

Organizational citizenship behaviour: The direct effect of job satisfaction and the mediating role of participative leadership*

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Abstract

This paper focuses on three variables: job satisfaction (JS), organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and participative leadership (PL). The main purpose is to examine the relationship between JS and OCB among employees, mediated by PL. The data were collected from 287 employees in Croatian companies. Using hierarchical regression to test the hypothesis, the study revealed a positive relationship between JS and OCB. The results also highlight the role PL has as a mediator for the JS and OCB relationship. The paper suggests that PL triggers JS and OCB by enhancing and reinforcing the relationship between them. The implication of the results is discussed emphasizing the benefits of the participative management style and democratic structures in the organizations for theory, research, and practice. This paper contributes to the growing literature aimed at understanding the drivers of OCB in organizations.

Keywords: organizational citizenship behaviour, job satisfaction, participative leadership

JEL Codes: M21, J28, D23

1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has been given significant attention in the management and organization literature, and many academics have proposed various definitions, classifications, antecedents, and outcomes of this concept. OCB represents “those organizationally beneficial behaviours and gestures that can neither be enforced on the basis of formal role obligations nor elicited by the contractual guarantee of recompense” (Organ, 1990, p. 46). Examples of OCB include helping other employees, volunteering for things that are not required, making innovative suggestions, not abusing the rights of colleagues, not taking extra breaks, and attending elective organization meetings (Kidwell et al., 1997). Empirical evidence indicates that OCB plays a significant role in performance improvement, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, job satisfaction (JS) (Narimani et al., 2013), and reduces employee turnover (Paille, 2013). Additionally, research has discovered a positive relationship between OCB and affective organizational commitment (Ng and Feldman, 2011), trust in the leader

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(Colquitt et al., 2013), and psychological empowerment (Seibert et al., 2011). Moreover, numerous researchers have shown the significant influence of OCB on organizational success (Chen et al., 1998; Podsakoff et al., 2014; Carpenter et al., 2014). All these OCB outcomes are the reasons why managers try to inspire and enhance their employees to conduct the behaviors that belong to the category of OCB.

Managers are also very interested in the JS of their employees, which is a close concept to OCB. Many researchers reported that JS and OCB are positively related (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Van Scotter, 2000; Gadot and Cohen, 2004; Podsakoff et al., 2006; Subhadrabandhu, 2012; Dehghani et al., 2014). JS is a contributing factor to the physical and mental employees' well-being. It has a major impact on work-related behaviours, such as productivity, absenteeism, turnover and employee relations, as well as an important influence on the financial standpoint of organizations. Thus, understanding employees' JS is an important organizational goal (Aronson et al., 2005). Employees with higher levels of JS exhibit more pro-social behaviour (Bateman and Organ, 1983). Kim (2006) states that employees who feel a higher level of JS will show a higher level of OCB. From an organizational psychology perspective, employees who express higher levels of JS and are engaged in OCB are considered essential for achieving the company's strategic goals (Sabahattin Mete, 2020).

Moreover, researchers have proven that essential individual and organizational behaviours and outcomes (both OCB and JS) are linked with leadership styles (Walumbwa et al., 2005). Leaders have recognized the extent of how their behaviour and energy affect employees' satisfaction, performance effectiveness, and productivity (Hassi, 2018). More than ever before, they are aware of the relevance of empowering and involving employees in decision-making (Guinot et al., 2021). In this regard, participative leadership (PL) in organizations emerged as a desirable and fruitful approach. Moreover, considering the extant research on leadership over the past decade, academics and practitioners' highest importance and attention have gained leadership styles that create a positive work environment. In that regard, the extensive empirical literature suggests that, depending on the context, PL can produce many complex relationships, and influence some processes positively and negatively in some situations.

Empirical evidence that supports a positive association between PL and many different work-related outcomes is represented significantly higher (Benoliel and Barth, 2017; Usadolo, 2020). When employees experience higher positive energy levels (Atwater and Carmeli, 2009) from their leaders, they are inclined to exhibit favourable workplace outcomes. Among many positive effects that PL can produce, researchers have suggested a positive correlation with JS and OCB (Bhatti and Qureshi, 2007; Chan, 2019; Usman et al., 2021). Although novel research abounds insights into leadership behaviour and its influence on JS, the

impact of PL on employee JS is still little understood (Chan, 2019). However, some prior studies show that PL leads to positive outcomes (Chan, 2019; Chang et al., Usman et al, 2021), but to the best of our knowledge, no research has yet addressed its impact on the relationship between JS and OCB.

