavior

OCB relates to employee behavior which is beyond his or her contractual tasks. More recently, the definition of OCB has been expanded to include not only the categories of altruism (helping behaviors aimed directly at specific persons) and generalized compliance (conscientious performance for the good of the organization) but also the categories of courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000).

The concept had OCB roots in the work of Katz and Kahn (1966), who identified three types of behavior required from employees for the effective functioning of an organization: the decision to join andremain in the organization; the performance of prescribed roles in a dependablemanner; and the undertaking of innovative and spontaneous activities beyond the prescribed role requirements.

Organizational researchers have contended that the evaluation of an employee's performance should include an assessment of both task performance (i.e., performance of those duties that are formally recognized as part of the job) and contextual performance (i.e., performance of extra-role behaviors, such as OCB, that increase organizational effectiveness) (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993).

Williams and Anderson (1991) identified thatOCB can be categorized into OCB towards individuals (OCB-I) and OCB towards the organization (OCB-O). Since, OCBI is an important issue and involves patterns of behavior that are directly involved in individuals in the organization; the current study will focus on OCB towards individuals.

Zacher and Jimmieson (2013) showed that transformational leadership was positively related to both OCB and sales productivity. Recently, Chiu and Chen (2005) showed that job variety and job significance had a significant positive relationship with OCB, whereas job identity, job autonomy, job feedback and job interdependence were not significantly related to OCB. These findings suggests that leaders should enrich job variety and job significance and place more concentration on enhancing employees' job characteristics to promote employees' OCB.

Although OCBis related to individual behaviors, it can promote the effective functioning of the organization. Yen and Niehoff (2004) have noted that in addition to the effects they may have on internalorganizational effectiveness measures, OCBs may also influence external effectiveness measures, such as customer satisfaction.

Arising from the above literature review on OCB, the following hypothesis can be presented:

H2: OCB will be positively related to LMX.

2.3. Leader-Member Exchange

As stated previously, the aim of the current research is to study the role of LMX as a mediating variable on the relationship between job involvement and OCB.

The quality of relationships between supervisors and subordinates is often studiedvia LMX theory. These relationships are characterized as high quality, reflecting trust, respect, and loyalty, or low quality, reflecting mistrust, low respect, and a lack ofloyalty (Morrow *et al.*, 2005). When relationships between supervisors and subordinates are of high quality, subordinates can have psychological safety. Psychological safety is of high importance for fostering OCB because it can increase OCB towards individuals (OCB-I) and OCB towards the organization (OCB-O). When an immediate supervisor provides opportunities for development, fair supervision, meaningful work, and autonomy, subordinates feel obliged to repay leaders with higher levels of organizational commitment, citizenship behaviors (Bhal, 2006). Subordinates having psychological safety feel that they have to reciprocate in a positive approach.

Researchers studying the correlation between LMX quality and intentions to quit have found it to be significant and negative (eg. Sparrowe, 1994). The findings of Lo *et al.* (2006) study suggested that LMX had significant impact on citizenship behavior performed by subordinates but the gender of the supervisor did not appear to moderate the relationships between LMX and OCB. Wang *et al.*, (2005) proved that LMX fully mediated between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors.Data collected in a high-technology firm revealed a positive association between LMX and creative work involvement (Volmer *et al.*, 2012). At the same time, high OCB helps strengthening LMX between supervisors and other employees.

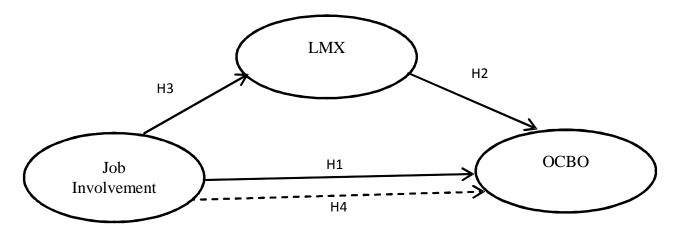
The current study suggests that the quality of LMX can affect the positive level of OCB exhibited by subordinates. If subordinates feel psychological safe, they will be encouraged to exhibit OCB. The mediating role of LMX in the relationship between job involvement and OCB is based on the notion that a high involvement may affect high-quality LMX and, in turn, high levels of OCB.

