

## *Human resources practices as predictors of organizational citizenship behaviour: The role of job breadth and organizational support*

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### **Abstract**

This study contributes to our understanding of the mediating and moderating processes through which satisfaction with developmental human resources practices are linked with organizational citizenship behaviour. Our model posits that the effect of satisfaction with developmental human resources practices on organizational citizenship behaviour is mediated by perceived organizational support and is moderated by job breadth. The methodology consisted of collecting data from 331 nurses who were surveyed about their satisfaction with developmental human resources practices, perceived organizational support, organizational citizenship behaviours and job breadth. Results support this model.

**Keywords:** human resources practices, organizational citizenship behaviour, job breadth, perceived organizational support

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Human resources (HR) practices can be summarized as the combination of practices geared towards improving organizational performance (Boselie, Dietz, & Boon, 2005). Previous research shows that HR practices were positively associated with work performance (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Kuvaas, 2008). More precisely, HR practices play an indirect role in organizational performance, that is, by increasing organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). Li-Yun, Aryee, and Law (2007) noted that high-performance HR practices foster employees' shared perceptions of a supportive organizational environment, which motivates discretionary behaviour that contributes to organizational performance. Whilst OCB has always been important for organizations, one can argue that it is particularly important in the context of care services because all types of helping-oriented behaviours cannot be fully specified in advance (Morrison, 1996). The same HR practices can be experimented in different way (Alfes, Shantz, Truss, & Soane, 2013). Relatively few studies have focussed on individual experiences of HR practices, and so this paper contributes to our understanding of how nurses' satisfaction of HR practices are linked with OCB. In the extant literature, HR practices–OCB relationships have been generally addressed in terms of social exchange theory. We provide a complementary perspective by examining how employees perceive their roles.

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## THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENTAL HR PRACTICES AND OCB

OCB have received great deal of attention from academics and practitioners alike. OCB is described by Organ as 'individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation' (1988: 4). Later, Organ specified that OCB is 'performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place' (1997: 95). OCB involves types of behaviour that are performed by employees to enhance organizational effectiveness. They are not required by the demands of task or job (Norris-Watts & Levy, 2004). Organ (1988) argued that OCB is held to be vital to the survival of an organization.

Most research suggests that OCB is multidimensional (Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). The three concepts developed by Organ (1997), Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994) and Williams and Anderson (1991), respectively, are the most popular. Organ identifies five dimensions of OCB: altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue. Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994) propose an alternative model of OCB based on civic citizenship research in political philosophy. Following this model, there are three dimensions to the concept of OCB: loyalty, obedience and participation. Loyalty designates allegiance to and promotion of the organization. Obedience describes respect for rules and policies. Participation describes innovation and engaging in meetings and group activities. Van Dyne, Cummings, and McLean Parks (1995) argue that OCB can be classified into two different categories: affiliative versus challenging. Affiliative citizenship forms of behaviours such as obedience and loyalty are directed towards maintaining the *status quo* (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). These types of behaviours are other oriented (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995). The social costs associated with obedience are usually low and the social rewards high (McAllister, Kamdar, Morrison, & Turban, 2007). Challenging citizenship behaviour such as participation is directed towards changing the *status quo*. These forms of behaviour question existing work processes and relationships (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). The social costs associated with challenging behaviours are high (McAllister et al., 2007).

Based on civic citizenship research in philosophy, this conceptualization proposes that OCB should not be limited to behaviour that managers find unambiguously positive and should include types of behaviours that can stimulate organizational innovation (Graham, 1995).

The third category of OCB proposed by Williams and Anderson (1991) distinguishes between OCB that is focussed on helping particular individuals (altruism) and OCB that is focussed on the organization (civic virtue, obedience).

