

## **Leadership, organisational citizenship and innovative work behaviours in Lesotho: Exploratory evidence**

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### **Abstract**

Although organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and innovative work behaviour (IWB) have attracted considerable attention in recent years, empirical studies on how leadership relates to each construct within the same research design in non-western environments are limited. Based on a sample of 100 participants in Lesotho, we explored how OCB and IWB related to each other, and how leadership related to each construct. The findings suggested that OCB and IWB were highly correlated, and while transformational leadership related to each concept positively, passive-avoidant dimension of transactional leadership related to each negatively. Furthermore, age, tenure, management level and level of education were all significantly related to both OCB and IWB. We submit that the participants could probably not differentiate between OCB and IWB as the two concepts probably represent a behavioural manifestation of the same latent construct. We recommend that managers who want to influence subordinates to adopt OCB and IWB should apply transformational leadership.

**Key words:** *organisational citizenship behaviour; innovative work behaviour; transformational leadership; transactional leadership*

## **Introduction**

The two related concepts of organisational citizenship behaviour (hereinafter OCB) and innovative work behaviour (hereinafter IWB) have generated considerable attention in recent years. As early as 1938, Barnard realised the need for organisational members to willingly cooperate for the good of the organisation. Katz and Kahn (1978, as cited in Skarlicki & Latham, 1997:617) argued that for an organisation to function effectively, among other things, it must have employees who undertake innovative and spontaneous activities that go beyond the prescribed job requirements. These activities, variously labelled organisational citizenship behaviour (Organ, 1988), contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993) or citizenship performance (Borman, 2004), shape the social and psychological context that serves as a critical catalyst for task activities and processes, and are related to organisational effectiveness (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach, 2000).

Organ (1988:4) defined OCB as ‘the behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation’. IWB, which is related to OCB, comprises both creativity and innovation (Scott & Bruce, 1994), and is defined by Janssen (2000:288) as ‘the intentional creation, introduction and application of new ideas within a work role, group or organisation, in order to benefit role performance, the group, or the organisation’. Both behaviours are extra role, intentional and discretionary, and are often not directly incorporated in reward systems of organisations (Janssen, 2000).

Although there has been a plethora of studies on the antecedents of these behaviours, to our knowledge, these behaviours have rarely been studied concurrently. As globalisation increases, it is also imperative to test whether the behavioural theories initiated in the Anglo-Saxon World can be generalised to effective management of ventures in other environments (Yen & Niehoff, 2004). To our knowledge, there is paucity of studies on OCB and IWB within the context of Lesotho.

The aim of this exploratory study is to close the gaps identified above. The specific objectives are (a) to examine the impact of leadership (transformational and transactional) on OCB and IWB, and (b) to examine whether leadership behaviours produce comparable impacts on OCB and IWB. Given the similarity between OCB and IWB, it was expected that the two behaviours would be highly correlated. Furthermore, the main effects of leadership on these behaviours were expected to be more or less the same. This is consistent with the meta-analysis of LePine, Erez and Johnson (2002:61) who concluded that the dimensions of OCB are highly related, and may in fact be indicators of a latent construct or imperfect ‘behavioural manifestation of positive cooperativeness...a general tendency to be cooperative and helpful in organisational settings’.

The next section proceeds with the theoretical background on the relationships between OCB and IWB, and the hypotheses on the relationship between leadership and these behaviours. Research methods are then described, followed by presentation of the results.

The final section presents the discussion of the results, their limitations, and the implications for research and practice.

