

Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Performance Evaluations: Distributive Justice or Injustice?

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Abstract

Purpose The purpose of this study was to examine employees' reactions to the use of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in performance evaluations. In addition, gender differences in such reactions were examined. **Design/methodology/approach** Data were obtained from a sample of working adults ($n = 78$) and a sample of students ($n = 249$). In the first study, participants compared the fairness of 11 different weighting combinations of OCB and core task behavior, using a within-subjects design. In the second study, low, medium, and high weightings of OCB were compared using a between-subjects design.

Findings In both studies, participants reported that evaluating employees on OCB was fair. OCB weightings of 30–50% were perceived as the most fair. Men felt that OCB weighting of 20–30% were the most fair and women felt that OCB weightings of 25–50% were the most fair.

Implications Considering that employees are evaluated on their OCB, it is important to know that they feel that it is

fair to do so. Choosing how heavily to weigh OCB may be more difficult, although weightings of 25–30% OCB were perceived to be fair to both the men and women in this research.

Originality/value This is the first study to examine employee reactions to the use of OCB in performance evaluations and add to a growing body of evidence suggesting that there are gender differences in the perceptions of OCB.

Keywords Organizational citizenship behavior · Core task behavior · Gender · Distributive justice · Performance evaluations · Social exchange theory

Job performance is typically defined as behaviors under the control of the individual that advance the goals of the organization (Rotundo and Sackett 2002). Past research has classified the performance domain into a number of dimensions. One of the more common classification schemes involves two categories of job behaviors: core task requirements and organizational citizenship requirements. Core task behavior (CTB) can be defined in terms of the formal, traditional behaviors that are prescribed and recognized as part of a particular job. In contrast, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is composed of informal acts of a prosocial nature benefiting coworkers, supervisors, and/or the organization (Smith et al. 1983). OCB has further been described to include those actions that are supportive of the environment in which the core task performance takes place (Organ 1997).

Although OCB was originally defined as behavior that is, “not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system” (Organ 1988, p. 4), research has demonstrated that

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OCB is used in performance evaluations with both supervisors and peers (Borman et al. 1995), in lab and field settings (Allen and Rush 1998), and from military personnel to sales personnel (MacKenzie et al. 1991; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994). The findings demonstrate that OCB influences overall performance ratings over and above the employees' requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform the job (e.g., Allen and Rush 1998; Johnson 2001), even to the extent of attributing a dollar value to these behaviors (Orr et al. 1989) and affecting employees' salary over time (Holladay et al. 2004). Managers are seeking out and using information on employees' citizenship behaviors in their performance evaluations (Werner 1994) and subsequent decisions regarding allocation of outcomes and rewards.

However, no research, to the authors' knowledge, has examined employees' reactions to the use of OCB in performance evaluations, in terms of fairness. It is important to consider employee fairness perceptions because of the potential impact of fairness perceptions on organizational effectiveness. Employees who perceive fairness in their organizations demonstrate more OCB, report higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, make more positive evaluations of authority, have better performance, and demonstrate lower levels of work withdrawal (Colquitt et al. 2001). As Colquitt (2001) explains, justice perceptions can be conceptualized in terms of employees' reactions to outcomes (distributive justice), the process that led to those outcomes (procedural justice), and their treatment during the process (interactional and informational justice). When outcomes are allocated in line with an individual's expectations and desired outcomes, he or she will perceive distributive justice. Procedural justice is experienced when one has voice and influence in the decision-making process and when the decision-making process is based on consistent, unbiased processes. Interactional justice relates to the interpersonal treatment one receives during the process. Informational justice relates to one receiving the desired amount of information, as to how the process will be carried out.

We expect that the other aspects of justice would also play an important role in fairness perceptions of using OCB in performance evaluations. For example, if OCBs were used consistently in performance evaluations across employees, if employees were treated with respect during the performance review, and if employees knew in advance that OCB would be evaluated, they should perceive greater procedural, interactional, and informational justice than if OCBs were not used consistently, if they were not treated with respect, and if they did not know in advance that OCB would be evaluated. In the current study, we hold these other aspects of justice constant in order to explore the effects of using OCB in performance appraisals on

distributive justice perceptions. We focus on distributive justice perceptions because if employees do not perceive the outcome to be fair, even if the process is fair, then overall fairness perceptions will be affected. Further, measures can be taken to improve procedural, interactional, and informational justice in every performance appraisal process, whereas, distributive justice can not always be achieved.

