

AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATION-BASED SELF- ESTEEM

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between trait affectivity (i.e., negative -NA and positive affect- PA), organization-based self-esteem (OBSE), and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). The current research attempts to augment the field's understanding by demonstrating that the relationship between affect and citizenship is at least partially mediated by OBSE. This paper tests hypotheses using data collected across two different samples: an organizational sample of 105 employees and an amalgam sample of 187 working adults. Findings indicate that OBSE mediates the NA – OCB relationship in the amalgam sample. OBSE also at least partially mediates the PA-OCB relationship in both samples. The paper concludes with a discussion of relevant strengths, limitations, directions for future research, and practical implications.

JEL: M12, M14

KEYWORDS: trait affectivity, organization-based self-esteem, organizational citizenship behavior

INTRODUCTION

Management researchers have long studied issues related to understanding why individuals choose to participate in organizations, are motivated to achieve, and lend their efforts to the greater organizational good (Sekiguchi, Burton, & Sablynksi, 2008). A primary goal of this research is to explore the role of two general mood dispositions (i.e., trait positive and negative affect) in organizational studies. Specifically, this research attempts to link affect with the propensity to enhance (or diminish) individuals senses of self-worth at work, and then to measure its effect on their choices to exhibit giving behaviors within the organization.

Heretofore, the field has dedicated significant attention to all of these constructs. For example, Staw, Sutton, and Pelled (1994) found that individuals' positive feelings about themselves and others enhanced the likelihood that they would demonstrate helping behaviors (operationalized in this study as organizational citizenship behaviors- OCB). Conversely, those whose feelings about themselves and others tend to be negative consistently behaved in a distant and lethargic fashion (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), and were, thus, largely unwilling to give more to the organization. However, the nomological networks to which prior investigations belong have not yet been expanded to consider the intervening potential of feelings of self-worth on the relationship of trait affect and extra-role behaviors.

Carson, Carson, Lanford, and Roe (1997) noted that feelings of self-worth predicted lower employee turnover intentions, better service both to clients and peers, higher levels of commitment, and promoted more time spent both on a job and in a given career field (a facet of OCB). Nevertheless, to this point there has been no systematic attempt to link the giving tendencies noted by Staw et al. (1994) with findings like those from Carson and colleagues (1997). Essentially, the field has not sequentially analyzed if individuals' predispositions toward affect (either positive or negative) necessarily promote feelings of self-worth which then, in turn, lead to acts of good organizational citizenship.

This document will move forward by reviewing relevant contemporary research, developing hypotheses, describing the samples used for empirical study, and summarizing the results. After discussing the implications of paper's main findings, it concludes by addressing relevant strengths, limitations, directions for future research, and practical implications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section of the paper, the author defines and positions all of the study variables. It begins by investigating the history and research on emotional affectivity. It then moves to a discussion of the psychological work related to self-esteem and the evolution of the mediating variable in the paper; organization-based self-esteem. The review then considers extant works related to acts of good organizational stewardship. Once these facets of organizational citizenship behaviors and its associated constructs have been delineated, the paper summarizes what researchers currently know of the relationships between these constructs and states its own hypotheses.

Emotional Affect

The affective constructs alluded to in introduction are component parts of the personality trait *neuroticism/emotional stability* which Costa and McCrea (1987) centrally defined as individual differences in the tendency to experience either positive or negative emotional states. Substantive research indicated that emotional experience is shaped by two broad but independent dimensions—negative affect (NA) and positive affect (PA). As such, it is important to examine both factors when studying how affect relates to various organizational phenomena including OBSE and OCB (Diener & Eammons, 1984; Watson, 1988).

Negative affect (NA) is a dimension of subjectively experienced strain. NA, as a construct, includes adverse mood states, such as anger, angst, guilt, disgust, pessimism, and depression. Affect can be measured either as a state (i.e., mood shifts) or as a trait (i.e., stable dispositional tendencies). The study variables in this research are consistent with what Tellegen (1982) defined as *negative affectivity* (or trait NA) and *positive affectivity* (or trait PA). These represent predispositions to experience either positive or negative feelings fairly *consistently over time* (Perrewe & Spector, 2002). Trait measures of affect are included in this research because they are more appropriate theoretical drivers of self-esteem. Self-esteem, whether organizationally based or otherwise, is more amendable to study by trait factors because the self concept, of which self-esteem is central, is created and sustained over time by experience and is, thus, relatively stable (Brief & Aldag, 1981).

Prior findings indicated that with respect to organizational interactions, those high in NA demonstrated a penchant for lethargy and a general disdain for interpersonal interaction (Watson et al., 1988). Furthermore, Castro, Douglas, Hochwarter, Ferris, and Frink (2003) noted that the positive communication style needed to be successful in dyadic relationships with supervisors is largely lacking for those high in NA. They attribute this to the fact that high NA individuals regularly behave in distant, hostile, or excessively fearful ways, thus, alienating others (Castro et al., 2003). Leader-member exchange theories would, thus, predict that the attendant negative quality of interaction then between such individuals and others, particularly supervisors, would generally result in “out-group” membership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As such, few, if any growth and self-esteem building and/or affirming organizational activities are available to those high in NA.