Recently, research has demonstrated the positive effects of HR practices on individual employee attitudes (Snape & Redman, 2010; Paşaoğlu, 2015). In the HR management performance chain, OCB is hypothesized to influence organizational effectiveness (Greenidge & Coyne, 2014). The findings of the study by Paillé, Boiral, and Chen (2013) suggest that employees engage in proactive behaviours as a result of a process of reciprocity between the actions of the organization and their own. Developmental and supportive HR practices fulfil employees' needs and therefore generate favourable attitudes and behaviours. Guest and King (2004) suggest that developmental and supportive HR practices consider the fulfilment of employee needs as an end in itself. Hui, Lee, and Wang (2015) find that the organizational inducements of perceived supervisor support and participative decision making led to higher levels of perceived insider status, which in turn enhanced OCB. Organizations offering educational and development programmes, promotion opportunities, and employee assistance programmes such as family leave and childcare support value their employees as long-term assets (Morrison, 1996). The use of developmental practices sends a signal to the employees that the organization is willing to invest in them beyond short-term returns (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). Developmental experiences (promotions, training) indicate that the organization recognizes and values

the employee's contributions (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). HR practices that show investment in the employees and recognition of employee contributions (e.g. valuing employee participation, training, etc.) indicate that the organization is supportive towards employees and is seeking to construct a social exchange relationship with them (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003).

Social exchange theory proposes that employees engage in social exchanges and anticipate that their efforts will be reciprocated by the other party. When employees perceive the employer to be fulfilling their obligations, they are more likely to feel obligated to reciprocate and hence increase their own sense of obligation towards the organization (Bal, De Lange, Jansen, & Van Der Velde, 2008). Developmental HR practices create conditions for employees to reciprocate in positive ways. Developmental HR practices encourage employees to respond in a way that will benefit the organization (Kuvaas, 2008). Adopting affiliative and challenging citizenship behaviour is a form of reciprocity shown to the employer (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).

Previous research on the association between the presence of HR practices and positive job outcomes, assumed that these practices would be applied to all employees. However, there are differences between intended HR practices and employees' experiences. Employee attitudes are influenced not so much by the way HR practices are intended to operate as the way they are actually implemented by supervisors (Kinnie, Hutchinson, Purcell, Rayton, & Swart, 2005). HR practices ought to be perceived and interpreted by employees before engender job outcomes (Sanders, Moorkamp, Torka, & Groeneveld, 2010). Furthermore, according to social exchange theory (Bal et al., 2008), employees view HR practices as a personalized commitment. They reciprocate this personalized commitment to their organization through positive job outcomes. These arguments reinforce the need for research to focus on employee perceptions of HR practices as experienced by them. Thus, research into HR practices and employee outcomes should be employee satisfaction centred. From this perspective, we argue that employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices is positively associated with affiliative and challenging kinds of OCB.

Hypothesis 1: Employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices will be positively related to OCB loyalty, OCB obedience, and OCB participation.

### **Job breadth as a moderator of HR practices–OCB linkages**

As discussed above, social exchange theory predicts a positive relationship between satisfaction with HR practices and OCB employees who, satisfied with HR practices, engage in OCB as a means to reciprocate their organization for providing developmental HR practices (Bal et al., 2008). However, they do not reciprocate equally.

The OCB construct is not the same for all employees. Morrison (1994) was the first to ask employees to categorize OCBs as either an expected part of an employee's job or above and beyond what is expected for the job. She explains that employees differ in how they define various behaviours as being in-role or extra-role. Employees differ in how broadly they define their job (Morrison, 1994) and in how they define citizenship behaviour as part of their job responsibilities (Morrison, 1996). Job breadth is greater when OCB is considered in-role rather than extra-role (Coyle-Shapiro, Kessler, & Purcell, 2004). Empirical studies have confirmed that employees do not uniformly consider their jobs in narrow terms with OCB considered extra-role (McAllister et al., 2007).

The boundary between in-role and extra-role behaviour varies among employees (Morrison, 1994). Coyle-Shapiro, Kessler, and Purcell (2004) note that the demarcation between in-role and extra-role behaviour is further blurred by the nature of some organizational interventions. There is more hope of affiliative OCB being considered part of one's job than challenging OCB (Jiao, Richards, & Hackett, 2013). According to this concept, employees may engage in OCB because they define this type of behaviour

as in-role. Empirical results show that employees who defined their job responsibilities more broadly engaged in more OCB than employees who adopted a narrower definition of their job responsibilities (Morrison, 1994).

