

Examining the Work Engagement-Organizational Citizenship Behavior Link: The Moderating Role of Employee Personality

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Abstract: Although previous researchers have paid significant attention to the effect of employee work engagement on employee involvement in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), only a few have specifically examined the joint effects of employee work engagement and employee personality on employee involvement in OCB. Drawing upon the Social Exchange Theory, this study specifically examined the role of employee personality (agreeableness) as a moderator in the work engagement-OCB relationship. A total of 646 employees from three public healthcare institutions in Malaysia participated in this study. Moderated hierarchical regression results indicated a positive effect of work engagement with OCB and a significant interaction between work engagement and agreeableness personality in predicting OCB. However, the effect of work engagement on OCB was stronger for those respondents low in agreeableness than for those high in agreeableness personality, contrary to the hypothesis. Managerial implications and directions for future research are discussed.

Keywords: *Work Engagement, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Employee Personality, Agreeableness.*

1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is one type of non-task-related employee behavior of employee that has captured the attention of both academicians and practitioners in recent years. OCB is found to benefit both employers and employees and has contributed greatly to organizational effectiveness (Casu, Mariani, Chiesa, Guglielmi & Gremigni (2021), Walz & Niehoff, 1996). OCB deals with the positive behavioral aspects that are neither stated in the job description nor enforced by the employment contract. Examples of OCB include helping new employees, volunteering at work, being punctual, and enhancing the reputation of the organization. OCB enhances coworker and managerial productivity, serves as an effective means of coordinating activities between team members and across work groups, and enhances the organization's ability to adapt to environmental changes (Organ, Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 2006, Yaakobi & Weisberg, 2020).

Studies on OCB in Malaysia have been conducted on employees in different types of industries such as services and manufacturing in the private and public sectors (Ishak, 2005; May & Ramayah, 2009; Krishnan et al., 2010, 2013). However, studies on OCB targeting employees in the health sector, particularly nurses in the public health sector are very scarce and deemed very important as this sector contributes significantly to the economic growth of the country. Nurses in the Malaysian public health sector were more relevant as respondents in this study because past research has reported that employees in the public sector have a greater degree of involvement in OCB in comparison to the private sector (Sharma, 2011). In addition, public hospitals or public healthcare centers are still the preferred healthcare providers in Malaysia because of the low charges and much-improved facilities at the new hospitals. The public healthcare sector is also facing critical challenges in sustaining the growth of the industry, in terms of retaining trained personnel and the increasing number of litigations. As such, it is deemed imperative for nurses in the public healthcare sector to display extra-role behaviors that will help to continuously improve service delivery, and significantly improve productivity and overall organizational effectiveness.

A review of the literature shows that OCB has been studied in-depth to determine its antecedents as well as its consequences. Although many studies have examined the direct relationship between various job attitudes and OCB (Belwalkar et al., 2018; Gahlawat & Kundu, 2020; Jain & Rizvi, 2020; Krishnan et al., 2014; Pletzer 2021; Shimamura et al., 2021), studies examining the moderating mechanism in the relationship between work engagement and OCB are scarce (Su & Hsiao, 2005; Krishnan et al., 2017). This study intended to

investigate the moderating role of employee personality (agreeableness) in the work engagement-OCB relationship. Although it is important to identify and examine the role of primary situational antecedents (i.e. work engagement) on OCB, examining the moderating role of employee personality in the work engagement-OCB link will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in OCB.

The social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and norms of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) were anchored as the main theories explaining the relationship between work engagement and OCB in this study. Social exchange refers to voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do bring from others. Reciprocating a favor received from another person functions as the starting mechanism of the exchange relationship. Favorable results of initial exchange transaction results in the development of trust, which is an integral aspect of the social exchange relationship. Employees who experience favorable work situations such as enriched and motivating jobs, good social support, and less demanding work environment, will be more engaged in their work and reciprocate by being involved in voluntary actions and helping behaviors such as OCB.

2. Literature Review

Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Smith et al. (1983) introduced the notion of OCB as discretionary behavior that goes beyond one's official role and is intended to help other people in the organization or to show conscientiousness and support towards the organization. Organ (1988, p.4) later defined this concept as: "an individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization. From the above definitions, OCB can be construed as a positive behavior that is neither stated in the job description nor enforced by the employment contract.