Positive affect (PA) denotes an individual's level of excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism (Watson & Clark, 1984). Furthermore, Baron (1996) defined positive affect as follows: "the tendency to have an overall sense of well-being, to experience positive emotions and mood states, and to see oneself as

pleasurably engaged in terms of both interpersonal relations and achievement" (p. 340). From that definition and related findings (e.g., Hochwarter, Perrewe, Ferris, & Brymer, 1999), researchers concluded those with high PA have enhanced interpersonal communication abilities that those high in NA do not, and thus find interaction more satisfactory. Conversely, those with low levels of PA, given their penchant for lethargy and a general lack of interpersonal enthusiasm (Watson, et al., 1988), do not likely possess the communication style needed to be successful in dyadic relationships.

Mobley (1977) argued that those high in PA would be more proactive in seeking satisfying situations, whereas individuals with low PA could be expected to be unresponsive and apathetic (see also Cropanzano, James, & Konovsky, 1993). Unsurprisingly, research indicated that individuals high in PA received better evaluations by interviewers, and tended to be liked more by colleagues as well (Fox & Spector, 2000). Researchers have also proposed that positive affect might generate support within organizations (Isen & Baron, 1991; Staw et al., 1994). Staw and colleagues (1994) argued that individuals with high positive affect are more attractive to others, and are perceived as possessing numerous desirable traits, and which lead to the development of positive relationships with coworkers.

Although much research has examined the relationships between dispositions and work attitudes – particularly job satisfaction (e.g., Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006, Cropanzano et al., 1993; Judge, 1993; Weiss & Adler, 1984), far less has systematically studied the effects PA in terms of its nomological position (Duffy, Ganster, & Shaw, 1998). Indeed, Cropanzano et al. (1993) noted that further study of PA might offer valuable insight into the role of dispositional affectivity in organizational relationships. It is in this vein that the current study attempts to link PA with OBSE and OCB.

Organization-Based Self-Esteem

Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, and Dunham (1989) developed the concept of organization-based self-esteem (OBSE). Their research extends Coopersmith's (1967) contention that self-esteem reflects the extent to which individuals believe they are capable, significant, and worthy. Organization-based self-esteem therefore reflects individuals' feelings of personal adequacy and worthiness as employees. Thus, employees with high organization-based self-esteem believe that they are important, meaningful, and worthwhile. OBSE is one component of global self-esteem which, in turn, is a facet of self-identity.

OBSE, however, differs from global self-esteem and self-identity in that it is more context-specific and, thus, is more responsive to proximal factors at play in organizations (Pierce et al., 1989). For example, global self-esteem and self-identity are relatively stable individual differences, rooted more in the experiences of primary (e.g., family members) socialization (Coopersmith, 1967). On the other hand, OBSE evolves based on employees' cumulative experiences within specific organizations and thus changes when individuals move between employers.

Naturally, because OBSE is an organizational facet, its creation and expression are somewhat confined by the structure of the firm itself. For example, in organizations where procedures, control, formality, and hierarchy are emphasized, individuals might not have abundant opportunities to demonstrate and gain competence (Elloy, 2005). In this case, individuals might experience a lowering of organization-based self-esteem. In contrast when employees have the opportunity to exercise self-direction and self-control, they will have a greater opportunity to exercise competence and experience success (Pierce et al, 1989). Furthermore, in organizations that ostensibly trust their employees by providing them with increased autonomy and valid feedback, the opportunity to foster OBSE will be even higher (Elloy & Randolph, 1997).

According to Korman's (1970, 1976) self-consistency model of motivation, self-esteem is central to the explanation of employee motivation, attitudes, and behaviors. OBSE extends this reasoning by positing

that experiences at work shape self-esteem beliefs, which in turn affect attitudes and behaviors. For example, individuals who perform well on a project will likely infer they are worthy and capable (Pierce et al., 1989). Similarly, when organizations acknowledge good performance (e.g., praise employees' work), it adds to individuals' organization-based self-esteem and increases the likelihood of further beneficial, self-directed efforts. In fact, successes enact a spiral of esteem building situations (Royle, Fox, & Hochwarter, 2009). These situations could be job performance related metrics or, to the degree to which both the individuals and organizations value giving, they could be acts of good citizenship.

Achieving high performance standards is one way in which individuals can maintain behavior that is consistent with their self-concept (Gardner, Van Dyne, & Pierce, 2004). When confronted with challenges, high self-esteem individuals value successful performance, exert effort, and engage in goal-directed behaviors. In addition, high self-esteem individuals are more likely to have higher self-efficacy than those with low self-esteem (Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Locke, McClellan, & Knight, 1996). Self-efficacy, the belief in one's abilities to achieve, also contributes to higher performance levels under almost all role and extra-role (e.g., citizenship behaviors) conditions (Bandura 1977, 1989).

Self-enhancement theory (Dipboye, 1977; Korman, 2001) posits that individuals have a basic need to enhance their level of self-esteem. However, individuals with high and low self-esteem differ in their methods of enhancement. For example, individuals high in OBSE will activate self-enhancing motivation to perform better and might engage in OCBs, whereas those low in OBSE will activate self-protecting motivation or "damage control" to justify low performance (Korman, 2001). As both self-consistency and self-enhancement theories predict, individuals with high levels of OBSE are more likely than individuals with low OBSE to have positive attitudes about performance (Carson et al., 1997), have been shown to be more productive (Pierce et al., 1989; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004), and are more likely to engage in OCBs (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

