

Paper Number:

DOE/METC/C-96/7244

Title:

The Relationship Between Self-Monitoring and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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Conference:

Annual Conference of Southern Management Association

Conference Location:

New Orleans, Louisiana

Conference Dates:

November 5-10, 1996

Conference Sponsor:

Southern Management Association

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-MONITORING AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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Organizational citizenship behavior is, by definition, behavior which is discretionary on the part of the individual, not recognized by the organizational reward system, yet contributes to the effectiveness of the organization. An example of citizenship behavior is to be especially helpful to co-workers when such help is not specifically required by the individual's normal job requirements. Another example is to always perform far above and beyond the call of duty, or what is required by the job.

A number of studies have shown that organizational citizenship behavior is affected by employees' perceptions of how fair and supportive the organization is. An individual's concern about the welfare of the group, as opposed to concern about themselves, also has been found to be related to citizenship behavior.

Although the main purpose of our study, which is ongoing, was to examine the effect of structure on several attitudinal variables, using the first set of data collected we were able to examine the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and a personality variable, self-monitoring.

Individuals high in self-monitoring are very sensitive to their external environment and can readily adjust their own behaviors appropriately. On the other hand, individuals low in self-monitoring are somewhat oblivious to their external environment and their behaviors are guided by internal states and feelings.

In this study, we examined the relationship between self-monitoring and several dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. We also included several control variables which have been found, in previous research, to be related to organizational citizenship behavior. The final sample consisted of 150 matched pairs of supervisory / subordinate data. The supervisor / cluster leader provided the ratings of the subordinate's citizenship behavior and the subordinate completed scales measuring self-monitoring and the control variables.

Based on several analyses, we found that self-monitoring was related to two particular dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. Specifically, we found that individuals who were high self-monitors were rated as more helpful to their co-workers. High self-monitors also were rated as more likely to perform citizenship behavior which focuses on communications to others in the work place to improve individual and group performance.

There are undoubtedly other factors relating to citizenship behavior than those investigated in this study. One purpose of the study was to observe how the formation of organizational clusters relates to citizenship behavior. The above findings will be extended during latter stages of the research project.

ARE CHAMELEONS GOOD CITIZENS?
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-MONITORING
AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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Are chameleons good citizens?

The relationship between self-monitoring
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ABSTRACT

In this study the relationship between self-monitoring and organizational citizenship behavior was examined. Support was found for the hypothesis that individuals high in self-monitoring are also more likely to perform organizational citizenship behaviors. Implications for management and future research are discussed.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined as job behavior which is discretionary on the part of the individual, not recognized by the organizational reward system, yet contributes to the effectiveness of the organization (Organ, 1988). Since the initial examinations of OCB by Bateman and Organ (1983) and Smith, Organ, and Near (1983), numerous studies have been conducted in search of the causes of OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Organ, 1990). Potential causes of OCB generally are categorized as either attitudinal or dispositional (Organ & Ryan, 1995). Karambayya (1991) has suggested another category of causes of OCB which pertains to the work context (e.g., work unit size, homogeneity among work group members, task interdependence, and complexity of the work technology).

Among the attitudinal constructs found to be related to OCB are job satisfaction (e.g., Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith et al., 1983; Williams & Anderson, 1991), perceptions of fairness (e.g., Konovsky & Folger, 1991; Moorman, 1991), organizational commitment (Becker, 1991), and perceived organizational support (Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1995). In a recent meta-analysis of causes of OCB, Organ and Ryan (1995) speculated that perhaps there is a general morale factor which many of these attitudinal measures tap that may be the underlying construct which is positively related to OCB.

Along the lines suggested by Karambayya (1991), there have been studies which reported a positive relationship between some dimensions of OCB and beliefs about the characteristics of the job (Farh, Podsakoff, & Organ, 1990; Moorman & Sayeed, 1995; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994). In each of

these studies the characteristics of the job were operationalized using the motivating potential score (MPS) calculated from the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976). Farh et al. (1990) suggested that employees who believe their work is high on the motivating potential score perform OCBs because they feel a greater sense of responsibility and accountability for their jobs, including both in-role and extra-role behaviors such as OCB.