The literature on OCB shows that many dimensions were introduced to measure the constructs of OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Since the introduction of OCB, Organ (1988, 1997 & 2018) has expanded the conceptualization of OCB into five distinct dimensions namely, altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. Altruism refers to the same helping behavior (helping specific others) as described by Smith et al. (1983). Courtesy denotes the behaviors that reflect basic consideration for others (e.g. letting one's coworkers know where they can be reached/consulting others before taking action). Conscientiousness is a pattern of going beyond minimal levels of attendance, punctuality, and conserving resources, and involves being a "good citizen" at the workplace. Civic virtue is somewhat different from the other dimensions because the target is the organization, or sometimes the work group, and the dimension pertains to constructive involvement in the political process of the organization (e.g. keeping abreast of issues involving the organization/keeping up with important matters within the organization). Sportsmanship reflects behaviors that an employee does not engage in, such as tolerating inconveniences without whining and grievances (e.g. not complaining about trivial matters).

Williams and Anderson (1991) examined the OCB dimensionality issue further and came up with a two-dimensional view: organizational citizenship behavior directed toward individuals (OCBI), and organizational citizenship behavior directed toward the organization (OCBO). The factor analytic evidence from their study demonstrated that the items used to measure OCB loaded best onto their two-dimensional view of OCB. However, it is important to mention that these two dimensions, OCBI and OCBO, were largely based on Organ's (1988) five dimensions. Williams and Anderson (1991) suggested that Organ's (1988) five dimensions be reduced to the two dimensions they proposed; OCBI comprises altruism and courtesy, and OCBO encompasses conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. A review of the literature shows that OCB has been studied in-depth both to determine its antecedents as well as its consequences. Studies have identified a number of predictors of OCB, including job attitudes (Shore & Wayne, 1993), interpersonal trust/loyalty to the leader, (Podsakoff et al. 1990) task characteristics (Krishnan et al., 2013; Todd & Kent, 2006), job crafting (Gong et al. 2018), workplace spirituality (Belwalkar et al., 2018), and spiritual leadership (Pio & Elia, 2018).

Work Engagement and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Employee work engagement has received increasing research attention over the past ten years (Balasubramanian & Lathabhavan, 2017; Coffeng et al.,

2014; Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008; Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). The work engagement construct has been defined in many different ways. In the academic literature, a number of definitions have been provided. Kahn (1990, p.694) defined personal engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances”. Kahn (1990, 1992) further emphasized that engagement is to be psychologically present when occupying and performing an organizational role.

On the other hand, burnout researchers defined engagement as the opposite or positive antithesis of burnout (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001) and claimed that engagement is characterized by energy, involvement, and efficacy, the direct opposite of the three burnout dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy. Schaufeli et al. (2002, p.74) defined engagement as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption”. The authors further stated that engagement is not a momentary and specific state, but rather, it is a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior.

Literature shows that two streams of research provide models of employee engagement. In his qualitative study on the psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work, Kahn (1990) found that there were three psychological conditions associated with engagement or disengagement at work: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. In other words, workers were more engaged at work in situations that offered them more psychological meaningfulness and psychological safety, and when they were more psychologically available. May et al. (2004) empirically tested Kahn’s (1990) model, found that meaningfulness, safety and availability were significantly related to engagement.

The other model of engagement comes from the burnout literature which describes job engagement as the positive antithesis of burnout, noting that burnout involves the erosion of engagement with one’s job (Maslach et al., 2001). The researchers identified six areas of work-life that lead to burnout and engagement: workload, control, rewards and recognition, community and social support, perceived fairness, and value. They argued that job engagement is associated with a sustainable workload, feelings of choice and control, appropriate recognition and reward, a supportive work community, fairness and justice, and meaningful and valued work. Like burnout, engagement is expected to mediate the link between these six work-life factors and various work outcomes. Both Kahn’s (1990) and Maslach et al.’s (2001) models indicate the psychological conditions or antecedents that are necessary for work engagement.