McAllister et al. (2007) have suggested that role definitions interact with fair treatment to influence OCB. According to them employees who perceive OCB as extra-role would be more sensitive to external cues, engaging in OCB if fair treatment is high, but reducing OCB if fair treatment is low. A logical extension to this research is to posit job breadth as a moderator of developmental HR practices and OCBs. Consequently, we suggest that employees will be more inclined to engage in OCB loyalty, OCB obedience and OCB participation in exchange for satisfaction with developmental HR practices if they consider these types of behaviour to be extra-role.

Hypothesis 2: Job breadth will moderate the relationship between employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices and OCB loyalty, OCB obedience and OCB participation such that these relationships will be stronger when job breadth is wide.

### **Perceived organizational support (POS) as a mediator of HR practices–OCB linkages**

Developmental HR practices have received increased attention for their effects on positive outcomes such as OCB (Morrison, 1996). However, it is still unclear how these practices influence OCB. Organizational support theory (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) might help to explain these relationships. According to organizational support theory, if employees perceive that their organization cares about their well-being and values their contributions, they will feel a sense of obligation to return favourable treatment by engaging in behaviours that benefit the organization (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

POS is an important tool to assess exchanges with an organization. POS encompasses employees' beliefs about the extent to which their organization values their contribution and cares about their welfare (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). Employees who believe that their organization treats them well and values their efforts devote greater effort towards the organization (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000; Pohl, 2002). When the employee perceives that his/her employer shows concern for his/her well-being, he/she feels indebtedness to the organization and respond favourably to the organization in the form of positive behaviour such as OCBs (Loi, Ngo, & Foley, 2006). Employees with high levels of POS demonstrate more OCB because such behaviour is beneficial to organizations (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). Prior research supports the positive relationship between high levels of POS and OCB (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997; Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998; Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999; Pohl, Dal Santo, & Battistelli, 2011).

Hypothesis 3: POS was positively associated with OCB loyalty, OCB obedience, and OCB participation.

Employees' POS seen in HR practices applied to them is 'rewarded' by higher OCB (Eisenberger et al., 2002). There is strong evidence that developmental HR practices have an impact on POS (Snape & Redman, 2010). More precisely, participation in decision making, fairness of rewards, and growth opportunities contribute to the development of POS (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). Providing developmental HR practices such as training sends strong messages that employees are valued as organizational assets (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Employees who are satisfied with developmental HR practices may perceive the objective existence of organizational support (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). Based on the above discussion, we propose that employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices is positively related to POS and that POS is a mediator of employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices–OCB linkage.

Hypothesis 4: POS will mediate the relationship between employee's satisfaction with developmental HR practices and OCB loyalty, OCB obedience and OCB participation.

## **METHOD**

### **Procedure**

Data for the study were obtained through the use of self-reporting questionnaires with a cover letter indicating the purpose of the study. The survey also contained demographic information (age, sex, organizational tenure). Subjects were based at one hospital located in Belgium. The study sample consisted of 331 nurses. Participation was on a voluntary basis and participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential. To minimize the detrimental effects of method biases (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), we introduced a separation between the measures of the satisfaction with HR practices, POS and OCB. We used 'a cover story' to reduce the effect of any obvious association between the predictor and outcome variables. The questionnaire was administered to the participants during working hours and all the filled-out questionnaires were returned in a locked box.

### **Participants**

In total, 51% of the respondents were women. In terms of length of service, 28.4% had served for less than 5 years, 16% had served between 5 and 10 years and 51.7% had been in service for over 10 years; 25% were aged from 18 to 25; 20.8% were aged from 25 to 32, 22.2% were aged from 32 to 50; 20.8% were aged 51 and older. The sample was made up of 28.4% managers and 71.6% employees.

### **Measures**

The measures used to assess POS, OCB and job breadth are based on scales that appear to be reliable.

#### ***POS***

We assessed POS with the nine items from the short version of the survey of POS (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). Employees responded to these nine items on 5-point scales ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. A sample item is 'The organisation values my contribution to its well-being'.

