Keeping the Peace: An investigation of the interaction between

personality, conflict and competence on organizational citizenship behaviors

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigated the interaction between self-reported proactive personality, competence, and interpersonal conflict in the prediction of supervisor ratings of organizational citizenship behaviors directed at individuals (OCBI) and organizations (OCBO).

Design/methodology/approach: Data were obtained from 165 full-time subordinate-supervisor dyads. Employees self-reported personality and control variable information in wave 1 and competence and interpersonal conflict information in wave 2. Data regarding employee OCB performance was collected from supervisors in Wave 3.

Findings: Results suggest that OCBs are performed less frequently in stressful circumstances but that proactive personality appears to assuage the effects of stress. Significant two- and three-way interactions suggest the interplay of personal and situational characteristics are more complex in predicting OCBO than OCBI, likely due to its more distal nature.

Research and Practical Implications: Results of the current study suggest steps managers may want to take to increase employee performance of OCBs, specifically, selecting proactive individuals, creating training programs to bolster employees' competence, and minimizing interpersonal conflict at work.

Originality/value: The current study confirms and extends extant research. The current study goes beyond previous work to consider a more complex interaction of factors that are related to employee engagement in OCBs.

Keywords: organizational citizenship behavior; proactive personality; interpersonal conflict; competence; prosocial behaviour; contextual performance; personality

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Organizational Citizenship Behavior

How do workers keep the peace? The answer stems, in part, from their behaviors and the behaviors of other organizational members. While job performance research used to consider only task-based, in-role behaviors, research over the last several decades has lead to the recognition of extra-role job performance in the effective functioning of organizations. Organ (1977) and Borman and Motowildo (1993) developed the concept that there are two main domains of job performance: task (focal) and contextual performance (also called organizational citizenship behavior). Research has confirmed that different variables predict level of performance in these two domains (e.g., Hattrup *et al.*, 1998; Jawahar *et al.*, 2008). According to Organ, Podsakoff and MacKenzie (2006), a behavior is an organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) if it is "discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization" (p. 3). OCBs strengthen the psychological and social core of the firm, allowing the firm to function at higher levels.

This definition treats OCBs as discretionary behaviors that are not part of an employee's formal job role requirements; thus, employees are not likely to be reprimanded or fired if they do not engage in OCBs. The importance of contextual performance has been widely recognized. Recent work, however, suggests that OCBs are increasingly viewed as required behaviors, especially as jobs evolve, traditional job descriptions become more abstract or non-existent, employees feel pressure to be good organizational citizens, and psychological contracts develop from shared expectations within the job context (Bolino *et al.*, 2010; Coyle-Shapiro *et al.*, 2004;

Turnipseed and Wilson, 2009; Van Dyne and Ellis, 2004; see also Bolino *et al.*, 2013).

Additionally, employees may feel increasing pressure to engage in OCBs as a result of economic

factors such as the on-going recession while organizations struggle to do more with less and

employees feel obligated to go "above and beyond" to keep their jobs (Bolino and Turnley,

2005; Bond *et al.*, 1997). In addition, due to the increasingly complex nature of the economy as

well as increasing global competition, OCBs, and the relationships that enable them to occur,

become increasing important (Coyle-Shapiro *et al.*, 2004). At the same time, firms have to elicit

OCBs in a different fashion then they do focal job performance (Organ *et al.*, 2006). Namely,

because OCBs tend to be discretionary in nature, it is difficult to include them in a contract; also,

OCBs are often difficult to monitor (Organ, 1988; Organ, 1997). Thus, managers are encouraged

to acquire OCBs through creating favorable work place conditions and building relationships

with their subordinates.

Accordingly, Williams and Anderson (1991) introduced a two-factor model of OCB that

categorizes behaviors into those that benefit specific individuals (OCBI) and those that benefit

the organization at large (OCBO). An example of an OCBI is an employee adjusting his/her

work schedule to accommodate the needs of others. An example of an OCBO is keeping up with

developments within the organization. Confirmatory factor analyses have provided support for

the structural validity of the two-factor model (Turnley *et al.*, 2003). One of the key differences

between OCBs is how they are produced. For instance, scholars have found stronger

relationships between LMX and OCBI than they did for LMX and OCBO (Illies *et al.*, 2007).

