

# THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS AND GENDER ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR

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(Received 25, February 2009; Revision Accepted 11, June 2009)

## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of personality characteristics and gender on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). One hundred and fifty (150) respondents comprising eighty (80) males and seventy (70) females were randomly drawn from the Ministries of Finance, Health, Lands and Survey; State Government Secretariat, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. Their age range was between 20 and 50 years. The respondents were administered with a set of questionnaires comprising two sections (A & B). Section A was the (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire- Adult (EPQ). This section also asked respondents about information relating to their age and gender. Section B was the Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Scale. The independent variables of interest were personality characteristics (introversion vs extroversion) and gender (males vs females). Two hypotheses were tested in the study. The first hypothesis predicting a significant difference between introverts and extroverts on organizational citizenship behaviour was confirmed,  $[F(146) = 20.04, p < .05]$ . However the second hypothesis which stated that there would be a significant difference between males and females on organizational citizenship behaviour was not significant,  $[F(146) = 3.22, p > .05]$ . It was however recommended among other things that organizations should create policies and strategies that facilitate organizational *citizen behaviour*.

**KEYWORDS:** Introversion, Extroversion, Gender, Work related behaviour, Organizational behaviour

## INTRODUCTION

Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is a unique aspect of individual activity at work; that was first mentioned in the early 1980s. According to Organ (1988), it represents individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization. This special behaviour has become a lively research field investigated by organizational researchers and industrial psychologists. However, whereas most of the studies appear to deal with the phenomenon from a behavioural/functional perspective, the natural orientation of organizational citizenship behaviour to psychology is often overlooked.

The classical approach to thinking about a job is in terms of the tasks that make up the

job. In fact, one purpose of job analysis is to establish or identify these tasks. In turn, performance appraisal is concerned with assessing how well employees perform the tasks that make up their jobs. However, organizational researchers have discovered that some employees contributed to the welfare or effectiveness of their organization by going beyond the duties prescribed in their jobs. That is, they give extra discretionary contributions that are neither required nor expected. The most frequently used term for this phenomenon is organizational citizenship behaviour. It is also referred to as pro-social organizational behaviour and extra role behaviour. Organ (1994) refers to a person who engages in organizational citizenship behaviour as a "good soldier".

The study of organizational citizenship behaviour has emerged as an extremely popular topic in organizational psychology, human

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resource management, and organizational behaviour. The roots of the construct could be traced back to Barnard (1938), and Katz (1964). Barnard (1938) underscored the theoretical and practical importance of the willingness of persons to contribute efforts to the cooperative system. He described this willingness as a posture tending to produce various constructive gestures.

Katz (1964) distinguished between dependable role performance (that is, in – role performance) and what he further described as spontaneous behaviour, which includes cooperative gestures, actions protective of the system, and behaviour all of which enhance the external image of the organization. Katz noted that much of the patterned activity that comprises organizations goes beyond formal role prescriptions in the extent to which it is intrinsically cooperative. Furthermore, the incentives (for example merit and pay) for excellence of in-role performance do not inhere in formal role obligations. The presumption is that many of these contributions aggregated over time and person enhances organizational effectiveness. Organ (1988) suggested that organizational citizenship behaviour, in effect, places more resources at the disposal of the organization and obviates the need for costly formal mechanism to provide functions otherwise rendered informally by organizational citizenship behaviour. The basic significance of organizational citizenship behaviour lies in the observation that it cannot be accounted for by incentives that sustain in-role behaviours.

Barnard (1938) further stated that the willingness of individuals to contribute cooperative efforts to the organization was indispensable to effective attainment of organizational goals. He elaborated that efforts must be exerted not only to perform the functions that contribute to the goals of the organization, but also to maintain the organization itself. Individuals differ in their willingness to contribute to the “cooperative system”, and these individual differences in behaviour cannot be explained by individual differences in ability. Maintaining the organization could be interpreted to up – lift the organization by exercising discretionary ownership.

Regarding the cooperative system, Katz (1964) extended this argument further. In any organization, he claimed, the system would breakdown were it not for the countless acts of cooperation exhibited by the employees. He

further noted that the incentives that motivate such spontaneous, informal contributions were different from those that motivated task proficiency.

According to Organ (1988), in organizational citizenship behaviour, an individual's behaviour is discretionary. This behaviour is not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and it in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization. Katz (1964) paid heed to the notion of employees' extra role behaviours. He believes that employees willingly contribute extra efforts to the attainment of organizational outcomes. He therefore relied on both the notion of Barnard (1938) and Katz, (1964) to develop his OCB construct.