It is well established that leadership style can have an impact on employees beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (Farrell, 2000) influencing their personal development throughout the extent of their capabilities (Torp and Nielsen, 2018). So, we consider that it would be beneficial to realize the extent to which creating the conditions for employee participation can help leaders in reinforcing OCB. In that vein, the purpose of our study is to provide an answer to whether the relationship between employee JS and OCB will be enhanced due to the PL approach. We propose that leaders who promote PL in their organizations are encouraging and boost employees' organizationally beneficial behaviours and gestures. Given these considerations, this paper will illustrate and discuss the role that PL has in intensifying OCB in organizations, particularly considering the relation between JS and OCB. There is an increased interest in PL and its impact on employees' work attitudes (Demirtas et al., 2017, Chang, 2019). Therefore, additional clarification of the relationship between JS and OCB, by introducing PL as a variable that could additionally enhance this relationship, could be very interesting cognition from the scientists' standpoint as well as for the managers.

2. Literature review

2.1. OCB

For the last several decades, OCB has represented a significant research topic due to its complexity, practical importance and implications for the organizations. OCB is defined as "individual behaviour that is not explicitly or indirectly recognized by the formal reward system, and that behaviour plays a vital role in the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988). OCB is manifested in various forms such as loyalty, organizational compliance, volunteering and helping others (Podsakoff et al., 2000). As it is not specified by the duties prescribed in the job description, this type of behaviour is not required by the organization. Therefore, it cannot be awarded, but it often brings informal recognition to the employee – peers' appreciation, manager's or organizational partners, and for the organization functional efficiency and success (Achmad, 2013).

There are several classifications of OCB. The dominant classification is emerged by Organ (1988) who defines five categories of OCB: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. Altruism deals with voluntary actions that involve helping another employee in completing his/her task (Kaur et al., 2020). Conscientiousness refers to employees whose behaviour goes beyond

the minimum required criteria (Memon, et al., 2017). Sportsmanship represents willingness acceptance of changes and perform without complaining (Pradhan et al., 2016). Courtesy characterizes discretionary behaviour of treating others with respect (Achmad, 2013). Civic virtue includes responsible and productive participation in the decision-making of an organization (Kaur et al., 2020).

OCB is theoretically based on two conceptual backgrounds: the social exchange theory and the equity theory. The social exchange theory presumes that when one side offers something useful, the other side must respond reciprocally or with an equally good offer (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) have shown that if one employee is supportive of another employee, there will be an equivalent effect on the other employee for being engaged in OCB. Therefore, social exchange theory explains why an individual displays OCB even when not assured of a formal reward from the other party (Kaur and Randhawa, 2021).

Perception of fairness is a necessary precondition for OCB. In that context, equity theory proposes that individuals estimate the ratio of what has been contributed (i.e., inputs) to what has been received (i.e., outcomes) for both themselves and a chosen referent other (Adams, 1965). Therefore, the mutual help of employees in the organization is an outcome of fairness perception (Adams, 1965), while unfairness perception stops employees from helping others.

Many types of research have dealt with the antecedents of OCB. Podsakoff et al. (2000) have separated those antecedents into four extensive categories. The first category includes individual employee's characteristics, such as demographic characteristics (gender, tenure), dispositional variables (conscientiousness, agreeableness), employee's role perception (role ambiguity, role conflict), employee's attitudes (JS, organizational commitment, trust in leaders) and employee's abilities and individual differences (professional orientation, need for independence, indifference to rewards). The second category refers to task characteristics (feedback, task routinization). The third category includes organizational characteristics (organizational formalization, organizational inflexibility, perceived organizational support). Finally, the fourth category refers to leadership behaviours (articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, high-performance expectations, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward behaviour, supportive leader behaviours) (Magdalena, 2014).