The Norm of Reciprocity

There are several reasons to expect that employees should find the process of being evaluated on OCBs to be fair. First, to the extent that employees engage in OCBs, they should expect to be rewarded for their efforts, because of the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960). The norm of reciprocity describes individuals' tendency to help those who have helped them (Gouldner 1960), in order to diminish feelings of obligation toward that individual. Therefore, when one provides benefits to another, he or she will expect benefits in return. The relevance of the norm of reciprocity to the workplace is highlighted in social exchange theory and work on psychological contracts. Social exchange theory makes the distinction between the financial basis of economic exchange and the socio-emotional basis of social exchange (Blau 1964).

Economic exchanges include the compensation given by the employer in response to the employee's fulfillment of job requirements and are largely contractual, rendering it unlikely that the two parties of the exchange will not meet their respective contributions. Social exchanges, however, are based on promises or expectations, rather than being contractual. When employees exhibit exceptional performance at work, including OCB, they are aware that the employer is not contractually obligated to compensate them for the behavior. Instead, they are relying on a "good faith" expectation that the employer will reward them for their increased contribution or effort and fulfill the norm of reciprocity. If the employee's expectation is not met and the norm of reciprocity is violated, then the employee will perceive that he or she has not been treated fairly.

The fair interaction between employee and employer can also be interpreted through the psychological contract literature (Guest 1998). Perceived employer obligations motivate employees to behave in a way that increases the likelihood of receiving inducements from the employer, such as engaging in OCB (Coyle-Shapiro 2002). If the inducements are not received, the employee should perceive unfairness, even though the employer was not contractually obligated to provide the inducements. Based on social exchange theory and psychological contracts, employees should expect to be rewarded for demonstrating

OCBs, and therefore, should perceive being evaluated on OCB to be more fair than not being evaluated on OCB, because of the norm of reciprocity.

Job Breadth

The second explanation for why employees should perceive the use of OCB in performance evaluation to be fair is because they consider OCB to be part of their job. Morrison (1994) defines the extent to which one defines OCB as in-role or extra-role as perceived job breadth. Coyle-Shapiro et al. (2004) examined both of these arguments (reciprocity and job breadth) and found that both explain why employees engage in OCB. If employees consider the behaviors associated with OCB (e.g., helping coworkers) as part of their job, they should expect to be evaluated on those behaviors and find this practice to be fair. Employees who perceive OCB as part of their job role, but then discover that it has no impact on their performance evaluation, should find the situation to be unfair. Not surprisingly, employees who perceive OCB as in-role tend to perform more OCB (Coyle-Shapiro et al. 2004; Morrison 1994). Pond et al. (1997) argue that employees engage in OCB, because they feel that they will be rewarded for those behaviors and found that employees generally believe that most OCBs are formally evaluated by their supervisor. If employees perceive OCB as part of their job, expect to be evaluated on OCB, and engage in OCB, it follows that they should find being evaluated on the basis of those behaviors as fair.

Hypothesis 1 Using OCB in performance evaluations to determine employee rankings will be perceived as more fair than not using OCB in performance evaluations.

Gender and OCB

While we expect that employees will perceive the use of OCB in performance evaluation to be fair, we expect that women will perceive heavier weightings of OCB as more fair than men, due to underlying expectations associated with gender roles. Gender roles are socially shared beliefs about how men and women should behave. Two role characteristics on which men and women are thought to differ are agency and communion (Eagly 1987). Agentive characteristics, which are primarily ascribed to men, include being assertive, controlling, confident, aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, and competitive. Communal characteristics, which are ascribed to women, include being affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, nurturing, and gentle. More importantly, gender

roles create behavioral prescriptions that govern expectations from oneself and from others about how one *should* behave (Eagly 1987). When one violates his or her gender role, it elicits a negative reaction from others (Eagly 1987). Therefore, based on the influence of gender roles, expectations would hold that women should engage in helping behaviors, such as OCB, more than men. If they violate their roles and do not engage in these behaviors, they may be evaluated negatively. Indeed, women are perceived as engaging in OCB more frequently (Allen and Rush 2001) and are rated more highly on these behaviors than men (Holladay et al. 2004; Lovell et al. 1999).

