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Citizenship in organisations : the good, the bad, and the fake

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CITIZENSHIP IN ORGANISATIONS: THE GOOD, THE BAD,

AND THE FAKE

ABSTRACT

The paper reports a qualitative, interview-based study of organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) as perceived in non-subordinate colleagues by 20 Hong Kong Chinese managerial, professional and white-collar staff. Interviewees drew on their own observations of, and inferences about, specific workplace incidents to illustrate differences between authentic OCB on the one hand, and faked (pseudo-) OCB, which entailed colleagues feigning or espousing OCB while actually not transcending basic in-role requirements or even violating requirements. Faked counterparts were found for a wide range of OCB sub-types. A variety of cases of simple absent OCB and simple anti-OCB, which typically involved cover-up but not pretension to engage in OCB, were also found. Core generic definitions were developed, grounded in case material. While noting the inherent context-specific and value-laden nature of judgements about OCB, the study pointed toward the existence of a set of bipolar continua, with dysfunctionally excessive OCB at one extreme and anti-citizenship at the other.

INTRODUCTION

Bateman and Organ (1983) coined the term 'organisational citizenship behaviour' (OCB) but it is traceable to Katz's (1964) innovative and spontaneous behaviour, and to Barnard's (1938) co-operation. OCB is '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' (Organ, 1988: 4). Excluded from OCB, sometimes called extra-role employee behaviour (Graham 1991; Van Dyne et al., 1995), is behaviour that employees have been trained to do (Bolino, 1999: 83).

This paper investigates the authenticity of OCB. Bolino (1999: 95) called for qualitative research on the relationship between OCB and impression management. He challenged assumptions that OCB is driven only by pro-social motives, arising from personal disposition (McNeely and Meglino, 1994), or from social exchange, related to favourable perceptions of superiors' conduct and organisational arrangements (Organ and Konovsky, 1989). The research evidence for personal disposition as a driver of OCB is modest (Podsakoff et al., 2000). While there is stronger evidence for the social exchange thesis (e.g. Farh et al., 1990; Becker and Billings, 1993; Deluga 1995; Organ and Ryan, 1995; Podsafoff et al., 1996; MacKenzie et al, 2001), Bolino (1999), after Eastman (1994), posits that impression management (Rosenfeld et al., 1995) also drives OCB:

> *'Impression management concerns will motivate individuals to engage in citizenship behaviors that correspond with the type of OCBs preferred by an influential target, are directed in the way that is most valued by an influential target, are noticed by an audience of influential targets, are timed so that their execution occurs at critical junctures, and are of great magnitude in terms of their level of effort or personal cost.' (Bolino, 1999: 93).*

Research evidence suggests that OCB gives rise to favourable performance evaluations and reward allocations by one's superiors (summarised in Podsakoff et al, 2000: 540), and supports the assumption (Katz and Kahn, 1966; Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 1997) that OCB increases organisational effectiveness (Podsakoff et al., 2000: 547). However, common methods variance (error through taking measurements from a single data source) substantially influences the measured relationship between OCB and individual performance (Podsakoff et al., 2000: 543). This suggests a strong motive to use impression management to imply to

particular others that one is engaging in OCB. While Podsakoff et al. (1993) claim that motives do not affect the impact of OCB, Bolino (1999: 90-91) argues, to the contrary, that energy directed toward impression management dilutes some of the positive value of OCB.

This paper also re-examines the behavioural dimensions of OCB, as perceived in Hong Kong. Some Western studies support a five-factor structure, comprising altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue (Podsakoff et al., 1990; MacKenzie et al., 1991; Deluga, 1998; Bolino, 1999), but alternative typologies have proliferated (for example, Smith et al., 1983; Organ, 1988; Van Dyne et al., 1994; and Moorman and Blakely, 1995). Hodson (1999, 2001) found six OCB types in ethnographies: pride in work, extra effort given freely, commitment to organisational goals, use of insider knowledge to facilitate production, co-operation, and peer training. In a Taiwan-based study, Farh et al. (1997) identified two additional OCB sub-categories: interpersonal harmony and protecting company resources. While Podsakoff et al. (2000) matched nearly 30 OCB dimensions into seven sub-categories: helping behaviour, sportsmanship, organisational loyalty, organisational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue, and self-development, their typology does not necessarily reconcile conflicting interpretations of the OCB dimensions and their content.

The following constitute further reasons for doing qualitative research in OCB:

1. Many instruments used in OCB research are insufficiently grounded in actual cases, and may thus lack construct validity (Van Dyne et al, 1995; Graham, 2000). There is a need to add more published descriptions of OCB cases to those reported by Hodson (1999, 2001), which correspond to a limited range of OCB sub-types and are based on fieldwork that had not been undertaken with OCB in mind. Farh et al. (1997) performed qualitative research for their OCB instrument, but do not report sample cases. Case descriptions are potentially valuable for understanding OCB in cultures where normative assumptions differ from those in the West.