One of the reasons why this occurs is that a supervisor has direct ability to encourage

development of OCBIs through relationship building (Lavelle *et al.*, 2007). Utilizing social

exchange theory, specifically the Norm of Reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), individuals may

perform OCBs to entice others to perform OCBs for them later or to reciprocate another's previous OCBs (Coyle-Shapiro *et al.*, 2004; Deckop *et al.*, 2003; Organ, 1988).

The importance of OCBs to both individuals and organizations is recognized in the literature (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009); organizational performance tends to improve in organizations in which employees engage in OCBs and individuals who perform OCBs are typically promoted faster and compensated higher. The positive outcomes associated with OCBs can be a source of competitive advantage in the market. Global competition drives organizations to constantly improve, and OCBs aid in this necessity for survival because workers are more collaborative and motivated. In essence, organizations must be lean, using their resources to the fullest, to compete in a global environment, and OCBs help the organization accomplish this goal. The presence of flattened hierarchies, downsizing, layoffs—all made worse by the Great Recession— has come with a cost: increasingly dissatisfied, unhappy, disengaged workers (Cappelli, Bassi, Katz, Knoke, & Osterman, 1997; Coyle-Shapiro *et al.*, 2004; Pfeffer, 2007). Thus, organizations that can maintain engaged employees, those who exhibit OCBs, can remain viable. Thus, OCBs lead to the development of resources that enable the organization to survive and thrive.

Work by Halbesleben and colleagues examines both focal and contextual performance when individuals are suffering from burnout (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004; Halbesleben and Bowler, 2005). Halbesleben and Bowler (2005) found that task performance and OCBO both dropped during the early stages of burnout. Yet, they also found, that OCBI actually increased during the early stages of burnout. Halbesleben and Buckley (2004) argued that one of the reasons why this occurred is that during the early stages of burnout workers seek to find additional resources to stave off burnout. Thus, workers use OCBs to obligate their coworkers to

provide resources which will enable them to overcome burnout. Hobfoll (2011) described this process as a resource caravan, whereby people add and subtract to the resource caravan as their needs wax and wane.

The purpose of this paper is to examine to extent to which situational and intrapersonal factors influence resource development. We draw on Conservation of Resource Theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002) to identify resources and propose specific ways in which these resources may combine to influence the extent to which people engage in different types of OCBs.

Stressors

Two models of stress are Hobfoll's (1989, 2002) Conservation of Resource (COR) theory and Goode's (1960) Scarcity Hypothesis. COR theory revolves around the notion of *resources*, i.e., objects, conditions, characteristics and energies including but not limited to mastery, self-esteem, time, intimacy, and economic security that are valuable to an individual or that can help the individual obtain other resources (Hobfoll, 1989). COR theory maintains that people try to gain and safeguard resources and that real or threatened loss of resources are perceived as stressful (Hobfoll, 1989, 2002). Goode's Scarcity Hypothesis asserts that people have a fixed amount of energy and once spent, the energy is not available for other pursuits. Perceptions of competence add to one's resources whereas interpersonal conflict degrades resources. Accordingly, resources are central to both COR theory and the Scarcity Hypothesis.

Based on COR Theory, employees experiencing interpersonal conflict at work and/or feelings of incompetence will have fewer resources (e.g., social support, self-esteem) than their peers. The Scarcity Hypothesis suggests they may then cope by focusing on their required job duties rather than engaging in discretionary ones to minimize further loss of resources. Relationships between stress and experienced interpersonal conflict (Friedman *et al.*, 2000) and

perceptions of mastery (Roepke and Grant, 2011; Younger *et al.*, 2008) have been noted in the literature.

In the current study, perceived conflict is examined at an interpersonal level rather than as an organization-wide phenomenon. Similar to what Lavelle *et al.* (2007) argued, OCBI and OCBO have different antecedents. The reason why they have different antecedents is that workers are able to track the different exchange relationships (organization vs. agent) they have in the organization and based on the exchange relationship, workers can target their OCBs according. Thus, we believe experiencing conflict with peers will affect engagement in OCBI. Thus, in consideration of COR theory and the Scarcity Hypothesis, we assert that resource loss resulting from a combination of interpersonal conflict and self-perceived incompetence will lead to lower levels of engagement in OCBI. In addition, because the focal worker has poor relationships with the coworkers, even if he or she performs OCBs, the worker may not enjoy reciprocation from coworkers. That is, to the extent that resources are limited, people who are in conflict with their colleagues are less likely to help those (or other) colleagues in an effort to avoid additional stress.