### **Theoretical background and hypotheses**

#### *Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and Innovative work behaviour (IWB)*

Drawing on Barnard's (1938) concept of 'willingness to cooperate' and the seminal work of Katz (1964, Katz & Kahn, 1978 as cited in Podsakoff et al., 2000), Organ and colleagues (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988; Smith, Organ & Near, 1983) are often credited with coining the term OCB; the term which encompasses some elements of IWB. While OCB is regarded as the voluntary behaviour that extends beyond the normal call of duty, in-role behaviour is described as the required behaviour that forms part of one's duties and responsibilities. According to Podsakoff et al. (2000: 516), seven overlapping themes of OCB include helping behaviour, sportsmanship, organisational loyalty, organisational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue and self-development. Individual initiative is the dimension that most resembles IWB, and includes voluntary acts of *creativity and innovation* designed to improve one's task or organisational performance. Creativity and innovation are essential processes of IWB. Creativity involves the production of novel and useful ideas, and innovation, which is broader, involves the generation, adoption (promotion) and implementation of ideas (Janssen, 2000; Reuvers, van Engen, Vinkenburg, & Wilson-Evered, 2008; Scott & Bruce, 1994). In describing the OCB directed towards the organisation, Allen (2006:121) suggested that it includes 'behaviours such as demonstrating above-average work attendance and making innovative suggestions to improve department quality', and included in his measure of this form of OCB the statement: 'I make innovative suggestions to improve the quality of the department' (p.127). Some researchers have actually defined IWB as extra role behaviour just like OCB. For instance, Janssen (2000:288) posited that IWBs are discretionary extra role behaviours which go 'beyond prescribed role expectations, and are not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system'.

Whether or not individual initiative (which is related to IWB) is extra-role behaviour is however a matter of judgment. Podsakoff et al. (2000: 524) argued that individual initiative is extra role behaviour to the extent that it involves engaging in task-related behaviours at the level beyond minimally required or generally accepted levels. Organ (1988, as cited in Podsakoff et al., 2000: 524), 'indicated that this form of behaviour is among the most difficult to distinguish from in-role behaviour, because it differs more in degree than in kind'.

In general, OCB and IWB are related, and the latter is connected to the 'individual initiative' dimension of the former. Both behaviours are described as discretionary extra-role behaviours; and both are also multi-dimensional constructs.

In addition to multitudes of employees within organisations, the late Steve Jobs of Apple Inc., and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook Inc. are recent example of leaders who exhibited these behaviours. Both leaders went extra mile to create information technology products

and/or services in their respective companies that have arguably revolutionised the business landscape forever.

### *Leadership and OCB*

Leadership is the process of influencing the thoughts, emotions and behaviours of followers towards set goals (Bartol & Martin, 1991). For more than three decades, the leadership research has been dominated by transactional and transformational leadership theories. While transactional leaders influence followers to perform up to set standards, transformational leaders stimulate performance beyond expectations (Bass, 1985).

Over the past three decades, many antecedents of OCB have been suggested and confirmed, and according to the meta-analyses by Podsakoff et al. (2000:532), job attitudes, task variables and leadership behaviours had the strongest relationship with OCBs than other antecedents. Of the many leadership behaviours included in the study, transformational leadership behaviours were found to have significant and consistent relationships with OCBs.

Transformational leadership encompasses the interrelated behavioural components of *inspirational motivation* (articulating an appealing vision); *intellectual stimulation* (encouraging followers to question old assumptions and therefore to be creative and innovative); *individualised consideration* (considering individual needs and coaching); and *idealised influence* (charismatic role modelling) (Jung, Chow and Wu, 2003; Rank, Nelson, Allen & Xu, 2009). The well-known leader in Africa who has exhibited these characteristics is Nelson Mandela. Other business and political leaders elsewhere who have exhibited these characteristics include Oprah Winfrey, Martin Luther King Jr., Jack Welch, Sir Richard Branson, and Mahatma Gandhi (Achua & Lussier, 2013:322).

Transformational leadership should plausibly relate to OCB. This is consistent with the original claim made by Bass (1985), namely, that transformational leadership is about 'achieving performance beyond expectations' (Purvanova, Bono & Dziewieczynski, 2006: 2). Thus transformational leadership behaviours should stimulate workers to engage in extra role behaviours such as OCB. Purvanova et al. (2006) maintained that this theoretical proposition has empirical support. This has not only been supported by individual empirical studies (e.g. McKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001; Purvanova et al., 2006), but also by previous meta-analyses on OCB (e.g. LePine et al., 2002; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 2000). We therefore expected to replicate previous findings linking transformational leadership and OCB in Lesotho.

*H1a: Transformational leadership is positively related to OCB.*

The effects of transformational leadership behaviours on OCB are generally stronger than those of transactional leadership (McKenzie et al., 2001). As stated above, while transactional leaders motivate followers to achieve stated objectives, transformational leaders influence followers to perform beyond expectations (Bass, 1985); the performance which connotes the essence of OCB as extra role behaviour. McKenzie et al. (2001:116) posited that for transactional leadership behaviours, 'the underlying influence process is one of instrumental compliance' rather than internalisation and identification

with values, goals and aspirations of followers associated with transformational forms of leadership behaviours. However, since the ‘augmentation effect’ suggests that transformational leadership augments rather than compete with transactional leadership (MacKenzie et al., 2001:116), a positive relationship could be expected between transactional leadership and OCB. Thus, although to a lesser extent than transformational leadership, we expected that transactional leadership would also relate positively to OCB.