2. Distinctions between in-role and citizenship behaviours are fuzzy (Organ, 1988: 5, quoted in Podsakoff et al., 2000: 549). Moreover, if OCB and in-role behaviours are on a continuum, or on various continua corresponding to the OCB dimensions, a logical extrapolation is that there are behaviours that are opposites of OCB. These may include resistance behaviours such as playing dumb, withholding enthusiasm, work avoidance, machine sabotage, procedure sabotage, social sabotage, subverting a particular manager,

and group conflict with management (Hodson, 1999, 2001). Reverse scored items on existing OCB questionnaires may not capture these and other forms of anti-citizenship. There is a general need to understand the various continua.

3. In most studies, ratings of OCB are either self-reports or are obtained from the immediate superior. Assessments by peers are relatively rare. If impression management is targeted at a specific audience (e.g. an immediate superior), collegial accounts of OCB are of potential interest because they may identify aspects of impression management that the targets do not notice.

METHODOLOGY

Research Aims and Questions

The current research study was initially inspired by Bolino's (1999) 'good soldiers or good actors?' dichotomy. However, it was based on two assumptions that diverge from those of Bolino (1999). First, it was open to the possibility that observers define OCB in part according to whether perceived motives are sincere or self-serving, whereas Bolino holds that motivation is not part of the OCB construct (1999: 85, n.3). Second, it considered that some observers (e.g. peers, subordinates) may construe that someone is, for instrumental reasons, deceiving another, targeted, observer (e.g. a line manager) into believing that he or she is engaging in OCBs more frequently or in a more widespread manner than is actually the case. By contrast, while Bolino (1999: 87) considers visibility, he does not consider that the audience may be segmented. These divergences may reflect cultural differences between Hong Kong, where the research took place, and the USA, where OCB theory originated. Workplace values in Hong Kong uneasily juxtapose rampant material desires (Lau & Kuan, 1988: 54) with traditional Confucian morality aspiring to honourable relationships and personal virtues, such as honesty and sincerity (Yang, 2000). Tacit pursuit of the former while avowing or feigning the latter is one way to manage the contradiction. Since Hong Kong is a networked (Redding, 1990), high power distance society (Wong and Birnbaum-More, 1994), juniors may find it harder to challenge misperceptions of their seniors than in low power distance societies such as the USA. Thus, if a junior staff member, through skilful duplicity or relationship building, creates distorted favourable impressions among seniors, it

may be very difficult for sceptical colleagues of that junior to correct the seniors' misconceptions.

Thus this research explored, *pace* Bolino, whether interviewees could distinguish between authentic OCB and faked OCB by their peers. The main research aims were (1) to clarify the nature of OCB, as construed by Hong Kong Chinese managerial, professional, and white-collar staff observing non-subordinate colleagues and (2) to identify differences, if any, between authentic OCB and impression management in this context. The second aim was of primary interest, but depended on the first. Two additional aims emerged as the study progressed, which were, for each observed OCB dimension, (3) to illuminate neutral and polar-opposite phenomena and (4) to identify extreme forms of OCB and their potential dysfunctions.

Four sets of associated research questions emerged, regarding perceived OCB among Hong Kong Chinese managerial, professional, and white-collar staff.

1. What are the sub-categories or dimensions of OCB? What particular essence defines each OCB sub-category? What, if any, general essence defines OCB?

2. Is it possible to distinguish genuine OCB from mere impression management (i.e. faked OCB)? If so, does every genuine OCB sub-category have a faked counterpart? What general criteria distinguish genuine from faked OCB?

3. For each sub-category of OCB, what are the neutral (i.e. in-role) and polar-opposite counterparts, and what criteria or interpretative rules distinguish these from one another, and from genuine OCB?

4. What, if any, extreme forms of OCB are to be found? What respective dysfunctions, if any, are associated with them?

Research Design and Data Collection

Since the research aims and questions focused on clarifying, understanding, and drawing distinctions between conceptual phenomena experienced in real world practice, and were not

concerned with causality, a qualitative, interpretivist approach was preferred over quantitative or mixed methods approaches (see Creswell, 2003: 6). Several methods of empirical phenomenology were employed, including understanding ideas through the voices of respondents (Field and Morse, 1985), analysis of naïve descriptions of specific lived experiences, development of clusters of meaning, distillation of general essences, and apprehension of essential relationships (Spiegelberg, 1978; Polkinghorne, 1989; Creswell, 1998: 51). However, because various sub-categories of OCB were already available as starting points for investigation, transcendental phenomenology, whereby all prejudgements are suspended regarding the focal phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994), was not undertaken.

