

Good Soldiers' Perceptions of Organizational Politics Understanding the Relation between Organizational Citizenship Behaviors and Perceptions of Organizational Politics: Evidence from Iran

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Abstract

Organizational citizenship behavior is a topic that has received a considerable attention during the past two decades. Most studies in this area are criticized for overreliance on single-source self-report. This study attempts to investigate the relation between perceptions of organizational politics and five dimensions of citizenship behaviors including civic virtue, sportsmanship, altruism, conscientiousness, and courtesy using both self- and peer- reported data. We hypothesized that the negative relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior exists in both cases of using self- and peer-reported data. Responses from 307 employees of ten public universities across Iran revealed that divergence exists between OCBs that were reported by job incumbent and their coworker's reports of incumbent citizenship behavior. Regression analysis showed negative significant effect of political perceptions on citizenship behaviors using peer-reports. But no negative meaningful effect was observed when self-reported data was implemented.

Keywords: Organizational citizenship behavior, Perceptions of organizational politics, Common method bias, Self-report, Peer-report, Iran

1. Introduction

Politics in organizations is simply a fact of life (cf. Medison, Allen, Renwick, & Mayes, 1980; Gandz & Murray, 1980). Personal experiences, hunches, and anecdotal evidence for years have supported a general belief that behavior in organizations is often political in nature (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). Mintzberg (1983) and Pfeffer (1992) defined organizational politics as a general term that indicates power relations and influence tactics in workplace. Due to this political nature, the concept of Organizational Politics has received an increasing attention in management literature. The direction of researches in this area has primarily focused on the role of organizational politics in setting organizational outcomes and the nature and characteristics of this relationship. Besides its practical implications, one of the reasons that consider politics and political behavior in organizations as a promising field for theoretical inquiry is the general belief that views this phenomenon as one of the existing obstacles to the optimum performance of organizations (Vigoda E. , 2000; Kacmar & Baron, 1999).

In line with the aforementioned accounts, is the belief by researchers that organizational politics, and political perceptions, have a negative influence on both workers and the work environment (e.g., Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989; Ferris, Adams, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, & Ammeter, 2002; Kacmar & Baron, 1999; Mayes & Allen, 1977; Porter, Allen, & Angle, 1981). Previous studies suggest that a negative relationship exists between Perception of Organizational Politics and job performance (Witt, 1998; Kacmar, Bozeman, Carlson, & Anthony, 1999). Overall job performance is generally divided into two components: task performance (or in-role performance) and contextual performance (or extra-role performance) (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Motowidlo, Borman, & Van Scotter, 1997). Task performance refers to outcomes of the substantive tasks that differentiate one occupation from another. Contextual performance refers to outcomes of behaviors that are needed to support the social fabric of the organization. These behaviors are not unique to a specific job but rather are inherent in all jobs (Witt, Kacmar, Carlson, & Zivnuska, 2002). Although task performance traditionally has received more attention than contextual performance, researchers have begun to empirically demonstrate that contextual performance and behaviors yield a competitive advantage for organizations. Contextual performance or behavior is deemed to be one of the key factors in enhancing the overall firm performance and thus contributing to the accomplishment of organizational goals (Borman, White, & Dorsey, 1995).

Among these Contextual Behaviors, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is the one that has received considerable attention in management literature during the past decade. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is referred to as a set of discretionary workplace behaviors that exceed one's basic job requirements. They are often described as behaviors that go beyond the call of duty (Jahangir, Akbar, & Haq, 2004). Organ (1988) argued that OCB is held to be vital to the survival of an organization. Organ further elaborated that organizational citizenship behavior can maximize the efficiency and productivity of both the employee and the organization, which ultimately contributes to the effective functioning of an organization. In general, it has been argued (cf. Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Organ, 1988; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983) that citizenship behaviors may enhance performance by "lubricating" the social machinery of the organization, reducing friction, and/or increasing efficiency.

We suggest that an employee's attempts to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors are strongly influenced by the organizational context. In contexts that are perceived as highly political, individuals are likely to engage in self-promotional activities. They are unlikely to want to sacrifice their self-promotional ambitions and place their efforts on helping others, as any energy that they dedicate to others may be perceived as taking away from their efforts to promote self-interests. Thus, individuals in situations perceived as political, alter their behavior by reducing their citizenship behaviors and engage more in self-promotional activities (Witt et al., 2002).

Much of the research regarding politics perceptions and OCBs has examined these constructs using a unidimensional framework. That is, these constructs have commonly been investigated with respect to *overall* perception of politics or *overall* OCBs regardless to the specific facets or dimensions of the constructs. To summarize, there is little research that facilitates an examination of the relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and different dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. In the present study we tried to examine these two constructs under a multidimensional framework.

