Abstract

This study investigated different motivational sources for organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), examining both the direct and moderating effects of perceived organisational support (POS) and goal orientation. Participants were 303 employees from 12 Australian for-profit organisations. The study finds that goal orientation moderates the relationship between POS and OCB such that the positive relationship between POS and organisationally directed citizenship behaviour is lessened when employees are motivated by high internal goal orientation. Implications of these findings for promoting employee citizenship are discussed.

Keywords: Organisational citizenship, organisational support, goal orientation
We live in an era in which employees are increasingly expected to contribute to organisational effectiveness in ways that go beyond the simple completion of a fixed set of prescribed work tasks. Rather, it is those employees who engage in discretionary and cooperative work related behaviours that are neither mandatory nor contractually compensated for that promote effective organisational functioning (Organ, 1988). Smith, Organ and Near (1983) introduced the term ‘Organisational Citizenship Behaviour’ to denote such behaviours and suggested they included such acts as punctuality and attendance beyond enforceable levels, helping other employees, voluntary assumption of ad-hoc tasks, and making suggestions for improvement. Given the widespread importance placed upon citizenship behaviour and its assumed role in enhancing organisational effectiveness (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997), the issue for organisations becomes how they might foster the citizenship potential of their employees.

A large body of literature grounded in social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) suggests employees will be more likely to engage in organisational citizenship behaviour when they feel obligated to reciprocate positive actions displayed by the organisation itself (for a meta-analytic review, see Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). That is, when the organisation is perceived to support and value employees in some way, such as through the provision of investment-oriented human resource practices (e.g., extensive training and development), then it is more likely that employees will feel a sense of obligation to return the employers’ favourable treatment by engaging in behaviours that support organisational goals. Such a view suggests citizenship behaviour may, to some extent at least, be motivated by instrumental aims as employees attempt to maximise the value of exchange with the organisation (Leonard, Beauvais, & Scholt, 1999).

The purpose of the present study is to examine the effect of another potential motivational source for citizenship behaviour, namely goal internalisation. Here I suggest goal internalisation, an intrinsic form of motivation in which employees help an organisation reach its goals simply because such goals are congruent with their personal value system, will play an important moderating role in the relationship between perceived organisational support and citizenship behaviour. To this end, a
discussion of the two constructs central to this research - perceived organisational support and goal internalisation - is first presented, with particular emphasis placed upon the motivation sources that underlie both variables. An examination the relative and combined effects of POS and goal internalisation on organisationally directed citizenship behaviour using a diverse sample of Australian employees is then presented. The implications of the findings for management and practice are discussed.

**Perceived Organisational Support and Organisational Citizenship**

Perceived organisational support (POS) is defined as a general perception concerning the extent to which the organisation values employees’ general contributions and cares for their well-being (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). Theoretically, POS has been linked to citizenship behaviour through an extrinsic motivation process, namely the desire to maximise the utility of the exchange relationship held between employee and his or her organisation. According to Eisenberger, et al. (1990), a reason why POS is related to OCB is that it may affect employees’ perceptions that they are valued by their organisation. A global perception that an organisation supports and values its employees will lead to reciprocal contributions from employees in the form of organisationally directed citizenship behaviours. In effect, POS produces a felt obligation to care about the organisation’s welfare, thereby promoting favourable actions that go beyond assigned responsibilities that help the organisation reach its goals (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In support of this view, several empirical studies have reported statistically significant associations between POS and OCB (e.g., Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998; Shore & Wayne, 1993). More recently, in their meta-analytic review of more than 70 POS studies, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) reported an average weighted correlation of .20 between POS and extra-role performance. When limited to extra-role behaviour directed specifically at the organisation, this weighted correlation rose to .24. Thus, it is firstly hypothesised that,

**Hypothesis 1.** There will be a positive direct relationship between POS and organisationally directed citizenship behaviour.


**Goal Internalisation Motivation**

Whilst numerous studies supporting the notion that positive social relationships facilitate OCB (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983), several unexplained results have emerged. Cardona, Lawrence and Bentler (2004), for example, point out that there are various perceived organisational experiences that exert a positive influence on OCB that do not appear to be social exchange relationships. Their example includes research that shows individuals’ perceptions of job characteristics appear to facilitate OCB (e.g., Farh, Podsakoff, & Organ, 1990; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994). Motivation to engage in OCB based upon intrinsic task characteristics suggests there are a range of antecedents to OCB have that yet to be considered within the literature. In the present study, the potential for another intrinsic motivator of OCB is presented, that of goal internalisation.