An interview guide was developed in English, translated into Chinese, and back translated to check for meaning equivalence. It began with a statement assuring confidentiality and explaining the purpose of the research. There followed seven sections, each broadly defining a particular OCB subtype (see Table 1), and in an open-ended manner asking respondents to describe a case of genuine OCB and another of false, misleading or insincere impression management (faked OCB), featuring one or more current or former non-subordinate colleagues. Labels and definitions were drawn from literature to cover a wide spectrum of OCB types (and any faked counterparts), including two, team player and informal leadership, which were envisaged as more broadly encompassing than sportsmanship and civic virtue, respectively. The eighth and final section left room for afterthoughts and cases not fitting the earlier labels and definitions.

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INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE
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Because the interview agenda sought descriptions of unfavourable behaviours, it covered sensitive territory, especially within a Chinese society, where face-giving and face-saving are emphasised (Bond and Hwang, 1987: 247-248). Thus, in order to increase the likelihood of open, candid replies, interviewees were recruited through a mixture of personal connections and snowballing. The resulting sample of 20 was slightly skewed in terms of gender (7 males and 13 females). While all respondents were Hong Kong Chinese, they were otherwise diverse in terms of age, educational and industrial background, and occupation. The median age was 36-40, the youngest respondent under 30, the oldest over 45. In terms of education, 2

had PhDs and a further 8 had Masters Degrees, but 5 had no post-school qualifications. There were 2 civil servants from separate government departments, 3 employees of different higher education institutions, and 15 private sector respondents from 14 Chinese and foreign-owned companies spread across various industries, including manufacturing, media, consultancy, trading, and transportation. Most respondents were either professionals, technical specialists, supervisors or line managers; their ranks ranged from junior administrator up to director level; and their specialisms included finance, human resources, information technology, logistics, marketing, merchandising, psychology, quality assurance, translation, and sales.

Altogether 19 interviews took place, as two respondents (males from different organisations) requested a joint interview. The interview guide was faxed or emailed to respondents two days before each of the interviews, which were conducted in semi-structured, in-depth format between late June and early September 2002, and lasted approximately 75 minutes each. The interviewer, a female Hong Kong Chinese associate with several years of business experience and academic research interviewing experience, engaged in open-ended questioning and allowed interviewees to tell stories in their own ways (Kvale 1996: 129), while probing for specific personal experiences and observations (Weiss, 1994: 71). She encouraged self-questioning, but at no time challenged respondents on whether a case they described was 'correctly' assigned as genuine or faked, or on whether it was appropriately matched with an OCB subtype. The interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed from Cantonese into English, yielding 110 pages of single-spaced text.

Data Analysis and Basic Findings

The authors began the analysis by independently reading each transcript several times. They discovered a small number of self-as-sole-actor OCB cases and cases involving direct subordinates, and excluded them from the subsequent analysis, which proceeded along four paths.

Steps along the first path of analysis initially sought to develop general criteria for differentiating genuine OCB from faked OCB. Each respondent had provided at least one case represented as genuine OCB, and the authors judged nearly all of these to be genuine OCB. The authors were also in accord with respondents about many cases that the latter saw as faked OCB, entailing pretensions to engage in OCB combined with observed behaviours

and/or inferred motives that indicated either absent citizenship (basic in-role conduct) or anti-citizenship (violating basic requirements). All but two respondents had provided at least one case of faked OCB that the authors also regarded as such. It turned out, however, that many other cases naïvely presented by respondents as examples of faked OCB did not match the authors' understanding of that category. Lengthy inspection of the transcripts of these apparently mismatched cases indicated that they were of two other types: simple absent citizenship and simple anti-citizenship, both of which, while often entailing façade or cover-up, involved no apparent claim or pretence to engage in OCB. As the authors categorised the cases, they arrived, through dialogue and constructive controversy, at agreement on the generic emergent definitions of OCB, other citizenship, faked OCB, simple absent citizenship and simple anti-citizenship (see Table 2). Referent actors' gender did not appear to be related to these generic categories (see Table 3). It appeared that a small number of interviewees had fixated on the good or bad deeds of an individual or a particular group, but that the great majority had not. Hence, the cited cases involved a variety of actors or sets of actors (see Table 3).

INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

INSERT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

The second path of analysis sought to review definitions of the OCB subtypes (see Table 1) in the light of the OCB cases provided by respondents. There were some instances where interviewees had recalled and reported genuine OCB cases under one subtype category that, on inspection, appeared to better fit other subtype categories, and these were initially re-matched. In addition, compound cases of genuine OCB, which included several critical incidents, were split and their parts assigned to appropriate subtype categories. Next, the authors produced a structural description of around 50 words for each of the genuine OCB cases, and listed these descriptions under the matching Table 1 sub-category headings, which made overall patterns among the cases easier to apprehend. The patterns suggested that adjustments to the subcategory headings and definitions were required, along with some overall re-shaping of the subcategory system and re-sorting of the cases. Accordingly, the authors jointly arrived at a revised set of genuine OCB subtypes (see Table 4). As a validity

check, the associate who had undertaken the interviews independently sorted the genuine OCB cases on the basis of their core descriptions and the revised OCB sub-typology, arriving at a concordance rate with the authors of 74.4%.

INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

The third path of analysis proceeded after the first two had converged. The authors sought to identify whether, for each of the genuine OCB subtypes in Table 4, there was a corresponding faked OCB subtype. A structural description were jointly produced for each of the faked OCB cases, and these descriptions were sorted under pseudo-OCB subcategories on the basis of the question 'what type of OCB was the actor claiming or otherwise pretending to engage in, but was seen not to be actually doing?' As a validity check, the associate performed an independent sort of the faked OCB cases, arriving at concordance with the authors in 71% of the cases. Several cases of each pseudo-OCB subcategory were confirmed by this validity check.

The fourth path of analysis also proceeded after the convergence of the first two. It investigated whether a set of continua existed, each with an OCB subtype at one end, and with corresponding subtypes of absent citizenship and anti-citizenship respectively marking the middle part and polar opposite end. The authors wrote a structural description for each case of simple absent citizenship or of simple anti-citizenship. They jointly sorted the simple absent citizenship cases under absent-OCB subcategories on the basis of the question 'what type of OCB was the situation calling for, but was not forthcoming?', and the simple anti-citizenship cases into anti-OCB subcategories on the basis of the question 'what type of OCB is this a polar opposite example of?' Once again, the associate performed independent validity checks, arriving at concordance with the authors in 63.6% of the simple absent OCB cases and 57.1% of the simple anti-OCB cases. At least one case of each absent-OCB subcategory was confirmed, with the exception of absent informal leadership, and at least one case of each anti-OCB subcategory was confirmed, with the exception of anti-helpfulness and anti-informal leadership. In a supplementary analysis, the authors matched reverse-scale items reported in the OCB literature to their corresponding absent-OCB or anti-OCB subcategories.

INTERPRETATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

<u>Special Characteristics Among the OCB Subcategories</u>

Table 4 presents grounded redefinitions of the OCB subcategories emerging from the data analysis. Helpfulness, which entailed freely offering solutions, guidance, resources and assistance, was consistent with Podsakoff's et al.'s (2000) definition of helping. However, the other five OCB subcategories had distinctive meanings. Two in particular seemed infused by a blend of local work ethics and traditional Confucian virtues (see Lau and Kuan, 1988). One, conscientiousness, entailed personal sacrifice of time, reflected in unpaid overtime during evenings, at weekends and on public holidays. The other, harmoniousness, involved preserving or restoring social face, and entailed humility, interpersonal sensitivity and self-restraint. For example, a female interviewee reported that a colleague spent several days resolving a work-related dispute between someone in his own department and someone in the interviewee's department. He brought the episode to a successful conclusion by apologising to each party on behalf of the other:

> *'The people concerned recognised his good intentions. The issue was settled. He could have stayed away from the dispute, because it was not related to him.' (FL).*

A third OCB subcategory, being a team player, entailed subordinating personal interests to collective needs, and often featured mutually supportive arrangements among group members. For example, an interviewee described how she and five former colleagues, each of them event organisers responsible for different clients, provided mutual cover to ensure that clients' ad hoc queries or requests were dealt with promptly.

> *'This was about team spirit and service attitude. We tried to solve the client's problems. There was a sense of mutual responsibility. After all, we didn't want to ruin the reputation of the department, because if customers complained, they complained about the whole department, not about individuals. We were in the same situation; we understood each other and helped each other. If you helped someone today, she would help you in the future. It was a reciprocal relationship.' (JC).*

In a related team player case that also reflects conscientiousness, the same group operated an unofficial rota for extra work on weekends, to ensure that someone would be on hand to host site visits, or would attend events that members had arranged:

> *'There was no rule that you had to work at weekends. The boss would not remind you to come to work if your client's event was being held — if you didn't show up, nobody (in the management) would care. Yet as a responsible person, you could not allow there to be nobody there to take care of the client. We regarded the duty shift as a viable solution because you just could not come to the office every Sunday.' (JC).*