2.2. JS and OCB

Spector (1997) described JS as a core variable in research and theory of organizational phenomena. JS could be defined as an emotional reaction and behavioural expression to a job that results from individual assessment of his/her

work achievement, work environment and work life (Golbasi et al., 2008). JS is expressed when employees have a pleasurable emotion associated with their job (Akehurst et al., 2013). In fact, the positive appraisal of the work experience refers to the fact that employees enjoy their work, whereas the negative evaluation involves loathing one's occupation. To enjoy working on diverse tasks yields satisfaction, while having an aversion to a specific job results in discontent and dissatisfaction (Hassi, 2019). Studies on JS are important because if employees experience low JS it can have many negative impacts on the individual and the organization behaviour, such as absenteeism, decrease in performance, low commitment, and turnover (Robbins and Judge, 2007). Satisfied employees affect positively the work outcomes, which results in the success and growth of the organization (Silverthorne, 1996).

JS as employees' attitude is one of the most researched antecedents of OCB. Many researches have explored the relationship between JS and OCB. Mainly, they have discovered a positive correlation between these two variables (Organ, 1988; Organ and Ryan, 1995; Chhabra and Mohanty, 2014; Shafazawana et al., 2016; Cantarelli, et al., 2016). In most of them, JS has been studied as an antecedent variable to OCB (Bateman and Organ, 1983; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Organ and Ryan, 1995; Van Scotter, 2000). It is reasonable to state that the employees who are satisfied with their work develop OCB easier, based on a reciprocity relation (Gadot & Cohen, 2004). Podsakoff et al. (2006) as well, have shown that employees who are satisfied generally easier make contributions in OCB than others. Furthermore, Bolino et al. (2002) suggested that employees are more likely to offer extra-role behaviour when they are satisfied with their jobs. Kim (2006) stated that employees who enjoy a higher level of JS would exhibit a higher level of OCB. Studies that are more recent have also implied that employees with increased levels of JS are more likely tend to display OCB (Subhadrabandhu, 2012; Dehghani et al., 2014).

In some research, JS has been examined as the outcome of OCB (Ngunia et al., 2006; Ko, 2008; Zeinabadi, 2010; Chang and Chang, 2010; Jain and Cooper, 2012; Subhadrabandhu, 2012). There is also some research that has reported a nonsignificant correlation between JS and OCB, suggesting that the relationship between them might sometimes depend on mediating variables (Alotaibi, 2001). Additionally, Chen et al. (1998) have not found an association between JS and OCB. Therefore, the relationship between JS and OCB, especially these variables' causal direction, is still questionable (Zeinabadi, 2010).

Following the cognitions presented above, mainly focusing on the dominant research results about the positive relationship between JS and OCB, we propose the first hypothesis of this research, which states:

H1: JS has a positive impact on OCB.

2.3. PL

PL can be defined as a social process (Griffin and Stacey, 2005) that refers to joint decision-making between leaders and their employees (Koopman and Wierdsma, 1998). It assumes a behaviour that strives to support and encourage employees' involvement, freedom, decision-making and problem-solving participation (Nystrom, 1990; Chan, 2019). As such, it can take different forms, including consultation, joint decision-making, and delegation (Yulk, 2006). This type of leadership behaviour generally produces positive employee attitudes and actions (Torp and Nielsen, 2018).

Participative leaders share giving responsibilities (Robert et al., 2000), authority (Usadolo, 2020), power and autonomy (Kirkman and Rosen, 1999) with their employees. They create a work environment where they can enhance their positive attitudes toward their job, colleagues, and organization. Employees exhilarated by their leaders are being given more responsibility, autonomy and active involvement in decision-making (Usman et al., 2021). Following this approach of welcoming employees into the decision-making process and developing positive interpersonal interactions with them (Kozlowski et al., 1999), a participative leader sends an inspiring and positive message, stimulating work motivation.

The effects of PL could be explained by social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). According to the theory postulations, when the relationship between leaders and employees is concerned, employees learn to behave through observation, imitation, and identification of leaders' behaviour's and attitudes. The role modelling motivates them. In this regard, employees are changing and adjusting their behaviours following the behaviour of participative leaders. Recent research reveals that employees who perceive their leaders as positive role models are likely to exhibit favourable work-related outcomes. Namely, when employees experience positive behaviour from their supervisors, they are likely to display positive work behaviours because they develop a feeling of being valued and trusted (Usadolo, 2020).