Despite the proliferation of research in this area, debate continues over the precise definition or operationalization of organizational citizenship behaviour. This is partly because most of the OCB research has focused on understanding the relationship between OCB and other constructs, rather than carefully defining the nature of the construct itself. This notwithstanding, one of its distinguishing features is that supervisors cannot demand or force their subordinates to exhibit OCB. Similarly, the employees do not or cannot expect any kind of formal rewards for these discretionary behaviours. However, as Organ (1997) observed, the supervisors do not regularly take into account and reward OCB exhibited by the subordinates both directly and indirectly (such as preferential treatment, performance ratings, and promotions). Another important assertion, especially in Organ's (1988) finding OCB is that these behaviours are often internally motivated, arising from within and sustained by an individual's intrinsic need for a sense of achievement, competence, belonging or affiliation. He argues that OCB distinct from related construct such as organizational commitment developed by organizational researches. While OCB may be empirically related to organizational commitment, it is important to emphasize that OCB refers to a particular class of employee behaviours, while constructs such as organizational commitment are attitude based and it is typically measured by seeking employees responses to scale item statements.

The unique contribution by Organ was to identify a class of employee work behaviour OCB whose relationship with job satisfaction, among

other variables, might be meaningfully examined in the search for practically significant workplace behaviours related to employee job attitudes. A second definition of OCB comes from Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994), who proposed the broader construct of extra – role behaviour (ERB). For them it is a discretionary behaviour which benefits or is intended to benefit the organization and it goes beyond existing role expectations. Organ (1997) suggested that the two definitions did not provide much clarity, as one's job roles are dependent on the expectations of and communication from the role sender. The sent role could thus be less than or greater than the actual job requirements. This role theory definition thus places OCB or extra role behaviour in the realm of phenomenology, unobservable and completely dependent on the "eyes of the beholder". This definition presumes intentions to benefit the organization but the behaviour should be defined independent of its presumed antecedents.

Motowidlo, Borman, and Schmit (1997) proposed another construct called 'contextual performance' related to OCB in that it contributes to the effectiveness of the organization by shaping the organizational, social, and psychological context that serves as the catalyst for task activities and processes. As opposed to 'task performance' that is the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organization's technical core. By "contextual performance" these authors referred to those behaviours that employees engage in many work behaviours that fall outside the rubric of task performance. Their taxonomy of contextual performance includes persisting with enthusiasm and extra effort as necessary to complete given task activities successfully, volunteering to carryout task activities that are not formally part of their own job, helping and cooperating with others, following organizational rules and procedures, and endorsing, supporting, and defending organizational objectives.

Two main facets of OCB mentioned in previous studies are OCB – altruistic, and OCB compliance. Whereas altruism appears to represent the help to specific persons, compliance involves more impersonal sort of conscientiousness.

However, organizational citizenship behaviours are affected by dispositional factors such as personality characteristics; previous efforts to elucidate dispositional antecedents of

organizational citizenship behaviours have yielded equivocal results. Personality plays a role in behaviours that are discretionary or performed in weak situations with limited external constraints. Given that personalities reflect enduring tendencies to think, feel, and behave in certain ways and that organizational citizenship behaviour are discretionary, there is a strong relationship between organizational citizenship behaviour and personality characteristics (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, and Bachrach, 2000). Also, personality can potentially yield organizational citizenship behaviours in the workplace through several simultaneous and interrelated processes. First, differences in personality may influence how individuals are motivated. Thus, motivation may be a mechanism by which personality yields organizational citizenship behaviour. Also, personality characteristics may affect how individuals interpret situations that arise and the likelihood that they react in an interpersonally facilitative manner.

Individuals low in emotional stability tend to view situations in a negative light (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Such individuals may interpret coworker's organizational citizenship behaviours as or threatening to status hierarchies, and may withhold helpful responses. Commonly associated with efficiency, organizational, reliability, and thoroughness, personality is a dimension of human behaviour that may both organize and direct behaviours. However, personality comes in different dimensions such as extraversion, and introversion. Individuals high in extraversion are described by adjectives such as active, assertive, energetic, enthusiastic, and outgoing (McCrae & John, 1992). Though, there is some evidence that extraversion is characterized by surgency to a greater degree than sociability, individuals high in extraversion tend to be highly social, talkative, and affectionate and commonly have numerous friendships and good social skills. Extraversion has been found to relate positively to training proficiency (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Nevertheless, many other factors apart from personality characteristics also affect organizational citizenship behaviour. Among these factors include gender. Work-related behaviours are often influenced by gender. However, literature is replete with empirical studies linking gender with OCB. Ronit & Ronit (2005) presented a feminist reading of the

concept of organizational Behaviour (OCB) and its components. They proposed that although the OCB discourse in the literature is presented as gender- neutral, it was emphasized that gender is embedded within the concept. It was highlighted that they not only reflect existing organizational structures but also contribute to the nature of these structures and help stabilize and reproduce the existing order.