The main purpose of this study is to understand the influence of the perceptions of organizational politics (POP) on different dimensions of employees' citizenship behavior in organizations. Most of the previous researches in OCB literature relied primarily upon single source self-reports (e.g., Allen & Rush, 1998; MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 1993; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Paine, 1998; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994). However, the overreliance on self-report survey methodology in OCB studies is of concern. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach (2000) believe that common method bias is one of the problematic limitations of these studies. Thus, we try to link job incumbent self-report to coworker report of the incumbent's behavior. In addition, we attempt to assess the similarity of incumbent-reported POP as predictor of both self-report and coworker report of OCBs. Therefore, this study may make a unique contribution to the theory on Organizational Citizenship Behavior, beyond its contribution to the knowledge on organizational politics.

The article is divided in three major sections. First, the theoretical foundations provided by the literature on organizational citizenship behavior and perception of organizational politics. Second, our hypotheses were tested by the data gathered from the employees of public universities across Iran. Finally, we explore the practical implications of the posited relationship, as well as our study limitations.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Organizational Citizenship Behavior

In the 1930s Chester Bernard observed the phenomenon of organizational citizenship behavior, which he then termed "Extra-role behaviors". The distinction made between in-role behaviors and extra-role behaviors is evident in the management literature (cf. Katz & Kahn, 1978; Turnipseed, 2002; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1991). In-role behavior is required or expected behavior and is the basis of regular and ongoing job performance (Katz, 1964). If employees fail to perform required behavior, they do not receive organizational rewards. In contrast, Extra-role behaviors are discretionary in nature and are usually not recognized by the organization's formal reward system (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996). Van Dayne (1998) believes that these behaviors are (1) not specified in advance by role prescriptions, (2) not recognized by formal reward systems, and (3) not a source of punitive consequences when not performed by job incumbents.

One form of extra-role employee behaviors that was popularized about two decades ago and has also received considerable attention is organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) (cf. Batenam & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988; Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Organ (1988, p. 4) defined organizational citizenship behaviors as:

"Individual behavior 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. By discretionary, we mean that the behavior is not an enforceable requirement of the role or the job description, that is, the clearly specifiable terms of the person's employment contract with the organization; the behavior is rather a matter of personal choice, such that its omission is not generally understood as punishable."

Some examples of OCBs are helping to orient new workers in the organization, not abusing the rights of others, and being friendly to the customers. A key principle of Organ's original definition of organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988) is that, when aggregated over time and people, such behavior enhances organizational effectiveness. OCBs may contribute to organizational success by (a) enhancing co-worker and managerial productivity, (b) freeing up resources so they can be used for more productive purposes, (c) reducing the need to devote scarce resources to purely maintenance functions, (d) helping to coordinate the activities both within and across work groups, (e) strengthening the organization's ability to attract and retain the best, (f) increasing the stability of the organization's performance and (g) enabling the organization to more effectively adapt environmental changes (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997).

One of the earliest attempts to conceptualize citizenship behaviors in organizations (Organ, 1988) identified a five-dimensional model. The dimensions identified by Organ are:

- Altruism, that refers to employee behaviors directed toward helping or cooperating with other employees in face to face interactions on organizationally relevant issues (e.g., helping new colleagues and freely giving time to others.)
- Conscientiousness, which is originally termed general compliance, which involves employees going beyond the minimum requirements of the organization. (e.g., efficient use of time and going beyond minimum expectations.)
- Sportsmanship, Organ (1990, p. 96) has identified sportsmanship as "a willingness to tolerate the inevitable inconveniences and impositions of work without complaining" (e.g., avoids complaining and whining.)
- Courtesy, that refers to employee's action directed toward the prevention of problems encountered by work associates (e.g., advance notices, reminders, and communicating appropriate information).
- Civic Virtue, represents participating responsibly in the political life of the organization (e.g., attending meetings, keeping up with the changes in the industry that might affect the organization.)

Williams (1988) also found a two-dimensional definition of OCB, and defined it as: (1) benefits directed at the organization in general, such as performing duties that are not required but which improve organizational image and performance (OCB-O); This dimension is similar to Organ's civic virtue construct, and (2) benefits directed at individuals within the organization, such as helping colleagues who have heavier workloads (OCB-I); This dimension is similar to Organ's altruism and courtesy constructs. Lots of researches in OCB literature have used these two or five-factor models (e.g., Williams & Anderson, 1991; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994) and yet most of them have only relied on self-report measurement. Although it has not been studied, it is likely that common method variance has biased the observed relationships between OCBs and other variables in those studies.

2.2. Common Method Bias

Podsakoff and Organ (1986) stated that Common method bias is a problem when both independent and dependent variable measures come from the same source. Any defect in the source contaminates both measures, presumably in the same fashion and in the same direction. One solution to this problem may be to escalate the unit of analysis. If a large sample of individuals can be reduced to a smaller but still meaningful number of units (departments, sections) and the variables have meaning at that unit of analysis, the researcher can use a randomly selected portion of respondents within each unit to estimate the value of some of the variables and the remaining persons in the unit for obtaining estimates of the values of the other variables (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). We used both job incumbent self-report and coworker report of the incumbent's behavior as an example of this technique. And to understand if job

incumbent self-report and coworker report of OCB are the same (converge) or not (diverge), the following hypothesis is presented:

Hypothesis 1: Job incumbent's self-reported OCB will diverge (i.e., will be negatively associated) with coworkers report of OCB.