#### ***OCB***

To measure OCB, we used a scale inspired by the OCB scale developed by Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994). This Likert scale assessed three dimensions of OCB: loyalty (four items), obedience (seven items) and participation (five items). Obedience includes respect for orderly structures and process. Loyalty represents allegiance to the organization and promotion of its interests. Participation includes responsible involvement in organizational governance. Responses were given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = 'strongly disagree,' to 5 = 'strongly agree'. A sample item is 'I represent the organization favourably to outsiders'.

#### ***Job breadth***

According to Morrison (1994) recommendation, we measured role breadth with direct appraisals of whether OCB items were seen as in-role or extra-role. Respondents were asked to classify each of the

items into one of the following two categories: (A) 'I feel this is part of my work duty' and (B) 'I feel this is something extra'. Employees provided role definition assessments for each of the OCB items.

### *Satisfaction with HR practices*

To assess employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices, we determined a set of four practices, in consultation with the hospital management, that affect the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1990): advancement, development, training and sharing decision programmes. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they were satisfied with these practices. We used an additive index to reflect a single comprehensive measure of these practices (Sun, Aryee, & Law, 2007). An example item is 'I am satisfied with promotion possibilities'.

## RESULTS

### Measurement model

In order to assess the measurement model of OCB, we first applied a confirmatory factor analysis (using EQS version 6.1) to confirm the dimensionality of OCB. Table 1 shows the item loadings for the 3-factor model.

The hypothesized three-factor model fit the data well. The key fit indices were as follows: comparative fit index: 0.902; good fit index: 0.880; adjusted good fit index: 0.843; root mean square error of approximation: 0.079.

### Test of hypotheses

Means, standard deviations, bivariate correlations and Cronbach's  $\alpha$  are reported in Table 2. As shown, the reliability coefficient ranged from 0.81 to 0.94.

TABLE 1. CONFIRMATORY ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS (OCB)

	OCB-L	OCB-O	OCB-P
Tell outsiders this is a good place to work	0.827		
Represents organization favourably to outsiders	0.909		
Go out of way to defend organization against outside threats	0.565		
Defend organization when employees criticize it	0.600		
Rarely wastes time at work		0.618	
Always comes to work on time		0.735	
Regardless of circumstances, produces highest quality work		0.749	
Meet all deadlines set by organization		0.777	
Is mentally alert and ready to work when arrives at work		0.794	
Follows work rules and instructions with extreme care		0.715	
Never wastes organizational resources		0.490	
Involved in outside groups for benefit of organization			0.535
Uses professional judgment to assess right/wrong for organization			0.617
Encourages management to keep knowledge/skills current			0.869
Encourages others to speak up at meetings			0.851
Helps coworkers think for themselves			0.503

Note. All factors loadings are significant at  $p < .05$ ;  $N = 301$ .

OCB-L = OCB loyalty; OCB-O = OCB obedience; OCB-P = OCB participation.

**TABLE 2. SUMMARIZE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, CORRELATIONS AND CRONBACH'S  $\alpha$** 

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. OCB-L	3.33	0.93	(0.82)				
2. OCB-P	3.17	0.86	0.307**	(0.81)			
3. OCB-O	4.22	0.61	0.198**	0.215**	(0.87)		
4. POS	2.65	0.93	0.633**	0.283**	0.135*	(0.94)	
5. DHRP	3.15	0.67	0.318**	0.252**	0.067	0.544**	(0.76)

Note. Scale reliability ( $\alpha$ ) on the diagonal.  $N = 301$ .

OCB-L = OCB loyalty; OCB-P = OCB participation; OCB-O = OCB obedience; POS = perceived organizational support; DHRP = developmental human resources practices.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$  two-tailed, respectively.

**TABLE 3. RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS ON DEVELOPMENTAL HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS (OCB)**

	OCB-L	OCB-O	OCB-P
Model 1			
Tenure	0.014	0.147*	0.106
Model 2			
DHRP	0.298**	0.098	0.189**
OCB-O $\times$ Jbreadth	-0.091	0.120*	0.053
$R^2$	0.091	0.048	0.048

Note.  $N = 301$ .

