

NURTURING ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS BY OPTIMISM SUBCULTURE Empirical Evidence from Pakistan

BASHARAT NAEEM, MUHAMMAD EHSAN MALIK
and NEELAM BANO*

Abstract. The main purpose of this study is to assess empirically to what extent sales force perceptions of optimism subculture are related to their Organizational Citizenship Behaviours directed towards organization (OCB-O) in the context of pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Survey methodology with descriptive research design is used to test the hypotheses. The results of hierarchical regression analyses of one hundred and ninety seven pharmaceutical sales persons' responses revealed that optimism subculture had significant positive effect on OCB-O and its dimensions such as civic virtue and conscientiousness, with exception of sportsmanship, controlling the effects of gender, education, age and selling experience of sales force. Practical implications of study findings and future research suggestions are presented, too.

Keywords: Pharmaceutical sales force, Pakistan, Optimism subculture, Civic virtue, Conscientiousness, Sportsmanship, OCB

JEL classification: F00, J12, M10, M14

*The authors are, respectively, Senior Research Officer at the Department of Management Science, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Lahore Campus; Dean, Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences / Professor/Director, Institute of Business Administration (IBA) / Director General, Gujranwala Campus at the University of the Punjab, Lahore; and Research Assistant at IBA, University of the Punjab / Ph.D. candidate at the University of Management and Technology, Lahore (Pakistan).

Corresponding author e-mail: basharatnaem@ciitlahore.edu.pk

I. INTRODUCTION

Organ (1988) defined organizational citizenship behaviour 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. By discretionary, we mean that the behaviour 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 behaviour is rather a matter of personal choice, such that its omission is not generally understood as punishable.” Despite the growing interest in citizenship-like behaviours, literature review on this topic revealed lack of agreement about the dimensionality of this construct indicating almost 30 potentially different forms of citizenship behaviour (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000) including Organization Citizenship Behaviours directed towards Organization (OCB-O) and Organization Citizenship Behaviours directed towards Individual (OCB-I). Williams and Anderson (1991) note that citizenship behaviours directed toward organization, inclusive of sportsmanship, civic virtue and conscientiousness dimensions, promotes the welfare of the organization.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is important in promoting organizational effectiveness (Yen and Neihoff, 2004) and producing short and long-term higher outcomes for the organizations (Joireman *et al.*, 2006; Dick *et al.*, 2006). The absence of OCB may generate negative consequences such as lower performance and high turnover (Lamude, 1994; Motowidlo, 2003). However, the organizations whose workers engage in OCB may enjoy improved strategic planning, rising managerial productivity and efficient ‘on-boarding’ of new hires (Podsakoff and MacKenzie, 1997). A recent meta-analysis conducted by Podsakoff *et al.* (2009) demonstrated evidence for the individual benefits (*e.g.*, “managerial ratings of employee performance”, “reward allocation decisions” and variety of withdrawal-related criteria) and organizational benefits (*e.g.*, productivity, reduced costs, customer satisfaction unit-level turnover) of organization citizenship behaviours. Therefore, the antecedents of OCB captured attention by past OCB researchers. In their literature review Podsakoff *et al.* (2000) noted four antecedent categories of OCB such as individual characteristics, task characteristics, organizational characteristics and leader behaviours. One important determinant is organizational culture which can also influence OCB (Mustaffa *et al.*, 2007). Organization culture was extensively investigated by researchers in last few decades but optimism subculture, defined as work unit cultural values directed at encouraging innovation, focused on result rather than activities, considering the effect of outcomes on employees and stressing teamwork

(Green Jr. *et al.*, 2004), remained ignored regarding its role in nurturing OCB.