Empirical investigations of OCB have primarily focused on identifying predictors of this behavior. Generally, these antecedents can fall into four major categories (Podsakoff et al., 2000): individual (or employee) characteristics including: employees' personality (Witt et al., 2002), other orientation (Lester, Meglino, & Korsgaard, 2008); task characteristics (Farh, Podsakoff, & Organ, 1990), organizational characteristics like organizational justice (Farh, Early, & Lin, 1997), organizational support (Randall, Cropanzano, & Bormann, 1999) and leadership behaviors such as transformational leadership (Schlechter & Engelbrecht, 2006). Studies also show that there is an established relationship between OCB and perception of organizational politics (POP).

2.3. Perceptions of Organizational Politics

The construct of organizational politics has captured the interest of organizational scientists for quite some time. Many definitions of this concept have been proposed in the literature (Drory & Romm, 1990). One of the earliest descriptions of organizational politics in the literature is from Mintzberg (1983, p. 172). He defined OP as "individual or group behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial, typically divisive, and above all in a technical sense, illegitimate—sanctioned neither by formal authority, accepted ideology, nor certified expertise (although it may exploit any one of these)." Examples of political behavior include bypassing the chain of command to gain approval, going through improper channels to obtain special equipment, and lobbying high level managers just prior to promotion decisions (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001).

A variety of perspectives were presented to understand politics in organizations (Burns, 1961; Gandz & Murray, 1980; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). There is a common belief that political behavior can be defined by the nature of the act or by people's perceptions of what is political (Vredenburg & Maurer, 1984). This is consistent with Lewin's (1936) notion that people's attitudes and behaviors are determined mostly by their perceptions of reality and not reality per se. In this area of research, we agreed with Gandz and Murray (1980) who suggested that rather than exclusively an objective state, it is appropriate to construe organizational politics as a subjective experience and, thus, as a state of mind. As a result, during the 1990s, perception of politics was suggested by Ferris and Kacmar (1992) as a good measure of the general political atmosphere in organization. A measure of perceived politics has greater scientific value than other measures of actual politics for three main reasons:

1. Perceptions of politics are more easily measured than actual political behavior.
2. They represent the reality as it is in the eyes of the beholder and thus are more expressive of player's views and behavioral intentions.
3. They are assumed to have a greater impact on the attitudes and behaviors of employees than actual politics (Vigoda, Vinarski, & Ben, 2003).

Consonant with the above, we suggest a definition by Ferris, Harrell-Cook, and Dulebohn (2000, p. 90) to be more applicable to the current study: the perception of organizational politics "involves an individual's attribution to behaviors of self-serving intent, and is defined as an individual's subjective evaluation about the extent to which the work environment is characterized by co-workers and supervisors who demonstrate such self-serving behavior."

The latest attempt to conceptualize the perceptions of organizational politics identified three factors which are labeled *general political behavior (GPB)*, that includes the behaviors of individuals who act in a self-serving manner to obtain valued outcomes; *go along to get ahead (GAGA)*, which consists of a lack of action by individuals (e.g., remain silent) in order to secure valued outcomes; and *pay and promotion policies (PPP)*, which involves the organization behaving politically through the policies it enacts (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997).

Researches in this area have shown that POP have a negative influence on a number of organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Valle & Perrewe, 2000), intent to turnover (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Kacmar et al., 1999; Maslyn & Fedor, 1998), and employee performance (Kacmar et al., 1999; Witt, 1998). Two previous studies have offered empirical support for the relationship between politics and performance (Kacmar et al., 1999; Witt, 1998). As mentioned earlier, employee performance is divided into two components: task performance and contextual performance (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior).