Over the last decade, the literature indicates a growing research interest in PL. Plenty of studies that investigated and evaluated PL in organizations have emerged, where the vast majority has confirmed its welfare for organizations and employees. Research studies indicated that PL is positively related to employee behaviours and many different work-related outcomes (Benoliel and Barth, 2017; Usadolo, 2020). In that sense, research indicated that when employees experience higher positive energy levels (Atwater and Carmeli, 2009) from their leaders that they are inclined to exhibit favourable workplace outcomes, such as thriving at work, OCB (Chan, 2019; Usman et al., 2021), innovative work behaviour (Krause, 2014, de Jong and Den Hartog, 2007), creativity

(Wong et al., 2018), organizational commitment, JS (Bhatti and Qureshi, 2007), etc.

2.4. *PL, JS and OCB*

PL has been very intensively applied in empirical research as a dependent and mediating variable in many relationships with the workplace outcome variables. Recently, much research interest has been laid on the impact of PL on JS. The relationship between leader-employee has a significant impact on employee's JS (DeCremer, 2003). Leaders can enhance or diminish the employees' commitment, satisfaction and job performance (Suar, 2006). In that regard, Bhatti and Qureshi (2007) revealed that employee involvement and participation in decision-making positively impact JS, employee engagement, and employee productivity in organizations. When employees feel that they are performing meaningful tasks that contribute to the success of their organizations, they are more motivated to work and experience greater satisfaction because of fulfilling their responsibility (Chen, 2019, p. 3). More recently, Behravesht et al. (2020) found that employee participative decision-making positively affects positive psychological resource capacities: hope, self-efficacy, and JS. They explain that employee participation influences changes in working conditions, positively affecting their job commitment, satisfaction, and motivation. Likewise, Guinot et al. (2021) research results established that PL positively influences JS directly and indirectly by employees feeling trusted. Hence, participative leaders who encourage employees to participate are likely to increase employees' satisfaction with their jobs.

In addition, among specific workplace outcomes related to PL that has received much research attention recently is OCB. Leadership has been considered vital across many fields and organizations regarding OCB (Bottomley et al., 2016). Huang et al (2010) provided empirical evidence that PL has a significant impact on OCB. Podsakoff, et al., (1996) proposed when leaders are supportive; the employees respond by demonstrating OCB, and when leaders are not supportive, the employees reciprocate by withholding OCB. Furthermore, Koh et al. (1995) suggested that transformational and transactional leadership had a positive influence on OCB. Chung (2017) found a mediating effect of perceived organizational support on creating OCB. Kaur and Randhawa (2021) emphasized that employee participation at various levels within an organization enhances their commitment and acts as a dominant factor related to OCB. By empowering subordinates, they reciprocate positively, putting additional effort into the realization of the tasks assigned by the leader (Bhatti, 2019).

Considering the empirical evidence of positive effects that PL has on JS and OCB, we argue that when employees experience positive energy from their supervisors, they will increase their involvement in their work and strengthen

the relations between these two variables. Therefore, we propose a mediating effect of PL between JS and OCB in our next hypothesis.

H2: PL mediates the relationship between JS and OCB.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Procedure and Sample

The survey was carried out in Croatia, precisely in the Splitsko-Dalmatinska County. Companies' management from the most productive industry (hospitality, retail and construction) decided to join our empirical research and engage their employees to participate in the survey. In agreeance with their leaders, employees filled out an online questionnaire version. Data collection was conducted during the second half of 2020. Participation was voluntary, anonymous and confidential, with the possibility of withdrawal at any time. The survey resulted in a participation of 287 respondents.