> *H1: Perceptions of competence and experienced interpersonal conflict will interact in order to predict engagement in OCBI. Specifically low conflict and high competence will be associated with greater engagement in OCBI while low perceptions of competence and high conflict will be associated with low engagement in OCBI.*

Proactive Personality

Many scholars (e.g., Barrick and Mount, 2005; Kanfer, 1990) argue the primary means through which personality affects job performance is through motivation. Contextual performance is a function of motivation (Borman and Motowildo, 1993; Organ, 1977, 1997)

while task performance is a function of intelligence (Schmidt and Hunter, 1998). Given that OCBs are discretionary and a function of motivation (Organ *et al.*, 2006), personality is more likely to influence contextual rather than task performance (Thompson, 2005).

According to Crant and colleagues (Bateman and Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000), people vary in the extent to which they try to influence the world around them; a dispositional trait they term *proactive personality*. Proactive individuals identify and act on opportunities, persevering until they achieve their goals. In contrast, less proactive individuals try to adapt to and accept their circumstances (Bateman and Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000; Kane *et al.*, 2012; Seibert *et al.*, 1999). Research has demonstrated that proactive personality is significantly related to a number of workplace criteria including job performance and career success (see for example Crant, 1995, 2000; Fuller and Marler, 2009; Thompson, 2005; Li *et al.*, 2010; Seibert *et al.*, 1999). Consistent with assertions made by Campbell (2000) and Crant (2000), we expect that proactive personality will also positively predict individual's engagement in OCBs.

H2: Proactive personality will be positively related to engagement in OCBs. Specifically individuals with more proactive personalities will be more likely to engage in OCBIs (H1a) and OCBOs (H1b) than those with less proactive personalities.

Proactive Personality as a Coping Resource

By definition, proactive individuals are more adept at identifying and acquiring resources than their less proactive peers. This means, at any given time proactive individuals will have more resources at their disposal than their colleagues. While some resources are needed to perform required job duties, extra resources are needed to engage in discretionary job behaviors, especially in stressful situations. Consequently, we assert that as stressors increase, engagement in OCBs will be less affected for proactive individuals than for individuals who are less

proactive. We believe, however, that the type of stressor is likely to affect engagement in OCBs differently.

Consistent with H1, we believe experiencing conflict with peers will affect engagement in OCBI. That is, based on COR Theory and the Scarcity Hypothesis, when resources are limited (i.e., low proactivity), people who are in conflict with their colleagues are less likely to help those (or other) colleagues in an effort to avoid additional stress. Thus, we predict that:

> *H3: Proactive personality will significantly moderate the relationship between interpersonal conflict at work and engagement in OCBI, such that the relationship will be stronger for less proactive individuals than for proactive individuals.*

A person's sense of competence in the job, however, is likely to affect his/her ability to engage in discretionary helping behaviors targeted toward other people and the organization at large. Similar to those who are high in proactive personality, those who have high degrees of competence will be more likely to have an excess of resources and even though they are experiencing stress, they will continue to perform OCBI and OCBO. Thus, to the extent that resources are limited, people who feel less competent will engage in OCBI and OCBO less often. Thus, we predict that:

> *H4: Proactive personality will moderate the relationship between perceptions of competence and engagement in both OCBI (H3a) and OCBO (H3b), such that the relationship will be stronger for proactive individuals than for less proactive individuals.*

Finally, the combination of interpersonal conflict and perceptions of low competence will magnify the relationship between proactive personality and engagement in discretionary behaviors. That is, the more stressors (interpersonal conflict and low perceptions of competence) and fewer resources (i.e., low proactive personality) will be associated with the lower OCBs

while an abundance of resources coupled with favorable interpersonal (low conflict) and

intrapersonal (feelings of competence) circumstances will be associated with high rates of OCB

engagement.