*H1b: Transactional leadership is positively related to OCB.*

#### *Leadership and IWB*

Among many factors that influence innovative or creative behaviours of employees, according to Jung et al. (2003:526), ‘leadership has been identified by many researchers as being one of the most, if not the most important’; but it ‘has been relatively understudied despite its wide acceptance among scholars as being a key contributor to creative performance’ (p.541). In the same vein, Rank et al. (2009:468) suggested that little research has related transformational leadership to individual innovation. This is surprising given how transformational leadership and IWB are close to each other conceptually. For instance, the transformational leadership behavioural dimension of intellectual stimulation challenges followers to question old assumptions, to think ‘out of the box’, and to adopt new approaches. In other words, transformational leaders should plausibly influence followers to adopt creative and innovative behaviours, the conjecture that has some empirical support.

Within electronic and telecommunications industry, Jung et al. (2003) established that transformational leadership was positively and directly related to organisation’s creativity and innovative ability. The study by Reuvers et al. (2008) within the healthcare industry replicated the positive relationship between transformational leadership and IWB. Comparable results were also reported by Rank et al. (2009) on data collected from several companies in Germany. Thus based on conceptual and empirical studies, we expected that transformational leadership would relate positively to IWB.

*H2a: Transformational leadership is positively related to IWB.*

There are however some strong arguments in favour of the negative relationship between transactional leadership and IWB. According to Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999), transactional leadership comprises of the interrelated behaviours of *contingent-reward* (the leader promises rewards for good performance); *active management by exception* (the leader searches for deviations from rules and standards and takes corrective action); and *passive-avoidant* or *passive management by exception* (the leader intervenes only if standards are not met). Thus transactional leadership emphasises extrinsic motivation, which according to Amabile (1996, as cited in Rank et al., 2009:468) militates against creativity. The study by Rank et al. (2009) confirmed that active-corrective transactional leadership was significantly and negatively correlated with innovation. We therefore expected a negative relationship between transactional leadership and IWB.

*H2b: Transactional leadership is negatively related to IWB.*

## Method

### *Sample and Procedures*

To test the hypotheses advanced in this exploratory study, a convenient sample of 100 employees were selected from four companies in Lesotho. Two companies were in the provision of insurance services, and the other two were respectively in the marketing consultancy and the supply of electricity. The contact office in all companies was the HR office, which in each case only agreed to *distribute a limited number of questionnaires to employees regardless of department or level of management*. We resorted to convenient sampling for two main reasons. First, the companies were reluctant to provide us with a sampling frame, and that hindered random sampling technique. Second, since the study was exploratory and did not aim at generalising the results, we found convenient sampling technique adequate for the purposes of the study. Of the 100 questionnaires distributed, a total of 70 usable ones were returned, constituting the response rate of 70%. The biographical data of respondents are summarised in Table 1.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Gender	Male	32	46
	Female	38	54
	Total	70	100
Age	18-24	06	09
	25-35	19	27
	Above 35	45	64
	<i>Total</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>100</i>
Education	Primary	04	06
	High School	02	03
	Tertiary	32	46
	Postgraduate	32	46
	<i>Total</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>101</i>
Management Level	None	13	19
	Supervisory	21	30
	Middle level	25	36
	Senior/top level	11	16

	<i>Total</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>101</i>
Tenure	Less than a year	12	17
	1-3 years	11	16
	4- 5 years	09	13
	Above 5 years	38	54
	<i>Total</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Note: Due to rounding off numbers, the total percentage in some cases has been 101.</i>			

54 percent of the participants were females, and the majority were above 35 years of age. Most of the participants were educated, with the majority having some tertiary education and above. In terms of management level, the majority were in supervisory and middle levels of management (30 percent and 36 percent respectively), but there were significant others who were purportedly in senior management level (16 percent) as well. 19 percent of the participants did not have any managerial responsibilities. The majority of participants (54 percent) had worked in their companies for five years or more.

#### *Measures and analysis*

The summary of the measures of variables is shown in the appendix.