Sample characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample characteristics

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	117	40.8
	Female	164	57.1
	Missing	6	2.1
Age	21–30	82	28.6
	31–40	82	28.6
	41–50	78	27.2
	51–60	40	13.9
	Missing	5	1.7
Education	Secondary education	123	42.9
	College education	73	25.4
	University education: Bachelor's, Master's degree or doctorate	90	31.4
	Missing	1	0.3
Tenure in organization	Less than 1 year	60	20.9
	2–5	97	33.8
	6–10	75	26.1
	11–15	30	10.5
	16–20	13	4.5
	21 and more	11	3.8
	Missing	1	0.3

Women were predominantly in the sample (57.1 %). The majority of respondents were between 28 and 40 years old (57.2 %). 42.9 % of sample respondents

had completed secondary-level education, while more than half were educated to high school level, (56.8 %) from college to university education. The majority of respondents were those with between 2 and 5 years of tenure (33.8 %).

3.2. *Research Instruments and Measures*

To collect research data self-reported measures were used. The aim was to collect information from the employees directly about their behaviors, beliefs, attitudes and intentions regarding employees OCB, JS and managers PL behaviour. This is the preferred method of data collection for the majority of the research, owing to its low cost, relative ease to use and flexibility (Kormos and Gifford, 2014). Additionally, control data collection is the value element, since data collection doesn't rely on third parties granting access.

Namely, we developed a four-section self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire included an introductory letter where we declared the purpose of the research and guaranteed the autonomy of individual responses. Except for the first section that included demographic data, the remaining three areas entailed 5-point scale measures.

Previously validated scales, originally developed in English, were used to measure all the constructs of this study. Two bilingual professional experts fluent in English and Croatian translated the scales items into Croatian. Afterwards, following Brislin's (1970) suggestion, with no collaboration, they translated the items back to English and compared their versions. Furthermore, to assess the semantic equivalence of the scales, they compared their versions and created a new one. When the back translation revealed that all items contained the same concepts as the original ones and that there was no need for further revision, they agreed that a valid translation was produced and that it can be continued with the data collection.

OCB was evaluated with 8 items drawn from Lee and Allen's (2002) scale of *OCB Individual*, which refers to individual behaviour within an organization. *OCB Individual* comprises all behaviours that aim to be interested in one's colleagues and helping them when they start working for the organization, need time off, need help with their duties, have (non)work-related problems, or have been absent. Items of this scale represented intra-role behaviours where participants were instructed to indicate, using 5-point Likert scale (1=never, 2=rare, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=very often) how often they are engaged in the identified behaviours. The reliability of the instrument was 0.943.

Following previous research (e.g., Guinot et al., 2014; Guinot et al., 2021), the variable *JS* was operationalized by one question because we were interested in employees' global feeling about the job they perform. In that regard, respondents were asked to examine their overall *JS* on a 5-point Likert scale,

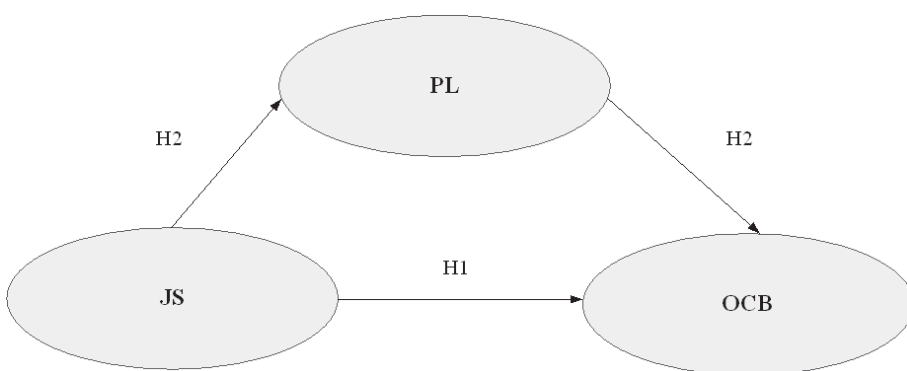
indicating 1=very dissatisfied; 2=dissatisfied; 3=neither satisfied or dissatisfied; 4=satisfied; 5=very satisfied.

To assess the frequency at which managers display *PL*, a scale of 6 items developed by de Jong and Den Hartog (2010) was used. Respondents were asked to specify, in their estimation, the leadership/managers' use of decision-making procedures that allow them to express their opinions, suggestions, influence important decisions, grant them autonomy to design and guide their tasks and provide them opportunities for independence and freedom. Using 5-point Likert scale (1= totally disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, 5=completely agree) the employees' indicated their judgment about the presents of *PL* in their organization. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the 6 items used had a score of 0.926.