The influence of gender on fairness perceptions of using OCB in performance evaluations can also be interpreted in terms of the job breadth and norm of reciprocity arguments. As Morrison (1994) argues, the distinction between in-role and extra-role behaviors is defined by supervisors' expectations. To the extent that supervisors expect employees to engage in a given behavior, that behavior becomes part of an employee's perceived job role. Because of gender role prescriptions, supervisors should expect female employees to engage in helping behaviors more than male employees, because helping others is a communal characteristic (Kidder 2002). Supervisors' expectations for job role behaviors may explain why female employees perceive OCB (altruism, conscientiousness, involvement), as part of their job to a greater extent than do male employees (Morrison 1994) and engage in such behaviors. The extent to which one engages in OCB determines how he or she will expect to be rewarded by the organization. If women are spending more time engaging in OCB, then they should expect that their performance evaluations would reflect their effort, in terms of the norm of reciprocity. If men engage in fewer OCBs, then they should expect rewards commensurate with their efforts.

Hypothesis 2 Female employees will perceive heavier weightings of OCB in performance evaluations as more fair than men.

Study 1

Method

Participants

A survey methodology allowed for a more representative sample of employees, maximizing the external validity of the results. A total of 78 (50 women, 28 men; 58 White, 20 Non-White) full-time employees ranging in age from 19 to 58 ($M = 36.32$, $SD = 12.34$) were recruited from a large metropolitan area to be survey participants. Participants

came from a wide-variety of industries including administration, banking, law, and oil and gas. Many of the participants reported having some supervisory experience ($n = 49$) and having previously conducted a performance appraisal ($n = 48$). Participants were recruited across organizations, rather than from within one organization, because of evidence demonstrating that OCB can be a group-level phenomenon (Ehrhart 2004). Therefore, choosing all participants from one organization may have resulted in more similarity in their responses, making the results specific to that organization, rather than generalizable across organizations.

Design, Materials, Outcome Measure and Procedure

We employed a mixed-subjects design, where the weighting of OCB and CTB was the within-subjects variable and employee gender was the between-subjects variable. Participants received a packet, which included a cover sheet with working definitions of OCB and CTB. Due to the number of ways OCB has been defined and due to the difficulty in determining what is less enforceable as a job requirement, we gave individuals a common working definition of what OCB encompassed (e.g., Organ 1988, 1997) and only provided a few prototypical examples from the literature. By doing so, we attenuated the problem that the particular behavior may not be identical across jobs. Thus, we defined OCB as encompassing:

Acts of cooperation, helpfulness, suggestions, gestures of goodwill, and altruism. Some specific examples of these behaviors include: helping others that have been absent, not spending time in idle conversation, and volunteering for things that are not required.

In order to ensure a common frame of reference for the employees in this study, we also provided a working definition of core task behavior: “Those actions that are central to a person’s role.” This practice of using frames with employees is similar to the practice of using frame of reference training and performance dimension training with managers to help increase their accuracy in completing evaluations (Milkovich and Newman 2002).

The next section of the packet provided instructions and an illustration of how the rankings of employees in the subsequent scenarios were determined by the weighting of OCB and CTB in a performance evaluation. There were 11 possible combinations of weightings, ranging from 100% OCB and 0% CTB to 0% OCB and 100% CTB, changing in increments of 10%. Participants were asked to review the rankings for all eleven scenarios and then indicate their perceived fairness for the outcome of the employee rankings for each scenario (for an example, see Appendix 1).

The items were: “These rankings are fair,” “The rankings reflect the effort the employees have put into their work,” “The rankings are appropriate for the work behaviors the employees have completed,” “The rankings reflect what the employees have contributed to the organization,” and “The rankings are justified, given the employees’ performances.” The perceived fairness was measured for each scenario by five items (all α 's > .88), adapted from Colquitt (2001) and rated on five-point Likert-scale from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

In our scenarios, all employees performed both organizational citizenship and core task behaviors. However, how well they performed the different types of behaviors varied by three levels (low = 1, average = 2, high = 3). All possible combinations of the three levels of performance were used, which resulted in nine unique employee performances for each scenario (e.g., Person A performed *low* on OCB and *low* on CTB). The numbers associated with each level were then multiplied by the percentage value to determine the employees’ overall performance score. The following serves as an illustration of the ranking outcome for a scenario (Appendix 1): an employee (Person F) scored average (=2) on OCB and high (=3) on CTB. Company A employed a performance evaluation system that weighted OCB 100% and CTB 0%, which resulted in a score of 200 [(2 × 100) + (3 × 0)] and rank of 2 for Person F.

This design allowed us to test the extent to which employees would perceive the use of OCB in performance evaluations in determining outcomes as fair. If employees do not believe OCB should be used in performance evaluations, then they should rate all combinations except for the 100% CTB and 0% OCB as unfair. If employees do feel that it is fair to use OCB in performance evaluations, then this design would allow us to gauge *the extent to which* employees felt that OCB should be used. For example, the design afforded us the capability to examine whether OCB should comprise 10% of the performance evaluation, or 50%.

