

**THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND
LEADER COMMITMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP
BEHAVIOUR**

Sabine Pohl and Pascal Paillé*

ABSTRACT. Prior studies have shown that commitment to the organization is related to organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). The target of organizational commitment is the organization itself. So the organizational citizenship behaviour most likely to be influenced by this commitment is OCB-oriented organization (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman & Taylor, 2000; Cohen, 1999). Given that workers are the targets of supervisor commitment and work group commitment, the behaviour most likely to be affected by this commitment is supervisor and worker-oriented behaviour. The results provide support for the idea that organizational commitment is associated with OCB-oriented organization.

INTRODUCTION

A review article by Brief and Motowidlo (1986) concluded by predicting a significant impact of organizational commitment on organizational citizenship (professional conscientiousness) and no impact on worker-oriented citizenship (altruism). The findings presented by Brief and Motowidlo were based on a cursory knowledge of the relations between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) available at the time and were largely derived from an interpretation of passages of a book-

* *Sabine Pohl, Ph.D., is a Professor, Faculty of Psychology and Education, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium. Her teaching and research interests are in organizational psychology. Pascal Paillé, Dr., is an Associate professor, Department of Management, Université Laval, Canada. His teaching and research interests are in human resource management, and organizational psychology.*

length study of organizational commitment by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982). Since then empirical research has produced a significant amount of data that corroborate (Shore, Tetrick, Shore & Barksdale, 2000) or invalidate the hypothesis (Schappe, 1998). The arguments given by Brief and Motowidlo need to be reconsidered in the light of empirical research on organizational commitment and OCB. It is now widely accepted that an organization is merely one target of commitment among other possible targets (Cohen, 2003; Cooper-Hakim & Viswevaran, 2005). The supervisor, the work group, the client and the profession are all targets that are just as liable to foster worker commitment. New forms of citizenship have also been identified, such as civic virtue, sportsmanship, obedience and social participation (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKensie, 2006).

A large number of empirical studies find that employee commitment and OCB are positively associated (Becker, 1992; Cohen, 2006; Chen, Hui & Segó, 1998; Chen & Francesco, 2003; MacKensie, Podsakoff & Ahearne, 1998; Meyer & Allen, 1986; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993; Moorman, Niehoff & Organ, 1993; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Schappe, 1998; Tansky, 1993; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler & Ensley, 2004; Van Scotter, 2000; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Yoon & Suh, 2003). Based on the results of a meta-analysis conducted by Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnysky (2002), the relation between affective commitment to the organization and citizenship behaviour was found to generate more empirical data (Sample = 22; Participants = 6,277; Average correlation = .32) than the relation between normative commitment to the organization and citizenship behaviour (Sample = 11; Participants = 3,840; Average correlation = .24) between 1984 and 2000. Normative commitment to the organization, defined as the bond between an individual and an organization as a result of an obligation on the part of the individual, remains the least studied component of employee commitment (Bergman, 2006). Analysis of the relations with commitment to the supervisor and to the work group has also been overlooked. The object of this study is to consider the normative component of employee commitment to improve understanding of the perceived obligations between supervisor and colleagues on the decision of employees to engage in OCB.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has been a topic that has attracted the attention of both academics and practitioners. The concept of organizational citizenship behaviour was first introduced in 1983 by Bateman and Organ, and since the introduction of this concept more than 650 articles have been published on OCB and related concepts (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff & Blume, 2009). 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 organization” (1988, p. 4). Later, Organ specified that OCB is “performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place” (Organ, 1997, p. 95). OCB is not required by the demands of task or job (Norris-Watts, 2004). It may be described as a lubricant of the social machinery of the organization, reducing friction and increasing efficiency (Organ, 1988). OCB is considered to be beneficial and supportive of the organization (Bolino, Turnley & Bloodgood, 2002).