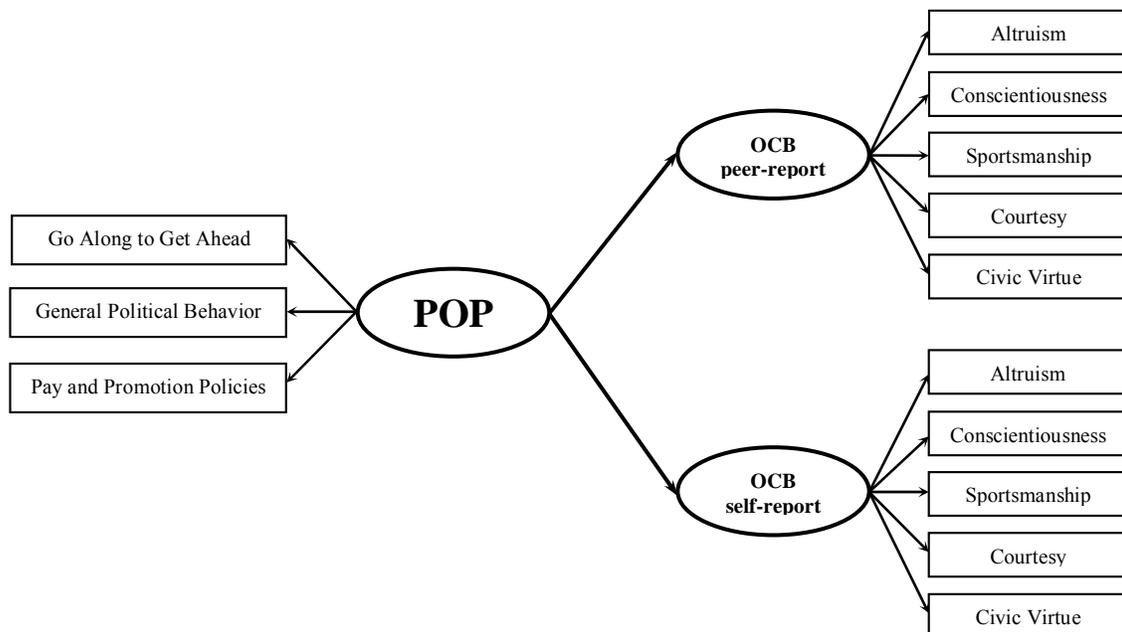
2.4. OCBs and Perceptions of Organizational Politics (POP)

A search of literature revealed only few reports of research that addressed the relationship between perception of organizational politics and organizational citizenship behavior. Cropanzano et al. (1997) found a nonsignificant negative relationship between POP and compliance OCBs ($r = -.08$) and altruism ($r = -.01$). However, Randall and his colleagues (1999) found a stronger negative relationship between politics perceptions and two dimensions of OCB adopted from Williams and Anderson (1991), ($r_{OCBI} = -.19, p < .05$; $r_{OCBO} = -.35, p < .01$). Vigoda (2007) found a negative relation between overall OCB and overall POP ($r = -.18, p < .01$). Therefore, it is expected that perceptions of organizational politics will be negatively affect dimensions of OCB. Accordingly, the conceptual framework, the second, and third hypotheses are suggested:

Hypothesis 2: An employee's perception of organizational politics has negative effect on dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviors that measured from peers.

Hypothesis 3: An employee's perception of organizational politics has negative effect on dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviors that measured from job incumbent.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of research



3. Method

3.1. Sample and Procedure

To examine the credibility of our hypotheses, a three-phase study was applied to a total number of 347 full-time employees randomly selected from ten public universities across Iran. A total of 307 questionnaires (return rate of 88.4%) were used in the final analysis. Participation in the research was voluntary and employees were assured of full confidentiality in the data analysis. To ensure this process, we distributed the questionnaires and collected them directly from the respondents after they had been completed. The samples were also representative of the local populations in the organizations. The various demographic characteristics of each sample (i.e., gender, age, education, and tenure) were compared with the general population statistics. The results confirmed that our sample was well representative of the target population. Participants in the study were 58% female, average age was 37.07 years (s.d. = 8.21); average tenure was 13.35 (s.d. = 7.68); 30.6% of the respondents held a high school education, 69.4% had bachelor degree or higher.

The first phase was designed to examine the perceptions of organizational politics through the application of POP questionnaires. In the second phase, that took place a week later, employees who had completed the POP questionnaires in the first phase were asked to complete the OCB self-report questionnaires measuring their own citizenship behavior. A week later, in the last phase of the study, we distributed the peer-report questionnaires – that were labeled with a matching secret code with self-report questionnaires – among the colleagues of the target participants to compare the results with that of self-report questionnaires in the phase two.

3.2. Measures

3.2.1. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Self-Report Scale)

We used a mixed scale for measuring the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. We measured *altruism*, *sportsmanship*, *civic virtue*, and *conscientiousness* in organization of employees with a twelve-item scale that was developed by MacKenzie, Podsakoff and Fetter (1993) and the two-item scale on *courtesy* that was developed by Mackenzie, Podsakoff and Paine (1999), with some modifications to render the items more appropriate for Iranian respondents. Three items were related to Altruism. An example of these items is "I help orient new agents even though it is not required". The coefficient alpha (Cronbach) of altruism is $\alpha = 0.75$; and three items were related to sportsmanship ($\alpha = 0.88$). An example of these items is "I focus on what's wrong with my situation rather than the positive side of it" (reversed item); three items were related to civic virtue ($\alpha = 0.75$). An example of these items is "I keep up with developments in the company"; and also three items were related to conscientiousness ($\alpha = 0.83$). An example of these items is "I return phone calls and respond to other messages and requests for information promptly". An example for courtesy ($\alpha = 0.88$) is "I take steps to try to prevent problems with other agents and/or other personnel in the agency". The scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Results of OCBs confirmatory factor analysis (measurement modeling) showed that OCB measurement model is suitable and all of modeling figures and parameters are meaningful. ($\chi^2 = 224.91$, $df = 72$; $p\text{-value} = .00000$; $RMSEA = .083$; $GFI = .90$; $AGFI = .86$; $CFI = .95$).