Results

Table 1 contains means, standard deviations, and correlations of all study variables. In order to test Hypothesis 1, “Using OCB in performance evaluations to determine employee rankings will be perceived as more fair than not using OCB in performance evaluations,” we conducted a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the weighting combination as the within-subjects variable. Because the data violated the assumption of sphericity, the Greenhouse-Geiser correction was used in the analyses to avoid a Type 1 error. The repeated measures ANOVA revealed a main effect for weighting, $F(3.48, 264.78) = 50.81, p < .001, \eta^2 = .40$ (see Fig. 1), indicating significant variance in the mean fairness ratings over the

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among study variables from Study 1

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender ^a	1.36	.48											
2. 0% OCB	2.16	1.05	.01										
3. 10% OCB	2.89	1.15	.18	.61**									
4. 20% OCB	3.41	1.10	.23*	.37**	.78**								
5. 30% OCB	3.61	.89	.28*	.22	.41**	.66**							
6. 40% OCB	3.47	.86	.08	−.02	−.09	.14	.52**						
7. 50% OCB	3.43	.92	−.18	−.15	−.48**	−.40**	−.07	.42**					
8. 60% OCB	2.86	.89	−.16	−.14	−.36**	−.37**	−.15	.33**	.62**				
9. 70% OCB	2.37	.86	−.14	.04	−.31**	−.33**	−.21	.01	.39**	.64**			
10. 80% OCB	2.06	.75	−.13	.24	−.10	−.16	−.16	.01	.15	.42**	.72**		
11. 90% OCB	1.97	.83	−.17	.35**	.07	−.07	−.15	−.11	.08	.35**	.67**	.79**	
12. 100% OCB	1.76	.81	−.11	.34**	.04	−.12	−.18	−.11	.00	.25*	.59**	.69**	.86**

N = 78. * *p* < .05, ** *p* < .01

^a Coded 1 = women, 2 = men

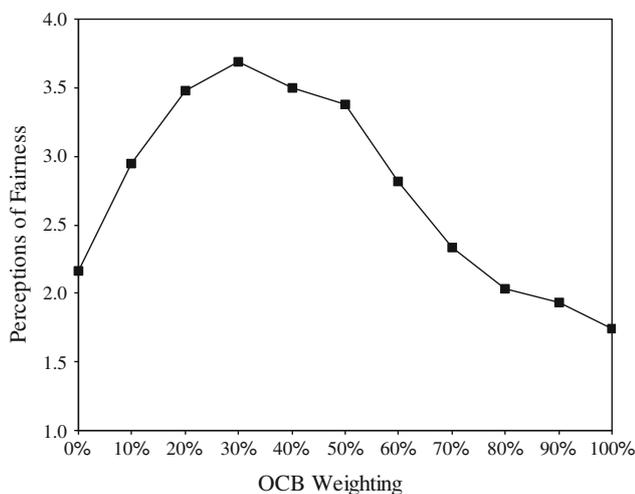


Fig. 1 The pattern of fairness perceptions across the OCB weightings

weightings. To further test our hypothesis, we conducted a Helmert contrast comparing the first weighting (0% OCB, 100% CTB) to all of the other weightings, which revealed a significant difference, $F(1, 76) = 30.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .28$. Employees perceived using OCB as more fair than not using OCB.

As an exploratory analysis, we were interested in examining which weighting combination employees perceived as the *most* fair. Participants perceived the weighting of 30% OCB (70% CTB) as the most fair (Fig. 1). Follow up *t* tests revealed that participants perceived 30% OCB as significantly more fair than 20% ($t(77) = -2.18$, $p = .03$) and 60% ($t(77) = -4.95$, $p < .001$). However, 30% OCB did not differ significantly from 40% ($t(77) = 1.42$, $p > .05$) or 50% ($t(77) = 1.25$, $p > .05$).