The aim of this study is to further investigate the relationship between organization-based self-esteem and organizational citizenship behaviors. Prior research provides support for the idea that OBSE is an intervening mechanism between such antecedents as job satisfaction, affective commitment, procedural justice, distributive justice, leader-member exchange quality, and workplace complaining (Hech, Bedian, & Day, 2005). It is my contention, that good performance –both task specific and contextual (i.e., OCB) – when demonstrated, serves to reinforce and enhance individuals' feelings of self-esteem.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Considerable attention has been paid to identifying actions that help organizations but which are difficult to measure with respect to bottom line profitability (e.g., Katz & Kahn, 1978; Bateman & Organ, 1983; Bolino, 1999). Such behaviors represent the crux of what is also referred to in literature as contextual performance or organizational citizenship behaviors (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Different authors have attempted to clarify the dimensionality of this construct. For example, Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) contended that contextual performance contained two dimensions: job dedication (i.e., self-directed efforts to work diligently) and interpersonal facilitation (i.e., interpersonal behaviors that help individuals accomplish organizational goals). They noted that most of these behaviors are desired or expected by employers, but are often missing in formal job descriptions and performance evaluations specifications, and are also generally not directly remunerable. Despite this apparent disconnect, extra-role behaviors are still critical for organizational effectiveness as well as successful individual job performance (Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996).

Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) require that individuals take the initiative not only to do "their duty" in terms of job performance, but also to help their colleagues, and act as diligent stewards with respect to organizational resources (Liang, Ling, & Hsieh, 2007). Organ's (1994) view of OCB is

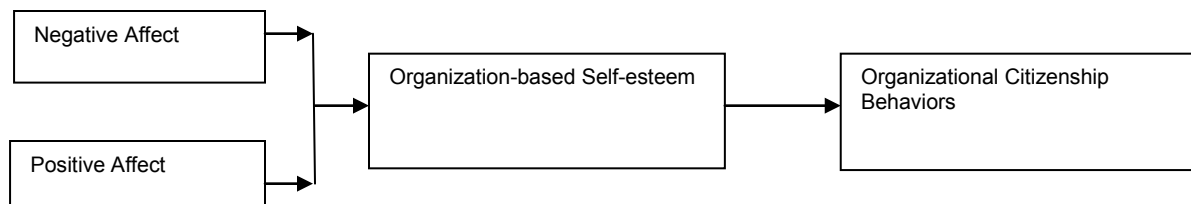
very prominent and well researched (Cheng, Hsieh, & Chou, 2002). This conceptualization incorporates collegiality, conscientiousness, respect for the law, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue (Cheng et al., 2002). Indeed, Bateman and Organ (1983) noted that several components of OCB involve behaviors that target others in the organization (e.g., altruism, compliance, loyalty, and participation). When employees demonstrate OCBs, their firms will not likely reward them financially, but will factor these behaviors into decisions related to pay and promotion at some future date (Lian et al., 2007).

As noted in previous sections of this research, trait affect and organization-based self-esteem are both theoretically and empirically related to OCB (e.g., Korman, 2001; Staw et al., 1994). These, as well as other authors have demonstrated that trait affect influences both self-identity (of which OBSE is a component) and giving behaviors (strongly related to OCB). Furthermore, high OBSE helps promote behaviors consistent with positive self-concepts and achieve high performance standards (Gardner et al., 2004). This research contends that individuals high in OBSE behave in a way that appears courteous, conscientious, supportive of others, and civically virtuous because it helps validate the positive feelings they have of themselves. It, furthermore, assumes that individuals are differentially inclined to feel good about themselves (i.e., NA/PA), but when they do, they give more to organizations because it reaffirms their identities. The study hypotheses are stated as follows and graphically depicted in Figure 1:

Hypothesis 1: Organization-based self-esteem mediates the relationship between negative affect and organizational citizenship behaviors such that NA diminishes OBSE and subsequently obviates OCB.

Hypothesis 2: Organization-based self-esteem mediates the relationship between negative affect and organizational citizenship behaviors such that PA promotes OBSE and subsequently fosters OCB.

Figure 1: The mediating effect of Organization-based Self-esteem on the trait affect (NA/PA) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior relationship.



This is the model of trait affect, OBSE, and OCB tested in this research. Hypothesis 1 states that negative affect adversely contributes to individuals' senses of organization-based self-esteem, which in turn discourages their exhibition of pro-social, giving, behaviors at work. Hypothesis 2 states that positive affect promotes individuals' senses of organization-based self-esteem, which in turn encourages them to proactively engage in giving behaviors.

METHOD

In order to be more certain about the study's findings, this research consists of data collected in two different studies analyzing the mediating effects of OBSE on the trait affect - organizational citizenship behavior relationship. Conducting multiple studies is desirable for two important reasons (see Lykken, 1968). First, it helps ensure that the findings were not particular to any particular work setting. Second, contributions to theory would be amplified if significant effects emerged in multiple, yet unique, studies. This research is comprised of two different samples: an amalgam sample and an organizational sample.

Participants and Procedures- Amalgam Sample

The amalgam sample consisted of self-reports from working adults around the world. Students involved in an extra credit assignment gave an employee survey only to individuals they knew to be employed full time in various organizations. A group of 75 students were allowed to distribute up to 5 surveys per person for class extra credit. As such, a maximum of 375 surveys was available to students. Ultimately, a total of 185 usable employee surveys were returned. This constitutes a response rate of 49%. Students either brought completed surveys back to class with them or told their contacted respondents to mail it back either in hard copy or electronic form. Contact information was collected, but not disseminated, on all respondents in order to ensure the legitimacy of their survey responses.