> *H5: There will be a three-way interaction between perceived competence, proactive*
>
> *personality, and interpersonal conflict on engagement in OCBI (H5a) and OCBO (H5b).*
>
> *Specifically, conflict will be associated with a smaller decrease in OCB engagement for*
>
> *proactive individuals, especially when there is a high perception of competence.*

Method

Sample and Procedure

Participants were recruited using a targeted sampling approach because it allows for

access to multiple organizations (Schneider, 1987; Schneider *et al.*, 1998; Organ and McFall,

2004; Organ *et al.*, 2006) across multiple industries (Ashforth *et al.*, 2007; Powell and

Greenhaus, 2010). Approximately 300 students enrolled in six sections of an introductory

management course at a large public university in the southern United States were incentivized

with extra credit to nominate a supervisor-subordinate dyad that met the following criteria:

willing to participate in a research study, currently employed at least 30 hours per week,

possessed a minimum of three years full-time work experience at the time of the study, and had

supervisor permission to participate and provide supervisor contact information. From the 334

nominations received, complete responses were received from 190 dyads. To control for number

of hours worked and work status (which can confer rewards such as health benefits), we

excluded 25 dyads in which subordinates were employed part-time. This yielded 165 dyads for

an effective sample of 49%.

Student recruiters were asked to provide the contact information of the individuals agreeing to participate in the study; participants were then contacted via web survey by the researchers. Participants provided supervisor contact information who were contacted directly by the researchers. Three questionnaires were administered, the first two of which were self-report instruments administered to subordinates two weeks apart. The third questionnaire was sent to the corresponding supervisors for completion. Personality and control variable information (e.g., age, sex) was collected with the first survey while perceptions of competence and interpersonal conflict were collected with the second survey. The supervisor survey was used to collect data regarding subordinate's engagement in OCBs. This process followed recommendations by Podsakoff *et al.* (2003), to minimize the possibility of common method biases. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their individual responses. Participants predominately self-identified as female (58.2%, N=96) and White (74.5%, N=123). Participants ranged in age from 19 to 70 years with an average age of 41.5 years (SD =11.91) and organizational tenure of 8.73 years (SD=8.76). The largest percentage of participants self-identified as non-managers (43.6%, N=72), followed by mid- to upper-level managers (25.5%, N=42), and lower level managers/supervisors (17.6%, N=29). The remaining participants (13.3%, N=22) indicated those categories did not apply to their employment type.

Measures

Several published scales were used in the current study. Internal consistency reliability coefficients were calculated for each scale using the current study's dataset. Cronbach's alpha coefficients are provided in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

Organizational citizenship behavior. Lee and Allen's 8-item (2002) OCBI ($\alpha = .87$) and OCBO ($\alpha = .91$) scales were used. Supervisors provided ratings on all OCB items. Representative OCBI and OCBO items are "Assists others with their duties" and "Offers ideas to improve the functioning of the organization," respectively. Responses were made using a 5-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from *definitely will not* (1) to *definitely will* (5).

Proactive personality. Bateman and Crant's (1993) 17-item Proactive Personality Scale was used to measure proactive personality ($\alpha = .90$). A sample item is "I am great at turning problems into opportunities". Participants responded using a 5-point scale with anchors ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5).

Interpersonal conflict at work. Spector and Jex's (1998) 4-item Interpersonal Conflict at Work (ICAWS; $\alpha = .77$) scale assessed the extent to which respondents experience hostile interactions at work. Responses were made on a 5-point scale with options ranging from *never* (1) to *very often* (5). A sample item is "How often do you get into arguments with others at work?"

Competence. Self-perceived job proficiency was assessed using the competence subscale from Spreitzer's (1995) measure of empowerment. The competence scale ($\alpha = .87$) consists of 3 items. Responses were made using a 5-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). A sample item is "I have mastered the skills necessary for my job."

Control variables. Given past research suggests relationships may exist between performance and variables such as age and gender (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989), these variables were included as demographic controls and assessed in the first survey.

Analysis

Bivariate correlations and moderated hierarchical linear regression analysis were used to test the study's hypotheses. For the hierarchical regression analyses, Aiken and West's (1991) centering procedure was used prior to creating interaction terms in order to minimize the potential for bias in the interaction term (Aiken and West, 1991). Control variables were entered in Step 1. Main effects were entered in Step 2. Two- and three-way interaction effects were entered in Steps 3 and 4, respectively. The same steps were used for both dependent measures despite subtle differences in hypotheses (i.e., no corresponding OCBO hypothesis for H1 and H3).

Results

Bivariate correlations and study variable summary statistics are reported in Table 1. All scales exhibited acceptable internal consistency reliability coefficients. Results for tests of hypotheses are reported in Tables 2 and 3. Most hypotheses received support. We discuss the hypotheses tested with simple correlations first and then proceed to those tested using hierarchical regression.