To test Hypothesis 2, female employees will perceive heavier weightings of OCB as more fair than men, we examined the repeated measures ANOVA with the weighting combination as the within-subjects variable and gender as the between-subjects variable. The main effect for gender was nonsignificant ($F(1, 76) = .002$, $p > .05$, $\eta^2 = .00$), but the interaction between weighting and gender was statistically significant ($F(3.48, 264.78) = 2.94$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .04$), as expected. The interaction indicated a significant difference in the pattern of mean fairness ratings for men and women. As illustrated in Fig. 2, men perceived the 30% OCB weighting as the most fair, and women perceived the weighting of 50% to be the most fair. Follow up *t* tests for the men revealed that the perceptions of 30% OCB weighting did not differ from the 20% ($t(27) = 1.44$, $p > .05$), although they differed from the 10% ($t(27) = 3.26$, $p < .01$) and 40% ($t(27) = 2.32$, $p = .03$) OCB weightings. For women, the perceptions of 50% OCB weighting did not differ from the 40% ($t(49) = .88$, $p > .05$), 30% ($t(49) = .71$, $p > .05$), or 20% OCB weightings ($t(49) = 1.36$, $p > .05$). However, there was a significant difference between perceptions of 50 and 60% ($t(49) = 4.84$, $p < .001$) and between that of 50 and 10% ($t(49) = 3.28$, $p < .01$) OCB. Therefore, men found weightings of 20–30% OCB as the most fair, while women found weightings of 20–50% OCB as the most fair.

Discussion

Study 1 examined the extent to which employees perceive the use of OCB in performance evaluations to be fair. As expected, employees perceived the use of OCB in determining outcomes from performance evaluations as more fair than not using OCB in performance evaluations. We

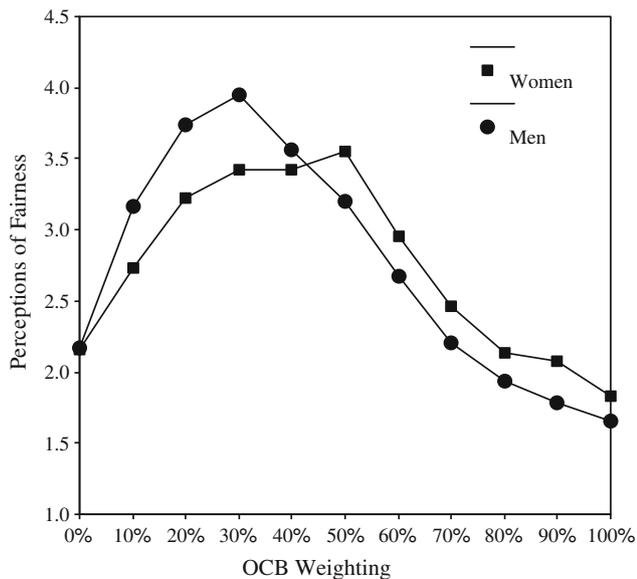


Fig. 2 The pattern of fairness perceptions across the OCB weightings by gender

also explored which OCB–CTB weighting combinations employees would feel were the most fair, finding that OCB weightings of 30–50% were perceived as the most fair. However, as expected, we found differences between male and female employees' fairness reactions. Men perceived lower weightings of OCB (20–30%) as the most fair, while women perceived these weighting in addition to higher weightings as the most fair (20–50%).

Study 2

Study 1 provided an exploratory analysis of the extent to which individuals find the use of OCB in performance evaluations as fair and differences that may be observed as a result of gender. The goal of Study 2 was to confirm the findings of Study 1 using an additional experiment, in which OCB and CTB are manipulated in a between-subjects design. In our second study, we chose three weightings of OCB—25, 50, and 75%. Although we will not specifically examine the weighting 30% (the OCB weighting perceived as most fair), extrapolating from the results of Study 1, we expect that the 25% OCB weighting will be perceived as the most fair, followed by the 50% weighting and the 75% weighting. In addition, because of men's preference for a lower OCB weighting in Study 1, we expect that men would perceive the 25% weighting as the most fair. Women's preference for an OCB weighting of 50% led to the expectation that they would perceive the 50% weighting of OCB as the most fair in Study 2. As a result of these different preferences for the most fair OCB

weighting, we expect a different pattern of means for men as compared to women. Women should perceive the 50% weighting of OCB as the most fair followed by the 25%, and then 75%. Men should perceive the 25% weighting of OCB as the most fair followed by 50 and 75%.

Hypothesis 1 OCB weightings of 25% will be perceived as the most fair, followed by 50 and 75%.

Hypothesis 2 Preference for OCB weightings in terms of perceived fairness will differ by gender.

Hypothesis 2a Men will perceive the 25% weighting of OCB as more fair than women.

Hypothesis 2b Women will perceive the 50% weighting of OCB as more fair than men.

Hypothesis 2c Men should perceive the 25% weighting of OCB as the most fair followed by the 50% weighting, and then the 75% weighting.

Hypothesis 2d Women will perceive the 50% weighting of OCB as the most fair followed by the 25% weighting, and then the 75% weighting.