3.2.2. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Peer-Report Scale)

For the third phase of the study, we used the same questionnaire that was mentioned above with a modification in items to be used as a peer-report scale. The coefficient alphas for this modified scale are: altruism ($\alpha = 0.89$); sportsmanship ($\alpha = 0.85$); civic virtue ($\alpha = 0.71$); conscientiousness ($\alpha = 0.83$); and courtesy ($\alpha = 0.86$). Examples for the new items are "My colleague helps orient new agents even though it is not required" and "My colleague focuses on what's wrong with his/her situation rather than the positive side of it" (reversed item). Results of OCBs confirmatory factor analysis (measurement modeling) showed that OCB measurement model is suitable and all of modeling figures and

parameters are meaningful. ($\chi^2 = 244.93$, $df = 72$; $p\text{-value} = .00000$; $RMSEA = .089$; $GFI = .90$; $AGFI = .85$; $CFI = .95$).

3.2.3. Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS)

We measured perceptions of organizational politics with the scale that was developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997) Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS). This scale identifies three dimensions, including: *General Political Behavior* (2 items), *Go Along To Get Ahead* (7 items), *Pay and Promotion Policies* (6 items). Representative POP scale items for the three factors include "People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down", "Telling others what they want to hear is sometimes better than telling the truth", and "The stated pay and promotion policies have nothing to do with how pay raises and promotions are determined", respectively. The Cronbach alpha for general political behavior subscale is $\alpha = 0.77$; go along to get ahead is $\alpha = 0.78$; and pay and promotion policies is $\alpha = 0.73$. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with higher scores indicating a negative aspect of work environment – perceptions of higher levels of organizational politics. Results of POP confirmatory factor analysis (measurement modeling) showed that POP measurement model is suitable and all of modeling figures and parameters are meaningful. ($\chi^2 = 348.16$, $df = 87$; $p\text{-value} = .00000$; $RMSEA = .099$; $GFI = .87$; $AGFI = .82$; $CFI = .93$).

4. Analysis

We analyzed the structure of the empirical model depicted in Figure 1 through structural equation modeling (SEM), utilizing LISREL 8.80. In addition, SPSS 15.0 for windows was used for analyzing the data. Mean scores for OCBs of self and peers were compared using a *t-test* for paired samples. We tested our second and third hypotheses, Relations between OCBs and perceptions of organizational politics, using regression analyses. We also, used multiple regression analyses to test the relationships between each dimensions of perceptions of organizational politics – GAGA, GPB, and PPP – and dimensions of OCBs – civic virtue, sportsmanship, altruism, Conscientiousness, and courtesy in two multiple regression models that include both self and peer report data.

5. Results

The descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of the research variables are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Go Along to Get Ahead	3.67	0.70	-															
2. General Political Behavior	3.81	0.81	.65**	-														
3. Pay and Promotion Policy	3.74	0.72	.55**	.52**	-													
4. POPS	3.74	0.63	.86**	.87**	.80**	-												
5. Civic Virtue (Peer-report)	2.59	0.84	-.32**	-.25**	-.39**	-.38**	-											
6. Sportsmanship (Peer-report)	2.70	0.95	-.12*	-.11	-.32**	-.21**	.40**	-										
7. Altruism (Peer-report)	3.09	0.91	-.08	-.11*	-.17**	-.14**	.33**	.27**	-									
8. Conscientiousness (Peer-report)	2.89	1.03	-.15**	-.15**	-.43**	-.28**	.58**	.51**	.44**	-								
9. Courtesy (Peer-report)	2.97	0.96	-.08	-.11	-.10	-.11*	.25**	.13*	.54**	.32**	-							
10. OCB (Peer-report)	2.85	0.67	-.21**	-.20**	-.40**	-.32**	.71**	.65**	.72**	.81**	.63**	-						
11. Civic Virtue (Self-report)	3.60	0.77	-.09	-.05	.12*	-.008	-.009	.03	.12*	-.09	.02	.02	-					
12. Sportsmanship (Self-report)	4.01	0.81	-.03	-.02	.02	-.01	-.04	.02	.02	-.007	-.06	-.02	.33**	-				
13. Altruism (Self-report)	3.96	0.64	.06	.05	.19**	.11*	-.11	-.03	.10	-.08	.02	-.02	.16**	.20**	-			
14. Conscientiousness (Self-report)	4.12	0.68	-.07	.01	.07	.03	.05	.04	.05	.04	.007	.05	.31**	.46**	.30**	-		
15. Courtesy (Self-report)	3.97	0.82	-.02	-.01	.17**	.05	-.13*	-.12*	.04	-.20**	-.007	-.12*	.13*	.27**	.38**	.22**	-	
16. OCB (Self-report)	3.93	0.48	-.03	-.008	.17**	.05	-.07	-.01	.10	-.10	-.008	-.03	.60**	.71**	.59**	.69**	.63**	-

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

$N = 307$

Mean scores for OCB of self and peers were compared, and *t-test* showed significant differences ($t = -22.584, p < .001$). Divergence (i.e., a negative correlation) was found between self- and coworker rating of OCB ($r = -.03$). Shown in table 2, our first hypothesis is supported. Figure 2 shows the SEM results of the structural model. The resulting fit indexes indicate an acceptable fit of the model. All fit indexes showed a good fit ($\chi^2 = 270.24; df = 63; p\text{-value} = .00000; RMSEA = .104; GFI = .88; AGFI = .83; CFI = .85$).