As shown in Table 1, hypotheses H2a and H2b were supported. Proactive personality was significantly positively correlated with engagement in OCBI ($r=.17, p< .05$) and OCBO ($r=.21, p<.01$).

Hypothesis 1 examined the interaction of conflict and competence in the prediction of engagement in OCBI. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, H1 was supported ($\beta = -.20, p < .05$). A median split was used to group participants into low and high experienced conflict groups and the correlation between competence and OCBI was examined for each group. Results showed the correlation was .39 ($p<.01$) for the low conflict group and .01 (ns) for the high conflict group.

Insert Table 2 and Figure 1 about here

Hypothesis 3 examined whether proactive personality moderated the relationship between conflict at work and engagement in OCBI. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 2, H3 was supported ($\beta = .19$, $p < .05$). A median split was used to place participants into low and high proactive personality groups and the correlation between conflict and OCBI was examined for each group. The correlation between conflict and OCBI was -.28 ($p<.01$) for the low proactive personality group and -.08 (*ns*) for the high proactive personality group.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Hypothesis 4 predicted that proactive personality would moderate the relationship between competence and OCBI (H4a) as well as the relationship between competence and OCBO (H4a). As shown in Tables 2 and 3 respectively, no significant moderation effect was found when either OCBI ($\beta = .00$, *ns*) or OCBO ($\beta = -.04$, *ns*) was the criterion.

Insert Table 3 and Figure 3 about here

Finally, Hypothesis 5 predicted three-way interactions between competence, conflict and proactive personality when both OCBI (H5a) and OCBO (H5b) served as criteria. As shown in Tables 2 and 3, results of the hierarchical regressions did not support H5a ($\beta = -.08$, *ns*) but did support H5b ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .05$). The three-way interaction for the prediction of OCBO is illustrated in Figure 3.

Discussion

The current study contributes to the literature both by providing support for previous findings and by extending knowledge regarding how proactive personality interacts with individual and situational factors in the prediction of OCB. Besides literature discussed in the introduction, our finding of a negative relationship between interpersonal (relational) conflict and engagement in OCBI was consistent with recent research by Lu *et al.* (2011). In addition, the significant interaction we found between proactive personality and interpersonal conflict (the opposite of their concept of harmony) in the prediction of OCB was consistent with recent research by Gan and Cheung (2010). The current study, however, goes beyond previous work to consider a more complex interaction of factors related to OCBs.

For the most part, the data from this study supported our hypotheses. We found, overall, that stressful circumstances were associated with lower engagement in OCBs than other situations and that having a proactive personality appears to assuage reduced OCB performance associated with working under stress. Specifically, we found that experienced interpersonal conflict seemed to be a salient magnifying factor. Alone, it was not a significant predictor of OCBI, but it exaggerated the effect of either of intrapersonal characteristics (proactive personality or perceptions of competence).

OCBO performance, on the other hand, seems to be associated with a more complex interplay of variables. This interplay may occur because any positive effects of engaging in OCBOs are more distal than engaging in OCBIs, hence, individuals may lack the necessary direct incentives to perform OCBOs (Lavelle *et al*., 2007). When engaging in OCBI, one is likely to help another in his/her department who will, more than likely compliment or somehow reciprocate the helpful act. OCBO performance is more likely to go unnoticed. As a result

individuals may not receive sufficient behavioral reinforcement to perform OCBOs (Lavelle *et al.*, 2007). What is very interesting about the three-way interaction in predicting OCBO is that it provides further support that proactive people pay attention to opportunities. As shown in Figure 3, people who were more proactive and who felt a higher degree of competence, engaged in OCBOs more than those who felt less competent, regardless of whether experienced conflict was high or low. The individuals who were less proactive but had higher perceptions of competence also helped more, if conflict was low. When conflict was high, however, the less proactive but competent employees helped less. Looking across the two graphs, proactive people who experience high conflict help more than their less proactive counterparts who experience high conflict. It is as if proactive individuals "jump in" to help the organization when there is conflict and do so at a greater level the more competent they feel. Their less proactive counterparts who experience high conflict are likely to disengage from OCBO performance, especially when they feel competent! Thus, consistent with past research (e.g., Joo and Lim, 2009; Liguori, McLarty, & Muldoon, 2013), individuals who are low on proactive personality may be more affected by contextual factors than highly proactive individuals.

