

# Are There Differences In Organizational Citizenship Behavior Across Ethnic Groups?

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**Abstract-** This research study aimed to explore the frequency of organizational citizenship behaviors in the workplace. OCBs vary from culture to culture. Employed adults living in Mexico, Dominican Republic and United States of America were surveyed in order to compare organizational citizenship behavior between cultures. The study used a convenient sample that included 103 employed adults. The survey was conducted anonymously through the Internet and participants were asked to answer a researcher-developed questionnaire about how often an organizational citizenship behavior was performed by themselves or others, such as coworkers. This study expected to demonstrate significant differences in organizational citizenship behaviors across cultures. However, the results indicated that there was no significant difference across cultures in OCBs.

**Index Terms-** Dominican Republic, United States of America, organizational citizenship behavior, cross-cultural differences.

## I. INTRODUCTION

For many years, the concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) has created considerable scholarly attention because these behaviors contribute to effective functioning of organizations (Podsakoff, Ahearne & MacKenzie, 1997; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994). OCB has been studied in a diversity of disciplines such as advertising, human resources, health care and economics (Lievens & Anseel, 2004). OCB is behavior that endorses the objectives of an organization and contributes to its social and psychological environment (Lo & Ramayah).

Organizational citizenship behavior became a subject of interest because it leads to improved effectiveness of an organization in the long run (Podsakoff, et. al, 1997; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994). Chester Bernard was the first person to make significant findings on the concept of OCB. In the 1930s, after studying and observing OCB, Bernard named it an extra role behavior. Throughout the years, other people became interested in this phenomenon. Katz and Kahn defined any behavior that improves the effectiveness of the organization as supra-role behavior. For Katz and Kahn (1966) OCB includes any activities done by the employee that serves to facilitate organizational functioning and does not interfere with the usual task performance. To describe the workers who exposed these extra role behaviors, they created the term citizenship.

It is important to know the difference between extra-role behaviors and in-role behaviors. Role behavior is the duty and responsibility of the employee whereas extra role behavior is any behavior that is not part of the employee's formal job

requirement (Farooqui, 2012). Extra-role behavior is any behavior that goes beyond existing role expectations and that attempts to benefit the company (Bateman & Organ, 1983). Offering help to new employees regarding the organization and bringing lunch to co-workers are examples of extra-role behaviors. According to Farooqui (2012), certain professions require more OCB than others. For example, one of the most OCB demanding careers is teaching. There is a significant amount of literature that demonstrates that teachers constantly go beyond their job requirements and contribute to the success of the schools by committing to its goals and values (Farooqui, 2012).

Organ's (1988) conceptualization of the phenomena has greatly benefited the research on OCB. According to Organ, it consists of five factors: Sportsmanship (i.e., accepting problems that are inevitable at work), Altruism (i.e., is helping a specific individual), Conscientiousness (i.e., is going beyond the required number of attendance), Courtesy (i.e., respect people's privacy by not borrowing something without asking), and Civic Virtue (i.e., being concerned about the company). These five distinct factors can be influenced by culture.

Culture is defined as values, customs, and learned beliefs that generate behavioral norms for a given society (Yau, 1994). People from different cultures may behave quite differently when facing similar situations. Similarly, the same behavior could also be motivated by different factors from people with different cultures. Babin et al. (2000) found that culture is an antecedent of OCBs. Researchers also suggested that the dimensions of OCBs might be different under different cultures (Farth, Earley & Lin, 1997; Law, Wong & Chen, 2007). Researchers Markus and Kitayama (1991) indicated that people from Eastern cultures (e.g., China, Japan and Korea) hold different perceptions compared to people from the Western culture (e.g., the United States, Canada and Australia). For example, people from Eastern and Western culture differ in things such as uncertainty avoidance; power distance; individualism versus collectivism as well as in masculinity versus femininity.