Respondent occupations in the amalgam sample included accountants, human resources administrators, sales professionals, marketing directors, and food service personnel. The average age of respondents was about 37 years old and the average organizational tenure was 7 years. The sample included 98 females (55%).

Participants and Procedures- Organizational Sample

Data for the organizational sample came from a recreation facility in a large university in the Southeast United States. The employees in this facility were mostly younger people, including many students. They were employed in various clerical, consulting, and custodial positions.

The organizational sample data came from a dyadic research design in which employees responded to questionnaires coded to match supervisor evaluations. Two surveys were distributed. The supervisor survey paired OCB data for each employee who completed the employee questionnaire. In fact, supervisors at this organization completed a survey for each of their employees regardless of whether that individual also submitted one. Supervisors and employees completed their surveys either at home or at work during break times.

The supervisors distributed surveys to employees in sealed envelopes. The employee could either return the survey in the mail (free of charge to employees) or, as was most often the case, could place it in a collection box in a sealed return envelope which was then collected in person. The supervisors maintained files that contained all the completed surveys for their subordinates. I collected these in person. Each of the four participating supervisors completed an average of 26 surveys for employees, all of whom they had known for at least three months.

Supervisors distributed 125 surveys, one for each supervised employee. Of the 125 surveys only 20 were not returned, thus, rendering a useable sample of 105. This constitutes a response rate of 84%. The average age of respondents was 21 and the average organizational tenure was 1.3 years. The sample included 54 females (51%).

Measures

Prior to using any measures, regardless of their prevalence in extant literature, the scales underwent confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test their dimensionality using principal component analysis with an orthogonal (Varimax) rotation. Applying Kaiser's Rule (retaining factors with eigenvalues over one), I examined the amount of variance extracted in the construct by the first factor relative to others (Pallant, 2004; Kaiser, 1974). The expected factor structures emerged, thus, no items were deleted in any scales in the analyses. Noted below, along with the variable descriptions and example questions, are the scales' calculated coefficient alpha values, the eigenvalues of the first extracted factor, and the proportion of cumulative variance in the construct described by that factor. Table 1 consolidates and presents all of this

information as well noting the original authors of the measures selected. Furthermore, listed in Appendix 1 are all of the items in the survey instrument used in this paper.

The questionnaire given to supervisors only taps the performance dimensions of their subordinates, although some additional demographic information was also collected. As such, the supervisor measure of OCB is the same as the one noted above with only the wording changed to reflect “the employee” as opposed to oneself. Four different supervisors evaluated the employees. These supervisors manage between 20 and 30 employees each. Spurious effects are possible if controls are not added. Age, gender, and organizational tenure are, thus, included as control variables given their previously demonstrated influence (Sheridan & Vredenburg, 1978).

Table 1: Scales, Sources, Reliabilities, and Factor Analyses

Sample	Variable Name	Scale Author	Coefficient α	Eigenvalue of the 1 st factor	Variance explained by 1 st factor
Amalgam	Positive Affect	Watson et al., (1988)	.88	5.00	.50
	Negative Affect		.89	4.18	.42
	Organization-based Self-esteem	Pierce et al., (1989) Podsakoff et al., (1990)	.94	5.85	.59
	Organizational Citizenship Behavior		.83	2.59	.43
Organizational	Positive Affect		.92	5.86	.59
	Negative Affect		.86	4.63	.46
	Organization-based Self-esteem		.92	6.04	.60
	Organizational Citizenship Behavior		.78	2.97	.49

This table contains information about the study's variables and the creators of the scales used to measure them. In addition, it reports the coefficient alpha values of each scale in both samples as well as the Eigenvalue of the first extracted factor and the amount of variance that it accounts for. All scales were measured with a five-point Likert-type response format anchored by “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” except PANAS which asked respondents to match the feelings they associate with a word to a number (1 = very slightly/not at all) to (5=extremely). Note: Scales used in both samples are exactly the same except in the organizational sample supervisors answered items about subordinate organizational citizenship behaviors.

Data Analysis and Results- Amalgam Sample

To determine if mediation existed in this data set, this research used Baron and Kenny's (1986) three-step procedure. In order to test for mediation, the following conditions must be met: First, the independent variable should be significantly related to the mediator variable (i.e., OBSE regressed on NA/PA, and control variables). Second, the independent variable should be related to the dependent variable (i.e., OCB regressed on NA/PA). Finally, in the third step, the mediating variable should be related to the dependent variable with the independent variable included in the equation (i.e., OBSE added into the regression equation). If the first three conditions hold, at least partial mediation is present. If the independent variable has a non-significant standardized beta weight in the third step and the mediator remains significant, then full mediation is present. If the independent variable has a significant but a reduced standardized beta weight (especially if associated significance levels drop) in the third step and the mediator remains significant as well, then a case of partial mediation exists.