Two other OCB sub-categories confirmed in this study had not previously been positively identified in the OCB literature. The first, protecting organizational resources, had been represented only in reverse-scale questionnaire items (Farh et al., 1997). In the current study, it was manifest in disciplined resource utilization, such as minimising unnecessary expenditure, tight management of petty cash, and recycling, salvaging or avoiding wastage of stationery, equipment or other facilities, for example:

> *'When some male colleagues arrive early or have to work overtime at night, they just switch on the lights of their work areas, not those of the whole office. They are influenced by their personal beliefs. One is the leader of a scout group and practices his discipline at work. They print on both sides of the paper to avoid waste.' (TL).*

The second, informal leadership, referred to welcome representation or influence, as opposed to dominance or imposition, corresponding to task-related and socio-emotional leadership (group maintenance) in classic group development studies (Bales, 1950). There were few confirmed cases of informal leadership, but interviewees valued them greatly. The task-related and socio-emotional forms, respectively, are illustrated below:

> *'At meetings, a colleague at the same rank as the rest of us gets us to think how we can deal with impending workload reshuffling, and how we can better serve schools and support each other. She is outspoken, and very bright and quick in her thinking. She sees issues from different perspectives and does not jump to conclusions.' (AL).*
>
> *'A relative newcomer, he chatted with everyone and was quickly recognised by everyone, including the chief, as an informal leader. We wanted to invite the chief*

to play mahjong, but nobody dared to do so because he was a very dour and serious man, and if he'd turned down our invitation, it would have been very embarrassing. We persuaded this colleague to invite the chief and somehow he succeeded.' (EC).

Faked Versus Genuine OCB

In this section, we present examples of five pseudo-OCB subcategories, all of which, because they were faked, also entailed absent-OCB or anti-OCB. The first example, below, illustrates three differences between faked and genuine conscientiousness. First, the interviewee appears to judge that the focal actors in the case, some office colleagues, do not fully orient their behaviour to task requirements or organisational needs. Second, she construes their behaviour as calculated and instrumental, rather than spontaneously work-related. Third, she sees them as engaging in impression management and as masking absent-conscientiousness by exaggerating how long they spend working.

> *'The company uses a time card system but does not pay overtime allowance. The boss usually leaves earlier than the staff and does not know whether they are really working or just doing other things unrelated to the job. Some people pretend to work overtime, to impress the boss that they are conscientious. During the day they sometimes surf the Internet. The boss doesn't know the technical aspects, so someone can say to the boss that it takes a lot of time to do a technical job, while the boss has no idea how long it takes.' (WT).*

The next example alludes to a pseudo team player, but because the descriptions are generalised it is unclear whether the real conduct is absent-OCB or anti-OCB.

> *'There are two levels to this colleague. During staff meetings he preaches that we should contribute to the department, and should co-operate to enhance team spirit, but we know that he is pretending because he is the person who makes the most trouble. With low ranking people he doesn't bother to pretend and shows his real self. ' (LLC)*

The third example, below, illustrates pseudo-helpfulness. The interviewee's account is evidently based on a mixture of direct observation and hearsay. In a case that may represent a widespread phenomenon (Manzoni and Barsoux, 2002), she construes that the focal actor, X,

strives to convey to the boss that she tries hard to help colleagues to improve their performance. The interviewee infers, however, that X, in reality, is not merely unhelpful to colleagues but has put them in jeopardy by setting them up to fail. Thus the case conveys the interviewee's anger and resentfulness arising from what she perceives as a masked form of anti-helpfulness. Although the case may also suggest pseudo-informal (task-related) leadership, it was not categorised as such because X actually secured a position of formal authority over those whom she pretended to help.

> *"In front of the boss, X shows how helpful she is, by answering our questions enthusiastically. But when the boss is away, X either doesn't answer our queries, or is very brief and off-hand. Among ourselves, whenever we discover a colleague's mistake, we tell them discreetly and help them to correct it, but by contrast X will point out, very loudly, that someone has just made a mistake, so that the boss can overhear. Pretending to be concerned about us, X went to the boss's room to tell him 'I really want them to do their jobs properly. I don't want our team to be like this. How can we help them?' The boss trusts her, and gave her authority to check our work, but we know that her motives are to stab us in the back and make herself look outstanding by comparison. She deliberately withholds information from us and waits for us to make mistakes, so we have to keep going back to ask her if our work is correct, because we don't want her to finger-point us to the boss." (FL).*