There is no clear consensus in the literature on the number of dimensions of OCB. A variety of forms are proposed. However, 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 political philosophy. This model also includes five dimensions: obedience, loyalty, advocacy participation, social participation and functional participation (Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch, 1994; Van Dyne & Lepine, 1998). The third concept of OCB proposed by Williams and Anderson (1991) includes behaviour focused on helping particular individuals within the organization (altruism, social participation,...) and behaviour beneficial to the organization (civic virtue, obedience). So Williams and Anderson (1991) distinguish OCB focused on interpersonal relations (OCBI) and OCB focused on the organization as a whole (OCBO). OCBO includes citizenship behaviors that are beneficial to the organization, while OCBI behaviors are aimed at benefiting other individuals.

The two models proposed by Organ and Van Dyne and Graham and Dienesch can be integrated into the concept proposed by Williams and Anderson (Podsakoff et al., 2009). For example, for Van Dyne, Graham and Dienesch, obedience is considered as behaviour focused on the organization. Empirical support does exist for these three concepts (Chen, Hui & Segó, 1998; Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin & Lord, 2002; Graham & Dienesch, 1994; Hui, Lee & Rousseau, 2004; MacKensie, Podsakoff & Fetter, 1993; MacKensie, Podsakoff & Ahearne, 1998; Paillé, 2009).

OCB and Employee Commitment

Given the interest in OCB, it seems useful to identify the antecedents of such behaviour. Prior research supports the fact that organizational commitment is a robust predictor of OCB (Meyer et al., 2002). During the 1990s, the definition of the organizational commitment construct was refined and developed. It is well established now that organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct (Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jakson, 1989; Meyer & Allen, 1991, 1997; Pohl, 2002). Meyer and Allen proposed that a distinction be made between affective, normative and continuance commitment. Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) proposed defining affective commitment as an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization and, continuance commitment as the perception of the costs related to leaving the organization as well as the perception of the lack of alternatives following such a break with the organization. Normative commitment reflects a perceived obligation to remain within the organization. Results of confirmatory analyses generally support the idea that affective, normative and continuance commitments are distinct components of commitment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002). Affective and normative commitments are linked positively to OCB, whereas continuance commitment is not associated with OCB (Meyer et al., 2002).

Yet, commitment may assume multiple foci (Meyer, Allen, Gallagher and Parks, 2001). Workers may have different levels of attachment to different members of their organization (colleagues, supervisor) and their organization as a whole (Reichers, 1985; Meyer, Allen, Gallagher & Parks, 2001). There are several reasons why multiple foci of commitment are interesting to investigate. First,

workers are exposed simultaneously to more than one object of commitment (Cohen, 1999). Second, commitment to the supervisor and work group is distinguishable from organizational commitment. The correlates, antecedents and consequences of commitment vary across dimensions (Redman & Snape, 2005; Cheng, Jiang & Riley, 2003). According to social exchange perspectives, there is a correspondence between the focus of exchange (organization, supervisor, work group) and the type of reciprocating behaviour (Redman & Snape, 2005). The object of organizational affective commitment is the organization itself. So, the most likely OCB to be influenced by this commitment is OCB-oriented organization (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman & Taylor, 2000; Cohen, 1999). Becker, Billings, Eveleth and Gilbert (1996), however, proposed an alternative theory. They argued that local foci (such as supervisor or workgroup commitment) are psychologically more proximal than global foci (such as organizational commitment). Thus, local foci would influence worker attitude and behaviour more than would global foci. Their results confirm that supervisory commitment is more positively associated with employee attitudes and behaviour than is organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 1: Organizational affective commitment is positively related to OCB-oriented organization than on OCB-social participation

Hypothesis 2: Organizational affective commitment is positively related to organization-oriented OCB more than to leader affective commitment and workgroup affective commitment

While relationships between affective commitment and OCB are relatively well documented (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002), the role of normative commitment as an antecedent of OCB is rarely discussed. Normative commitment can be defined as a mindset in which an individual has an obligation to pursue a course of action relevant to a particular target (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001, p. 316). According to Meyer et al. (2002), normative commitment can be applied to leader commitment and work group commitment. We also hypothesized that there is a correspondence between the focus of commitment (organization, work group) and the type of OCB (Redman & Snape, 2005). Furthermore, normative commitment is more of a contextual concept than an affective and continuance commitment (Battistelli, Mariani &

Bellò, 2006; Meyer et al., 2002; Gautam, Van Dick, Wagner & Davis, 2005). The relationships between OCB and normative commitment in a North American context are stronger than the same relationships in a Western context (Chen & Francesco, 2003; Gautam et al., 2005; Meyer et al., 2002). It may be that underlying cultural values lead to greater or lesser emphasis on the appropriateness of OCB. So, it is important to investigate relationships between OCB and normative commitment in various cultural contexts. The purpose for this paper is to test the relationships between OCB and normative commitment in a Belgian context.