Table 2: T-test results for OCB self and peer-report

	Mean	SD	Mean differences	t	df	P-Value
OCB self-report	3.93	.48	1.08	22.58	306	0.000
OCB peer-report	2.85	.67				

As predicted before, perceptions of organizational politics is negatively related to citizenship behaviors measured from peers ($\beta = -.339, t = -5.894, F = 34.745, p < .001$). The second hypothesis was supported, in the way that a negative significant relationship was found between POP and all dimensions of OCB peer-report, including civic virtue ($\beta = -.513, t = -7.224, F = 52.191, p < .001$); sportsmanship ($\beta = -.325, t = -3.857, F = 14.876, p < .001$); altruism ($\beta = -.214, t = -2.603, F = 6.774, p < .001$); Conscientiousness ($\beta = -.467, t = -5.198, F = 27.019, p < .001$); and courtesy ($\beta = -.178, t = -2.055, F = 4.225, p < .05$). Results from regression analyses didn't show a negatively significant relationship between perceptions of organizational politics and those citizenship behaviors that measured from employees themselves ($\beta = .041, t = .919, F = .845$). No significant negative relation was found between POP and dimensions of self-reported OCB, including civic virtue ($\beta = -.01, t = -.142$); sportsmanship ($\beta = -.16, t = -.218$); altruism ($\beta = .122, t = 2.095$); Conscientiousness ($\beta = .039, t = .631$); and courtesy ($\beta = .068, t = .914$). Thus, our third hypothesis was not supported.

Figure 2: Results of Structural Equation Modeling on relation between POP and OCB self and peer-report

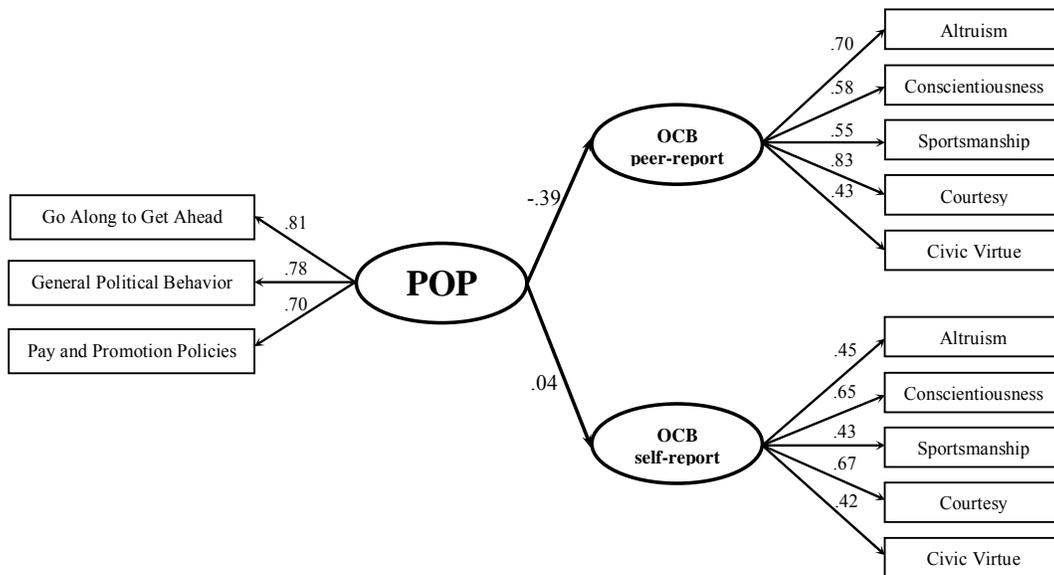


Table 3 and 4 present results of the multiple regression analyses for both perceptions of organizational politics and citizenship behaviors dimensions. Shown in table 3, regression results revealed that except one – GAGA and Civic Virtue ($\beta = -.223, t = -2.566, p < .05$) – there was no significant negative relation between any dimensions of POP and dimensions of OCBs. As shown in