The fourth example, below, illustrates pseudo-harmoniousness. The male interviewee regards the efforts of a male peer colleague, D, to prevent embarrassment and overt conflict with their boss though polite acquiescence, as sham. He construes that since D's relationship with their boss does not entail mutual respect, it is actually characterised by absent-harmoniousness. According to the account, because D makes no attempt at a constructive response to the problem, his conduct fails to meet at least one general criterion for OCB, and arguably could also be considered as absent informal leadership:

> *'The Chief edits our translations, but he sometimes does not improve them and even creates errors. For example, we may confirm through reference sources that the original term was correct and that the Chief's substitute term is incorrect. Even when D knows that the Chief is not right about his work, he always speaks to the Chief respectfully and never contradicts him. I feel that he intends to be tactful, avoid embarrassment, and maintain a good relationship. However, while I feel D's intention is genuine, I believe the relationship itself is not sincere in that he is very*

skilful in hiding his real feelings. In fact, through some casual conversations with D, I know that he does not really respect the Chief and believes he is unprofessional.' (EC).

The final case in this section exemplifies pseudo-protection of organisational resources, linked to absent protection of organisational resources. The male interviewee believes that the focal person, a secretary, imposes economies on others while making special exceptions for herself and her friends, and infers that her primary, and insincere, motive is to create a favourable impression with her boss, rather than to achieve savings.

> *'A female secretary is responsible for purchasing stationery and office materials. She has misled her boss into believing that the staff are willing to re-use items. If 100 staplers are needed, she orders 60 new staplers, and re-cycles 40 old staplers. The company seems to save money, but in fact, she reserves new items for herself and her friends while giving old items to other colleagues. Her boss doesn't know this.' (TL).*

Simple Absent OCB

Some subcategories of absent-OCB are already illustrated above, combined with pseudo-OCB. Below we present two further cases, where there was no evident pretence of engaging in OCB, both of which entail withholding specialist knowledge from others. The first is categorised as simple absent team player conduct, because the focal actor, a team leader, places self-interest above the collective needs of the team:

> *'She was the only one who knew how to do cruise bookings, but kept her position secure by not sharing the knowledge. If you don't know how to do a cruise booking, there is no way you can learn it on your own. At the time, the yield on a single cruise booking was equivalent to many normal bookings. There were too many cases for her to process on her own, and as a team leader, she should have taught her juniors so that everyone could handle them and increase the business.' (ML).*

The second is categorised as simple absent helpfulness. The focal actor, an accountant, does not provide financial data in a timely manner to the interviewee, a female logistics manager of equivalent rank, and only provides the assistance that she needs when forced to do so:

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'He always told me that the data would be available in two or three days, but if I told him that the boss needed it, he would give me the data within an hour. I asked him many times to teach me how to generate the data myself, but he kept resisting until the boss asked him to, then he taught me immediately that afternoon. He seems to think that guarding turf and keeping job secrets enhances his job security.' (MC).

Simple Anti-OCB

Anti-helpfulness is already illustrated above, linked with pseudo-OCB. Anti-protecting organisational resources involved misappropriation of organisational property, acceptance of forbidden advantages (gifts, kickbacks) or misuse of organisational facilities for personal business. Here, we illustrate two other anti-OCB subcategories.

Cases of perceived anti-conscientiousness included neglect of job duties, task avoidance, low productivity, and unrecorded absenteeism. A former quality inspector described how some former peers, whom she regarded as irresponsible, cut corners:

> *"They did not actually do site visits, but just did a 'remote-control' job. They just looked at the sample that had been shipped in, and relied on their prior knowledge about the competency level of the factory to figure out the defects of the goods. I saw one of them stay away and write the report in a café near the office building." (PS).*

Anti-team player conduct included misdirecting blame, and taking credit for others' work, but more generally entailed pursuit of narrow self-interest to the extent that co-operation with team members was undermined. In the case that follows, C, the focal actor, and two divisional sales managers were responsible only for selling the products of their respective divisions. The Hong Kong HQ manager asked them to arrange for staff from the three divisions to make joint sales calls and to promote each other's products.

> *'C agreed to this, but behind his back, if she discovered that her representatives were actually making joint calls, she scolded them. She may have been afraid that another division would substitute her sales volume, but her resistance caused great harm to the company. Her salespeople were afraid to do joint sales calls, or to fill in for other divisions, so other divisions had to allocate extra manpower.' (MC).*

IMPRESSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND DIRECTIONS

We conclude by adding some partially conjectural material, summarising contributions and limitations of the current study, and along the way, suggesting further research directions.