*Leadership:* The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X (Bass & Avolio, 1995) was used to assess the leadership behaviour of supervisors. We selected ten items: two to assess each of the four dimensions of transformational leadership (intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and idealized influence), and two items to each assess contingent-reward and passive-avoidant forms of transactional leadership. The participants were asked to assess the behaviour of their supervisors on a scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 4 (frequently if not always). Factor analysis (principal components, varimax rotation) resulted into two factors, one consisting of transformational leadership items (Cronbach's alpha=0.92) and the other consisting of two items representing transactional leadership (Cronbach's alpha=0.46). Items representing transactional leadership could not be added into one scale because of low internal reliability.

*OCB:* We adapted four items from the scale developed by Borman and Motowidlo (1993) to assess contextual performance (OCB). The participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha was 0.93.

*IWB:* We adapted 9 items based on Janssen's (2000) scale for individual innovative work behaviour at the work place. The participants were asked to rate how often they behaved as described on a scale ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (always). Though the items tapped into opportunity exploration, idea generation, idea championing and idea implementation,

as was the case in Janssen's study, the items were found to cluster into one uni-dimensional additive scale. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.96.

*Other measures:* As shown in the appendix, other measures included gender, age, education, management level and tenure of employees.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used to analyse data.

## Results

The zero-order correlations of independent variables with OCB and IWB are shown in Table 2.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>OCB (r)</i>	<i>IWB (r)</i>
IWB	0.87**	-
Transformational leadership	0.61**	0.70**
Contingent reward transactional leadership	-0.20	-0.24
Passive-avoidant transactional leadership	-0.54**	-0.62**
Gender	-0.10	-0.21
Age	0.37**	0.46**
Educational level	0.63**	0.61**
Management level	0.46**	0.53**
Tenure	0.35**	0.43**
<i>**Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)</i>		

As could be expected, the correlation between OCB and IWB was high ( $r=0.87$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), and when the items assessing the two variables were factor analysed (principal components, varimax rotation), they produced one factor. This suggests that the respondents could not differentiate between OCB and IWB in this study. In terms of correlation, with the exception of educational level, the independent variables had a slightly higher correlation with IWB than OCB. It is worth noting however that significance levels were the same at  $p \leq 0.01$ .

As expected, transformational leadership was positively and significantly related to both OCB and IWB, suggesting that supervisors who exhibited more transformational leadership behaviour inspired subordinates to exhibit OCB and IWB behaviour than supervisors who exhibited less transformational leadership. Hypotheses 1a and 2a were



fully supported. Hypothesis 1b was not supported because neither contingent–reward nor passive-avoidant forms of transactional leadership were positively related to OCB. In fact, contrary to expectations, passive-avoidant transactional leadership was negatively and significantly related to OCB. Hypothesis 2b was partially supported because only passive-avoidant transactional leadership was negatively and significantly related to IWB. Thus the results suggest that passive-avoidant transactional leadership reduced both OCB and IWB.

Significant positive correlations were also produced between age, tenure, management and education levels on the one hand, and OCB and IWB on the other. This suggests that a) experienced subordinates (older and more tenured) were more likely to exhibit OCB and IWB than their less experienced counterparts, b) the higher the level of the respondent, the higher the levels of OCB and IWB and vice-versa, and c) the higher the level of education, the higher the levels of OCB and IWB and vice versa.

## **Discussion**

Though OCB and IWB have recently attracted considerable attention in management research, empirical studies on how leadership relates to them in general and in non-western environments in particular are scarce. The current study based in Lesotho found that OCB and IWB were highly correlated, suggesting that the participants could not probably differentiate between them. This is not surprising given that the two constructs share some similar content domain, namely that both are intentional extra role behaviours that are often not recognised in formal reward systems (Janssen, 2000).

As could be expected, transformational leadership was strongly related to both OCB and IWB. This is in accord with the conceptualisation of transformational leadership as the behaviour that influences followers to perform beyond expectations, and to question old assumptions and therefore become creative and innovative (Bass, 1985). It also confirms prior studies on the relationships between transformational leadership and OCB (e.g. Jung et al., 2003; Rank et al., 2009; Reuvers et al., 2008); and transformational leadership and IWB (e.g. Rank et al., 2008). The current study contributes to existing empirical studies in that transformational leadership was correlated with both extra role behaviours within the same research design in a non-western setting.