The conditions of engagement in both Kahn’s (1990) and Maslach et al.’s (2001) models reflect the economic and socio-emotional exchange resources within the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964). When employees receive these resources from their organization, they feel obliged to repay the organization with greater levels of engagement. In terms of Kahn’s (1990) definition of engagement, employees feel obliged to bring themselves more deeply into their role performances as repayment for the resources they receive from their organization. When the organization fails to provide these resources (e.g. motivating job characteristics, social support, conducive work environment), individuals are more likely to withdraw and disengage themselves from their roles. Thus, the amount of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources that an individual is prepared to devote to the performance of one’s work role is contingent on the economic and socio-emotional resources received from the organization.

Based on the above discussion on the theoretical and empirical research related to this study, the researchers proposed the following:

Hypothesis 1: Work engagement is positively related to OCB.

Moderating Role of Employee Personality: Since it is widely agreed that employee involvement in extra-role behavior such as OCB arises from both employee attitudinal factors and personal factors (Krishnan et al., 2010, 2013; Macey & Schneider, 2008), it is imperative to include personality factors in the study of OCB. Employee job attitude is not solely responsible for controlling or shaping the extent to which individuals display OCB in their work. Various studies have shown the direct effect of employee personality on employee involvement in OCB. Employee personality factors also function as reciprocal determinants of extra-role

behaviors and contribute to shaping the environment (Bandura, 1978). In line with this argument, one type of employee personality variable namely agreeableness was explored as a potential moderator in the relationship between work engagement and OCB.

There has been a consensus among organization behavior researchers that the five-factor model of personality (Barrick & Mount, 1991, 2005; Costa & McCrae, 1992, 1997), is one of the most prominent models in contemporary psychology to describe the most salient features of personality. The big five personality dimensions can be divided into five factors: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Of these five factors, conscientiousness and agreeableness have the most obvious theoretical connections with OCB and have been the subject of most dispositionally-based OCB research (Digman, 1990). Given that most OCB researchers have focused on conscientiousness and agreeableness among the Big Five, we focused on agreeableness personality to examine its direct and moderating role. Agreeableness is the tendency to be trusting, compliant, caring, considerate, generous, and gentle. Such individuals have an optimistic view of human nature. They are sympathetic to others and have a desire to help others; in return, they expect others to be helpful. In essence, agreeable individuals are pro-social and have a communal orientation toward others (Costa & McCrae, 1992; John & Srivastava, 1999).

Literature shows that employee personality was found to play both, as a direct predictor or as a moderator in OCB studies. For example, agreeableness and conscientiousness were found to have a positive relationship with OCB (Ilies et al., 2009). Recently, more studies have been conducted to examine the moderating role of personality disposition in various job situations- work outcome relationships (Srivatsa & Pathak 2020). For example, Ballout (2009) examined the moderating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between career commitment and career success and found that career commitment predicted both objective (i.e. salary level) and subjective (i.e. career satisfaction) career success but only for employees with average to high self-efficacy, not for those with low self-efficacy. Comeau and Griffith (2005) support the notion that personality variables interact with environmental variables such as structural interdependence to impact the levels of OCB. On the other hand, Ilies et al. (2006) investigated the interactive effects of personality traits and experienced states on intra-individual patterns of citizenship behavior. The results of their study demonstrate that agreeableness moderated the intra-individual relationship between state positive affect and daily reports of citizenship behavior. Highly agreeable employees exhibited more consistent patterns of citizenship behavior, such that their performance of OCB was less dependent on their state of positive affect. Based on the above discussion of the theoretical and empirical research related to this study, the researchers proposed the following:

Hypothesis 2: Employee personality (agreeableness) moderates the relationship between work engagement and OCB.

Sub Hypothesis 2a: Agreeableness moderates the work engagement-OCB relation, such that the relation between work engagement and OCB will be stronger when employees are high in agreeableness than when they are low in agreeableness.