DHRP = developmental human resources practices; OCB-L = OCB loyalty; OCB-P = OCB participation; OCB-O = OCB obedience; Jbreadth = job breadth.

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$  two-tailed, respectively.

As expected, nurses' satisfaction with developmental HR practices was linked to OCB loyalty and OCB participation. However, these practices were not related to OCB obedience.

### Developmental HR Practices, job breadth and OCB

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 1. We entered control variables (age and tenure) in step 1 and employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices and interaction terms in step 2. Following Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003), we centred the variables prior to computing interaction terms. As shown in Table 3, results demonstrated a positive relationship between satisfaction with developmental HR practices and OCB loyalty ( $B: 0.322$ ;  $p < .000$ ) and demonstrated a positive link between employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices and OCB participation ( $B: 0.238$ ;  $p < .000$ ). Surprisingly, there was no direct employee satisfaction with developmental HR practices effect on OCB obedience ( $B: 0.040$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Hypothesis 1 is partially supported. To test Hypothesis 2, we examined the moderating influences of job breadth on the satisfaction with developmental HR practices-OCB relationship. Specifically, the effect of satisfaction with developmental HR practices on affiliative and challenging OCB would be stronger when these forms of behaviour

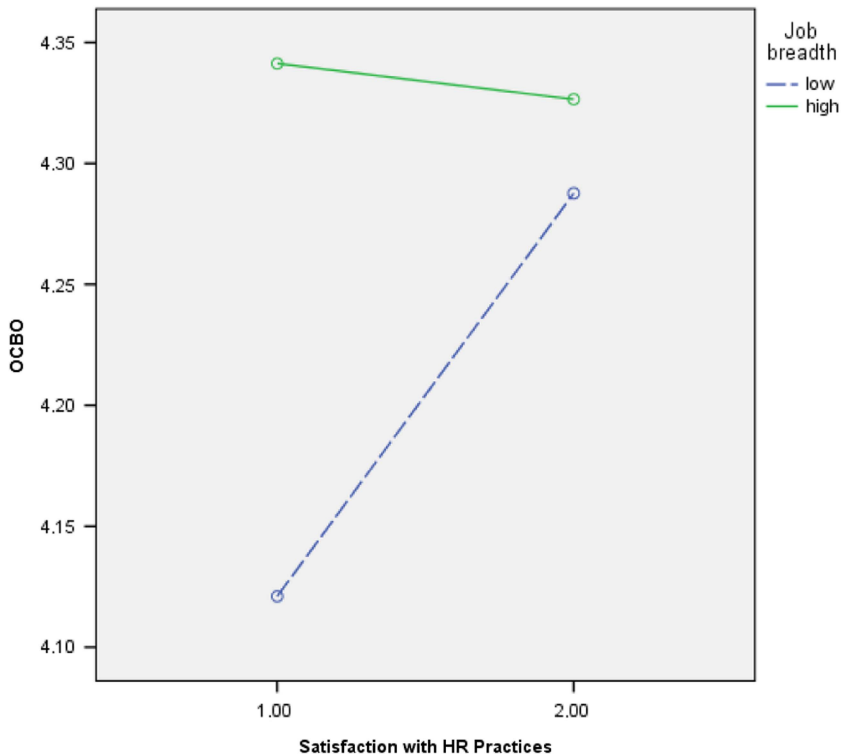


FIGURE 1. EFFECTS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN DEVELOPMENTAL HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) PRACTICES AND JOB BREADTH ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS OBEDIENCE (OCBO)

were perceived as in-role. As shown in Table 3, the effect of the interaction between developmental HR practices and job breadth on OCB obedience was significant ( $B = 0.129$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure 1 depicts the plot of the interaction.

Results show that, under high job breadth conditions, OCB obedience was weakly related to satisfaction with developmental HR practices. But, under low job breadth conditions, OCB obedience was positively related to satisfaction with developmental HR practices. Employees perceiving developmental HR practices tended to engage in OCB obedience if they regarded it as extra-role.