Contrary to expectations, transactional leadership was not positively related to OCB. Instead, the passive-avoidant form of transactional leadership was negatively and significantly related to both OCB and IWB. This does not support the ‘augmentation effect’ which argues that transformational leadership complements rather than compete with transactional leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1993 as cited in MacKenzie et al., 2001:116). According to MacKenzie et al. (2001:116), ‘transformational leadership behaviours augment or enhance the effectiveness of the leader over and above what she or he could achieve through transactional leadership alone’. Two reasons may be advanced to explain this unexpected result. First, it may be that transactional leadership behaviours were narrowly measured in this study, reducing the reliability of the construct. Again as suggested by MacKenzie et al. (2001:121), transactional leadership is likely to influence OCBs to the extent that there is a direct linkage between contingent reward

behaviour and OCBs. It is possible that there were no such linkages in the organisations sampled in this study.

Though not hypothesised in this study, age, tenure, management and education levels were significantly related to both OCB and IWB. As suggested by Janssen (2000:298) and Scott and Bruce (1994), educated employees perform complex and non-routine jobs which provide opportunities for performance of extra role behaviours. Higher level jobs provide similar opportunities, and people are likely to occupy high level jobs later in their careers, providing the patterns of relationships between extra role behaviours and management level, age and tenure in this study.

### *Implications*

The current study provides managerial and theoretical implications. First, supervisors who want to influence subordinates to go beyond the call of duty and to be creative and innovative can adopt transformational leadership behaviours. This can be achieved by designing leadership training courses that target supervisors in organisations. Second, though the relationship between OCB and IWB has not been made clear, the results of this study suggest a possibility of overlap between the two concepts. It is possible that the latter is the dimension of the former, and based on the views of LePine et al. (2002), such dimensions may in fact be indicators of a latent construct.

### *Limitations*

When interpreting the results of this study and their implications, limitations, which provide opportunities for future research, should be considered. First, although the results replicate prior findings in different industries, the small sample and how it was selected reduce the generalisation of the results. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the study precludes causal inferences. Third, though leadership behaviours of supervisors were reported by subordinates, and extra role behaviours are susceptible to idiosyncratic interpretation and hence best self-reported (e.g. Janssen, 2000:292); self-reported data lends itself to common method variance. The longitudinal study based on a diversified, large and randomly selected sample using different sources of data could be conducted to replicate the findings of this study.

## **Appendix**

### **Summary of the measures of variables**

#### *Demographic Factors*

*Gender* (male=0, female=1)

*Age* (18-24=0, 25-35=1, Above 35=2)

*Education* (Primary=0, High school=1, Tertiary=2, Postgraduate=3)

*Management level* (none=0, supervisory=1, middle=2, senior/top=3)

*Tenure* (less than a year=0, 1-3 years=1, 4-5 years=2, above 5 years=3)

*Transformational leadership* (0=not at all,...4=frequently if not always)

1. My supervisor gets me look at problems from different angles
2. My supervisor suggests new ways of looking at how to complete work assignments
3. My supervisor considers me as having different needs, abilities and aspirations from others
4. My supervisor helps me develop my strengths
5. My supervisor talks optimistically about the future and articulates a compelling vision
6. My supervisor instils pride in me for being associated with him/her
7. My supervisor acts in ways that build my respect
8. My supervisor considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions

*Transactional leadership* (0=not at all,...4=frequently if not always)

9. My supervisor shows that he/she is a firm believer in 'if it isn't broke, don't fix it'.
10. My supervisor makes it clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved.

*Innovative Work Behaviour* (0=never,...4=always)

1. How often do you think of original solutions?
2. How well informed are you of the information necessary to perform your duties efficiently?
3. How often do you search out new working methods, techniques or instruments
4. How often do you pay attention to issues that are not part of your daily work/tasks?
5. How often do you encourage key organisation members to be enthusiastic about innovative ideas?
6. How often do you contribute to implementation of innovation?
7. How often do you invent new approaches for the implementation of tasks?
8. How often do you systematically introduce innovative ideas into work practices?
9. How often do you work in your suggestions to improve existing products or services?

*Organisational Citizenship Behaviour* (0=Strongly disagree,...4=Strongly agree)

1. You voluntarily do more than the job requires
2. You voluntarily do more than the job requires to help others or contribute to organisational effectiveness
3. You tackle a difficult work assignment enthusiastically
4. You volunteer for additional responsibilities

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