table 4, a significant negative relationship between most dimensions of OCB (peer-report) and POP was observed. Among perceptions of organizational politics factors GAGA ($\beta = -.194$, $t = -2.189$, $p < .05$) and PPP ($\beta = -.374$, $t = -4.912$, $p < .001$) had significant negative relation with civic virtue dimension of OCBs. But no significant relation between GPB and civic virtue was observed ($\beta = .015$, $t = .197$). PPP was the only factor that has negative relation with sportsmanship ($\beta = -.493$, $t = -5.553$, $p < .001$); no significant relation between GAGA ($\beta = .059$, $t = .573$), and GPB ($\beta = .066$, $t = .756$) with sportsmanship was shown. Like sportsmanship, altruism and conscientiousness have only a significant relation with PPP factor of organizational politics ($\beta = -.220$, $t = -2.471$, $p < .05$; $\beta = -.733$, $t = -8.018$, $p < .001$). No relation between GAGA, and GPB with altruism and conscientiousness was observed. Coefficient betas and t-values for these two relations are ($\beta = .062$, $t = .599$; $\beta = .137$, $t = 1.292$) and ($\beta = -.062$, $t = -.712$; $\beta = .071$, $t = .787$), respectively. No significant relation between any dimensions of POP – GAGA ($\beta = .009$, $t = .080$); GPB ($\beta = -.100$, $t = -1.079$); and PPP ($\beta = -.080$, $t = -.852$) and courtesy were found.

Table 3: Multiple regression model of POP and OCB-self dimensions

OCB-self											
Dependent	Civic Virtue		Sportsmanship		Altruism		Conscientiousness		Courtesy		
	Independent	β	T	β	T	β	T	β	T	β	T
GAGA		-.223	-2.566*	-.061	-.649	-.037	-.503	-.075	-.955	-.150	-1.618
GPB		-.055	-.754	-.020	-.252	-.036	-.585	.007	.104	-.081	-1.039
PPP		.286	3.834**	0.70	.862	.213	3.412**	.112	1.652	.327	4.113**
F		5.836**		.348		4.314**		1.015		5.693**	
R ²		.055		.003		.041		.010		.053	
Adjusted R ²		.045		-.006		.031		.000		.041	

Note: ** significant at $P < 0.01$

* significant at $P < 0.05$

Table 4: Multiple regression model of POP and OCB-peer dimensions

OCB-peer											
Dependent	Civic Virtue		Sportsmanship		Altruism		Conscientiousness		Courtesy		
	Independent	β	T	β	T	β	T	β	T	β	T
GAGA		-.194	-2.189*	.059	.573	.062	.599	.137	1.292	.009	.080
GPB		.015	.197	.066	.756	-.062	-.712	.071	.787	-.100	-1.079
PPP		-.374	-4.912**	-.493	-5.553**	-.220	-2.471*	-.733	-8.018**	-.080	-.852
F		21.405**		12.214**		3.430*		24.931**		1.540	
R ²		.175		.108		.033		.198		.015	
Adjusted R ²		.167		.099		.023		.190		.005	

Note: ** significant at $P < 0.01$

* significant at $P < 0.05$

6. Discussion

In the present study, we investigated a methodological issue that has emerged in much organizational research, but particularly in empirical studies of organizational citizenship behaviors. The overreliance of self-report survey methodology is of concern mainly because of over-report bias due to desirable topics like citizenship behavior, or common method bias as mentioned before. To demonstrate the robustness of our findings across different reporting groups, we collected OCB data from both job incumbents and their coworkers, along with POP from the job incumbents. Therefore, our aim was two-fold: (1) we tested the divergence of these two sets of OCB reports, and (2) we also tested the overall relation between POP and OCB as well as their dimensions.

In general, the results were supportive of our first and second hypotheses. More specifically, our first hypothesis was confirmed in the sense that self and peer reports diverged on OCB. We found mean differences and negative association between self- ($M = 3.93$) and peer report ($M = 2.85$) of OCB

($r = -.03$). As shown in previous section, peer data demonstrated OCB dimensions to be negatively related to overall perceptions of organizational politics (support for hypothesis 2). Unlike hypothesis 1 and 2, hypothesis 3 was not supported. Not only no significant negative relation was found between perceptions of organizational politics and most dimensions of OCBs that were measured from job incumbent, but also in the case of altruism the relationship was positive ($\beta = .122$, $t = 2.095$, $F = 4.389$, $p < .05$). Beside common method variance discussed above, another explanation to the rejection of our third hypothesis could be the *social desirability* problem, so labeled because questionnaire items may prompt responses that will present the person in a favorable light (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). So, in this case employees tend to rate their own citizenship behaviors more than what they really are. Given the evidence provided in this research, a deeper look into research methodology, especially in the case of citizenship behavior studies is needed. As our findings showed, using peer-report questionnaire resulted in better understanding of the relationships between POP and OCB dimensions.

Given the considerable implications that OCBs have for overall performance, better understanding of its antecedents is important (Borman et al., 1995). One way to arrive at this understanding is to explore theoretically relevant antecedents that have not been linked to organizational citizenship behaviors, as we have done with perceptions of organizational politics in the present study. We tried to support the idea that political perceptions should be considered prominent phenomenon with significant consequences on employee citizenship behavior in organizations. One interesting result of this study was that no significant relation was found between *GAGA*, *GPB*, and *PPP* in one hand and courtesy on the other hand (cf. table 4). One explanation is that many employees do not consider the political nature of organization in their personal relationships with coworkers. As mentioned earlier, Williams and Anderson (1991) believed that OCBs could be divided into two dimensions, OCB-I and OCB-O. Courtesy is one dimension that can be classified as a behavior that benefits individuals within the organization (OCB-I).