In view of *control variables*, the previous studies suggested that demographic variables, such as gender, age, education, tenure, are potential predictors of many leadership and employees' behaviours and attitudes (Hassi, 2018; Chan, 2019). Therefore, we decided to include age, gender, education, and tenure as control variables in our analysis. Variable gender was dummy coded (1=male, 2=female), while age and tenure were coded as continuous variables. We treated education as a categorical variable and measured it with a four-item scale (from secondary education to doctoral education) (See Table 1).

A proposed research model, which illustrates the key relationships that were in the focus of this study, is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Proposed research model



3.3. Common Method Variance

All data are self-reported and collected through the same questionnaire at one point in time. So to be sure that there was no false internal consistency among questionnaire items, Harman's single factor score was conducted (Podsakoff et

al. 2012). Regarding to it all items (measuring latent variables) are loaded into one common factor. Total variance for a single factor was 46.47 %, which is less than 50 %, suggesting that common method variance did not affect our data and, therefore, the research results.

3.4. Data Analysis

We used statistical software SPSS 23 to analyze and interpret quantitative data. To check the common method bias issue, Harman's single factor test was performed. Statistical procedures applied in this research were Cronbach's alpha, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis. Finally, to test the proposed research model, hierarchical regression analysis was undertaken. We decided on this method because it provides step-by-step outcomes of study variables (Usman et al., 2021), and has recently been widely used by researchers to test similar research models.

4. Research Results

4.1. Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficients

Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficients of research variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	1	2	3
1. OCB	4.182	.7609	1		
2. JS	4.034	.8135	.331**	1	
3. PL	3.281	.9344	.226**	.428**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows that OCB has the highest mean value ($M = 4.182$), which means that employees were often engaged in different kind of behaviours regarding helping each other. The mean value of JS could be also perceived as high ($M = 4.034$), which indicates that employees were satisfied with their jobs. The mean value of PL ($M = 3.281$) indicates that employees considered that their leaders moderately conducted activities related to PL.

Additionally, results presented in Table 2 show a significant positive correlations between JS and OCB ($r = 0.331$, $p \leq 0.01$), between PL and OCB ($r = 0.226$, $p \leq 0.01$), and between JS and PL ($r = 0.428$, $p \leq 0.01$).

Therefore, all research variables included in the research are significantly related to each other.

4.2. Regression Models

In order to test the proposed research, hypotheses hierarchical regression analyses were carried out. Results of these analyses are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Hierarchical regression results – OCB is dependent variable

	Variables	β	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	ΔR	F	Collinearity Statistics	
								Tolerance	VIF
1. Step	Gender	.079						.988	1.012
	Age	.023						.671	1.490
	Education	.055						.973	1.028
	Tenure in the organization	.178*	.194	.038	.023	.038	2.573*	.681	1.468
2. Step	Gender	.146*						.948	1.055
	Age	-.023						.663	1.509
	Education	.053						.973	1.028
	Tenure in the organization	.137*						.674	1.484
	JS	.334***	.378	.143	.0127	.105	8.739*	.941	1.063
3. Step	Gender	.169*						.921	1.086
	Age	-.032						.660	1.515
	Education	.043						.968	1.033
	Tenure in the organization	.135						.674	1.484
	JS	.285***						.824	1.213
	PL	.141*	.399	.159	.140	.016	8.230*	.816	1.225

Note: *** $p \leq .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p \leq .05$

Hierarchical regression analysis presented in Table 3 includes OCB as dependent variable. It has been conducted in three steps. Control variables (gender, age, education, tenure in the organization) were included in Step 1; JS was included in Step 2; while PL was included in Step 3. The second step of hierarchical regression analysis suggests the acceptance of the first research hypothesis, which stated that JS has a positive impact on OCB. Namely, research results showed that JS statistically significant predicts OCB ($r = 0.334$, $p \leq .001$).

The second research hypothesis stated that PL mediates the relationship between JS and OCB. For this mediation testing, we have employed Baron and Kenny procedures (Baron and Kenny, 1986). This procedure includes three regression analyses: (1) independent variable predicting the dependent variable (Table 3);

(2) independent variable predicting the mediator (Table 4); and (3) independent variable and mediator predicting the dependent variable (Table 3).