Contrary to our predictions, job breadth did not moderate HR practices–OCB loyalty and OCB participation linkage. Employees perceiving developmental HR practices engage in OCB loyalty and OCB participation irrespective of whether they regarded doing so as in-role or extra-role.

### POS as mediator

Data were analysed using the method suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2004) in the case of mediator analyses. We adopted bootstrapping to derive better estimates. The use of bootstrapped confidence intervals avoids power problems of asymmetry and abnormal sampling distributions of an indirect effect (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004) (Table 4).

The mediation hypothesis predicted that the relationship between satisfaction with developmental HR practices and the three types of OCB should be mediated by POS. Results show that POS mediates the relationship between satisfaction with developmental HR practices and OCB loyalty and OCB participation.



**TABLE 4. MEDIATION ANALYSES OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT (POS) FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS (OCB) LOYALTY AND OCB PARTICIPATION**

	<i>OCB loyalty (B)</i>	<i>OCB participation (B)</i>
DHRP on POS	0.754**	0.754**
POS on outcome controlling DHRP	0.639**	0.196**
DHRP on outcome controlling POS	-0.039	0.168*
Indirect effects	0.481**	0.149**
Sobel test	Value: 0.48*	Value: 0.15**

Note. B: Standardized  $\beta$ ; bootstrap resampling = 5000; N = 301; DHRP = developmental human resources practices. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$  two-tailed, respectively.

## DISCUSSION

The pressure to be efficient and effective is particularly emphasized in the hospital sector. One important aspect of improving and maintaining service quality in hospitals is to better manage HR practices (Townsend & Wilkinson, 2010). Nurses are the most important HR in the health care system. Their quality and function have a profound impact on the quality of health services. The nurses in hospitals are the first point of call for patients.

While many studies highlight the relationship between different HR practices and employee performance, it is unclear how the context of health care organizations may alter this relationship. Furthermore, we have only a limited understanding of how individual nurses experience differently the same HR practices (Townsend & Adrian Wilkinson, 2010). These are significant questions for hospital managers. This research provides additional evidence about the advantages that hospitals can obtain by supporting their nurses and suggests how important it is to promote developmental HR to increase nurses' OCB. Therefore, this study offers valuable insights for hospital health managers who might consider developmental HR as an effective means of enhancing nurses' OCB. Finally, This article was intended to enrich our knowledge of the relationships between developmental HR practices and OCB. Including affiliative and challenging behaviours such as participation, loyalty and obedience as part of OCB, this OCB conceptualization enriches our understanding of these forms of behaviour.

The first contribution of this study is to show that hospitals can bring about higher levels of OCB by creating HR practices that foster such behaviour. Employee satisfaction with developmental HR practices can encourage or discourage the OCB of nurses. Based on our results, implementing developmental HR may not be sufficient. The way nurses experience or perceive HR policies is more important for nurses' OCB. If managers link their strategic goals to the nurses' experiences, the organization can be said to have a positive impact on nurses' OCB outcomes. Specifically, we found that satisfaction with developmental HR practices is positively associated with OCB loyalty and OCB participation. OCB loyalty reflects an identification with organizational objectives, and an allegiance to an organization (Graham & Van Dyne, 2006). It denotes a responsible form of participation in the political life of the organization. OCB participation emphasizes the challenge to the *status quo* and is focussed on promoting change (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995). OCB participation has a proactive focus directed at encouraging change (Graham & Van Dyne, 2006). Surprisingly, there is no significant relationship between developmental HR practices and OCB obedience. One possible interpretation for this result is that obedience is linked to dependable task accomplishment. It includes an effort expended on the quality of work and efficient use of resources (Graham, 1995). Professional norms and socialization may impose this kind of OCB more directly than developmental HR practices. Nurses are socialized to express caring and empathy and at the same time they are encouraged to

develop a level of professional efficacy. In the health sector, in addition to organizational policies describing how to behave with patients, there also exist very clear professional norms and expectations about how the professionals should behave. Being gentle with a patient could improve his/her compliance towards treatment, reassuring an anxious patient may reduce the risk of painful complications. These expectations may be implicitly or explicitly taught in nursing school but they are inherent to professional norms. These professional norms are internalized as a part of the role and can foster satisfying experiences at work (Dal Santo, Pohl, & Battistelli, 2016). These expectations may become part of one's professional ethics (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987).