These results have important implications. From the practitioner perspective, the current study provides evidence for the effects of perceptions of organizational politics and should persuade managers to do something about it. As shown in table 4 among all dimensions of perceptions of organizational politics, *pay and promotion policies* had the most significant effect on all dimensions of citizenship behaviors. It should make the managers aware of the sensitivity of employees to these policies and they should be careful about how these policies are being made. One way to prevent employees of such perceptions is including employees in and informing them about pay and promotion policy making processes. Given that undesirable outcomes of high political contexts are probably more a result of subjectively constructed perceptions rather than on actual politics (Ferris et al., 1989), organizational practitioners need to do a much better job to diminish such subjective evaluations. For instance, practitioners may need to do a better job at communicating expectations, policies, procedures, and standards of behavior with workers; or to reduce workers uncertainty about how and why decisions are made, managers could regularly include workers in organizational decision-making processes (Ferris et al., 2002). Generally promoting a positive work climate makes employees tolerate inconveniences without complaint, openly cooperate with management, conserve organizational resource, take initiative to solve problems, and willingly attempt to help coworkers or organizations when possible. Supervisors who better understand how to promote citizenship behaviors may save time and reap productivity increases (Witt et al., 2002).

6.1. Limitations

The present study has several limitations. First, despite the fact that most of the citizenship behavior studies were conducted in American culture, our study was carried on in non-American culture, which raises questions about the generalizability of our results to other populations. Ferris et al. (2002) mentioned employment setting and cultural differences as potential moderators of POP outcomes relationships. However, other studies can benefit from a fresh source of data on POP. An examination of perceptions of organizational politics in a non-American environment can advance the

understanding of the differences in political behaviors across cultures. Research also is needed on the potential impact that cultural context might have on citizenship behavior (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Another limitation of this study concerns its relatively narrow examination of other variables that are thought to affect perceptions of organizational politics and organizational citizenship behaviors. In their original model of perceptions of organizational politics Ferris and Kacmar (1991) mentioned many constructs that should be taken into consideration in this regard. Nevertheless, we emphasized on the relation between these two constructs regardless of the effects of possible moderators. A fruitful avenue for future research may incorporate the effect of moderators on the relationship between political perceptions and citizenship behaviors.

7. Conclusion

Our results have contributed to empirical evidence confirming the assumption that peer-reported measures of citizenship behaviors can predict its relationship with perceptions of organizational politics better than self-reported measures. The objective of multi-source data is to overcome the limitation of each form of single source data. The current findings provide stronger evidence that OCB is negatively affected by political perceptions of work environment that has been provided in the past.

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Appendix 1

Perception of organizational politics scale (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997):

General Political Behavior

1. People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down.
2. There has always been an influential group in this department that no one ever crosses.

Go Along to Get Ahead

3. Employees are encouraged to speak out frankly even when they are critical of well-established ideas. (RS)
4. There is no place for yes-men around here; good ideas are desired even if it means disagreeing with superiors. (RS)
5. Agreeing with powerful others is the best alternative in this organization.
6. It is best not to rock the boat in this organization.
7. Sometimes it is easier to remain quiet than to fight the system.
8. Telling others what they want to hear is sometimes better than telling the truth.
9. It is safer to think what you are told than to make up your own mind.

Pay and Promotion Policies

10. Since I have worked in this department, I have never seen the pay and promotion policies applied politically. (RS)
11. I can't remember when a person received a pay increase or promotion that was inconsistent with the published policies. (RS)
12. None of the raises I have received are consistent with the policies on how raises should be determined
13. The stated pay and promotion policies have nothing to do with how pay raises and promotions are determined.
14. When it comes to pay raise and promotion decisions, policies are irrelevant.
15. Promotions around here are not valued much because how they are determined is so political.

Organizational citizenship behavior scale (Mackenzie, Podsakoff, & Paine, 1999; MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 1993):

Civic virtue

1. "Keeps up" with developments in the company
2. Attends functions that are not required, but that help the company image
3. Is willing to risk disapproval in order to express his/her beliefs about what's best for the company

Sportsmanship

4. Consumes a lot of time complaining about trivial matters (RS)
5. Tends to make "mountains out of molehills" (makes problems bigger than they are) (RS)
6. Always focuses on what's wrong with his/her situation, rather than the positive side of it (RS)

Altruism

7. Helps orient new agents even though it is not required
8. Is always ready to help or to lend a helping hand to those around him/her
9. Willingly gives of his/her time to help others

Conscientiousness

10. Conscientiously follows company regulations and procedures
11. Turns in budgets, sales projections, expenses reports, etc. earlier than is required
12. Returns phone calls and responds to messages and requests for information promptly

Courtesy

13. "Touches base" with others before initiating actions that might affect them
14. Takes steps to try to prevent problems with other agents and/or other personnel in the agency

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