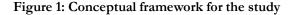
Based on the preceding text, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H3: LMX will be positively related to job involvement.

H4: LMX will mediate the relationship between job involvement and OCB.

Thus, the following proposed conceptual framework that reflexes all hypotheses is depicted in Figure 1:





The current research is conducted on employees working with engineering and construction sector in Jordan, and focus on the mediating role of LMX on the relationship between job involvement and OCBO.

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

Respondents for the current study used were employees working in engineering and construction sector in Jordan. Engineering and construction sector is of remarkable economic significance to Jordan since it is a catalyst for several other sectors. Nevertheless, the challenges and problems of this sector have to be addressed. A convenience sample of 200 employees was randomly selected and questionnaires were distributed to them. A total of 186 filled out questionnaires were returned and found suitable for statistical analysis, resulting in a response rate of 93.0% per cent of the total distributed questionnaires.

Respondents were asked to rate the three constructs on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree). As shown on Table 1, most of the sample respondents (89.8%) were male, while only (10.2%) were female.

	Characteristics	Number	%
Gender	Male	167	89.8
	Female	19	10.2
Total		186	100.0
Age	18-25	34	18.3
	26-33	54	29.0
	34-41	71	38.2
	42-49	16	8.6
	50 and above	11	5.9
Total		186	100.0
Education	High School & less	46	24.7
	Diploma	79	42.5
	B. Sc.	53	28.5
	M.Sc.	8	4.3
Total		186	100.0

Table 1Demographic Characteristics

In relation to age, the highest percentage (38.2%) was for respondents of 34-41 years old. Around 67.2% (n=125) of the participants had a Diploma degree and less, while 32.8% (n=61) of them had a Bachelor degree or above.

3.2. Measures

The questionnaire used in the study consists of four parts:

Job Involvement: Job involvement is measured using ten statements from instruments developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and Kanungo, R. (1982). Cronbach alpha value for the 10-item scale was 0.928 indicating an acceptable degree of internal reliability.

Leader-Member Exchange: Measurement of LMX was adopted from Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995). Cronbach Alpha of .959 for LMX items was acceptable.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB): Researchers describe several sub-constructs of organizational citizenship behavior. In this study, OCB-O towards the organization was measured using the 7 items developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990). Cronbach Alpha of .895 for LMX items was acceptable.

Demographic variables: Demographic characteristics were measured depending on categories. Gender was measured as a dichotomous variable coded as 1 for male and 2 for female. Age and education levels were also assessed by asking the participants to report them in categories.

4. DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS

4.1. DescriptiveStatistics

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and correlations of all the studied variables.

Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlations								
Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3			
1. Job Involvement	3.853	.783	(.928)					
2. LMX	3.818	.903	.321***	(.959)				
3. OCBO	3.702	.958	.466***	.376***	(.895)			

Table 2

Reliability coefficients for the scales are in parentheses along the diagonal ** Correlation is significant at the .001 level

Job Involvement is correlated significantly (p < .001) with LMX and OCBO (r = .321 and .466, respectively), and LMX is correlated significantly (p < .001) with OCBO (r = .376).

4.2. Hypothesis Tests

4.2.1. Structural Equation Modeling

Statistical Package for the SocialSciences (SPSS) issue 21 and AMOS 21 were used for data analysis. All items measuring the study constructs were subjected to an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Varimax Rotation.Internal reliability was assessed by computing a Cronbach's alpha for each of all the constructs.

Factor loadings with less than .40 were excluded from all constructs. Convergent validity is tested by assuring t-value of larger than 1.96 at the .05 level for all item loadings (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). All items yielded significant loadings, and at the same time, all the itemtotal correlations were above .50, providing evidence of good convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010).

To confirm results from EFA, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied and constructs were evaluated. Evidence of the reliability of the scale is that the composite reliability (CR) of all the variables was greater than the threshold of .70 (Carmines and Zeller, 1988). The average variance extracted (AVE) values for all the factors whichwere greater than .50supports the convergent validity of all the constructs.