Behaviour motivated by goal internalisation occurs when individuals adopt attitudes and behaviours congruent with their value system (Leonard et al., 1999). This is what Katz and Kahn (1978) refer to as motivation based upon internalised values, and what Etzioni (1975) refers to as pure moral involvement. Goal internalisation as an intrinsic motivator has also been examined as one dimension organisational commitment (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986) and psychological empowerment (Menon, 2001). When the organisational goals align with their own value systems, employees are likely to have higher goal internalisation and be driven by an earnest desire to help better the organisation (Barbuto, Fritz, & Marx, 2002). One way for employees high in goal internalisation to help better an organisation is go ‘beyond the call of duty’ and engage in OCB. Accordingly, it is hypothesised that,

**Hypothesis 2**: Goal internalisation will positively predict organisationally directed citizenship behaviour.

**POS and OCB: The Moderating Role of Goal Internalisation**

As previously discussed, organisational support theory is based upon the premise that employees act in ways to maximise the value of exchange with the organisation. These acts are argued to result from felt obligations to reciprocate others’ actions due to the norm of reciprocity (Rhoades &
Eisenberger, 2002). Under this theoretical treatment, POS acts as an extrinsic motivator of citizenship behaviour. Goal internalisation is different from extrinsic motivators like perceived organisational support, however, because it embodies the concept of self interest (Barbuto, Cundall, & Fritz, 2004). Goal internalisation motivation occurs when an employee believes in the cause. As such, we might expect that employees high in goal internalisation do not respond the same way to perceptions of organisational support than those low in goal internalisation. Instead of engaging in organisationally directed citizenship for the sake of ensuring the quality of the exchange relationship, or in ensuring the equity of employer-employee exchanges, employees’ high in goal internalisation are more likely to engage in organisational citizenship regardless. It is not the acts displayed by the organisation that motivate high goal internalised individuals, but the belief that the goals of the organisation are both worthwhile and achievable (Barbuto et al., 2004). Based on this rationale, the following hypothesis is made:

_Hypothesis 3_: The positive relationship between POS and organisationally directed citizenship behaviour will be weaker when goal internalisation is high than when it is low.

**METHOD**

*Sample*

Data were collected from 303 employees from 12 various for-profit organisations in Australia. These organisations were invited to participate in a larger study examining attitudinal and behavioural reactions to perceived organisational support. Company wide or stratified random sample surveys (of not less than 50 employees) were conducted with response rates across the organisations ranging from a low of 11% to a high of 60% (average response rate = 46%). The respondent sample was mostly full time (73%) female (76%) with a low union participation rate (9%). With respect to job categories, the sample consisted of managers (16%), supervisors (8%), various professional groups (8%), administrators (25%), sales staff (36%), and skilled (3%), service (1%), or technical workers (1%).
**Measures**

A survey questionnaire was used to measure focal variables using pre-established scales. For each measure, respondents indicated their agreement with statements on a five point Likert response scale ranging from 1 (‘strongly disagree’) to 5 (‘strongly agree’).

**Perceived Organisational Support.**
The short version of the Survey of Organisational Support (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997) was used to assess the extent to which employees perceived that the organisation valued their contributions and cared about their well-being. Past research has established the psychometric properties of the scale, providing evidence for the high internal reliability and unidimensionality of the 8-item SPOS (Eisenberger et al., 1997). In the present study, Chronbach’s alpha was .89.

**Goal Internalisation.**
Goal internalisation was measured with a three item scale developed by Menon (2001). Chronbach’s alpha for the scale was .92.

**Organisational Citizenship Behaviour.**
Organisationally directed citizenship behaviour was assessed using the organisational member proficiency dimension of Griffin, Parker and Neal’s integrated model of work performance (2001). This three item scale assesses the extent to which an employee presents a positive image of the organisation to others, talks about the organisation in positive ways, and defends it against criticism. Chronbach’s alpha for this scale was .80

**Control Variables.**
Three control variables were used in the analyses; age, education level and tenure.

**RESULTS**

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations.
Table I.

Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations Between Variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tenure</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. POS</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Goal internalisation</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Organisational citizenship</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: POS = Perceived Organisational Support. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p <.001.

Moderated hierarchical regression analysis was used to test hypotheses. In step 1, the controls age, education level and tenure were entered as a set. Perceived organisational support and goal internalisation were entered in Step 2 and Step 3, respectively. Finally, in step 4, the cross product of POS and goal internalisation was entered into the equation. To reduce multicollinearity effects and make the interaction term more directly interpretable, the POS and goal internalisation variables were centered at their means (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

As predicted by Hypothesis 1, POS was positively associated with citizenship behaviour after taking account of control variables (see Table 2), explaining an additional 15% of variance beyond the restricted model. Similarly, and in support of Hypothesis 2, goal internalisation was significantly and positively associated with citizenship behaviour, explaining an additional 2% of variance in citizenship behaviour above and beyond POS. In equation 4, the inclusion of the interaction between POS and goal internalisation accounts for an additional 3 per cent of variance in organisationally directed citizenship behaviour.
Table 2.