The third category of predictor variables examined in previous research is comprised of individual dispositional constructs. For example, conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1987) has generally been found to be positively related to the impersonal dimensions of OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995). Moorman and Blakely (1995) found that individualism-collectivism was related to the interpersonal dimensions of OCB. Individuals who were more concerned about the welfare of the group were more likely to perform citizenship behaviors. The purpose of the present study is to examine a different dispositional variable, self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974), which we believe is related to OCB.

Self-monitoring

High self-monitors are sensitive to the requirements of a particular situation and can readily adjust their own behavior to fit that situation (Snyder, 1987). High self-monitors tend to rely more on situational verbal and non-verbal cues than on their internal feelings and attitudes to determine the appropriateness of their own behavior. At the other extreme, low self-monitors are less sensitive to and less

concerned with their own impact on others. Low self-monitors are guided more by their internal feelings and attitudes rather than by situational cues.

Previous research has found that high self-monitors, compared with low self-monitors, perform better in boundary spanning positions, which require sensitivity to social cues and communicating and interacting with different groups of people (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982). High self-monitors also perform better in jobs which require good communications skills (Larkin, 1987). High self-monitors also have been found to be more likely than low self-monitors to emerge as group leaders (Dobbins, Long, & Dedrick, 1990; Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991). Baron (1989) found that high self-monitors are more likely to resolve conflict through collaboration and compromise rather than through avoidance and competition. Finally, high self-monitors are more likely to be promoted (Kilduff & Day, 1994).

The preceding suggests that self-monitoring may be related to the interpersonal dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. Specifically, we believe that self-monitoring is related to the interpersonal dimensions of OCB because 1) high self-monitors are more sensitive to and more concerned with their own impact on others, 2) high self-monitors may have better communications skills (Larkin, 1987) and 3) high self-monitors may be better able to cooperate with others (Baron, 1989; Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1982). High self-monitors are more likely to be sensitive to others' need for help, one of the dimensions of OCB, and may be better able to adjust their own behavior to provide such help. Based upon this rationale, our hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Self-monitoring is positively related to the interpersonal dimensions of OCB.

H2: After controlling for attitudinal variables and beliefs about task characteristics, self-monitoring is positively related to the interpersonal dimensions of OCB.

METHODS

Sample

The sample used in this study consisted of employees of a governmental research facility. Two hundred and three employees were administered a questionnaire which contained measures of self-monitoring, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, perceived organizational support, and perceptions of job characteristics. These questionnaires were administered in small groups and were collected on-site. Individuals who were not present when the questionnaire was administered or who preferred not to complete the questionnaire in a group setting were provided with a pre-addressed envelope so that the questionnaire could be mailed directly to the researchers. Individuals were asked to place their name on the completed questionnaire so that responses could be matched with the supervisory ratings of organizational citizenship behavior. The supervisors of the 203 employees were asked to complete a measure of organizational citizenship behavior for their subordinates and mail the completed questionnaire directly to the

researchers. Confidentiality of the supervisor and subordinate responses was guaranteed.

For the subordinate questionnaire, 190 were returned, for a response rate of 94 percent. One hundred seventy-four completed supervisory questionnaires were returned. There were 172 matched supervisor/subordinate questionnaires for a response rate of 85 percent. After taking into account missing data and depending on the particular analysis, there were from 140 to 150 matched pairs of usable data.

The average age of the subordinates was 38.9 years with a standard deviation of 12.84. The average tenure with the organization was 10 years with a standard deviation of 7.67 years. Approximately 84 percent of the sample were males. Although data regarding education level were not collected in the questionnaire, discussions with senior management indicated that most of the employees in this sample have graduate degrees, including many with doctorates.