Second, the results of the present study suggest that POS may be critical to the relationship between developmental HR practices and employees' OCB. POS fully mediates the relationship between HR practices and OCB loyalty and partially mediates the relationship between HR practices and OCB participation. These results indicate that developmental practices communicate to nurses that the organization values and cares about them. Nurses who benefit from developmental practices perceived more organizational support and are more likely to reciprocate through OCB loyalty and OCB participation. In addition to a consistent set of developmental HR practices, hospitals need to be aware of POS and how critical it is to establishing a positive environment in which nurses are willing to commit to higher levels of OCB. Although nurses who are satisfied with developmental HR practices in their hospitals demonstrate higher levels of OCB, the extent to which they feel supported by their organization impacts on how many more OCBs they might engage in.

Third, our results show that there are two alternative explanations for the development of employees' OCB. Employees' OCB can be explained not just by social exchange theory, but also by how employees perceive their roles. Nurses who are satisfied with developmental HR practices tend to engage in OCB loyalty and OCB participation behaviour irrespective of whether they regarded doing so as in-role or extra-role. Consistent with past research (Mc Allister et al., 2006), employees perceiving positive treatment tended to engage in affiliative kinds of OCBs and challenging ones, irrespective of whether they regarded doing so as in-role or extra-role. Developmental HR practices, is particularly aimed at increasing motivation to perform OCB by supporting the developmental needs of employees. These practices signal that there is a high likelihood of receiving long-term support and rewards from the organization (Kuvaas, 2008).

However, our results show that nurses engage in OCB obedience irrespective of whether they are satisfied with HR practices if they perceive this behaviour as in-role. Satisfaction with HR practices–OCB obedience linkage can be explained by social exchange theory only when employees consider OCB obedience as extra-role rather than in-role. Job roles engender expectations about behaviours that are necessary for satisfactory completion of one's job and behaviours that go beyond those expectations (Kidder & Parks, 2001). Professional ethics is a critical factor that influences the perception of job breadth. OCB obedience depends on professional ethics and is considered to be in-role most nurses. Consequently, most nurses tend to engage in OCB obedience.

### **Limitations and directions for future research**

This study provides a complementary perspective by job breadth explanations of satisfaction with HR practices–OCB linkages. We contribute towards a deeper understanding of the specific psychological mechanisms that may mediate and moderate this relationship.

However, this study has limitations. The data were gathered at one point in time, making it impossible to draw inferences of causality. Although we built upon previous theories that have argued for the causal precedence of satisfaction with developmental HR practices, there is a need for longitudinal research to address issues of causality. Future research should measure OCB at multiple time intervals to reveal if, when, and how these relationships between developmental HR practices, POS and OCB may be changing.

Second, this research focussed on individual satisfaction with developmental HR practices. An interesting avenue for future research is the extent to which individual satisfaction matches up with the team's perception of HR practices.

Third, the use of self-reporting questionnaires to collect data regarding OCB is one limitation of the findings. We use nurses' self-reports of OCBs to tap into the different aspects of OCB, of which the nurses may be aware. According to Piercy, Cravens, Lane, and Vorhies (2006), the use of OCB self-reports is important since employees may avoid drawing a supervisor's attention to their extra-behavioural role because they are suspicious of each other. Nurses' perceptions and reports of their own OCB can be different than observed OCB. Indeed, the supervisor may be more aware of the employees who seek to make a favourable impression, rather than the 'good nurses'. We suggest to use both observed OCB and self-reported OCB in future research.

One final limitation is the cultural context in which the study was conducted. There is significant evidence to suggest that culture influences relationships between variables. Therefore, any generalization based on the results of this research to countries other than Western countries should be viewed with caution.