<u>Dysfunctionality and the OCB Dimensions</u>

The right-hand columns of Table 5 give an overview of the absent- and anti- forms of each of the OCB sub-categories, based both on reinterpretations of reverse-scored items in OCB instruments (Farh et al., 1990: 712; Podsakoff et al., 1990: 121; Konovsky and Organ, 1996: 266; Turnipseed and Murkison, 1996: 43; Farh et al., 1997: 428; MacKenzie et al., 1999: 403-404; Williams and Shiaw, 1999: 667-668; Turnipseed and Murkison, 2000: 211-212) and on confirmed cases found in our research. The sketches of absent- and anti-informal leadership are speculative, as no cases were found.

INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

The second column of Table 5 posits that OCB can be practised to excess, and/or can be misdirected, as in the obsessive pursuit of organisational goals, myopically construed, to the neglect of other stakeholders, including self. Further research could test these conjectures by seeking out and understanding cases of dysfunctional practice of each type of OCB, and could also examine the possible impact of normative pressure, character and personal morality. Potential dysfunctions and ethical issues associated with OCB are not addressed in the OCB literature, but have been raised elsewhere. One example is Feldman's (2002: 50) commentary on Barnard's (1938) story of an employee who stayed at her post while watching her house burning down with her bedridden mother inside. Another is Chikudate's (2002) account of the normative entrapment that allowed executives to engage in illegal activity while believing that they were doing their honourable best to serve their corporation, as did the rank and file employees, who knew but kept silent. Among several possibly dysfunctional cases of conscientiousness found in the current study, two are illustrated below, the first

featuring a trading company supervisor, the second involving a senior operations manager in a shipping company:

> 'He worked continuously for 2 months, working on every day even at weekends. When his daughter was in hospital, he was too busy to visit her. I think he thinks too much about the interests of the company and the benefits for his department.' (SK).

> "He is 'on-call' almost 24-hours a day. His mobile phone cannot be switched off. I think he has sacrificed all his time for the company. Official work time is from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., but he normally leaves after 8 or 9p.m. without imprinting his fingers on the scanner so as not to claim for overtime pay. He tells me that when he gets home, he just has dinner, then he goes to bed. ' (KC).

Contributions of the Study

1. The study has produced, and, grounded in detailed case accounts, distinguished between, original generic definitions of pseudo-citizenship, simple absent citizenship and simple anti-citizenship (see Table 2).

2. The discovery of faked OCB has an important implication for human resource management. This is that accurate task measurement (even when possible) cannot itself correct distortions that may arise if performance appraisals involve the focal person and a single judge. The case for 360-degree feedback systems (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998) is thus strengthened, so long as they represent stakeholders fairly.

3. With reference to the construals of Hong Kong Chinese peer observers, the study has found that perceived sincerity and integrity are essential to OCB, at least in that culture, rather than behaviour alone.

4. The study has redefined and re-clustered various OCB subtypes (see Table 4) based on meanings in context, rather than on statistical association. These appear to represent the essence of citizenship in organisations, as construed in Hong Kong.

5. It has provided, fresh to the OCB literature, positive descriptions and illustrations of informal leadership, harmoniousness, protecting organisational resources, and group-level OCB, as in the team player cases reported above.

6. The study has tentatively mapped the dysfunctions associated with OCB, its absence, and its opposites (see Table 5)

Limitations

Due to access constraints, the current study shares three limitations with mainstream, positivist OCB research. First, distinguishing genuine from faked OCB entails multi-layered inferences in the face of inherent clouds of ambiguity. Each case was subject to distortion by selective, biased perceptions and attributions of single respondents, themselves vulnerable to contingencies, such as deliberate deception or cover-up, or the harbouring of multiple, even unconscious, motives by both focal actor and observer.

Second, because the study drew on isolated individuals' perceptions, it tended to be channelled toward an individualist model of OCB. Had resources and access been available to allow triangulation through ethnography (Hodson, 1999, 2001; Perlow and Weeks, 2002) and/or by obtaining multiple observers' accounts of the same incident or actor, the study might have yielded deeper, richer, and trustworthier accounts of group-level and community-level OCB phenomena. Such approaches would allow comparisons with collective phenomena observed in communities of practice, such as experience sharing through storytelling (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Orr, 1996; Storck and Hill, 2000).

A third limitation of the study is that the OCB continua identified in Table 5 remain fuzzy and subject to context-specific and value-laden interpretations. What in one setting may signify conscientiousness, such as repeated self-checking of output quality, or working 60 hour weeks without extra pay, may in higher pressure contexts be regarded as meeting basic requirements, and in less pressurised contexts may be seen as obsessive and ultimately dysfunctional behaviour.

A fourth limitation of the current study is that, given the proliferation of OCB dimensions identified in prior studies, it was not possible to address all of them directly in

the interviews. For example, that there was no case of loyal boosterism, i.e. projecting favourable images of the organisation to outsiders (Moorman and Blakely, 1995) may reflect that it was not covered in the interview guide, although other aspects of loyalty were subsumed under other subcategories, such as being a team player.