3. Methodology

Sample and Procedure: Respondents of this study consist of nursing and clinical employees holding non-supervisory jobs in two public hospitals in Malaysia. A total of 800 questionnaires were personally distributed to the targeted employees through their hospital supervisors. A total of 36 nursing supervisors from these hospitals were responsible for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires from their respective subordinates. The respondents were involved in various operations in the wards, clinics, units and centers in the hospitals such as the Pediatric Clinic, Ear Nose & Throat Clinic, Skin Clinic, Eye Clinic, Oncology and Gynecology Clinic, Physiotherapy Unit, Occupational Therapy Unit, Palliative Care Unit, and the Day Care Center. This study employed the convenience sampling method in selecting respondents and a survey research design was chosen for this study. Data on employees' perceived work engagement, personality (agreeableness) and involvement in OCB were collected cross-sectionally, using structured research questionnaires.

Before distributing the study questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted to assess; i) whether the items were easy to understand, and ii) the appropriateness of the questionnaire design. As the questionnaire used in this

study was based on the western culture in previous studies, a pilot test was deemed important to validate its appropriateness to the Malaysian scenario before the actual data collection. Since the original survey instrument was developed in English, the English scale was translated into the Malay language and then re-translated into English by two bilingual (English and Malay) scholars. A total of 100 nurses participated in the pilot study. It was agreed that most of the items were clear and easy to understand. None of the items for the three main study variables (OCB, work engagement, and agreeableness) in this study were revised because the respondents found them to be clearly stated. Therefore all the items that measured the main study variables in this study were adopted and administered to the targeted employees.

Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data on employee's perceptions of work engagement, personality and their involvement in OCB. The nursing supervisors' help was sought to distribute and collect the questionnaires from their subordinates. All questionnaires distributed were collected personally by the researcher from the nursing supervisors for six weeks. A longer time was taken to collect some of the questionnaires distributed because some nursing supervisors could not be contacted due to various reasons such as annual leave, pilgrimage or attending courses. Respondents participated voluntarily and they were also told that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The anonymity of the respondents was also assured.

Measures: This study adopted the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002) to measure OCB. All the 15 items of this scale were adopted without any modification. This 15-item scale used a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (very inaccurate) to 5 (very accurate) to measure helping behaviors that benefit a specific individual (OCB-I) and the organization as a whole (OCB-O). Lee and Allen (2002) reported the reliabilities of .83 (OCB-I) and .88 (OCB-O). Although researchers have widely used the five dimensions of OCB proposed by MacKenzie, Podsakoff and Fetter (1993), most studies on OCB used either the overall measure of OCB or the five main dimensions by Mackenzie et al. (1993). In this study, the overall measure of OCB was used. OCB items that were retained after the confirmatory factor analysis were summed to form a composite score for the OCB construct in this study. Examples of items in this scale are "I help others who have been absent" and "I offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organization". This study reported a coefficient alpha reliability of .84 for the composite score for OCB. Chien and Su (2009) reported a coefficient alpha reliability of .94 for their composite score for OCB.

Work engagement was measured using a 9-item questionnaire designed by Schaufeli et al. (2006). These items assessed three main dimensions of work engagement namely vigor, dedication and absorption in their jobs. A sample item is "at my work, I feel bursting with energy". Participants indicated their responses on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This study has reported a coefficient alpha reliability of .89 for work engagement.

This study adopted Goldberg's (1992) Big Five IPIP with a 10-item questionnaire to measure agreeableness. A sample item is "I sympathize with others' feelings". Participants indicated their responses on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (very inaccurate) to 5 (very accurate). This study reported a coefficient alpha reliability of .73 for agreeableness.

Data Analysis: The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows Version 20.0. A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to investigate the hypotheses. Before conducting the multiple regression, data was screened for violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The bivariate relationship between all the study variables was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

A moderated hierarchical regression was conducted to test the moderation effects of agreeableness on the relationship between work engagement and OCB (Hypothesis 2). There were three main steps (Cohen & Cohen, 1983) involved in the moderated regression analysis. In Step 1, the hypothesized independent variable was entered. In Step 2, the moderator variable (agreeableness) was entered. In Step 3, the interaction terms were entered. Any significant increase in the variable explained, as shown by R^2 in Step 2 and the corresponding significance value for beta would indicate the direct relationship between the moderating variable (agreeableness) and the dependent variable. Any significant increase in the variable

explained, as shown by R^2 in Step 3 and the corresponding significance value for beta would indicate the moderating effect of agreeableness on the relation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. According to Sharma et al. (1981), if the interaction term is statistically significant and the coefficient of determination value (R square) increases, a pure moderating effect is then present. On the other hand, if there is no significant difference in Step 2 and Step 3 of the moderated regression analysis, a quasi-moderating effect is present.