Measures

Organizational citizenship behavior. OCB was measured with the 21 item scale developed by Moorman and Blakely (1992, 1995). This multi-dimensional scale was based on Graham's (1989) OCB dimensions of interpersonal helping (six items), individual initiative (five items), loyal boosterism (five items), and personal industry (five items). Interpersonal helping focuses on helping co-workers when such help is needed. Individual initiative focuses on communications to others in the work place to improve individual and group performance. Loyal boosterism

focuses on promoting the organization's image. Personal industry focuses on task performance above and beyond normal role expectations. A confirmatory factor analysis (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1993) of this four dimension scale was conducted. The confirmatory fit index (CFI), developed by Bentler (1990), was .92 which indicated that the data fit the model well. Cronbach's alphas for the interpersonal helping, individual initiative, loyal boosterism, and personal industry dimensions were .91, .90, .89, and .87, respectively.

Self-monitoring. Self-monitoring was measured with the 18 item true-false scale developed by Snyder and Gangestad (1986). In this scale, the responses are coded 0 and 1, with a 1 indicating a high self-monitor. The 18 responses are then averaged. Previous research using this scale has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties (Kilduff & Day, 1994; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was .78.

Organizational commitment. Organizational commitment was measured with the 16 item scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1984). Previous research using this scale has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties (e.g., Shore & Wayne, 1993). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was .77.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured with the five satisfaction items from the JDS (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Cronbach's alpha was .80.

Perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support was measured with the 17 item scale developed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hitchinson, and Sowa (1986). Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .94.

Task characteristics. Task characteristics were measured using the JDS developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976). The five core dimensions of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback from the job were multiplicatively combined to form the motivating potential score (MPS) that was used in subsequent analyses. The validity of this widely used measure of task characteristics is well established (Fried & Ferris, 1987). Cronbach's alpha was .89.

RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented in Table 1. An inspection of Table 1 reveals that the four OCB dimensions are highly intercorrelated, which is consistent with previous studies of OCB.

Self-monitoring is correlated with the interpersonal helping OCB dimension ($r = .24, p < .01$) and also with the individual initiative OCB dimension ($r = .20, p < .01$). Self-monitoring is not correlated with loyal boosterism and personal industry. These results are supportive of the initial hypothesis that self-monitoring is related to the interpersonal dimensions but not the non-interpersonal dimensions of OCB.

Insert Table 1 about here

The results of the regression models in which the four OCB dimensions are regressed on self-monitoring and the control variables of organizational

commitment, job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and motivating potential score are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Insert Table 2 about here

Insert Table 3 about here

An examination of the initial model, in which interpersonal helping is regressed on self-monitoring and the four control variables, reveals that the model is significant and that the relationship between interpersonal helping and self-monitoring remains statistically significant after controlling for organizational commitment, job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and the motivating potential score. In the second model, in which individual initiative is regressed on self-monitoring and the four control variables, self-monitoring remains significant. These results provide support for the second hypothesis that self-monitoring is related to the interpersonal dimensions of OCB after controlling for attitudinal variables and beliefs about task characteristics.

DISCUSSION

In this study we found support for the hypotheses that the dispositional variable, self-monitoring, is positively related to the interpersonal dimensions of OCB. Although there are limitations with this study, which are described below,

we believe that the results of the present study are particularly strong for several reasons.

First, the relationship between self-monitoring and interpersonal helping and individual initiative remained significant after controlling for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, perceived organizational support, and the motivating potential score. Each of these control variables has been found to be related to OCB in previous research.

Second, the OCB ratings were obtained from the supervisor and were not subordinate self-ratings, which is characteristic of many studies of OCB. Thus, the common source problem of inflated relationships between OCB and other variables of interest was avoided. Organ and Ryan's (1995) meta-analysis of OCB studies found that relationships were greater when the subordinates rated their own OCBs than when the OCBs were rated by their supervisors.

Finally, this sample consisted entirely of professionals, for which OCBs are more difficult to differentiate from normal, in-role job performance. For blue collar workers, which characterizes much of OCB research, extra-role job behaviors are more easily identified (Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Thus, we believe that after considering that 1) the relationships between self-monitoring and the OCB dimensions were significant after controlling for variables known to be related to OCB, 2) the OCB ratings were conducted by the subordinate's supervisor, and 3) the sample consisted of professional^s, the results provide considerable evidence in support of our hypotheses.