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Table 1. Indicative definitions of OCB subtypes included in the interview guide

OCB subtype label	Definition
Conscientiousness	Is careful in his/her work, dependable, punctual, willing to take on new duties, adhering to company rules, etc.
Team player	Contributes positively to team spirit, tolerates inconvenience, does no whinge or complain about trivial problems, and has a positive attitude toward the work even when circumstances are difficult, is sportsmanlike.
Considerate	Avoids causing unnecessary inconvenience to colleagues and to internal or external customers, makes it easier for them to get things done, gives them early warnings of potential problems, etc.
An informal leader at your level	Keeps in touch with relevant developments and informs others about them; plays a constructive role in improving working arrangements and in helping to make changes effective; freely shares knowledge, skills and expertise with others.
Altruistic	Is other-centred, cares about colleagues and is helpful to them if they have problems with their work, helps to solve the problems of internal and external customers.
Harmonious	Is fair and respectful to other colleagues and to internal and external customers; does not cause them any harm, and does not cheat, trick, slander or deceive them.
Protecting company resources	Uses company time, resources and benefits in a disciplined, economical, and honest manner that demonstrates high integrity and trustworthiness in utilising/protecting company resources.

Table 2. Generic emergent definitions of OCB and pseudo-OCB

Generic items	Definitions
OCB	The behaviour is perceived to meet all the following conditions: 1. Performed in a constructive manner that is intended (directly or indirectly) to benefit the organisation. 2. Beyond formal or requested requirements. 3. Done voluntarily and sincerely. 4. Acceptable in terms of morality and justice.
Other citizenship	The behaviour is perceived to meet conditions 2-4, but not condition 1, in that it is apparently intended to benefit others, but not the organisation as represented by management.
Pseudo-OCB (Faked OCB)	The person is perceived to claim or otherwise pretend to engage in OCB, while failing to meet all the conditions 1-4, and thus actually engaging either in absent citizenship or anti-citizenship.
Simple absent citizenship	The person is not perceived to pretend to engage in OCB, and is perceived to fail to meet one or more of the conditions 1-4, and not to engage in other citizenship
Simple anti-citizenship	The person is perceived wilfully to harm, neglect or exploit others or the organisation

Table 3. Number of cases identified

Generic items	Cases featuring actors identified as male only	Cases featuring actors identified as female only	Total cases	Total actor sets
OCB	45	32	91	66
Other citizenship	2	0	3	3
Pseudo-OCB (Faked OCB)	25	20	53	47
Simple absent citizenship	8	7	22	21
Simple anti-citizenship	15	15	34	30

Table 4. Emergent redefinitions of OCB subtypes

OCB subtype label	Definition
Conscientiousness	Without supervision, consistently manifesting enthusiasm for, commitment to, dedication to one's work, willingness to make personal sacrifices for organisational goals.
Team player	Contributing to the maintenance of co-operation and commitment to shared goals.
Helpfulness	Constructively, keenly, spontaneously, and reliably helping others to do their work, solve problems, or prevent adverse consequences.
Informal leadership	Enthusiastically and constructively assuming responsibility for influencing others' performance and/or the social climate.
Harmoniousness	Helping to maintain mutual respect, while preventing inconvenience or embarrassment and avoiding socio-emotional conflict.
Protecting organisational resources	Exercising special care and restraint in the use of organisational resources.

Table 5. Schematic Representation of the Range of Citizenship Conduct

Citizenship dimensions: exceeding job requirements	Excessive or inappropriate citizenship	Absent-citizenship: doing no more than meet bare requirements	Anti-citizenship: violating basic requirements
Conscientiousness	Workaholism	Working to rule, passive compliance, taking it easy	Scrimshanking, dereliction of duty
Protecting organisational resources	* 'Organisational anorexia'	Unnecessary expenditure; failure to economise on resources	Misappropriating organisational property or facilities; fraud, corruption; neglectful wastage
Being a team player	* Groupthink	Narrowly self-serving behaviour; minimalist co-operation with others	Taking credit for others' work; finding a scapegoat for one's own mistakes
Helpfulness	* Creating dependency	Providing only reluctant or conditional assistance to others; indirectly causing problems for others	Impairing the work of others; putting others at risk
Harmoniousness	* Suppression of constructive controversy	Not respecting others	Expressing hostility to others; demeaning others behind their back
Informal leadership	* Zealotry	* Absence of voice	* Resistance to change for narrow, self-serving reasons; making discouraging comments

* signifies no confirmed cases found.

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