Most empirical research on OCB was conducted in the West, using US employee's samples (Farh *et al.*, 2004). The studies conducted in the non-Western context, particularly in Pakistan, are limited in number. Podsakoff *et al.* (2000) urged for the need of future research to examine the potential impact of culture on citizenship behaviours (Jena and Goswami, 2014). In addition to it, currently there is a dearth of studies that connects optimism subculture with important organizational construct such as OCB-O and its dimensions. Hence, the need of the hour is to investigate whether or not optimism subculture contributes to fostering OCB-O and its dimensions in the selling context of Pakistan. Therefore the main goal of this research investigation was to extend the research on optimism subculture as antecedent of OCB particularly OCB-O and its three important dimensions from the perspective of pharmaceutical sales persons in Pakistani context.

Social exchange theory was used to provide conceptual logic by which optimism subculture may affect OCB-O. Review of the social exchange literature suggests that employees can have distinct social exchange relationships with their organization as a whole (Wayne *et al.*, 1997; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). When sales persons perceive positive work environment in terms of team collaboration focus, people orientation, creativity and outcomes emphasis, then they may reciprocate favourably by directing their citizenship behaviours toward the organization (Williams and Anderson, 1991; LePine *et al.*, 2002). Previous research indicated the role of culture and work conditions in OCB (Gautam *et al.*, 2005) and demographic variables might confound the effect of perceived optimism subculture on OCB-O and its dimensions. Therefore, the following research question and related hypotheses were addressed in the present study:

Research Questions

To what extent do sales persons' perceptions of optimistic subculture values relate to OCB-O and its dimensions taking into consideration demographic variables?

Therefore, the following relationships are expected:

Hypothesis 1

'Perceived optimism subculture' is positively related to OCB-O of pharmaceutical sales persons while controlling for the effect of demographic variables such as gender, education, age and selling experience.

Hypothesis 1a-1c

'Perceived optimism subculture' is positively related to OCB-O dimensions: (1a) civic virtue, (1b) sportsmanship, and (1c) conscientiousness of pharmaceutical sales persons while controlling for the effect of demographic variables such as gender, education, age and selling experience.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Survey methodology and descriptive research design was used to ascertain the degree of association of sales persons' perceptions of optimism subculture with OCB-O and its three dimensions. Structured questionnaires were successfully administered to one hundred and ninety seven pharmaceutical sales persons by using mixed mode of communication comprising of email, self and personal administration. Seven-item measure of optimism subculture developed by Green Jr. *et al.* (2004) by using four dimensions, people orientation, outcome orientation, team orientation, creativity and innovation orientation, of organization culture profile (O'Reilly *et al.*, 1991). OCB-O was measured by nine items (MacKenzie *et al.*, 1993) from its three dimensions such as civic virtue (three items), sportsmanship (three items) and conscientiousness (three items). The conceptual definition of sportsmanship (Organ, 1990*b*) used in this study was "willingness to tolerate the inevitable inconveniences and impositions of work without complaining." Conscientiousness definition used was pattern of going well beyond minimally required levels of attendance, punctuality, housekeeping, conserving resources, and related matters of internal maintenance (Organ, 1988; 1990*a*; 1990*b*). Whereas Organ (1988; 1990*a*; 1990*b*) defined civic virtue, as used in this study, as responsible, constructive involvement in the political process of the organization, including not just expressing opinions but reading one's mail, attending meetings, and keeping abreast of larger issues involving the organization. A 5-point Likert response format having extreme anchors "1" for "strongly disagree" and "5" for "strongly agree" was employed for all the validated scales. Demographic variables of pharmaceutical sales persons such as gender, education, age and selling experience were used as control variables in all study hypotheses. Hierarchical regression procedure was used for data analysis to test expected relationships.