Implications for Managers

Employee engagement in OCBs can greatly enhance an organization's effectiveness. The current study can help management foster OCB in their organizations through selection and organizational initiatives. For instance, managers may want to assess proactive personality during the selection process given that it is related to a number of important organizational and career outcomes. For example, proactive people engage in OCBOs more frequently than their less proactive counterparts, even in stressful circumstances. Because OCBOs are designed to benefit the organization as a whole, they likely directly affect organizational performance

(whereas the effect of OCBIs on organizational performance is more indirect, via helping individual employees), organizations should be mindful of selecting proactive individuals. Alternatively, managers may create training programs and other initiatives to bolster employees' actual and perceived competence and minimize interpersonal conflict. Managers, however, must realize that proactive personality is not a panacea. People with proactive personality may be viewed less favorably in some cultures (Gan and Cheung, 2010), creating a potential issue for international and global organizations. Also characteristics of proactive individuals (e.g., initiative) may not be desirable in all jobs or all companies (Campbell, 2000). Finally, proactive personality cannot completely buffer individuals against the negative effects of stress; proactive individuals are more likely to experience burnout in the form of depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment compared to their less proactive counterparts when faced with multiple types of role conflict (Jawahar *et al.*, 2012) which may be more likely when proactive individuals are motivated to engage in OCBs to enhance their image but do so at the cost of other important relationships such as their families.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are several limitations to the current study. First, the overall percent of variance explained based on the adjusted R^2 for the final, retained model when both OCBI and OCBO were the criterion were somewhat low (11.4% and 9.70%, respectively). The use of surveys separated by time and completed by different sources (self vs. supervisor), however, bolsters the results, providing support that the relationship noted were real rather than merely measurement artifacts. Additionally, our findings are consistent with previous research on personality and organizational research in terms of percentage of variance explained (e.g., Barrick and Mount,

1991; Champoux and Peters, 1987; Chaplin, 1991; Kisamore, Jawahar, Liguori, Mharapara, and

Stone, 2010).

Second, this study did not employ an experimental design and thus, causal conclusions

cannot be drawn regarding whether the variables studied caused changes in OCB or whether

other variables accounted for these relationships. It is also possible, consistent with literature on

the dark side of OCBs (see Bolino *et al.*, 2013), that we found higher OCB engagement by

proactive individuals even when conflict was high. One possible explanation is that while career

ambition may foster OCBs, it also may be a source of conflict.

Third, though we attempted to control for organizational bias, the recruitment method

may have produced other types of bias. One example may be that only workers with strong

relationships with their supervisor may have completed the supervisor section, therefore limiting

range. Or, perhaps only conscientious students recruited study participants; thus a more

conscientious sample of participants may have been recruited as students would be likely to

nominate employees similar to themselves. Fourth, due to our sampling technique and less than

perfect participation by those recruited, some sections of the population were likely not

represented in our sample. The current study makes an important contribution by revealing more

aspects of the relationship between personality and performance on the job. Fifth, we did not

employ any measures of stress to assess whether the factors we believe would be stressful (e.g.,

conflict, feelings of incompetence) were actually stressful. Finally, it is important to note that in

the present study, conflict was operationalized as dealing with strained interpersonal

relationships at work. While results of the present study found that interpersonal conflict was

associated with decreased engagement in OCBs, work by Karam (2011) has shown that exposure

to another type of conflict (i.e., living in a war zone) can be associated with increased engagement in OCBs.

Fourth, we used an established measure of OCBs. According to recent research, however, while OCBs are, by definition discretionary, the behaviors included on the measure may not be truly discretionary for all the individuals studied. That is, recent research suggests that behaviors that some consider discretionary may be viewed as or be explicitly required (Coyle-Shapiro *et al.*, 2004).

Future research should include a measure of stress to assess causal linkages proposed here. Future research may also seek to replicate these results using international samples in order to see whether and when the relationships are consistent across cultures. Finally, work which further examines in what instances conflict increases and in what instances conflict decreases OCB is needed.