Methods

Participants

Participants consisted of 249 undergraduate business students at a large public university. There were 118 men and 131 women. Most participants were White ($n = 211$), although there were also 26 Asian, 3 Black, and 3 Hispanic participants. Four participants indicated "other" as their race and two chose not to report their race. Most participants were juniors ($n = 101$) and seniors ($n = 135$), with the remaining participants reporting that they were sophomores ($n = 10$) or not indicating their year ($n = 3$). They ranged in age from 17 to 48 with a mean age of 21.30 ($SD = 2.50$). Most participants had previous work experience ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 3.04$).

Procedure

The same procedure from the first study was followed for the second study. Similar to Study 1, the packet provided definitions and instructions illustrating how the weighting of OCB and CTB would affect employees' rankings who differed in performance in terms of OCB and CTB. However, as Study 2 was a between-subjects design, each participant received only one possible combination of OCB and CTB. There were three possible conditions: 25% OCB, 75% CTB; 50% OCB, 50% CTB; and 75% OCB, 25% CTB. Participants then rated the weighting on fairness using five distributive justice items ($\alpha = .86$), adapted from

Colquitt (2001), along a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

Results

Table 2 contains means, standard deviations, and correlations of all study variables. A univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with fairness perceptions as the dependent variable and OCB weighting and gender as the independent variables. The ANOVA revealed a main effect for OCB $F(2, 243) = 24.19, p < .001, \eta^2 = .17$. There was no main effect for gender $F(1, 243) = 0.04, p > .05, \eta^2 = .00$, but there was a gender by weighting interaction $F(2, 243) = 13.78, p < .001, \eta^2 = .10$. First, looking at the main effect for OCB, Hypothesis 1 suggested that weightings of 25% would be perceived as the most fair followed by 50 and 75%. The hypothesis was partially supported such that weightings of 25% were perceived as the most fair ($M = 3.18, SD = .77$), followed by 50% ($M = 3.24, SD = .82$), and 75% ($M = 2.49, SD = .84$). However, follow up t tests revealed that the 25 and 50% weightings were perceived as equally fair ($t(174) = .17, p > .05$), although 50% was more fair than 75% ($t(144) = 5.27, p < .001$).

Next, looking at the gender by weighting interaction, we examined which weighting would be preferred by men and women in terms of fairness. Men were expected to perceive 25% as the most fair, followed by 50%, and 75%. The results support this hypothesis. Men perceived 25% OCB weighting as more fair than 50% ($t(78) = 2.41, p < .05$) and 50% as more fair than 75% ($t(73) = 5.47, p < .001$). This preference among men also held true when compared with women, where men ($M = 3.53, SD = .68$) perceived the 25% OCB weighting as more fair than women ($M = 2.92, SD = .72, t(101) = 4.48, p < .001$). These findings show that men perceived the heaviest CTB weighting to be the most fair across multiple comparisons, i.e., men evaluating the fairness of other CTB weightings and women evaluating the same weighting.

For women, it was expected that the OCB weighting of 50% would be perceived as the most fair followed by 25 and

75%. Women perceived 25 and 50% as equally fair ($t(94) = -1.54, p > .05$), but 50% as more fair than 75% ($t(69) = 2.17, p < .05$). When comparing the findings for women with men, we did not find that women ($M = 3.17, SD = .85$) perceived the OCB weighting of 50% as more fair than men ($M = 3.16, SD = .79, t(71) = -.08, p > .05$). Although there was no hypothesis related to the heaviest OCB weighting, women ($M = 2.77, SD = .72$) perceived the 75% weighting to be more fair than men ($M = 2.21, SD = .72, t(71) = -3.33, p < .01$). These findings show women demonstrating a greater range of acceptance for the weight assigned to OCB, both when comparing the perceptions among women and when contrasting the perceptions held by men of the heaviest OCB weighting.

Discussion

Study 2 demonstrated that individuals perceive weighting OCB in performance evaluations at 25 and 50% to be equally fair, but more fair than weighting OCB at 75%. These findings appear to be driven by the female participants who perceived OCB weightings of 25 and 50% as equally fair. Men, however, perceived weighting OCB at 25% as more fair than 50%. Further comparisons of the male and female participants illustrated their differing perceptions of fairness. As shown in Fig. 3, the contrast in fairness perceptions across the OCB weightings was greater for men than for women. Men’s perception of fairness was highest with an OCB weighting of 25%, and it decreased markedly with the heavier OCB weightings. In comparison, women’s perceptions of fairness were more similar across OCB weightings, albeit lower at the 75% weighting.