Hypothesis 3: Organizational normative commitment is positively related to organization-oriented OCB more than to OCB-social participation

Hypothesis 4: Organizational normative commitment is positively related to organization-oriented OCB more than is leader normative commitment and workgroup normative commitment

In summary, a significant amount of empirical research has found strong positive relations between employee commitment and OCB – the greater the level of commitment of an employee to their organization, the greater the likelihood that they will demonstrate a willingness to engage in citizenship behaviour benefiting the organization. Despite these findings, more data are required to determine the specific impact of the normative component of employee commitment on OCB. The more specific purpose of this research is to examine how affective and normative commitments to the organization, affective and normative commitments to the supervisor and affective and normative commitments to the workgroup and OCB are related. The hypothesis of a correspondence between the focus of commitment and the type of OCB is submitted.

METHOD

Sample

Participants included employees in several Belgian organizations. The organizations included human services, information technology and sales. Self-completion questionnaires were randomly distributed to these workers. Responses were confidential and anonymous. We received 202 useable questionnaires, for a response rate of 32%. The study sample consisted of 47% women; 27.2% ages 16 to 25;

29.2% ages 26 to 35; 14.9% ages 36 to 45; 20.8% ages 46 to 55; and, 4% ages 56 and older. Average organizational tenure was 8.4 years. The sample was composed of 5.9% supervisory management; 27.2% executives; 44.6% employees; and, 7.9% workmen.

Measurement

The various measurements are as follows:

- Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). To measure organizational citizenship behaviour, we used a scale inspired by the OCB scale developed by Van Dyne, Graham and Dienesch, (1994). This Likert scale assesses three dimensions of OCB: fidelity (3 items), obedience (7 items) and social participation (2 items). Fidelity and obedience are an exemplar of OCB-O and social participation is an exemplar of OCB-I. Responses were weighted on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
- Organizational Commitment. Organizational affective commitment and organizational normative commitment were measured using the affective and normative commitment scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1991).
- Supervisor affective commitment and work group affective commitment. These affective commitments were assessed with 12 items from Stinglhamber, Beintein and Vandenberghe (2002).
- Supervisor normative commitment and work group normative commitment. These normative commitments were assessed with 12 items from Stinglhamber, Beintein and Vandenberghe (2002). Responses were weighted on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Previous research has found good coefficient reliabilities for these measures (Stinglhamber, Beintein & Vandenberghe, 2002). Demographic information including age, gender and tenure was also collected.

RESULTS

Data analyses were conducted in three stages. First, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (using EQS version 6.1) to confirm the dimensionality of OCB. Secondly, using hierarchical block

regression we examined the hypothesized relationships between organizational, supervisor and work group affective commitments and OCB-fidelity, OCB-obedience and OCB-social participation. Thirdly, we conducted a hierarchical block regression to assess the relationships between organizational, supervisor and work group normative commitments and OCB.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

We tested a three-factor solution with fidelity, obedience and social participation as dimensions. Each loading was significant for its respective dimensions (Table 1).

This model fit the data well (χ^2 : 121.286, df = 54). The key fit indices were as follows: CFI (Comparative Fit Index) = .918; GFI (Good Fit Index) = .909; AGFI = .868 (Adjusted Good fit Index); RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) = .081.

TABLE 1
Confirmatory Factor Analysis of OCB

Item	F1	F2	F3
Tells outsiders this is a good place to work		.823	
Represents organization favourably to outsiders		.898	
Does not go out of way to defend organization against outside threats		.716	
Produces as much as possible at all times	.677		
Always comes to work on time	.740		
Regardless of circumstances, produces highest quality work	.622		
Is mentally alert and ready to work when arriving at work	.764		
Follows work rules and instructions with extreme care	.753		
Sometimes wastes organizational resources	.706		
Sometimes misses work for no good reason	.709		
Encourages others to speak up at meetings			.926
Helps co-workers think for themselves			.906

Notes: All factors loadings are significant a $p < .05$.