However, there are several limitations which should be noted and should temper the claims made about the strength of the results noted above. First, the OCB scale used in this study has been used in previous research and has demonstrated acceptable psychometric properties; however, the validity of this scale is not yet established. Second, given the cross-sectional design used in this study, we cannot make strong inferences about the nature of the causal relationships. Although it seems unlikely that performing citizenship behaviors makes someone more of a self-monitor, such a possibility cannot be ruled out. It is also possible, of course, that the relationship between self-monitoring and OCB is spurious.

A final limitation of this study has implications for the theoretical underpinnings of this study and also suggests directions for future research. The results may simply be due to the nature of the sample rather than invariant across samples. While we've argued that individuals who are high self-monitors perform more citizenship behaviors, an assumption has been that the cues sensed by the high self-monitor and ignored or not sensed by the low self-monitor are for the individual to be helpful to co-workers. It is possible, perhaps even likely, that in some organizations such norms and cues would not only be lacking but counter to our assumptions. In some organizations high self-monitors may be responsive to cues to not help co-workers (e.g., it's every man or woman for him- or herself). Thus in organizations which foster a spirit of cooperativeness high self-monitors may exhibit greater citizenship while in organizations which foster individual

competitiveness high self-monitors may exhibit less citizenship. Conceivably such differences could exist within a single organization, depending on the particular organizational subunit or level of the hierarchy.

Although one examination of self-monitoring and OCB provides limited evidence about the nature of the relationship, there are potential implications for management. Should other studies find similar evidence in support of this relationship, managers might use such knowledge when considering an applicant or employee for particular assignments. For example, one may take into consideration self-monitoring when making assignments to teams, which require a great deal of collaboration and cooperation. When putting together a decision making group, perhaps too many high self-monitors might suffer from group think. In summary, however, if high self-monitors are better organizational citizens, it's in the organization's best interest to employ them.

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Table 1.

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of study variables.

Variables	Means	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Interpersonal helping	5.11	1.03								
2. Individual initiative	5.04	1.06	.79***							
3. Loyal boosterism	4.89	1.00	.69***	.62***						
4. Personal industry	5.27	1.08	.69***	.67***	.63***					
5. Self-monitoring	0.37	0.21	.24**	.20**	.10	.01				
6. Organizational commitment	4.37	0.78	.16*	.08	.26**	.18*	-.06			
7. Job satisfaction	3.88	1.16	.05	.05	.34***	.17*	-.06	.60***		
8. Perceived organizational support	4.09	0.91	.04	-.01	.34***	.16*	.04	.46***	.55***	
9. Motivating potential score	148.31	63.52	.16*	.12	.29***	.13	.08	.46***	.49***	.64***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2.

Interpersonal helping and individual initiative regressed on self-monitoring, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and motivating potential score.^a

<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>Dependent Variables</u>	
	Interpersonal helping	Individual initiative
Self-monitoring	1.05 (2.73)**	1.02 (2.60)*
Organizational commitment	.16 (1.23)	.06 (0.42)
Job satisfaction	.01 (0.05)	.04 (0.40)
Perceived organizational support	-.19 (-1.76)	-.13 (-1.18)
Motivating potential score	.003 (1.88)	.002 (1.33)
F ratio	3.53**	2.31*
N	140	148
R ²	.12	.08

a t statistics in parenthesis

* p < .05, ** p < .01

Table 3.

Loyal boosterism and personal industry regressed on self-monitoring, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and motivating potential score.^a

<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>Dependent Variables</u>	
	Loyal boosterism	Personal industry
Self-monitoring	.54 (1.46)	-.02 (-.04)
Organizational commitment	.002 (0.01)	.07 (0.51)
Job satisfaction	.19 (1.84)	.13 (1.19)
Perceived organizational support	.22 (2.04)*	.03 (0.27)
Motivating potential score	.001 (0.78)	.0003 (0.19)
F ratio	6.24***	1.42
N	140	150
R ²	.19	.05

a t statistics in parenthesis

* p < .05, *** p < .001