

The Impact of Empowering Leadership Behaviors on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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Abstract: The current study examines the impact of empowering leadership behaviors (namely, enhancing the meaningfulness of work, fostering participation in decision-making, expressing confidence, and providing autonomy) on organizational citizenship. The data was collected through a questionnaire from a sample consisting of 200 employees in governmental institutions in the Albaha region. Pearson correlations indicated that OCB had a statistically significant positive relationship with all factors of leadership empowerment behavior (EMW, FPDM, ECHP, and PABC), ranging between 0.432 and 0.655. The study provided practical implications and suggested some directions for future research.

Keywords: empowering leadership, organizational citizenship, decision making, autonomy.

أثر سلوكيات القيادة التمكينية على المواطنة التنظيمية

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ملخص: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة أثر سلوكيات القيادة التمكينية بأبعادها الأربعة (تعزيز معنى العمل، تعزيز المشاركة في اتخاذ القرار، إظهار الثقة، ومنح الاستقلالية) على سلوك المواطنة التنظيمية. تم جمع المعلومات لهذه الدراسة من بعض الجهات الحكومية في منطقة الباحة، من عينة تتكون من ٢٠٠ موظف. وقد أظهر معامل بيرسون أن المواطنة التنظيمية لها علاقة إيجابية ذات دلالة إحصائية مع كل أبعاد القيادة التمكينية وتراوح هذا التأثير بين 0.432 و0.655. وقد قدمت الدراسة عددًا من التوصيات وكذلك التوجهات المستقبلية البحثية.

كلمات مفتاحية: القيادة التمكينية، المواطنة التنظيمية، اتخاذ القرار، الاستقلالية



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1. Introduction

Employees' empowerment is pivotal to organizational effectiveness and productivity. Therefore, successful organizations often seek to foster empowerment among employees by creating a positive and flexible work environment. Empowering leaders decentralizes and grants more autonomy to employees, gets them more engaged in decision-making, and gives them more trust to handle workplace challenges. Consequently, employees willingly perform duties and tasks beyond the boundaries of their job, lend a hand to support their co-workers, and contribute immensely to organizational effectiveness. Empowering leadership behaviors (ELB) are related to different organizational outcomes, one of which is organizational citizenship. Individuals with high OCB tend to help other employees, do extra tasks, and sacrifice their time and efforts to serve the organization. Very little is known about the impact of empowering leadership styles on OCB among public institutions in Saudi Arabia, especially in this time of emerging changes and transformation. Therefore, the prime aim of this study is to provide a better understanding of ELB's impact on OCB in public institutions in Saudi Arabia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empowering Leadership

ELB can be defined as a leadership style that gives employees more autonomy and eliminates bureaucratic constraints to increase their efficiency (Ahearne et al., 2005). In this scenario, leaders focus on enabling and supporting employees to unleash their potential by allowing more independence in decision-making, providing them with proper information, guiding and mentoring them, and respecting their choices and preferences (Pearce & Sims, 2002). Empowerment reflects confidence in the workforce's capacity to execute mission and goals, builds trust in an organization, and creates a second line of leadership. Empowerment enhances employees' motivation, enables them to be more responsive to their environment, and increases constructive attitudes and behaviors (Ahearne et al., 2005; Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015; Forrester, 2000). According to Ahearne et al. (2005), empowering leadership has four dimensions:

- 1- *The meaningfulness of work* stems from the employees' perception that their work is related to their own values and ideals and that their contributions are appreciated and acknowledged.
- 2- *Fostering employee participation in decision-making reflects employees engagement in the decision-making process as they are regarded as experts in their respective areas of expertise.*
- 3- *Expressing confidence in an employee's competence* when leaders suggest that employees are competent to accomplish their work. Therefore, employees sense that their abilities are recognized by the leader, which fulfills their competence needs.
- 4- *Autonomy in the workplace* means giving employees freedom over their behaviors and choices regarding their own work. Autonomy fosters individuals' autonomous motivation and encourages employees to engage in independent actions.