Despite the widespread interest in the topic of organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) little empirical research has tested the fundamental assumptions that these forms of behaviour improve the effectiveness of work groups or organization. Though several theoretical and conceptual explanations of why OCB may improve organization effectiveness have been provided, it also says ineffectiveness is primarily caused by little or no motivation. An attempt for any company or organization to ignore the application of motivations of OCB may lead to drastic set backs.

These abnormalities call for intensification of interest to examine the influence or the role which personality characteristics and Gender play in determining organizational citizenship behaviour. Consequently, the researcher therefore formulates the following research questions as a guide towards the realization of the overall objective of this study:

- To what extent does personality characteristics influence organizational citizenship behaviour.
- Does one's gender in any way influence organizational citizenship behaviour.

The primary objective of this study was specifically to ascertain whether personality characteristics influenced organizational citizenship behaviour. This study was also set to examine the influence of gender on organizational citizenship behaviour.

Van Dyne & Lepine (1998) in a study of professional bankers and hospital employees found that contingent workers engaged in fewer organizational citizenship behaviour and had lower effective commitment to their organizations. They argued that there would be less pressure for contingent employees, who receive fewer tangible and intangible rewards from their employing organizations, to perform organizational citizenship behaviour when the market was one in which there were severe shortages of labour and when their choice of

contingent job status would be more to be voluntary.

Mark'oczy & Xin (2004) investigated the virtues of omission in organizational citizenship behaviours. In the study, they drew their sample from 524 American and Chinese managers, and the study was designed to distinguish active positive contributions from avoidance of doing harm to others within the concept of organizational citizenship behaviour. The result of the study showed that avoidance of harmful behaviours played a major role in rational differences in what was considered to be organizational citizenship behaviours. Vigoda-Gadot, Baruch, Creevy, and Hind (2006) designed a study to predict and evaluate organizational efficiency, success, and employee performance in Israeli public management using organizational citizenship behaviour. Data was collected from employees in one of the major public health organizations in Israel. A total of 200 respondents were used in the study. About a month after the respondents were surveyed, supervisors in each of the clinic provided OCBs for each employee who completed a questionnaire. The findings indicated significant relationships between job status, participation in decision – making/centralization and organizational commitment, and the two dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviours.

In another study, King, George and Hebl (2005) conducted a study to indicate the link between personality and organizational citizenship behaviours. The results indicated that of the 374 respondents surveyed in the study there were significant interactions between conscientiousness, on the one hand, and agreeableness, extraversion, and emotional stability on the other, in predicting organizational citizenship behaviours. In clarifying the relationship between personality and organizational citizenship behaviour, the researchers suggested that the impact of personality characteristics in a social context depended on a positive interpersonal orientation.

### **Statement of Hypotheses**

From the foregoing, the following hypotheses were generated and tested:

1. There will be a statistically significant difference between introversion and extroversion on organizational citizenship behaviour.

2. There will be a statistically significant difference between males and females on organizational citizenship behaviour.

## **METHOD**

### **Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted to test for the reliability and validity of the instruments used in the study. The Organizational citizenship behaviour questionnaire was administered to 40 participants who were randomly selected from the Federal Government Secretariat, Uyo. The data was analyzed using the statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Out of the initial 21 items used in the study, 18 items were retained while 3 items were discarded using cut-off point of 0.30. The scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.88. The face validity for the instrument was also obtained through expert judgement by (2) two psychologists.

## **MAIN STUDY**

### **Participants**

One hundred and fifty (150) participants were randomly drawn from the population of three ministries (Ministry of Finance, Health, Land and Survey) all in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. One hundred and fifty participants comprising eighty (80) males and seventy (70) females with of 20 – 50 years participated in this study

### **Instruments / Materials**

The instruments used in this study were compiled into a questionnaire which had three sections. Section A asked question relating to personal information from the participants. Section B was the Eysenck personality questionnaire (EPQ) developed by Eysenck and Eysenck. (1975), the instrument had been adopted for use by professionals in Nigeria after

several years of re-standardizing it in order to enhance its suitability and relevance among Nigerian professionals; this instrument measures personality feelings towards their job. Section C the OCB questionnaire was developed by the researcher and it contains 18 – items and had a reliability coefficient of 0.88. The scoring format of the OCB scale ranged from Strongly disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Undecided = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5. The implication of this is that the higher the score, the higher the organizational citizenship behaviour.