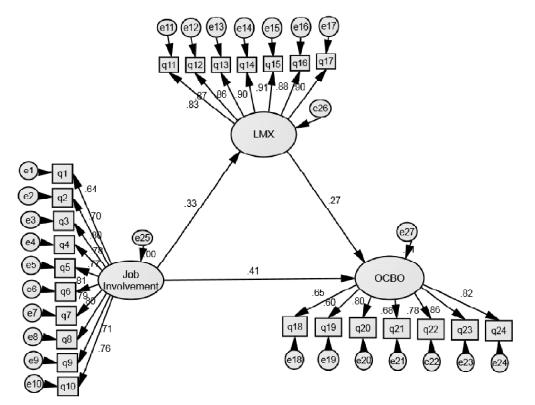
The overall fit statistics of the CFA resulted in(X^2) =408.86 with 249 degrees of freedom and a p-value $\leq .000$. Due to the sensitivity of the (X^2) to the sample size, the ratio of chi-square normed by degrees of freedom (X^2 /df) is used to assess the model fit. Results showed that (X^2 /df) was 1.642 which met the threshold of less than 3.00 (Luarn and Lin, 2005).

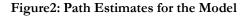
Results of the CFA for the other indices required to judge the data fit indicated that Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .952; Tucker Lewis index (TLI) = .947; Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR) = .0446; and The Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation (RMSEA) = .059. All these indices results were within the recommended limits uggested that the hypothesized model fitted well with the sample data.

4.2.2. Path Analysis

The initial hypothetical structural model was used for the path analysis between latent variables in a manner consistent with that suggested by Schumacker and Lomax (1996).

Based on the results of the model, AMOS produced the following output path diagram as illustrated in Figure 2:





The CFA results depicted in Figure 2showed that OCBO was significantly related to job involvement ($\beta = .41$, $p \le .001$). Thus, H1 was supported. OCBO was significantly related to LMX ($\beta = .27$, $p \le .001$), and job involvement was also significantly related to LMX ($\beta = .33$, $p \le .001$). Thus, H2 and H3 were supported.

Results of the indirect effect of organizational trust on the relationship between job involvement and OCBO ($\beta = .089$, p $\le .01$) provided support for H4.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study tested a model of the influence of job involvement andLMX, on OCBOin the engineering and construction sector in Jordan. Four hypotheses (H1 to H4) were developed, and the model tests supported all the hypotheses. Organizations increasingly need employees who do not need prodding and who not only sense the need for getting things done, but actually do it (Agarwal *et al.*, 2012).

According to H1, job involvement was found to have a significant positive influence on OCBO. The result of this study is consistent with the results from previous studies, e.g. Chu *et al.* (2005), and Chughtai's (2008), which proposed that there is a significant relationship between job involvement and organizational citizenship behaviors.

The finding of the current research regarding the relationship between LMX and OCBO (H2) is consistent with the results of (Lo *et al.*, 2006) which surveyed executives and managers employed in the East Malaysian manufacturing organizations and proved that there is a significant relationship between LMX and organizational citizenship behaviors.

Findings also revealed that there is a significant relationship between job involvement and LMX (H3). The result of the significant relationship between these two constructs consistent with a longitudinal field survey data (N = 144) collected in a high-technology firm revealed a positive association between LMX and creative work involvement (Volmer *et al.*, 2012). However, the contribution of the present study is that it sheds more light on the role of LMX on the relationship between job involvement, LMX, and OCBO. Under a high level of job involvement, employees tend to have better relations with their supervisors and they are inclined to exercise better OCBO.

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The current study has faced some limitations that have to be discussed. First, itsdesign is cross-sectional, making it difficult to infer causal relationsbetween the variables. A longitudinal design would be better to test the changes in relationships between variables over time. Second, our results were based on self-reported data. Thus, common method bias cannot completely be ruled out (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Yet, our study with more than one measurement tool should have reduced common method bias.

Despite these limitations, it is believed that the present study contributes to the literature and empirical aspects of the fields of job involvement, LMX, and OCBO. The present study was carried out in the context of the engineering and construction business in Jordan. Further investigation may be conducted by practitioners and researchers in other sectors.

Although the current study concentrated on examining the relationship between job involvement, LMX, and OCBO by utilizing structural equation modeling, future studies may include the mediation role of LMX in the relationship between OCBO and other factors such as,self-efficacy and organizational justice.

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