In our case, JS is an independent variable, and OCB is a dependent variable, and the regression analysis presented in Table 3 suggested that JS predicted OCB ($r = 0.285$, $p \leq .001$).

Table 4 presents the results of hierarchical regression analysis where the independent variable predicted the mediator. In our case, JS predicted PL. This regression has been conducted in two steps. In the Step 1 control variables (gender, age, education, tenure in the organization) were entered in the regression model, while in the Step 2, JS was entered in the model. The results of this analysis showed that JS statistically significant predicts PL ($r = 0.351$, $p \leq .001$).

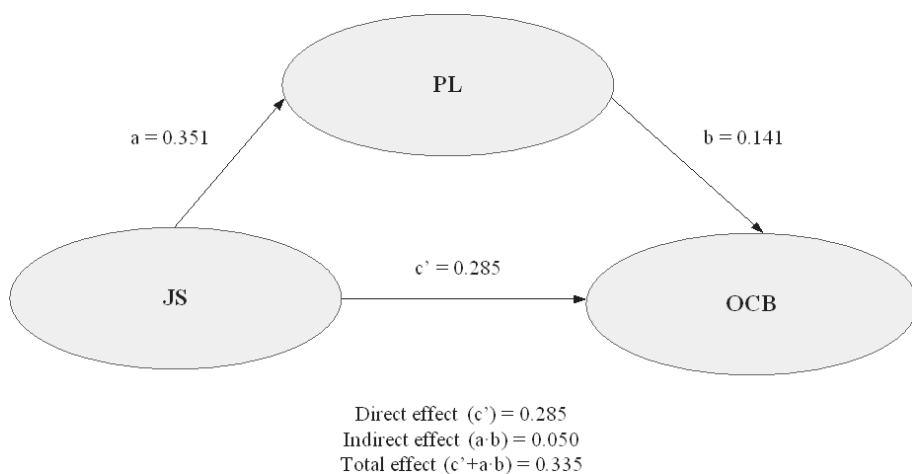
Table 4. Hierarchical regression results – PL is dependent variable

	Variables	β	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	ΔR	F	Collinearity Statistics	
								Tolerance	VIF
1. Step	Gender	-.229***						.988	1.012
	Age	.114						.671	1.490
	Education	.068						.973	1.028
	Tenure in the organization	.056	.261	.068	.054	.068	4.806***	.681	1.468
2. Step	Gender	.158*						.948	1.055
	Age	.066						.663	1.509
	Educatio	.065						.973	1.028
	Tenure in the organization	.012						.674	1.484
	JS	.351***	.429	.184	.168	.116	11.797***	.941	1.063

Note: *** $p \leq .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p \leq .05$

Finally, the third regression analysis that follows Baron and Kenny procedures is presented in Table 3. The presented results showed that independent variable and mediator predicts the dependent variable, which in our case means that PL is mediator in the relationship between JS and OCB.

Figure 2 summarizes these results by which we can confirm the second research hypothesis.

Figure 2. Mediation effect of PL

Namely, Figure 2 shows the existence of the association between JS and OCB ($r = 0.285$, $p \leq .001$), which represents direct effect of JS on OCB. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3. Furthermore, the research results showed that JS is related to PL ($r = 0.351$, $p \leq .001$), which is showed in Table 4. Additionally, PL is related to OCB ($r = 0.141$, $p \leq .05$) (Table 3). Figure 2 summarizes three possible effects in the relationship between JS and OCB. From their values, it is evident that PL mediated the relationship between JS and OCB, since the total effect of this relationship was a highest.

5. Discussion, Implications and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion

The value that satisfied employees have on many aspects of individual and the organization's behaviour and outcomes is unquestionable. Many research studies confirmed this argument. Our research results go in the same direction endorsing that satisfied employees' exhibit a higher level of OCB (Gadot and Cohen, 2004; Kim, 2006; Podsakoff et al., 2006; Subhadrabandhu, 2012; Dehghani et al., 2014). This implies that satisfied employees will behave in a way that contributes to the shared workplace desired outcomes without expecting personal gain (Hassi, 2018). They have a need to express their gratitude to their organization since they are satisfied with the job they perform.