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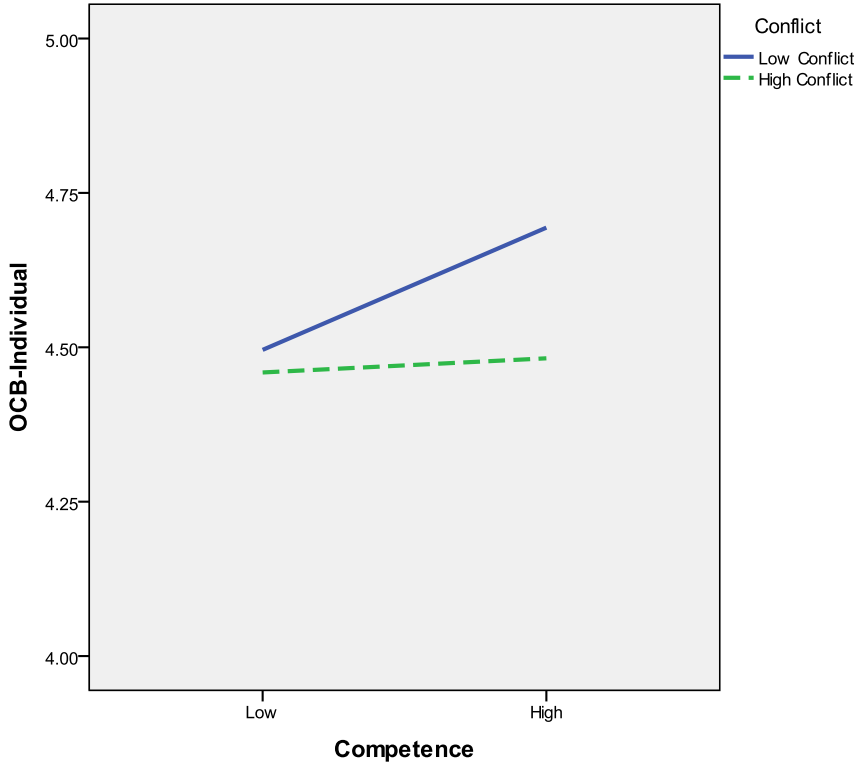
Figure 1

Figure 1. Interpersonal conflict at work as a moderator of the relationship between competence

and organizational citizenship behavior directed at individuals (OCBI).
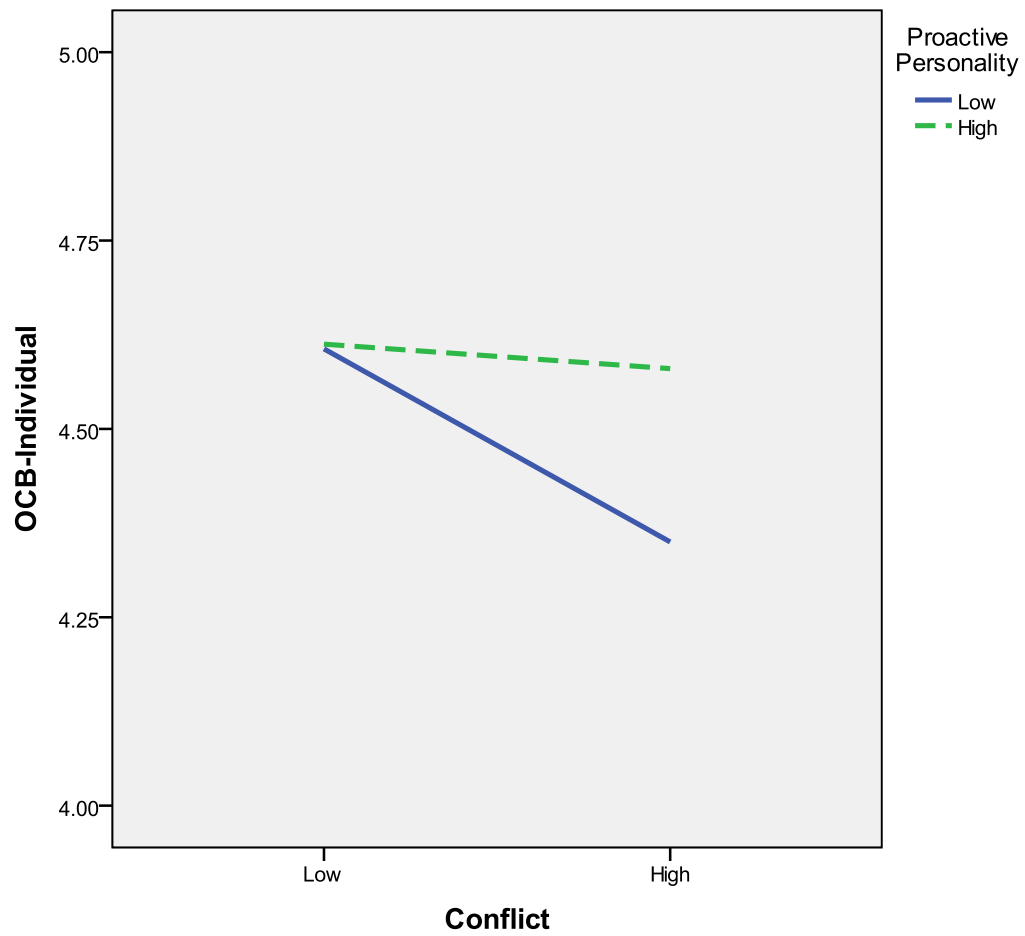
Figure 2