III. RESULTS

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation of all the study constructs and demographic variables are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics

Study Constructs	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Optimism Subculture	3.66	0.55	197
OCB-O	3.55	0.49	197
Civic Virtue	3.60	0.64	197
Sportsmanship	3.24	0.95	197
Conscientiousness	3.80	0.71	197
Selling Experience	4.65	3.14	197
Age (Years)	27.26	4.33	197

Hypothesis Testing

As regards hypothesis 1, perceived optimism subculture was expected to relate positively to OCB-O of pharmaceutical sales persons while controlling their demographic characteristics. The results of hierarchical regression analysis pertaining to the first hypothesis are presented in Table 2. OCB-O was first regressed on demographic variables of pharmaceutical sales persons such as gender, education, age and selling experience. Interestingly, none of demographic variables was found to be significantly related to OCB-O. However, when OCB-O was regressed on optimism subculture along with demographic variables, it contributed about 7 percent unique variance in OCB-O beyond demographic variables. The analysis indicated that optimism subculture had highly significant but weak positive relationship with OCB-O ($\beta = 0.26$, $t = 3.78$, $p < 0.001$) which was in line to hypothesis 1.

As regards hypothesis 1a, perceived optimism subculture was expected to relate positively to civic virtue of pharmaceutical sales persons while controlling their demographic characteristics. The results of hierarchical regression analysis pertaining to this hypothesis are presented in Table 3. Civic virtue was first regressed on demographic variables of pharmaceutical sales persons such as gender, education, age and selling experience. Interestingly, none of demographic variables was found to be significantly related to civic virtue. However, when civic virtue was regressed on optimism subculture along with demographic variables, it contributed about 18 percent unique variance in civic virtue beyond demographic variables. The analysis indicated that optimism subculture had highly significant but

weak positive relationship with civic virtue ($\beta = 0.29$, $t = 4.27$, $p < 0.001$) which was concurrent to hypothesis 1a.

TABLE 2
Model Summary^c

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				β t (sig.)
					R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change	ANOVA F (sig.)	
1	0.151 ^a	0.023	0.002	0.49431	0.023	1.114	0.351	1.11 (0.351) ^a	NS
2	0.301 ^b	0.091	0.067	0.47799	0.068	14.329	0.000	3.82 (0.003) ^b	OptuCul: 0.26 3.78 (0.000); NS

a Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education;

b Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education, Optimism Subculture (OptuCul);

c Dependent Variable: OCB-O; NS: All demographic variables were non-significant

TABLE 3
Model Summary^c

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				β t (sig.)
					R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change	ANOVA F (sig.)	
1	0.145 ^a	0.021	0.001	0.64041	0.021	1.028	0.394	1.03 (0.39) ^a	NS
2	0.326 ^b	0.106	0.083	0.61342	0.085	18.265	0.000	4.55 (0.001) ^b	OptuCul: 0.29 4.27 (0.000); NS

a Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education;

b Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education, Optimism Subculture (OptuCul);

c Dependent Variable: Civic Virtue; NS: All demographic variables were non-significant

As regards hypothesis 1b, perceived optimism subculture was expected to relate positively to sportsmanship of pharmaceutical sales persons while controlling their demographic characteristics. The results of hierarchical regression analysis pertaining to this hypothesis are presented in Table 4. Sportsmanship was first regressed on demographic variables of pharmaceutical sales persons such as gender, education, age and selling experience. Interestingly, none of demographic variables was found to be significantly related to sportsmanship. However when sportsmanship was regressed on optimism subculture along with demographic variables, neither demographic variables nor optimism subculture contributed significant variance in sportsmanship which was contrary to hypothesis 1b.

TABLE 4
Model Summary^c

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				β t (sig.)
					R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change	ANOVA F (sig.)	
1	0.189 ^a	0.036	0.016	0.94050	0.036	1.781	0.134	1.78 (0.13) ^a	NS
2	0.204 ^b	0.042	0.017	0.94008	0.006	1.173	0.280	1.66 (0.15) ^b	OptsCul: 0.08 1.08 (0.28); NS

- a Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education;
- b Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education, Optimism Subculture (OptsCul);
- c Dependent Variable: Sportsmanship; NS: All demographic variables were non-significant

As regards hypothesis 1c, perceived optimism subculture was expected to relate positively to conscientiousness of pharmaceutical sales persons while controlling their demographic characteristics. The results of hierarchical regression analysis pertaining to this hypothesis are presented in Table 5. Conscientiousness was first regressed on demographic variables of pharmaceutical sales persons such as gender, education, age and selling experience. Interestingly, none of demographic variables was found to be significantly related to conscientiousness. However, when conscientiousness

was regressed on optimism subculture along with demographic variables, it contributed about 3 percent unique variance in conscientiousness beyond demographic variables. The analysis indicated that optimism subculture had significant but weak positive relationship with conscientiousness ($\beta = 0.18$, $t = 2.56$, $p < 0.01$) which was concurrent to hypothesis 1c.