Besides JS, PL has been considered vital regarding OCB. Our research results showed that PL is related to OCB, which was also confirmed by some past studies (Huang et al., 2010, Podsakoff, et al., 1996) indicating the importance of PL in organizations as a predictor of OCB. Results suggest that employee participation within an organization enhances their commitment and acts as

a prevailing factor related to OCB. When leaders are supportive, employees respond by demonstrating OCB. In this regard, PL is associated with employees' higher level of OCB. Thus, leaders have the power to create a work environment that will direct employees to engage in behaviours that priorities co-workers and organizational over self-interest purpose.

In addition, the present study goes one step further and suggests that PL can activate and intensify the relationship between JS and OCB. This conclusion has been developed through the analysis of PL as a mediator variable. These results may imply that when employees experience PL style, it will encourage them to engage harder with their work and build their confidence. Hence, the positive relationship between JS and OCB is stronger when employees are welcomed into the decision-making process and when they have positive interpersonal interactions with their leaders.

The results of this study are particularly important in light of previous research that highlighted the position of PL to employees' work performance and indicated that it is positively related to employee behaviours and many different work-related outcomes (Benoliel and Barth, 2017; Usadolo, 2020). They are in agreement with Atwater and Carmeli (2009), Chan (2019), Usman et al. (2021), Wong et al., (2018) who concluded that when employees experience higher positive energy levels from their leaders that they are inclined to exhibit favourable workplace outcomes, such as thriving at work, job satisfaction, OCB, creativity, etc.

5.2. *Theoretical Contributions*

From the theoretical standpoint, the results of this study advance the literature on the social exchange theory, which presumes that when one side offers something useful, the other side must respond reciprocally or with an equally good offer (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). The findings also contribute to the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), empirically suggesting that where the relationship between leaders and employees is concerned, employees learn to behave through observation, imitation, and identification of leaders' behaviours and attitudes. Another unique contribution is seen in new knowledge enhancement regarding favourable work-related outcomes, which is of enormous value for today's and future business success. Overall, the results of this paper will shed some new light and enhance the understanding of the relevance of participative management style and democratic structures in organizations.

5.3. *Practical Contributions*

For practitioners, the results of the study indicate that leaders must understand the significant role PL plays in influencing employees' work-related attitudes.

Managers should pay greater attention to the participative leadership style because participative leaders can be considered key role players in fostering positive changes in organizations. Namely, via the promotion of a positive relationship between leaders and employees based on trust, facilitation, collaboration, consultations, support, and joint creation of new solutions, leaders can provide an adequate response to complex challenges faced in organizations. Results indicate that employees who perceive their leaders as positive role models are likely to exhibit favourable work-related outcomes.

Furthermore, the present findings imply that the intrinsic motivation that employees gain through involvement in decision – making processes, self-government, and low control of participative leaders inspire them to exhibit OCB. Therefore, PL in organizations produces an impulse to foster employees' engagement in OCB. In this kind of positive socio-emotional environment, leaders recognize the value and appreciate employees' skills, ideas, and suggestions. This can be viewed as a crucial motivational technique (Benoit and Barth, 2016) or a model that moves employees to work harder and better, increasing their productivity and satisfaction with the job they perform. Accordingly, leaders should be encouraged to improve their ability for more flexible leadership since PL is becoming an essential management practice that can improve, develop and maintain organizational success.

5.4. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between JS and OCB, mediated by PL. Research results revealed that JS has a positive direct impact on OCB and that PL mediates the relationship between JS and OCB in a way that it enhances this relationship by strengthening it. This research contributes to the clarification of the relationship between JS and OCB by introducing PL as a variable that enhances this relationship, which could be very interesting cognition from the scientist's standpoint as well as for managers.

The conclusions of this paper should be observed through research limitations. The research sample constrains conclusion generalization as it is limited in scope and size. Additional limitations are self-reported measures that included a certain subjectivity in collected data.

The cross-sectional analysis could also be perceived as a research limitation. So, for some future research, longitudinal research could be considered. Furthermore, future research could include organizational commitment as a relevant work attitude that could be related to JS and OCB as well as to PL.

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