Means, standard deviations, internal reliabilities, and intercorrelations among analyzed variables are provided in Table 2.

TABLE 2
The Mean, Intercorrelations and Alpha Coefficient of Our Research Variables

	Mean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. OAC	3,38	(.87)								
2. ONC	2,62	.47**	(.93)							
3. SAC	3,16	.37**	.29**	(.88)						
4. SNC	1,99	.25**	.69**	.30**	(.88)					
5. WGAC	3,18	.46**	.29**	.20**	.19**	(.85)				
6. WCNC	1,85	.19**	.51**	.10	.52**	.34**	(.81)			
7. OCBF	3,66	.50**	.29**	.33**	.14*	.22**	.11	(.81)		
8. OCBO	4,02	.36**	.28**	.22**	.14*	.19**	.09	.34**	(.84)	
9. OCBP	3,29	.23**	.09	.20**	.09	.17*	-.01	.21**	.08	(.86)

Notes: *p < 0.01; **p < 0.05.

All measurements demonstrate acceptable alpha coefficients. As one might expect, organizational normative commitment and organizational affective commitment are correlated. Further, affective organizational commitment, affective work group commitment and affective supervisor commitment have a significant relationship. The three dimensions of normative commitment (organizational, supervisor and work group commitment) are also correlated.

Relationships among Variables

Hypothesis 1 predicts that organizational affective commitment has a greater impact on OCB-oriented organization than on OCB-social participation; Hypothesis 2 suggests that organizational affective commitment affects OCB-oriented organization more than it affects supervisor affective commitment and workgroup affective commitment. These two hypotheses were tested using hierarchical regression. Table 3 displays these results. Organizational affective commitment was entered in Step 1 of the regression equation, supervisor affective commitment in Step 2 and work group affective commitment in Step 3.

TABLE 3
Hierarchical Regression for Various Affective Commitments Predicting
OCB-Fidelity, OCB-Obedience and OCB-Social Participation

Predictors	OCB-fidelity			OCB-obedience			OCB-social participation		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Step 1 Organizational commitment	.59 ^b	.37 ^b	.35 ^c	.34 ^b	.53 ^b	.51 ^b	.35 ^c	.29 ^c	.26 ^b
Step 2 Supervisor commitment				.071	.183 ^b	.132 ^b		.15 ^a	.14 ^a
Step 3 Work group commitment				.007		.033			.082
Change in F	105.71 ^b	29.81 ^c	.939	.009	9.02 ^a	.265	26.53 ^b	4.41 ^a	1.18
Change in R2	.329	.138 ^b	.004	.000	.029	.001	.124	.020	.005
Adjusted R2	.354	.134	.133	.129	.380	.378	.119	.135	.136

Notes: ^a p < 0.05; ^b p < 0.01; ^c p < 0.001.

As expected, organizational affective commitment is correlated positively with OCB-fidelity and OCB-obedience. Organizational commitment is also linked to OCB-social participation. However, this relationship is not as strong as the relationships between organizational commitment and OCB-oriented organization. Supervisor commitment and work group commitment were not significant in predicting OCB-fidelity. The impact of supervisor commitment was less significant on OCB-obedience than on organizational affective commitment.

Hypothesis 3 predicts that organizational normative commitment affects OCB-oriented organization more than OCB-social participation; Hypothesis 4 suggests that organizational normative commitment affects OCB-oriented organization more than it affects supervisor normative commitment and work group normative commitment (Table 4).

Normative organizational commitment is linked to OCB-fidelity and OCB-obedience but not to OCB-social participation. Normative organizational commitment is clearly associated more with OCB-O than with OCB-social participation. Interestingly, supervisor normative

commitment and work group normative commitment are not linked to OCB-fidelity, OCB-obedience and OCB-social participation.