Table 2 provides the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among study variables. The single largest correlation between variables in the amalgam sample is unsurprisingly between two controls- age and organization tenure ($r = .56, p < .01$). The correlations do not strongly indicate problems of multicollinearity because none exceeds the .60 benchmark noted by Cohen et al. (2003). To test this sample's hypotheses, the researcher performed the three-step procedure as recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986) to test for mediation. In each of the three steps, the control variables (i.e., age, organizational tenure, and gender) were included due to their potential impact on organizational

citizenship behaviors and to provide a more stringent test of the relationships. Overall, gender was the only control variable to be significantly related to OCB. However, consistent with theory, OBSE was significantly related to citizenship at the $p < .01$ level.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Study Variables

Variable	M1	SD1	M2	SD2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	36.51	13.42	20.97	1.71	---	-.20	.36*	.05	.05	-.10	-.13
2. Gender	---	---	---	---	-.08	---	-.16	.03	-.15	-.03	-.06
3. Org. Tenure	7.37	8.02	1.28	.76	.57*	-.10	---	.013	.03	-.06	-.03
4. OCB	3.49	.53	3.73	.56	.14	.19*	.05	---	.20*	.02	.14
5. OBSE	4.20	.54	4.02	.55	.26*	.01	.13	.48*	---	-.04	.52*
6. Negative affect	1.69	.62	1.77	.67	-.24*	-.04	-.04	-.15*	-.19*	---	-.22*
7. Positive affect	3.84	.72	3.71	.82	.11	.01	.00	.36*	.48*	-.27*	---

*indicates significance levels of $p < .05$ or higher. †M1 and SD1 come from the amalgam sample, M2 and SD2 from the organization. Correlations below the diagonal are from the amalgam sample, correlations above it are from the organization.

The first step in Table 3 provides the results for the first step indicating that the mediating variable, OBSE, was significantly negatively related to NA ($b = -.16, p < .05$). As such, it is legitimate to proceed to the second step. The second panel provides the results for this step and shows that NA is significantly, negatively, related to the dependent variable (OCB) ($b = -.12, p < .10$). Trait negative affect explained 5% of the variance in OCB.

In the third step of Baron and Kenny’s (1986) procedure, the mediating variable (i.e., OBSE) should be related to the dependent variable (OCB) with the independent variables included in the equation. The third step in Table 3 provides the results of the final step. As can be seen, OBSE was a strong predictor ($b = .46, p < .001$) of OCB, but NA failed to show significance ($b = -.06, p < n/s$). This sudden lack of significance, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), indicates that organization-based self-esteem fully mediated the relationship between negative affect and organizational citizenship behaviors.

Table 3: Mediation Results for NA in the Amalgam Sample

Variable	F	df	Adjusted R ²	β (standard)
Step 1: Mediator Variable Regressed on the Independent Variable				
Mediator: OBSE	4.10**	4	.06	
NA				-.16*
Step 2: Dependent Variable Regressed on Independent Variable				
Dep. Var.: OCB	11.36***	4	.05	
NA				-.12†
Step 3: Dependent Variable Regressed on Mediator (OBSE) with the Independent Variable Included				
Dep. Var.: OCB	11.31***	5	.25	
OBSE				.46***
NA				-.06N/S

Significance levels are indicated as follows: † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. All results include age, gender, and organizational tenure as control variables. The panels of this table show the mediation steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The results suggest that if the relationship weakens substantially in the presence of OBSE, partial mediation occurs. $N=187$

The first step in Table 4 provides the results for the study’s second test hypothesis. It indicated that the mediating variable, OBSE, is significantly positively related to PA ($b = .46, p < .001$). Thus, further calculations are in order. The table’s second step provides these results and shows that PA is significantly, positively, related to the dependent variable (OCB) ($b = .34, p < .001$). Trait positive affect explained between 16% of the variance in OCB.

In the third step of Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure, the mediating variable (i.e., OBSE) should be related to the dependent variable (OCB) with the independent variables included in the equation. The third step of Table 4 notes these results. As can be seen, OBSE was a strong predictor ($b = .39, p < .001$) of OCB, but PA still proved a significant antecedent to OCB ($b = -.16, p < .05$) with OBSE entered in the equation. Baron and Kenny (1986) noted that if between the second and third steps the IV's standardized beta weight drops and/or the significance level drops, the relationship is partially mediated. Such is the case here. In this sample, OBSE partially mediated the relationship between PA and OCB.

Table 4: Mediation Results for PA in the Amalgam Sample

Variable	F	df	Adjusted R ²	β (standard)
Step 1: Mediator Variable Regressed on the Independent Variable				
Mediator: OBSE	17.29***	4	.26	
PA				.46***
Step 2: Dependent Variable Regressed on Independent Variable				
Dep. Var.: OCB	9.52***	4	.16	
PA				.34***
Step 3: Dependent Variable Regressed on Mediator (OBSE) with the Independent Variable Included				
Dep. Var.: OCB	14.34***	5	.26	
OBSE				.39***
PA				.16*

Significance levels are indicated as follows: † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. All results include age, gender, and organizational tenure as control variables. The panels of this table show the mediation steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The results suggest that if the relationship weakens substantially in the presence of OBSE, partial mediation occurs. $N=187$

Data Analysis and Results- Organizational Sample

Again, Table 2 provides the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among study variables. The single largest correlation between variables in the organizational sample is between OBSE and PA ($r = .52, p < .01$). Based on the theoretical drivers mentioned above (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 1993) this correlation is to be expected. The other correlations do not strongly indicate problems of multicollinearity in that none exceeds the established .60 benchmark for concern (Cohen et al., 2003).

Data analyses in this sample used the same Baron and Kenny (1986) three-step procedure noted above to test for mediation. In each of the three steps, the control variables (i.e., age, organizational tenure, and gender) were included due to their potential impact on organizational citizenship behaviors and to provide a more stringent test of the relationships. Overall, of the controls only gender was significantly related to OCB. However, consistent with theory, OBSE was significantly related to citizenship behaviors at the $p < .01$ level.