General Discussion

The nature of a within-subjects design, as in Study 1, presents a potential exposure to demand characteristics. To eliminate this possible threat to the validity of our findings,

Table 2 Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among study variables from Study 2

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1. Gender ^a	0.53	0.50	1		
2. OCB ^b	1.88	0.83	-.09	1	
3. Fairness	2.97	0.84	-.03	-.33***	1

$N = 249$. *** $p < .001$

^a Coded 1 = women, 2 = men

^b Coded as 1 = 25% OCB, 2 = 50% OCB, 3 = 75% OCB

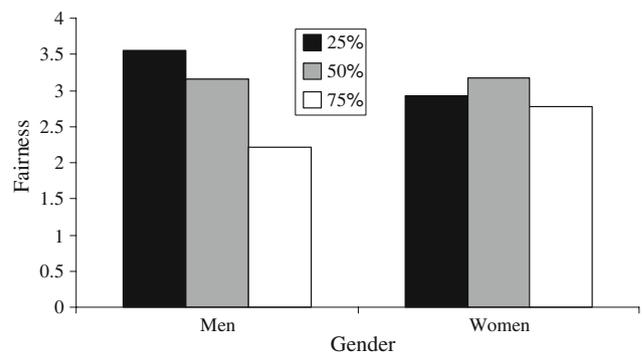


Fig. 3 Fairness perceptions across the OCB weightings by gender

we replicated the study using a between-subjects design. In both studies, the results indicated that women have a wider range of what they perceive to be fair in terms of using OCBs in performance evaluations. They find weightings anywhere from 25 to 50% to be fair, while men perceive lower ratings as significantly more fair. Specifically, in Study 1 women perceived OCB weightings of 30–50% as equally fair, while in Study 2 they perceived weightings of 25 and 50% as equally fair. In Study 1, men perceived OCB weightings 20–30% (and significantly more fair than weightings of 40% and higher) as the most fair, while in Study 2 they perceived OCB weightings of 25% as more fair than 50%. Participants, generally, did not find OCB weightings over 50% to be fair, although women's fairness perceptions of these high weightings were greater than men's. The similarity, and ultimately the replication, of our findings across the different study designs employed lend evidence to the robust effect that weighting behaviors in performance evaluations can have on perceptions of fairness.

To understand and offer an explanation for the effect and resulting findings, we draw from theories related to gender roles and the social exchange. For example, the finding that women perceived heavier weightings of OCB as more fair can be explained in terms of male and female gender roles. Because the female gender role includes communal characteristics such as being helpful, women should be expected to engage in more OCB by their supervisors and by themselves. Indeed, women perceive OCB as part of their job to a greater extent than do men (Morrison 1994). Therefore, if women are not rewarded for their efforts, they should perceive the situation as unfair (in accordance with social exchange and psychological contract theories). It is unlikely, however, that organizations will reward OCBs as highly as they do CTBs, because they are less central to the formal job role. Yet, as Kidder and McLean Parks (2001) suggest, if female employees reduce OCBs to a level that is more similar to male employees, they may be evaluated negatively because supervisors expect female employees to engage in more OCBs than male employees. As a result, if female employees reduce OCB to focus on CTB, then the OCB component of their performance evaluations can suffer. However, if they engage in OCB at the expense of CTB, then their performance evaluations may suffer because CTB tends to outweigh OCB in performance evaluations. Either outcome could result in perceptions of injustice from female employees.

This research also raises practical issues for the use of OCB in performance evaluations. Since managers are using OCB when evaluating their subordinates (Borman, et al. 1995; Johnson 2001; MacKenzie et al. 1991; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994), employees' perceptions of the

fairness of this practice become important. Meta-analytic work has linked employee fairness perceptions to a multitude of organizational outcomes including OCB, work withdrawal, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, evaluation of authority, and performance (Colquitt et al. 2001). However, previous research has failed to consider employees' fairness reactions toward using OCB in performance evaluations. Our findings suggest that there is a delicate balance between using OCB and not using OCB in performance evaluations. In light of social exchange theory and psychological contracts, employees should expect to be rewarded for their efforts at work. If managers give too little weight to the performance of OCB, it could discourage employees from performing these behaviors in the future because the norm of reciprocity has been violated. If managers give too much weight to OCB, employees may also see the practice as being unfair because employees' demonstrations of CTB are being under rewarded. For example, in this study employees reported very high weightings of OCB (80–100%) as less fair than not using OCB at all. Furthermore, placing too much weight on OCB might cause employees to over perform OCB at the cost of their more formally required job duties, because they see that these behaviors are being rewarded. Thus, the current research integrates and broadens implications stemming from social exchange theory by focusing on employees' perceptions of organization practices and inducements in this equity-driven relationship.