The significance of the interaction was determined by examining the significance of the increment in criterion variance that is explained by the interaction term. To examine the nature of this interaction, the interaction effect was plotted using the values of one standard deviation below and above the mean for both the predictor variable and moderator variable (Cohen & Cohen, 1983; Aiken & West, 1991). To reduce the multicollinearity among the main effect variables and their interaction terms, the scores on work engagement (independent variable) and agreeableness (moderator variable), and their interaction term were mean-centered (Aiken & West, 1991).

4. Results

A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed and 681 were returned. Out of the 681 survey forms that were returned, 35 cases with several missing values were removed, leaving a final research sample of 646 cases that were then used in the final analysis. Of the 646 respondents, 97.4% were female and 2.6 % were male. The gender population was imbalance because females were the dominant workforce holding clinical jobs in hospitals. In terms of ethnic composition of the respondents, 93.3% comprised of Malays, 3.9 % comprised of Chinese, 2.3 % comprised of Indians and the rest were from other ethnic groups. About 74% of the respondents were married, 19 % were not married, and 91% held higher school certificates and diploma qualifications. The age range of the participants was 23 to 58 years, with an average age of 36 years (sd = 8.4). The mean organizational tenure was 8 years (sd = 7.1).

Table 1 shows the value of means, standard deviations, internal reliabilities and correlations among the variables. The mean value of the study variables was above 3.5. The Pearson product-moment correlation analysis shows that most of the variables were strongly correlated with one another. As can be seen, work engagement was correlated with organizational citizenship behavior, and with agreeableness personality. Work engagement was also positively related to OCB and agreeableness personality. In general, the correlations were small to moderate, suggesting that common source variance was not a major problem in these data.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations and Reliabilities

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Work Engagement	4.04	0.51	(.89)		
2. OCB	3.91	0.52	.58**	(.84)	
3. Agreeableness	4.18	0.48	.26**	.39**	(.73)

Note: Values in parentheses along the diagonal represent coefficient alphas. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Interaction between Work Engagement and Agreeableness on OCB: Equation 1 in Table 2 shows the results of the regression analysis conducted to test hypothesis 2. Work engagement was entered in Step 1, explaining 38.5% of the variance in OCB. This result revealed a significant positive relationship between work engagement ($p < 0.05$) and OCB. Thus, hypothesis 1 is fully supported in this study. After entering the agreeableness personality variable in Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 44.1%, $F(2, 643) = 254.0, p < 0.001$. The agreeableness personality measure explained an additional 5.7 % of the variance in OCB, after controlling for work engagement, with an R squared change of 0.057. In the final step (Step 3), the main interaction term was entered. The addition of this interaction term accounted for only an additional 0.6% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = 0.006, p < 0.05$). This result revealed a significant interaction between work engagement and agreeableness ($p < 0.05$) in predicting OCB. Thus, hypothesis 2 is supported in this study.