The first step in Table 5 provides the results of this procedure. Unlike the amalgam sample, in the organizational sample NA did not significantly predict OBSE. In the absence of significance in step one, neither steps two or three are possible. As such, with respect to NA, OBSE and OCB, no concrete case can be made for mediation in the organizational sample.

Table 5: Mediation Results for NA in the Organizational Sample

Variable	F	df	Adjusted R ²	β (standard)
Step 1: Mediator Variable Regressed on the Independent Variable				
Mediator: OBSE	N/S	4	-.01	
NA				N/S

Significance levels are indicated as follows: † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. All results include age, gender, and organizational tenure as control variables. The panels of this table show the mediation steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The results suggest that if the relationship weakens substantially in the presence of OBSE, partial mediation occurs. $N=105$

The first step in Table 6 provides the results for the study's second test hypothesis. It notes that the mediating variable, OBSE, is significantly, positively, related to PA ($b = .53, p < .001$). Thus, a researcher is allowed to proceed to the second step. The table's step provides these results and shows that PA is significantly, positively, related to the dependent variable (OCB) ($b = .29, p < .01$). Trait positive affect explained 9% of the variance in OCB.

In the third step of Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure, the mediating variable (i.e., OBSE) should be related to the dependent variable (OCB) with the independent variables included in the equation. The third step of Table 6 provides the results of the final calculation. As can be seen, OBSE was a strong predictor ($b = .41, p < .001$) of OCB, but PA failed to show significance ($b = -.06, p < n/s$). The lack of significance, according to Baron and Kenny (1986), indicates that organization-based self-esteem fully mediates the relationship between trait positive affect and organizational citizenship behaviors. Stated somewhat differently, these results suggested that the variance in OCB caused by PA was being channeled through OBSE.

Table 6: Mediation Results for PA the Organizational Sample

Variable	F	df	Adjusted R ²	β (standard)
Step 1: Mediator Variable Regressed on the Independent Variable				
Mediator: OBSE	10.50***	4	.27	
PA				.53***
Step 2: Dependent Variable Regressed on Independent Variable				
Dep. Var.: OCB	2.44*	4	.09	
PA				.29**
Step 3: Dependent Variable Regressed on Mediator (OBSE) with the Independent Variable Included				
Dep. Var.: OCB	5.17***	5	.17	
OBSE				.41***
PA				.07 N/S

*Significance levels are indicated as follows: † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. All results include age, gender, and organizational tenure as control variables. The panels of this table show the mediation steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The results suggest that if the relationship weakens substantially in the presence of OBSE, partial mediation occurs. $N=105$*

DISCUSSION

The data in this study suggest a mediated relationship among trait affect, organization-based self-esteem and organizational citizenship behaviors exists. These data corroborate others' findings (e.g., Pierce et al., 1989; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), with respect to the direct relationships between trait affect and OBSE as well as OCB. This research also helps validate and augment other relevant of bodies of literature as well. For example, finding that NA and PA predicted OBSE but that it, in turn, promoted contextual performance enhances both the study of organizational citizenship as well as personality research.

Heretofore, research has not sequentially examined the extent to which individuals' differential tendencies to view the world as either hostile or inviting, impacted the extent to which they build their senses of self-worth at work. Consequently, personality research is extended with the awareness that OBSE can serve as a linking mechanism in the creation of feelings self-worth in organizations and the willingness to give of oneself beyond what is expected by a job description. By examining the influence of individual factors (i.e., affect – both positive and negative) concomitantly, and across samples, t confident that dimensions relevant to OBSE and OCB are tapped in the current study.

Contributions to Theory and Practice

Mossholder, Bedeian, and Armenakis (1981) contended that self-esteem predicted abilities in many organizational contexts. This research seeks to demonstrate that one such ability (or the lack thereof) is that which allows individuals to behave proactively on the behalf of the organization and others (i.e., engage in OCB). Mossholder et al. (1981) demonstrated that those low in self-esteem sought the aid of others more than high self-esteem individuals. Unfortunately, those too dependent on their colleagues might find it difficult to make the specific individual level contributions that OCB requires (e.g., to come in early to work, be proactive, and mentor). The data in the amalgam sample helped validate that claim by demonstrating that NA negatively predicted both OBSE and subsequently OCB.

This study's findings are also in keeping with Mobley's (1977), contentions that those high in PA would be more proactive in seeking satisfying situations. This research indicated that PA promoted OBSE due to its ego-affirming nature – a quintessentially satisfying situation (Pierce et al., 1989), and individuals' subsequent tendencies to activate self-enhancing motivations to contextually perform better (Korman, 2001). Specifically, results from both the organizational and amalgam samples indicated that PA promoted individuals' tendencies to feel worthwhile at work and to subsequently give more at work.

A logical implication from this study for practitioners is to test applicant affective dispositions. Naturally, if organizations were to do so, it is clear that they would wish to hire applicants who are high in PA and/or low in NA. However, caution must be taken in this regard. To this point, personality predictors of job related outcomes like job performance and OCB have not consistently generated significant results and operational confounds persist (Organ et al., 2006; Barsade & Gibson, 2007). This variability underscores criticisms of personality testing for selection purposes (e.g., Guion & Gottier, 1965). However, in the context of this research, personality testing might still be useful given the mediated nature of the trait affect, OBSE, OCB relationship because NA /PA most proximally influences organization-based self-esteem. As Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) noted, affect predicted LMX outcomes and the quality of these interactions constitute the self-evaluative reflections that help create organization-based self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1979; Pierce et al., 1989). In this respect then, testing applicants' trait affect might still prove beneficial.