TABLE 5
Model Summary^c

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				β t (sig.)
					R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change	ANOVA F (sig.)	
1	0.173 ^a	0.030	0.010	0.70748	0.030	1.486	0.208	1.59 (0.21) ^a	NS
2	0.250 ^b	0.062	0.038	0.69743	0.032	6.573	0.011	2.54 (0.03) ^b	OptsCul: 0.18 2.56 (0.01); NS

a Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education;

b Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Selling Experience, Age, Education, Optimism Subculture (OptsCul);

c Dependent Variable: Conscientiousness ; NS: All demographic variables were non-significant

IV. DISCUSSION

Given the practical implications of organization directed OCB pertaining to organization effectiveness, performance, productivity and turnover, the present study ascertained to what extent positive organization environment could foster OCB-O of pharmaceutical sales persons in Pakistani context. The results indicated that perceptions of optimism subculture had its positive role in cultivating pharmaceutical sales force organization oriented pro-social behaviours (overall) and its important characteristics such as civic virtue and conscientiousness with the exception of sportsmanship. These results confirmed most of the study hypotheses for positive link between optimism subculture and OCB-O and its dimensions. These findings are consistent to the postulations of social exchange theory that employees may reciprocate favourably to employers by engaging in organizational directed citizenship behaviours such as civic virtue and conscientiousness. Conceptual logic of

organizational informal control such as optimism subculture might explain why it is positively related to OCB-O. The work unit or sales organization cultural values might have expected sales persons to be engaged in favourable organization behaviours such as OCB-O, civic virtue and conscientiousness. Taking into consideration study findings, the sales organization leadership or management should take immediate necessary interventions to develop optimistic cultural values by improving focus on team orientation, people orientation, creativity and risk taking besides outcome orientations. Future researchers should take the longitudinal research, experimental and mixed method designs rather than cross sectional design to assess the robustness of these study findings.

REFERENCES

- Blau, P. M. (1964), *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New York: Wiley.
- Cooke, Robert A. and Denise M. Rousseau (1988), Behavioral norms and expectations: A quantitative approach to the assessment of organizational culture. *Group and Organization Management*, Volume 13(3), pp. 245-273.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/105960118801300302>
- Cropanzano, R. and M. S. Mitchell (2005), Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, Volume 31(6), pp. 874-900.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
- Deckop, J. R., R. Mangel and C. C. Cirka (1999), Getting more than you pay for: Organizational citizenship behavior and pay-for-performance plan. *Academy of Management Journal*, Volume 42(4), pp. 420-428.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/257012>
- Dick, R. V., M. W. Grojean, O. Christ and J. Wieseke (2006), Identity and the extra mile: Relationships between organizational identification and organizational citizenship behavior. *British Journal of Management*, Volume 17(4), pp. 283-301. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2006.00520.x>
- Farh, J. L., C. B. Zhong and D. W. Organ (2004), Organizational citizenship behavior in the People's Republic of China. *Organization Science*, Volume 15(2), pp. 241-253. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1030.0051>
- Gautam, T., R. V. Dick, U. Wagner, N. Upadhyay and A. J. Davis (2005), Organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment in Nepal. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, Volume 8(3), pp. 305-314.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-839X.2005.00172.x>
- Green Jr., K. W., B. Medlin and D. Whitten (2004), Developing optimism to improve performance: An approach for the manufacturing sector. *Industrial Management and Data Systems*, Volume 104(2), pp. 106-114.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02635570410522071>
- Jena, R. K. and R. Goswami (2014), Measuring the determinants of organizational citizenship behavior. *Global Business Review*, Volume 15(2), pp. 381-396.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0972150914523587>
- Joireman, J., D. Daniels, J. George-Falvy and D. Kamdar (2006), Organizational citizenship behaviors as function of empathy consideration of future consequences, and employee time horizon: An initial exploration using an in-basket simulation of OCBs. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Volume 36(9), pp. 2266-2292. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.0021-9029.2006.00103.x>
- Lamude, K. G. (1994), Supervisors' influence tactics for handling managers' resistance. *Psychological Reports*, Volume 75(1), pp. 371-374.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2466/pr0.1994.75.1.371>