Previous research on empowerment demonstrated that ELB had positive correlations with a higher level of satisfaction and individual performance, lower role ambiguity, higher employee adaptability, and organizational citizenship behavior (Ahearne et al., 2005; Cheba & Kollias, 2000; Humphrey, 2012).

2.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organ (1988) defined organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) 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" (p. 4). OCB generally includes behaviors that employees perform beyond their job descriptions and formal roles (Klotz et al., 2018; McShane & Von Glinow, 2018). Employees exhibit OCB through engaging in voluntary behaviors such as volunteering for additional tasks, orienting new employees, interacting positively with others, and tolerating inconveniences at work. (De Geus et al., 2020; MacKenzie et al., 2018; Zeyada, 2018).

Organizational citizenship behavior is fundamental due to its benefits to individuals and organizations (MacKenzie et al., 2018; Zeyada, 2018). Previous research shows that organizational citizenship behavior has a positive impact on job satisfaction, employee performance, perception of fairness, self-efficacy, interper-

sonal trust, productivity, and perceived justice (Barsulai, Makopondo, & Fwaya, 2019; Hidayah & Harnoto, 2018; Lestari & Ghaby, 2018). Another stream of research explored the antecedents of OCB. Findings from previous research show that OCB antecedents included organizational commitment, justice, public service motivation, good leadership, affective commitment, organizational commitment, psychological empowerment, organizational identification, and job satisfaction (De Geus et al., 2020; MacKenzie et al., 2018; Organ, D. W., 2018).

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, including a cross-sectional survey methodology for data collection. The main objective of this study was to address the following overarching question: What effects do the ELB factors have on OCB? To answer this question effectively, the variables of this study were divided into four independent variables (enhancing the meaningfulness of work, fostering participation in decision-making, expressing confidence, and providing autonomy) and one dependent variable (OCB). The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire after reading and agreeing to a consent letter containing detailed information about the purpose of the study.

3.2 Hypothesis Development

Empowering Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Leadership behaviors have been found to be a vital predictor of OCB. Previous research has found that effective leadership behaviors and styles are positively associated with the development of employee OCB (Mekpor and Dartey-Baah, 2020; Zhang et al., 2020). Findings of a study conducted by Asgari et al. (2020) found a significant link between transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and employees' OCB. These outcomes are consistent with prior empirical research (e.g., Khalili, 2017; Lee, Woo, & Kim, 2018; Mekpor & Dartey-Baah, 2017) that asserts the role of leaders behavior is pivotal in shaping employees' behavior and leading them to participate in voluntary work behaviors.

In particular, leadership research shows that empowering leadership directly influences employees' organizational citizenship behavior (Çelik, O. T., & Konan, N., 2021; Humphrey, 2012; Shahab & Sobari, 2018). Based on the previous discussion, this paper proposes that leadership empowerment behaviors increase employee OCB. Moreover, the investigation will be furthered to examine the impact of ELB dimensions (namely enhancing the meaningfulness of work, fostering participation in decision-making, expressing confidence in high performance, and providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints) on organizational citizenship behavior. The following hypothesis were formulated

Hypothesis 1: Enhancing the meaningfulness of work has a significant positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis 2: Fostering participation in decision-making has a significant positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis 3: Expressing confidence has a significant positive impact on Organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis 4: Providing autonomy has a significant positive impact on Organizational citizenship behavior.

3.3 Participants

The sample for this study was extracted from government employees in Albaha City. The study adopted a convenient sampling method, and the sample size was 200 employees. About 70 participants responded to the survey. Almost 64% were male and 35.7% were female, about education; 44.3% of the total sample had a bachelor's degree, 30% had a master's degree, and 25.7% had a doctorate degree, about experience; the highest percent, 41.4% of the sample, had experience (6 to 10 years), while the lowest had experience above 20 years, with 2.9% of the total sample.