There are implications for groups as well. Most contemporary organizations implement some sort of group based work (e.g., Devine, Clayton, Philips, Dunford, & Milner, 1999; Stewart, Manz, & Sims, 1999). As such, this research could prove helpful to managers when they consider how to deploy their employees in group situations. The present findings suggest that those most likely to demonstrate desired acts of good citizenship (e.g., helping others, volunteering, and being courteous) do so because they believe their organizations promote their senses of self-worth and they are generally positive individuals. Managers would do well to track the frequency of pro-social acts, the individuals performing them, and then place those employees together on teams. By doing so, managers could be more certain that they are creating a higher mean level of positive affect and discouraging the creation of unwanted affective diversity. This would likely lead the group to experience higher levels of cohesion, provide better customer service, reduce absenteeism, foster better cooperation amongst members, and ultimately lead to better firm performance (George, 1995; Barsade, Ward, Turner, & Sonnenfeld, 2000).

This research also adds to the body of literature on the ameliorative influences of NA on desirable work outcomes. Practitioners would be well advised to consider the effects of NA on OBSE, OCB, and the cost structure of the firm. Research (i.e., Simon, Von Korff, Ludman, Katon, Rutter, Unutzer, Lin, Bush, & Walker, 2002) suggested that negative affect promotes depressive episodes which, subsequently, adversely affect profitability. HR managers would likely find it difficult, if not ethically questionable, to try to eliminate applicants based on trait NA (Mount, Barrick, & Strauss, 1994). This task would be arduous, if not impossible, due to differential applicant abilities to self-monitor (Snyder, 1987). A

person's ability to adjust behaviors based on environmental factors (e.g., the need to appear positive during an interview to make a "good impression" and get hired) might make it difficult to identify NA at the outset. Assuming then that both high NA and PA employees exist in organizations, it would be desirable, although admittedly reactive, to make counseling available for all members of the organization. Making depression prevention specialists available to employees modestly increases depression-free days for individuals high in NA and is a prudent investment with respect to health care costs (Simon et al., 2002). These authors suggested that the incremental cost effectiveness of treatment was \$24 per depression free day whereas the costs of maintaining the program were only about \$14 per day. Ultimately, such opportunities enhance the probability that individuals will find esteem building opportunities in their organizations and demonstrate pro-social behaviors.

Strengths and Limitations

A fundamental strength of this research involves its two-study design. The desirability of the two-study design is rooted in the constructive replication of findings across studies. Furthermore, multiple samples allow researchers more rigorous external generalizations, especially if their conclusions differ from previous research on potential moderating conditions (Schwab, 1999). Taken together, the findings in the organizational and amalgam samples increase validity. The veracity of the claims made in this research is also strengthened by the use of paired dyads in the organizational sample. The use of supervisor ratings of citizenship behaviors helps eliminate the threat that individuals will evaluate themselves too favorably and spuriously influence findings. Additionally, according to Organ et al., 2006, the fact that measures of OCB were collected from supervisors while employees completed information on the other study variables helps reduce the threat of common method variance (i.e., not all information coming from the same source and apparatus).

Another positive aspect of this research relates to its response rates. Generally, one would expect a response rate of 30% (Dillman, 2000). However, in the organizational sample the response rate was nearly 85%. This is advantageous because it helps alleviate concerns about the existence of significant differences between individuals who responded and those who did not. In this case, non-response bias (e.g., the potential that respondents differ in motivation and ability from non-respondents) can largely be ruled out (Schwab, 1999). Considering that the organizational data contain the responses of the vast majority of the employees, as opposed to only the anticipated one third of them (Dillman, 2000), study data do likely represent the attitudes of those in the organization.

Ideally, this research would have employed peer reviews of OCB as well as those of the supervisors. Although, as noted above, the use of supervisor/subordinate dyads is very useful for helping to eliminate the tendency individuals to evaluate themselves too positively, a substantive issues must still be addressed. Specifically, there is the possibility that supervisors show bias when they note subordinate punctuality, compliance, and observation of the rules and deem them "good employees". They then infer that such employees are helpful to coworkers and take initiative to solve problems (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Therefore, including peer evaluations of subordinate OCB could clarify if helping behaviors are actually taking place. It is, after all, usually peers who would be given that aid (or not).

Another possible limitation to this research involves the choice of organizations. The organization used in the current study represents a departure from many organizational samples. Specifically, this organization operates on a large university campus. As such, most of the employees were young relative to the general population. This could affect the nature and time frame of the job, and, thus, spuriously impact the evolution of OBSE (Somers, 1995). Additionally, the ratio of employees to supervisors was not ideal. On average, each supervisor evaluated 26 employees. Generally, it is desirable if supervisors evaluate a small number of employees in order to avoid the possibility of obtaining biased results. Nevertheless, this organization only had four supervisors.

In addition to the unfavorable ratio of employees to managers, the organizational study is also limited by its total sample size. Although the study enjoys a very favorable response rate (84%), only 105 surveys were collected, thus, the power and effect size in the organizational sample lie slightly below the a priori standards advocated by Cohen (1992) and Green (1991).

This research also suffers from another limitation in that it was a cross-sectional study. A frequent lament on the part of organizational researchers is the lack of longitudinal research design in field studies. Cross-sectional studies diminish researchers' abilities to make more definitive statements of causality. It might be said that cross-sectional research is like trying to understand a movie by looking only at one still shot.