Further research could examine a wider variety of OCB antecedents including previously studied variables such as trust in leader, teamwork, personality traits, other HR practices such as job security (Paré & Tremblay, 2007) and new variables such as emotional supervisor support. Emotional support takes the form of sympathy, caring, comfort and encouragement. Employees who received high emotional supervisor support experience high levels of congruence between their goals and their capabilities (Pohl & Galletta, 2017).

Another interesting avenue for future developmental HR research is to investigate moderation models at different levels of analysis. Perceptions of fairness or social contexts of organizations, for example, may affect developmental HR practices–OCB (Kuvás, 2010). Future studies should integrate perceptions of fairness as a potential moderator of the relationship between developmental HR practices and OCB.

## **Practical implications**

Practitioners and researchers concerned with nurses' OCB can benefit from our research in several ways. OCB are crucial for organizations because they can help organizations enhance their performance. Our findings imply that employees satisfied with developmental HR practice may engage in OCB, which is empirically known to be related to organizational effectiveness. More precisely, satisfaction with developmental HR practices are useful to facilitate OCB loyalty and OCB participation. Developmental HR practices serve as signals to nurses about the extent to which the hospital values and cares about them as individuals, which then contributes to OCB. Meeting developmental need of employee will better enable workers to maximize their potential in OCB. Developmental HR practices, such as training and sharing decision programmes, signal an organization's intention to build up a long-term exchange relationship with its employees.

The key finding that nurses' OCB is linked to satisfaction with developmental HR practices has significant implications for managers. Employees' OCB are dependent on how they perceive, they interpret and how they are satisfied with HR practices in workplaces. More specifically, satisfaction with developmental HR practices that are perceived as supportive can be very important in increasing OCB loyalty and OCB participation. Thus, it is important to differentiate the way in which developmental HR practices are actually operate to the ways in which top managers are intended to operate. In order to increase employees' OCB, supervisors need to have a better knowledge of what factors may be related to employees' satisfaction of developmental HR practices. Employees' perceptions of HR practices can be shaped by their managers and coworkers.

It is also important to communicate about intervention policies. Nurses' supervisors play an important role in interpreting HR practices for their team. There are key differences in the way various nurses' supervisors interpret and implement HR practices for their team. Nurses' supervisors must be supported by their organization to structure, schedule and promote developmental HR practices. Potential ways to increase developmental HR satisfaction support involve training nurses' supervisors to support and enhance their communication with nurses and hospital managers. Nurses' supervisors and HR departments can create opportunities for learning and sharing, such as training and developing actions to meet nurses' growth and developmental needs. Organizations could facilitate the communication and interactions between managers and employees to give them opportunities to create a shared understanding of developmental HR practices.

## CONCLUSION

In nursing management, providing an environment favourable to the experience of developmental practices would be a logical move to increase the quality of health care services. The quality of nurses' care is strongly dependent on OCB, which has a significant influence on patient satisfaction (Kazemipour & Mohd Amin, 2012).

Our study contributes to a deeper understanding of the 'black box' phenomenon that links developmental HR practices to OCB. The findings of this study imply that OCB depend on the employees' satisfaction with developmental HR practices. Consequently, the sole implementation of developmental HR practices, does not suffice to increase nurses' OCB. Furthermore, we introduced POS as a key variable, in this developmental HR practices–OCB linkages. Nurses consider their experiences of developmental HR practices broader than their day-to-day working lives. Developmental HR practices transcend the department of HR and signals to nurses that the organization values and cares about them.

The findings of this study suggest also that nurses' motivation to engage in OCB can be explained not just by social exchange theory, but also by how nurses perceive their roles. A more complete understanding of why nurses engage in OCB needs to take into account how nurses define the boundaries of their job. The demarcation between in-role and extra-role behaviours depends on the nature of their professional activities and interventions. Dimensions of OCB grounded in obedience are usually seen as in-role rather than discretionary in the health care sector. In health care, developmental HR practices promote OCB loyalty and OCB participation but not OCB obedience, which is perceived as a required behaviour. It is important to define these dimensions 'OCB carefully so their relations with HR management can become known'.

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