3.4 Data collection

This study used an online survey method to gather data. Two surveys were emailed to the human resource managers at the selected institutions, who in turn emailed them to the participants. The survey

included a consent letter that participants had to read and agree to before they could access the surveys. A short demographics section was included. The demographic section has three questions about gender, education, and years of experience. In addition, there are two main sections, including the OCB scale and the ELB scale.

3.4.1 Organizational Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire

Employees OCB was measured using the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale created by Podsakoff and colleagues (1990). This is a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scale has 24 items that encompass the most well-known dimensions of OCB: conscientiousness (5 items), sportsmanship (5 items), civic virtue (4 items), courtesy (6 items), and altruism (5 items). All sportsmanship items were reversed scored, meaning lower scores indicated participants engaged in more sportsmanship behaviors.

3.4.2 Leadership empowerment behavior Questionnaire

LEB was assessed using Ahearne et al.'s (2005) 12-item measure. This is a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale reflects four components of LED: (1) enhancing the meaningfulness of work (three items, $\alpha = .89$), (2) fostering participation in decision-making (three items, $\alpha = .86$), (3) expressing confidence in high performance (three items, $\alpha = .85$), and (4) providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (three items, $\alpha = .79$).

3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data was checked for outliers to make

it ready for analysis. The collected data was analyzed in various ways. Factor analysis was used to extract factors. Then, Cronbach's alpha was employed to test the reliability of the extracted factors. Through correlation analysis, the correlation coefficient was evaluated to assess the correlations between variables.

4. Results

4.1 Factor analysis

Factor analysis was performed with (1) as the Eigen value to improve the strength of the factors. Then, five factors were extracted when the rotation converged in six iterations. The five factors named are:

- Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)
- Enhancing the meaningfulness of work (EMW)
- Fostering participation in decision-making (FPDM)
- Expressing confidence in high performance (ECHP)
- Providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (PABC)

Out of 36 items in the questionnaire, the first 24 were categorized as OCB and the remaining 12 under leadership empowerment behavior (ELB) factors: EMW, FPDM, ECHP, and PABC.

The analysis extracted a five-factor solution, each with Eigen values above one, which explains 80.03% of the total variance. The KMO was (0.849), indicating a meritorious level based on Kaiser and Rice (1974), and the Barlett's test for sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 3860.091$, $p = 0.000$). The Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) was found to be above 0.70 for all 36 items, based on the rotated component matrix. (Table 2)

Table 1.
Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
I help others who have heavy workloads	0.498				
I am the classic "squeaky wheel" that always needs greasing.	0.742				
I believe in giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay	0.863				
I consume a lot of time complaining about trivial matters	0.618				

I try to avoid creating problems for coworkers	0.942				
I keep abreast of changes in the organization	0.755				
I tend to make “mountains out of molehills”.	0.902				
I consider the impact of my actions on coworkers	0.870				
I attend meetings that are not mandatory but are considered important.	0.802				
I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around me.	0.972				
I attend functions that are not required but help the company image.	0.888				
I read and keep up with organization announcements, memos, and so on.	0.877				
I help others who have been absent.	0.647				
I do not abuse the rights of others.	0.939				
I willingly help others who have work related problems	0.640				
I always focus on what’s wrong, rather than focusing on the positive.	0.954				
I take steps to prevent problems with other coworkers.	0.849				
My attendance at work is above the norm.	0.954				
I always find fault with what the organization is doing.	0.945				
I am mindful of how my behavior affects other people’s job.	0.967				
I do not take extra breaks.	0.972				
I obey company rules and regulations even when no one is watching.	0.957				
I help orient new people even though it is not required.	0.901				
I am one of the most conscientiousness people in this organization	0.904				
My manager helps me understand how my objectives and goals relate to that of the company.			0.912		
My manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company.			0.981		
My manager helps me understand how my job fits into the bigger picture			0.862		
My manager makes many decisions together with me.				0.791	
My manager often consults me on strategic decisions.				0.687	
My manager solicits my opinion on decisions that may affect me.				0.982	
My manager believes that I can handle demanding tasks.		0.869			
My manager believes in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes.		0.947			