TABLE 4
Hierarchical Regression for Various Normative Commitments
Predicting OCB-Fidelity, OCB-Obedience and OCB-Social Participation

Predictors	OCB fidelity		OCB obedience		OCB social participation	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Step 1. Organizational normative commitment	.413***	.479***	.333**	.391**	.001	-.139
Step 2. Supervisor commitment		-.065		-.009		.098
Work group commitment		-.044		-.103		.167
Change in F	19.856**	1.029	22.22**	1.077	1.283	.940
Change in R2	.101	.010	.113	.011	.007	.010
Adjusted R2	.096	.096	.108	.108	.007	.001

Notes: *p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001.

DISCUSSION

Contribution of the Study

This study contributes to the literature on multiple commitment and OCB in several ways. A first contribution of this study is the confirmation of the three components of OCB (fidelity, obedience and social participation) in Belgium. The CFA results show that the three components of OCB loaded on three distinct factors. This result is consistent with results found in Western and French samples (Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch, 1994; Van Dyne & Lepine, 1998).

A key finding of this study is that organizational affective commitment explains OCB-oriented organization better than OCB-social participation; additionally, in comparison with others foci of commitment (supervisor and work group), organizational commitment is the best predictor of OCB-organization. Our results show that organizational commitment has a greater impact on OCB than supervisor or workgroup commitment. This result is consistent with the social exchange perspective. According to the social exchange framework, there is a correspondence between the focus

of exchange (organization, supervisor, work group) and the type of reciprocating behaviour (Redman & Snape, 2005, Masterson, Lewis, Goldman & Taylor, 2000; Cohen, 1999). The OCB most likely to be influenced by organizational commitment is OCB-oriented organization. Indeed, affective organizational commitment was positively linked to fidelity and obedience and the relationship between affective commitment and social participation was weak. Furthermore, leader commitment and work group commitment were less associated with OCB-oriented organization than organizational commitment. Normative organizational commitment was also associated with OCB-organization, but not with OCB social-participation. This study confirms this correspondence between the focus of commitment and the predicted outcome.

The third objective of this research was to examine the role of normative commitment as an antecedent of OCB. Normative commitment is more of a contextual concept than the other forms of commitment. According to Meyer et al. (2002), the relationship between normative commitment and OCB was stronger than comparable relationships reported by studies carried out in North America.

Limitations and Implications

We can identify some limitations to this study. First, common method variance bias is a concern. Secondly, we elected to use self-report to assess OCB. The decision to use self-reports depends upon the purpose of the study. Self-report data are commonly used to assess individual self-perception (Spector 1994). Thirdly, because of the design chosen for this study, the difficulty of inferring causality entails a significant limitation that needs to be acknowledged (Bobko & Stone-Romé, 1988). Duplication of this study using a longitudinal design should serve to mitigate this limitation. One final limitation is the cultural context in which the study was conducted (Belgium). There is significant evidence to suggest that culture influences relations between variables. Evidence of this has been found for employee commitment (Cohen, 2003) and OCB (Paillé, 2009). Therefore any generalization of the results of this research to countries other than western countries should be viewed with caution.

Despite these limitations, this study suggests a number of implications for future research. For example, the literature on organizational behavior indicates that both commitment (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvaran, 2005) and OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2009) explain the same consequences at an organizational-level of analysis, such as withdrawal behaviors (i.e. absenteeism, turnover or turnover intents). Following Nielsen, Halfhill and Nielsen (2005), the research model could usefully be extended to supervisor-level and colleague-level analyses. Furthermore, the inclusion alongside forms of commitments of a whole set of variables associated with the exchange process at supervisor or group work levels (i.e. trust, justice, support, etc.) might help to improve our understanding of the willingness of employees to engage in OCB. Finally, it could be interesting to study the relationship between leader commitment and work commitment and OCB-focused on interpersonal relations. In this study, OCB-focused on interpersonal relation was assessed merely by social participation. The measurement of OCB-interpersonal relations could be improved.

CONCLUSION

This research has attempted to extend the three dimensions of OCB in a Belgian context. This study contributes to further understanding the development of OCB by providing insight into how commitments affect OCB among a sample of Belgian workers. The findings from this research suggest that the various foci of affective and normative commitment are relevant to OCB.

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