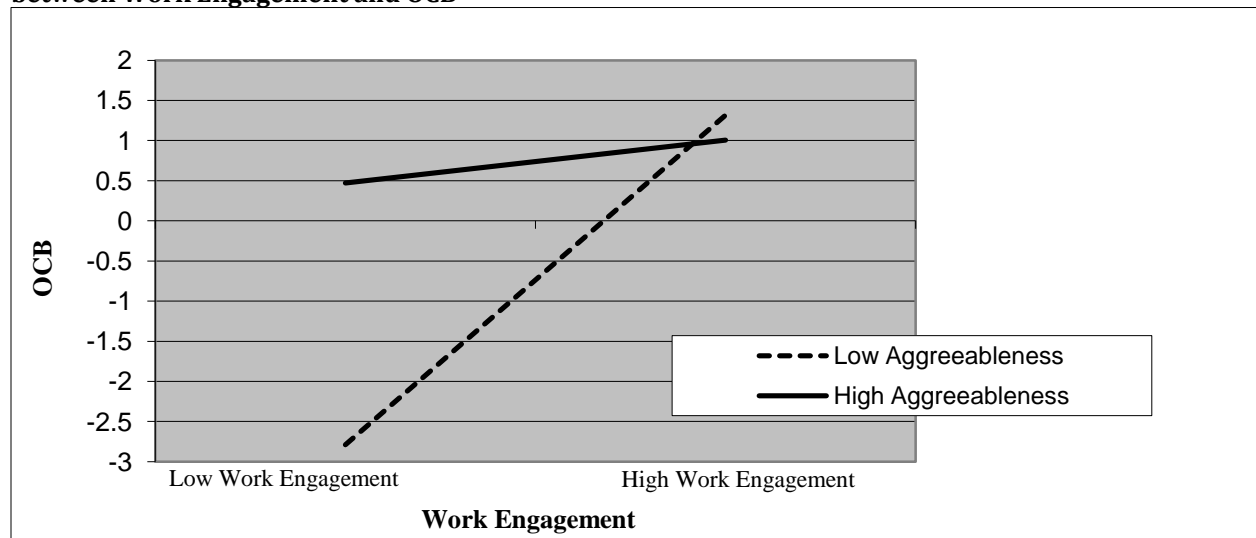
Table 2: Moderated Regression Results for the Interaction Effect of Work Engagement and Agreeableness on OCB

Variable OCB		Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Equation		B	B	B
1	Step 1. Main effect.			
	Work engagement (MWE)	0.56***	0.49***	1.05***
	Step 2. Main effect. (moderator)			
	Agreeableness (MPA)		0.29***	0.86***
	Step 3. Interaction effect			
	MWE x MPA			-0.14*
	R ²	0.385	0.441	0.447
	Adjusted R ²	0.384	0.440	0.445
	F	402.9***	254.0***	173.1***
	ΔR ²		0.057	0.006

Note: N=646; unstandardized coefficients are reported; *p<0.05; two tailed; **p<0.01; two tailed; ***p<0.001; two tailed †p<.05, one tailed.

The impact of work engagement on OCB at different levels of agreeableness (high agreeableness and low agreeableness) was further explored to answer hypothesis 2a. Hypothesis 2a postulates that agreeableness personality moderates the work engagement-OCB relations, such that the relationship between OCB and work engagement will be stronger when employees are high in agreeableness than when their agreeableness is low. Following the moderated regression procedures outlined by Cohen and Cohen (1983), the nature of the interaction between agreeableness personality and perceived autonomy was plotted. The moderating effect of agreeableness in the relationship between autonomy and OCB is shown in Figure 1. It can be seen that the regression slope is steeper for low agreeableness than for high agreeableness. This shows that a low agreeableness personality was found to amplify the positive relationship between work engagement and OCB. These results indicated that the effect of work engagement on OCB was stronger for those respondents with low agreeableness (-1 SD from the mean) than for those with high agreeableness (-1 SD from the mean) contrary to the hypothesis. Thus, hypothesis 2a is partially supported in this study.

Figure 1: Graphical Representation of the Moderating Effect of Agreeableness on the Relationship between Work Engagement and OCB



5. Discussion & Implications

The main purpose of this study was to examine the moderating role of employee personality in the relationship between work engagement and OCB. As hypothesized, the results showed support for the direct effect of work engagement on OCB (Hypothesis 1). The findings of the significant positive effect of the work engagement variable on OCB are consistent with several research results. (Ng & Tay, 2010; Krishnan et al., 2010, 2013). This study has also provided further support from an interactionist perspective in the development of employee work behavior (OCB). It was found that employee involvement in OCB was jointly predicted by dispositional (agreeableness personality) and attitudinal (work engagement) variables. Importantly, the findings of this study show that agreeableness moderates the relationship between work engagement and OCB (Hypothesis 2). The present findings are consistent with a study by Liu et al. (2008) that shows agreeableness moderated the perceived meaningfulness of the job-OCB relationship.

However, contrary to expectations, the relationships between work engagements with OCB were found to be stronger for low agreeable employees compared to high agreeable employees, contrary to hypothesis 2a. In other words, a low agreeableness personality amplifies the positive impact of work engagement on employees' intention to help their colleagues. It is expected that those who are low in agreeableness are less friendly and uncooperative, less courteous; and as a result would not be likely to express their dedication by helping others as they are less empathetic. Rather, they would be more likely to focus on their task performance.