My manager expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level.		0.773			
My manager allows me to do my job my way.					0.715
My manager makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple.					0.445
My manager allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy customer needs.					0.791

4.2 Reliability Analysis

In table 2, the calculated Cronbach’s alpha was (0.987) for the organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)

factor, and for ELB’ factors, the alpha ranged between (0.771) and (0.927); these results indicate good reliability. Cronbach’s alpha ranges from $r = 0$ to 1 , with $r = 0.7$ or greater considered sufficiently reliable

Table 2
Reliability Results

	No. of item	Cronbach alpha
Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)	24	0.987
Enhancing the meaningfulness of work (EMW)	3	0.927
Fostering participation in decision making (FPDM)	3	0.892
Expressing confidence in high performance (ECHP)	3	0.849
Providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (PABC)	3	0.771

4.3. Descriptive statistic

As shown in table 3, the descriptive statistics show that Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) had Mean score (5.2219) out of (7) in the interval [4.44 – 5.29]

corresponding to (Slightly Agree) according to 7-point Likert scale while the Mean score for ELB’ factors ranged between (3.7716) and (3.8573) in the interval [3.40 – 4.19] corresponding to (Agree) according to 5-point Likert scale.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)	1.88	7.00	5.2219	1.36952
Enhancing the meaningfulness of work (EMW)	1.00	5.00	3.8096	1.05534
Fostering participation in decision making (FPDM)	1.00	5.00	3.7806	1.08299
Expressing confidence in high performance (ECHP)	1.33	5.00	3.8573	1.04008
Providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints (PABC)	1.67	5.00	3.7716	0.96906

(Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).
 4.4. Correlation and Regression

Table 4 shows the outcomes of the correlation test that examined the relationship between

organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and leadership empowerment behavior (ELB) factors. (OCB) has a statistically significant positive relationship with all factors of leadership empowerment behavior, ranging between 0.432

Table 4
Correlation Matrix

	OCB	EMW	FPDM	ECHP	
OCB	1				
EMW	0.432**	1			
FPDM	0.655**	0.271*	1		
ECHP	0.512**	0.139		1	
PABC	0.570**	0.471**			1

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

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Multiple linear regression analyses were employed. Table 5 displays that the four variables (EMW, FPDM, ECHP, and PABC) were used as independent variables with OCB as a dependent variable. The regression model was fitted. The model explains 57% of the variance of (OCB), and the model was found to be significant with (F = 21.472, sig = 0.000). By referring to the F value and its P value, it may

be concluded that the model is valid and that there is a correlation between (OCB) and the four factors of (ELB). To verify the existence of the mentioned relationship, a multicollinearity test was carried out. The result revealed that VIF < 3 with Tolerance < 1 indicates the non-existence of a multicollinearity problem. Also, the assumption of normality for the residual was met, as shown in the histogram and P-P plot of the regression-standardized residual.

Table 5
Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.163	0.585		0.279	0.781		
EMW	0.256	0.120	0.197	2.137	0.036	0.776	1.289
FPDM	0.479	0.132	0.379	3.617	0.001	0.605	1.654
ECHP	0.292	0.125	0.222	2.331	0.023	0.731	1.367
PABC	0.304	0.146	0.215	2.077	0.042	0.619	1.615

and 0.655.

Multiple linear regression models show that the four factors were good explanatory variables for the dependent variable (OCB). The results of the regression model demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between OCB and ELB factors. This can be inferred from the T-value and its associated P-value. The four factors explain 0.569 of the variations in OCB (R² value = 0.569), showing that the strength of the relationship between OCB and the four factors of ELB was moderate.