- LePine, J. A., A. Erez and D. E. Johnson (2002), The nature and dimensionality of organizational citizenship behavior: A critical review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Volume 87(1), pp. 52-65.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.1.52>
- MacKenzie, S. B., P. M. Podsakoff and R. Fetter (1993), The impact of organizational citizenship behavior on evaluations of salesperson performance. *Journal of Marketing*, Volume 57(1), pp. 70-80.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1252058>
- Motowidlo, S. J. (2003), Job performance. In W. C. Borman, D. R. Ilgen and R. J. Klimoski (eds.), *Handbook of Psychology: Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, Volume 12, pp. 39-53. John Wiley: Hoboken, New Jersey.
- Mustaffa, C. S., W. R. Abdul Rahman, M. A. Hassan and F. Ahmad (2007), Work culture and organizational citizenship behavior among Malaysian employees. *The International Journal on Knowledge, Culture and Change Management*, Volume 7(8), pp. 35-50.
- O'Reilly III, C. A., J. Chatman and D. F. Caldwell (1991), People and organizational culture: A profile comparison approach to assessing person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Journal*, Volume 34(3), pp. 487-516. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/256404>
- Organ, D. W. (1988), *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Good Soldier Syndrome*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Organ, D. W. (1990a), The motivational basis of organizational citizenship behavior. In B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings (eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Volume 12, pp. 43-72. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Organ, D. W. (1990b), The subtle significance of job satisfaction. *Clinical Laboratory Management Review*, Volume 4, pp. 94-98.
- Pfeffer, J. (1981), Management as symbolic action. In L. L. Cummings and B. M. Staw (eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Volume 3, pp. 1-52. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Podsakoff, N. P., S. W. Whiting, P. M. Podsakoff and B. D. Blume (2009), Individual- and organizational-level consequences of organizational citizenship behaviors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Volume 94(1), pp. 122. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0013079>
- Podsakoff, P. M. and S. B. MacKenzie (1997), Impact of organizational citizenship behavior on organizational performance: A review and suggestion for future research. *Human Performance*, Volume 10(2), pp. 133-151.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327043hup1002_5
- Podsakoff, P. M., S. B. MacKenzie, J. B. Paine and D. G. Bachrach (2000), Organizational citizenship behaviors: A critical review of the theoretical and

- empirical literature and suggestions for future research. *Journal of Management*, Volume 26(3), pp. 513-563.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/014920630002600307>
- Schein, E. H. (1990), Organizational culture. *American Psychologist*, Volume 45(2), pp. 109-119. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.45.2.109>
- Wayne, S. J., L. M. Shore and R. C. Liden (1997), Perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange: A social exchange perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, Volume 40(1), pp. 82-111.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/257021>
- Williams, L. J. and S. E. Anderson (1991), Job satisfaction and organizational commitment as predictors of organizational citizenship and in-role behaviors. *Journal of Management*, Volume 17(3), pp. 601-617.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700305>
- Yen, H. R. and B. P. Niehoff (2004), Organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational effectiveness: Examining relationships in Taiwanese banks. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Volume 34(8), pp. 1617-1637.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2004.tb02790.x>