Figure 2. Proactive personality as a moderator of the relationship between interpersonal conflict at work and organizational citizenship behavior directed at individuals (OCBI).
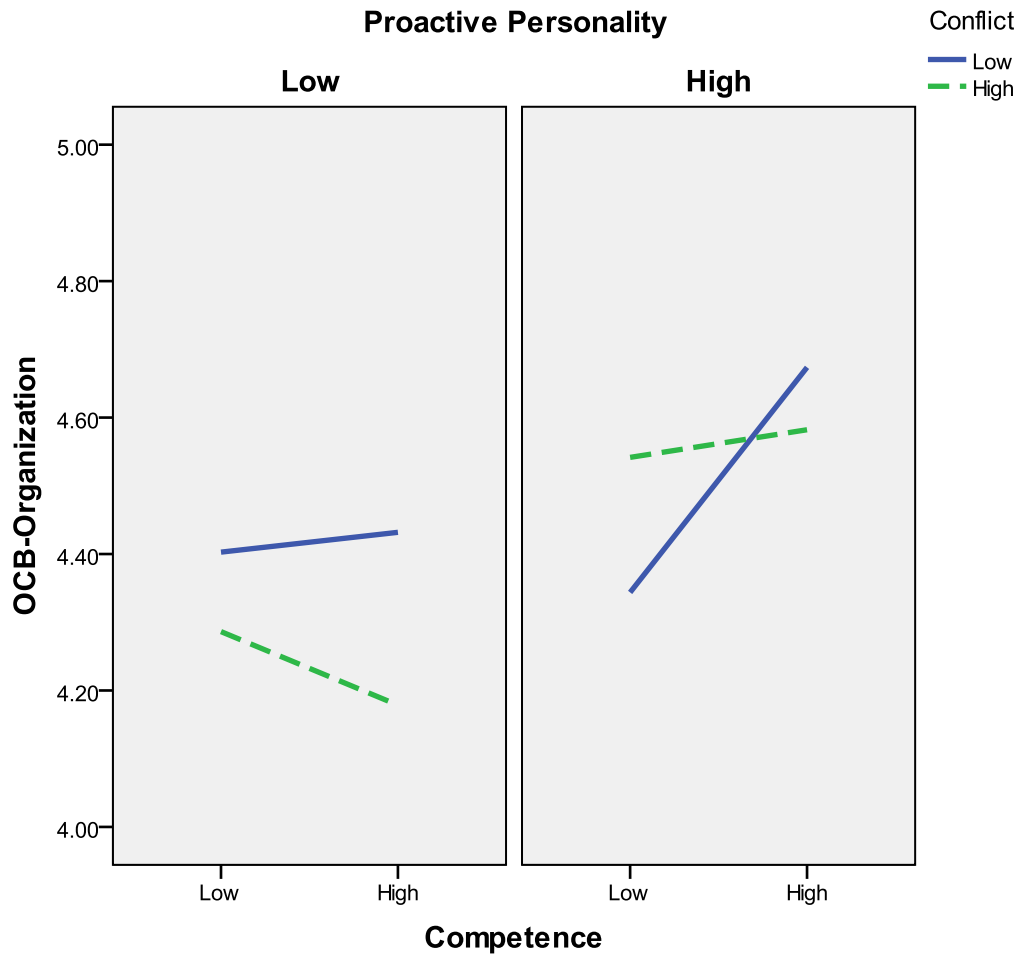
Figure 3

Figure 3. Three-way interaction between perceived competence, proactive personality and interpersonal conflict in the prediction of organizational citizenship behavior directed at organizations (OCBO).