The highest effect was for FPDM by Coefficients Beta (0.479) with (P = 0.001 < 0.05), indicating that for every one unit increase in FPDM, OCB will increase by (0.479), followed by (0.304) with (P = 0.042 < 0.05) for PABC, followed by (0.292) with (P = 0.023 < 0.05) for ECHP, while the lowest effect was for EMW with Coefficients Beta (0.256) and (P = 0.036 < 0.05). Thus, the results indicate a relationship between OCB and ELB according to the next equation:

$OCB = 0.163 + 0.256 (EMW) + 0.479 (FPDM) + 0.292 (ECHP) + 0.304 (PABC)$

5. Discussion

This section summarizes the findings of the empirical data study as well as how they compare to previous studies. This study aimed to investigate the influence of leadership empowerment on employees' OCB. This investigation was furthered to examine the impact of ELB dimensions (namely enhancing the meaningfulness of work, fostering participation in decision-making, expressing confidence in high performance, and providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints) on OCB. The main hypothesis predicted that there is a significant positive relationship between empowering leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The findings supported the main hypothesis.

The results of the regression model demonstrated that there was a positive and significant relationship between ELB factors and OCB. This demonstrates that employees are willing to show OCB if they perceive that their leadership empowers them. that employees who

As shown in the finding of the second hypothesis, there was a significant positive relationship between EMW and OCB. These results are in congruence

with previous studies, where the researchers found a significant positive influence of EMW and OCB (e.g., Lam et al., 2016; Jamshidi and Rajabi, 2015; Lam et al., 2016).

Similarly, there was a positive and significant impact of FPDM on OCB. This result denotes the importance of individuals' engagement in the decision-making process. According to Singh (2009), employees' involvement in decision-making is profoundly important for current organizations to remain effective and competitive. Therefore, organizations should sustain a work environment that fosters individuals' participation in making decisions to exploit their potential and energy. This result is consistent with previous research (e.g., Ike et al., 2017). Furthermore, the result of testing H4 indicated a positive and significant influence of ECHP on OCB. This outcome is consistent with the findings of Ahearn (2004), who found that confidence is related to OCB. In terms of H5, the result confirmed the significant positive impact of PABC on OCB. (Chen & Chiu, 2009; Krishnan, Ismail, Samuel, & Kanchymalay, 2013; Randhawa and Kaur, 2015).

6. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of leadership empowerment behaviors (namely enhancing the meaningfulness of work, fostering participation in decision-making, expressing confidence in high performance, and providing autonomy from bureaucratic constraints) on employees' OCB. The two main results of this study were:

There is a significant positive impact of ELB on OCB. The four factors of ELB have a significant positive influence on OCB.

The findings of this study are significant and practical for both managers and organizations. Managers need to adopt empowering behaviors to encourage employees to behave autonomously and collaboratively. Leaders need to demonstrate a high level of confidence in individuals' performance and create a sense of meaningfulness at work to promote employees OCB. Employees with high OCB can contribute immensely to enhancing productivity and effectiveness. In addition, organizations need to be strategic about developing

future leaders. Effective leadership training can assist in implementing the appropriate leadership styles that enhance employees' empowerment and engagement. This study suggests some directions for potential future research. For example, future research may consider the mediating variables that might moderate the relationship between ELB and OCB. In addition, this study can be replicated within other industries in order to further examine the generalizability of the results. The findings of this study focused on the relationships between managers and employees. However, there could be other important factors and attributes affecting organizational citizenship behaviors. A longitudinal study can be more helpful to reflect the leadership styles followed by the leaders and the feelings of employees toward empowerment.

There are several limitations to this study that should be noted. First, the data were obtained from a single source, which might account for some of the biases. A second limitation is that the data was collected through questionnaires and consisted only of self-reported data. Employees may not fully understand whether their manager's behaviors are empowering. Thirdly, this study is cross-sectional, and accordingly, experimental and longitudinal studies should be conducted to eliminate the possibility of other causal explanations for the relationships between the variables.

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