Limitations and Future Research

As with any research, there are some limitations to the current studies. Most notably, the individuals in these studies were not reacting to the fairness of their own performance evaluations. Rather, they were rating the fairness of using OCBs in performance evaluations in general. Contextual factors, such as organizational culture and job characteristics would likely impact or interact with reactions to the use of OCBs in performance evaluations, just as they impact decisions to engage in OCBs (see Fodchuk 2007 for a review). For example, individuals in development-focused organizations might react more favorably to using OCBs than individuals in results-focused organizations. Similarly, the national culture in which an organization is embedded (collectivistic versus individualistic) could impact reactions (Gelfand et al. 2007). Future research should examine the impact of these and other contextual and individual factors on reactions to the use of OCB in performance evaluations.

A second concern relates to the domain of the criterion: justice reactions. Justice perceptions include distributive justice as well as procedural and interactional justice (Colquitt 2001). Although only distributive justice was

examined in the current study, procedural justice and interactional justice are also likely to be influenced by the use of OCB in performance evaluation. For example, individuals would likely experience greater procedural justice if they had some input in the performance appraisal process, and the performance appraisal process were applied consistently across individuals. Additional research might also examine the use of OCBs in performance evaluations on those outcomes as well. A third concern relates to the use of college students in the second study who likely had not had experience giving a performance evaluation in the past. However, the first study consisted of working individuals, and the results were consistent across the two studies.

Finally, there are likely other individual differences that impact fairness reactions, beyond employee gender, that we did not examine in these studies. Personality, employee trust, self-monitoring, task-interdependence, and mood have been shown to have a direct relationship with OCB (e.g., Halverson and Holladay 2004; Johnson 2008; Witt et al. 2002). Similarly, individuals who perceive OCB as part of their job (greater job breadth) are also likely to perceive the use of OCB as more fair than individuals who perceive such behavior as extra-role. Examining these variables as moderators could expand the scope surrounding the OCB–fairness relationship.

Conclusion

The present study employed a survey methodology to obtain employees’ perceptions, allowing for controlled manipulation of the study variables (e.g., ability to constrain the performance level of employees on each dimension, ability to manipulate the weightings). The ability to manipulate the weightings was given foremost priority because of the lack of previous research in this area. Therefore, with the current methodology, we were able to capture employees’ perceptions of the fairness of using OCB in performance evaluations. Future research should continue to examine this question with regard to employees’ fairness perceptions of OCB–CTB weightings in their own evaluations. Such research could focus on those existing organizations that apply weighting schemes to performance dimensions in order to determine their employees’ overall performance scores. Future research may also examine the extent to which employees withdraw this behavior, if it is not rewarded.

In summary, the present research demonstrates that employees perceive the use of OCB in determining rankings from performance evaluations to be a fair practice, and find using some weighting of OCB as more fair than none, with OCB weightings of 25–50% as the most fair. However, the findings also revealed differences between men

and women in fairness perceptions, such that women find a wider range of OCB weightings to be more fair than men. Although the results from the two studies show some variance in the fairness perceptions among participants and between men and women regarding the exact weightings that should be assigned to OCB and CTB, it is worth noting that most participants thought that CTB should still comprise at least 50% if not more of the evaluation score, with the optimal weight to elicit fairness perceptions in both men and women being 70–75%. This research has important practical and theoretical implications for the use of OCB in performance evaluations.

Appendix: Scenario 1

Company A weights organizational citizenship behaviors 100% and core task behaviors 0% in determining employees overall performance level. By doing so, employees are then ranked according to their level of performance on the two work behaviors.

	OCB = 100	CTB = 0	Score	Ranking
Person A	1 = Low	1 = Low	100	3
Person B	1 = Low	2 = Average	100	3
Person C	1 = Low	3 = High	100	3
Person D	2 = Average	1 = Low	200	2
Person E	2 = Average	2 = Average	200	2
Person F	2 = Average	3 = High	200	2
Person G	3 = High	1 = Low	300	1
Person H	3 = High	2 = Average	300	1
Person I	3 = High	3 = High	300	1

Rankings: 1 being the best to 3 being the worst

Strongly disagree	Neutral		Strongly agree	
1	2	3	4	5

- 1. These rankings are fair.
- 2. The rankings reflect the effort the employees have put into their work.
- 3. The rankings are appropriate for the work behaviors the employees have completed.
- 4. The rankings reflect what the employees have contributed to the organization.
- 5. The rankings are justified, given the employees’ performances.

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