### **Procedure**

The researchers sought for permission from the relevant ministries who granted the researcher the consent to administer the questionnaires. The respondents were thereafter approached by the researcher and after explaining the essence of the study, the researcher requested for their assistance in filling the questionnaires. They were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses as there were no wrong or right answers and that their candid responses would be used strictly for the purpose of research.

### **Design / Statistics**

The researcher adopted A 2 x 2 factorial design for the study. The independent variables examined in this study were personality characteristics (introvert vs extrovert) and gender (male vs female). A 2 -Way Analysis of Variance for unequal sample sizes was used in analyzing the data obtained in the study.

## **RESULTS**

In this section the result of the statistically Analysis of the data obtained in the study are presented. A 2 – way analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in analyzing the data.

**Table I:** Table of Means showing the influence of personality characteristics and gender on organizational citizenship behaviour.

Gender	Personality characteristics		Total
	Introvert	Extrovert	
Male	63.97	59.46	61.72
Female	61.69	58.76	60.22
Total	62.83	59.11	121.94

The descriptive results obtained from the data analysis as shown in Table I indicate that introverts scored a higher mean performance than the extroverts (62.83 vs 59.11) on organizational citizenship behaviour. This implies that the

introverts exhibited a higher organizational citizenship behaviour than the extroverts. From Table I, it is also evident that males recorded a higher mean score than the females (61.72 vs 60.22) on organizational citizenship behaviour.

**Table II:** Summary table of 2 x 2 ANOVA of the influence of personality characteristics and gender on organizational citizenship behaviour

SOV	SS	df	MSS	F-test	p
A	503.59	1	503.59	20.04	<.05
B	80.91	1	80.91	3.22	ns
AB	22.54	1	22.54	0.09	ns
$S_{AB}^2$ (Error)	3667.66	146	25.12		
Total	4274.70	149	632.16		

**Key:** Factor A = Personality Characteristics, Factor B = Gender; Critical Value = 3.84

Results as presented in Table II above reveals that hypothesis I which predicted a statistically significant difference between introversion and extroversion was confirmed [ $F(1,146)=20.04$ ,  $p<.05$ ]. The researchers therefore accepted the first hypothesis. However, the second which predicted a statistically significant difference between male and female participants was not confirmed [ $F(1,146)=3.22$ ,  $p>.05$ ]. Thus, the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that the gender of the employee plays no role on organizational citizen behavior. Also the interaction of personality characteristics and gender on organizational behaviour was significant [ $F(1,146)=0.09$ ,  $p>.05$ ].

## DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the research conducted on the influence of personality characteristics and gender on organizational citizenship behaviour, did not support all the predicted hypotheses. The results supported the first hypothesis as was expected. On the other

hand, this study, based on the findings, revealed that there is a greater influence of introversion than extroversion on organizational citizenship behaviour which means the result was accepted. This is in line with the findings King, George and Mebl (2005) who found that personality characteristics and organizational citizenship behaviour were strongly correlated. Accordingly, they stated that this relationship depended on a positive interpersonal orientation.

Meanwhile the second hypothesis which stated that there will be a statistically significant difference between males and females on organizational citizenship behaviour was not statistically significant despite the higher mean score recorded by males when compared to female participants. According to Ronit and Ronit (2005), OCB discourse in literature is presented as gender- neutral, they concluded however that gender is deeply embedded within the concept. This assertion contradicts the findings of the present study which found no difference between men and women in the expression of organizational citizenship behaviour..

The pattern of results generated in this study thus has helped to lend credence to available research on organizational citizenship behaviour and the generalizability of the construct. Overall personality characteristic of an employee/ worker has been found to have implication for the level of citizenship behaviour exhibited among employees to their organization. Also, the result has shown that the gender of an employee does not influence their level of citizenship behaviour to the organization, this in particular suggests that if organizations or the leadership could provide the employee(s) with equal opportunity whether as male or female, there is the likelihood that the multiplier effect will be to the benefit of the individual employee in terms of their mental health and satisfaction with the work and the organization, while this will afford the organization opportunity to commit resources to other policy issues that will better the employees welfare and move the organization forward in terms of increased productivity.

### Recommendation

From the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Since organizational citizenship behaviour leads to organizational effectiveness, organizations should create strategies/policies that will facilitate such behaviour.
- Also, dispositional antecedents influence OCB, thus organizations should employ individuals with good dispositions towards the job.

### SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The apparent relevance of organizational citizenship behaviour has given rise to a large number of studies that investigates its numerous antecedents. The findings of this study have or indicate several implications. First, this study reveals that personality characteristics affect organizational citizenship behaviour. Also the study indicates that gender has no effect on organizational citizenship behaviours. Furthermore, it adds to the growing body of indigenous empirical works.

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