Directions for Future Research

A fundamental step in future research relates to a longitudinal examination of the relationship between OBSE and OCB. Longitudinal designs would help clarify whether or not the influences of OBSE remain constant over time with respect to predicting OCB.

Another issue that future researchers might explore involves the inclusion of possible moderators to this basic model. One such boundary condition might be the effects of structural elements in the organization. For example, scholars might look at the structural distance between employees and supervisors as potential moderators of the existing linkages. Korman (2001) noted those low in self-esteem tend to engage in "damage control" to diminish unfavorable scrutiny from others in the organization. Structural distance has been shown to be negatively related to altruism and civic virtue (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). Given these findings, researchers might consider the potential that great structural distance augments the tendencies that those low in OBSE would have to perform poorly and withhold citizenship behaviors (Carson et al., 1997; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) because their supervisors are not close enough to notice it. This lack of engagement in OCBs might also be augmented if low OBSE individuals face substantial organizational constraints like insufficient time or training (Jex, Adams, Bachrach, & Sorenson, 2003).

Assuming that those in flatter organizations "wear more hats" and are, thus, more proximally linked to others (Cascio, 1995; Kirkman & Shapiro, 1997), researchers might also find it fruitful to examine the potential moderating effect of low structural distance (see Podsakoff et al., 1996) on those high in OBSE. In this case it might be that higher performance levels (including increased demonstration of citizenship behaviors) usually experienced by those high in self-esteem (Bandura 1977, 1989) would be exacerbated by the "closeness"- in terms of the proximity and quality of the functional relationship- of their supervisors (Organ et al., 2006; Napier & Ferris, 1993). Similarly, as Elloy (2005) suggested, this flat structure might also moderate the relationship between PA and OBSE, such that OBSE might increase under less-bureaucratic conditions because positive, outgoing, individuals would have more opportunities to engage in behaviors that build self-esteem.

Cultural distinctions also warrant consideration when discussing potential moderators. For example, two of Hofstede's (1984) dimensions of culture bear directly on the expression of OCB- *individualism/collectivism* and *power distance*. Individualistic countries (e.g., the United States) typically promote the expression of personal values and interests, whereas collectivist countries (e.g., China) emphasize the demonstration of behaviors that support the values of larger groups such as family, tribes, or countrymen. Fahr, Zhong, and Organ (2004) noted that collectivism created, in Chinese employees, a more comprehensive, unbounded, and diffuse sense of helping (e.g., beliefs that employees should go so far as to help others in their organizations repair their homes after water damage). As such, it reasonable to postulate that with the expanded domain of interaction that collectivism promotes, the tendency of

employees high in OBSE to engage in OCBs might be augmented. Future scholarship might seek to validate that claim.

Power distance describes a society’s recognition of, and comfort with, institutionalized, hierarchical, differences between individuals based on class, status, and income (Hofstede, 1984). Latin American cultures generally have a strong awareness of power distance (Hofstede, 1984; Organ et al., 2006). Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994) noted that “voice”- the opportunities employees take to speak out against behaviors that discredit or damage the organization, is an important act of citizenship. Organ and colleagues (2006), however, noted that power distance distinctions among Mexican employees constrained the tendency of subordinates to question the behaviors and/or decisions of their superiors.

Future research might determine if high power distance could act as a suppressor variable. Per Roserberg’s (1979) discussion, researchers might test, if high power distance –the test factor, is positively related to OBSE (especially among managers) - the independent variable, but negatively related to OCB- the dependent variable. It is plausible that even employees, who feel valued in the organizational context, might withhold citizenships behaviors (i.e., exercise “voice”) because they are culturally conditioned to believe that it is not their place.

CONCLUSION

Trait affect is a fundamental personality dimension that influences employee behavior (e.g., Castro et al., 2003; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Indeed, its effects are felt by nearly everyone in both private and organizational life. However, researchers are still investigating the extent to which it impacts individuals, their social interactions, intentions to give, and feelings of self-worth. To date, research has not sequentially connected trait affect with organization-based self-esteem and organizational citizenship behaviors. This research, though preliminary, indicates that personality (i.e., trait affect) does impact employees’ feelings of self-worth in organizations which in turn differentially predicts beneficial, pro-social, behaviors.

Appendix 1: Survey items

This scale consists of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have felt this way during the past few weeks. Use the following scale to record your answers:

- 1 = *very slightly, or not at all*
- 2 = *a little*
- 3 = *moderately*
- 4 = *quite a bit*
- 5 = *extremely*

_____ afraid	_____ active	_____ alert
_____ scared	_____ strong	_____ proud
_____ nervous	_____ attentive	_____ upset
_____ jittery	_____ determined	_____ guilty
_____ irritable	_____ enthusiastic	_____ interested
_____ hostile	_____ excited	_____ distressed
_____ ashamed	_____ inspired	

Note: In addition to the items listed above, control variables (i.e., standard demographic variables) and information on respondent organizational tenure were collected and used in data analyses.

Panel A: Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990)					
I often help others who have been absent at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I often volunteer for things that are not required at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I often orient people although it is not required at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I often help others when they have a heavy workload.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I often assist my supervisor with his or her work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I often make suggestions to improve my department.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Panel B: Organization-based Self-esteem (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, & Dunham, 1989)					
I count in this organization.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am taken seriously at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am an important member of this organization.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Other organizational members trust me.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
There is faith in me at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can make a difference at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am a valuable member of this organization.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am helpful to others at work.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am an efficient worker.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am a cooperative member of this organization.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988)

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