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for POS and Goal Internalisation Predicting OCB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1. Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2. Perceived Organisational Support</td>
<td>.40***</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3. Goal Internalisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 4. POS by goal internalisation interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change R²</td>
<td>.03*</td>
<td>.15***</td>
<td>.02***</td>
<td>.03***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model R²</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F</td>
<td>3.72*</td>
<td>17.05***</td>
<td>16.08***</td>
<td>15.38***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Following the recommendations of Aiken and West (1991), simple regression lines representing the relationship between POS and citizenship behaviour were plotted separately at high and low levels of goal internalisation (i.e., 1 SD above and below the mean; see Figure 1). As hypothesised, the relationship between POS and citizenship behaviour is stronger for employees with low goal internalisation than for employees with high goal internalisation.

Figure 1. Relationship between perceived organisational support and organisational member proficiency (citizenship behaviour) as a function of goal internalisation.
Discussion

The present study attempts to advance research by examining both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators of organisationally directed citizenship behaviour together. Consistent with previous research, this study finds that perceived organisational support is positively associated with discretionary employee behaviour, thereby reinforcing the importance of fostering quality employment relations. In addition, and extending previous research, the results of the present study also indicate that the relationship between POS and OCB is weaker for those employees high in goal internalisation.

Individuals and organisations participate in an exchange relationship, the quality of which many have argued is vital to ensuring effective organisational functioning. Organisation’s can attempt to demonstrate their commitment to the quality of this relationship by engaging in activities that show they care for and value their employees (Eisenberger et al., 1990). In turn, employees are expected to reciprocate by engaging in behaviours that help the organisation reach its goals. However, the current research suggests some organisational members will attempt to reach those goals independent of any visible actions on the part of the organisation. Knowing that individuals primarily motivated by goal internalisation will attempt to pursue goals independent of extrinsic considerations has implications for organisations and their attempts to foster a cooperative and generally helpful workforce. Perhaps the most obvious is whether it is possible to enhance intrinsic motivational sources within employees like goal internalisation. Attempts at aligning organisational goals with individual values may be both a more viable and cost effective strategy compared to some of the proposed methods of demonstrating organisational support, such as the ‘investment-oriented’ human resource practices described by Tsui and colleagues (Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997). A wide body of literature exists on the importance of aligning the values of employees and organisations, from Schneider’s (1987) attraction-selection-attrition framework to the theory and empirical findings centred around person-organisation fit (Kristoff, 1996) and value congruence (Kalliah, Bluehorn, & Strube, 1999). Each provides some
indication how value alignment has the potential to result in goal internalisation by employees, to which this study indicates forms an intrinsic antecedent to OCB and moderator to POS-OCB relations.

**Limitations**

Some limitations common to field studies should be noted. First, the data presented here are cross sectional thereby ruling out any assessment of causality. Whilst I have conducted the present study on the premise that perceptions of organisational support and goal internalisation result in greater citizenship behaviour, it is equally plausible to suggest that people who generally show higher levels of citizenship behaviour are simply more predisposed to provide more favourable assessments of the level of support received by their organisation, or the extent to which they have internalised the goals of the organisation. Longitudinal or laboratory studies are needed to provide evidence of causation or reciprocal effects. A second limitation concerns the possible impact of common method variance on the present findings. It should be noted, however, that in terms of significant moderation effects, the impact of common method variance and self-report bias is considered to be less of an issue. The bias attributed to monomethod effects is expected to increase the main effects at the expense of interaction effects (see Wall, Jackson, Mullarkey, & Parker, 1996). Thus, the presence of a significant interaction effect adds meaningful support to the moderation hypothesis. Of course, this is not to suggest that future studies would not benefit from the inclusion of multi-method data collection strategies, including objective measures of the behavioural outcomes.

**Future Research**

The results of this study should encourage further examination of the relationship between different motivation sources and organisational citizenship behaviour. Goal internalisation is but one source of motivation amongst many and any number of typologies (for reviews, see Kanfer, 1992; Locke & Henne, 1986) may be fruitfully utilised in order to further our understanding why employees choose to engage in organisationally directed citizenship behaviour.
Conclusions

Perceived organisational support has consistently been shown to be an important antecedent to organisational citizenship behaviour. The present study indicates, however, that organisational members do not necessarily need external motivators like visual displays of support and caring to display citizenship behaviours. With goal internalisation motivation, employees need only hold a strong belief in the goals of the organisation in order to work towards their accomplishment.
REFERENCES