However, in this study, the influence of work engagement on OCB was more prominent among employees with low agreeableness personalities compared to those with high agreeableness personalities. In other words, an employee who is highly engaged in his/her job tends to display more OCB despite being a low agreeable employee. This finding seems to contradict earlier findings by Liu et al. (2008) which show that the relationship between a situational variable (empowering leadership) and employee OCB, was stronger for high agreeable employees compared to low agreeable employees (also see Colbert et al., 2004; Krings et al., 2009). Although this finding may contradict theoretically, it might have a significant contribution to the personality and OCB literature.

One possible reason for this is that compared to employees who are highly agreeable, those who are lowly agreeable are more likely to be task-goal-oriented. To achieve their task goals, they may tend to be less friendly, more outspoken and more competitive. Despite carrying this personality, they may still engage in helping behavior towards their peers because by doing so they may also accomplish their own task goals if the goals are to be achieved collectively with their peers as prevalent in the hospital work context. Helping behaviors such as helping others who were absent and giving time to help peers with work-related problems, are some of the ways to help the peers achieve their task goals and at the same time achieve one's own task goals.

In the nursing profession, many tasks performed by nurses involve effective collaboration or joint action with their peers for example, transporting patients from one unit to another, making up the bed of the patients, and dressing the patients. Nurses may also need to be less agreeable to achieve their task goals when their job involves interdepartmental tasks. For example, a nurse may receive instructions from supervisors of other departments despite receiving work instructions from their supervisors. Although they may receive work instructions from supervisors from other units, they need to ensure that they have completed their department tasks first before taking on other responsibilities. To achieve this, they may have to be less agreeable (outspoken and competitive) so that they are not overpowered by supervisors from other departments. Perhaps by being less agreeable, nurses may have a better opportunity to complete their assigned tasks which will eventually increase their level of motivation. As a result of this, they may display helping behaviors towards their peers. Work environmental factors such as the organizational pressure to achieve task goals, and the demanding job situation in the nursing field nowadays may also have influenced nurses to exhibit low agreeable personalities.

An obvious implication of this study is that employees' engagement in their work and their personality matters at the workplace, particularly with regard to promoting their involvement in extra-role behaviors

such as OCB. This study has demonstrated that engaged employees will actively participate in helping behavior such as OCB if they have an agreeable personality disposition. Specifically, this study found that the relationship between work engagement and OCB amplifies for employees who possess a low level of agreeable personality compared to those who pose high level of agreeable personality. Therefore, employers who wish to increase employee involvement in OCB need to take into consideration this specific personality in their employee selection process. Employees with less agreeable personalities are represented by employees who are outspoken and competitive.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research: Although this study has provided some important insights into the relationship between work engagement and OCB, we acknowledge that there are also some limitations. First, the sample used in this study was almost homogenous with mostly female respondents (over 95%). Further, the respondents in this study were mainly registered staff nurses employed at public hospitals in Malaysia. This has implications for the generalizability of our research findings to employees in other sectors of the economy. Thus, future studies should replicate our study using samples drawn from different occupations and types of work with even gender distribution. Second, the current study employed a cross-sectional design in which data were collected from respondents at a single point in time. One of the weaknesses of this method is that it does not allow us to draw a firm conclusion regarding the causal direction of the relationships among the predictors and outcome variables. Given this limitation, future research should examine the relationships among the variables using longitudinal designs that examine the continuity of the response. Finally, this study has focused on only one type of employee personality as a moderator in the work engagement-OCB relationship. Future research can be extended by examining other potential personality variables such as job conscientiousness or self-efficacy.

Conclusion: This study has provided empirical evidence for linking employees' work engagement and their involvement in OCB. This study found strong support for the direct effect of work engagement on OCB. This study revealed that employee personality (agreeableness) moderates the relationship between work engagement and OCB. Specifically, this study found that the relationship between work engagement and OCB amplifies for employees who possess a low level of agreeable personality compared to those who possess a high level of agreeableness personality.

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