Traditionally, the United States is considered as a highly individual-oriented culture, whereas China is considered as a highly collective oriented-culture (Hofstede, 1980). Parsons and Shils (1951) distinguished individualism as being self-orientated and collectivism as being collectivity-oriented. An individualist believes that their personal goals are more important than the goals of a group and therefore consider that the attainment of his/her personal goals is of primary importance (Wagner & Moch, 1986). A collectivist would think the opposite way, valuing the goals of the group more highly than their personal goals. As a representative of individualistic-oriented cultures, the

United States focuses on self-interest and individual success. China, on the other hand, as a representative of collectivistic-oriented cultures discourages individual achievement and emphasizes collective orientation (Ho, 1976). As a result, in the business organization setting, this culture difference in terms of individualism or collectivism orientation may influence employees' perception of the social exchange with coworkers, supervisors and customers, because they may perceive different levels of importance of the relationships when they are holding different orientation (Ma, 2013).

There have been some studies regarding organizational citizenship behaviors for individuals living in North America and other countries, such as China and Malaysia, but no previous research has been found regarding organizational citizenship behaviors in Latin American countries such as Mexico and the Dominican Republic. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to report across specific Hispanic groups, Mexican and Dominicans, in order to better understand the major antecedents of OCB.

According to Hofstede (1980), Mexicans and Dominicans are collectivistic. Both countries also have a high ranking on Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance and Masculinity. This means that these two countries are more likely to value their personal relationships with coworkers, as well as group goals over their own. In addition, the roles in Mexico as well as in the Dominican Republic between men and women are also different. Both countries have a high rank in Masculinity (Hofstede, 1980). This might not just be seen in the workplace, where the highest positions are held by men, but also at home, where women tend to take care of the children and house. Hofstede also mentions that inequality is another of the challenges that these countries face. Some examples of these inequalities are income and education levels. Additionally, both have very high rankings on Power Distance. In other words this means that members of the lowest positions accept that power is distributed unevenly (Hofstede, 1980). Mexicans and Dominicans believe in a hierarchical order, where everyone has a place to which they belong. People in these countries expect to be told what to do. Having a high-ranking score in uncertainty avoidance means that they have no tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. In other words, Mexicans and Dominicans have a high need for rules and have an inner urge to be busy and work hard. These cultural views have a great impact on organizational citizenship behavior.

This research aims to provide information that will broaden the understanding of the relationship between culture and organizational citizenship behavior within the workplace. The investigator wants to explore how OCB compares between these three populations. It is hypothesized that organizational citizenship behavior is significantly different across these cultures.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### a. Participants

The ethnicity variable in this study was based on the sample of the population living in Mexico and the Dominican Republic, which were the target groups. The study also had a sample of individuals living in the United States of America. The participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. The

responses to the surveys were collected through the Internet by the use of survey software program, such as Survey Monkey. A hyperlink to the survey was emailed to each participant. Since the study used a convenient sample method, participants were asked to forward the questionnaire link to their email contacts that met the requirements to participate in the survey.

A total of 103 survey questionnaires were obtained from all the three countries. Demographic aspects such as age, gender, and level of education were taken into consideration. From Mexico a total of 33 surveys were collected, in which the majority of respondents (51.5%) were males and 48.5% were females. The mean average age was 32; the age range for Mexico was between 23 and 60 years old. The level of education for Mexico included 72.7% who had a bachelor's degree and 6.1% who had a master's degree.

Thirty-six surveys were received from the Dominican Republic, in which 50% were females and 50% were males. The mean average age was 30; the age range for the Dominican Republic was between 19 and 57 years old. The majority of the Dominican sample had a bachelor's degree (63.9%).

Thirty-four surveys were collected from the United States of America, in which the majority of respondents (61.8%) were females and the remaining 38.2% were males. The mean average age was 31; the age range for the United States was between 22 and 64. The sample reported that 55.9% has a bachelor's degree, 26.5% had a master's degree and 17.6% had a doctoral degree. Additional details about the sample are available in Table 1 and Table 2.

### b. Instrumentation

The survey, designed by Fox, Spector, Goh, Bruursema, & Kessler, 2012 (see Appendix A), intended to measure the occurrence of organizational citizenship behavior performed by employees living in Mexico, Dominican Republic and the United States of America. It contained items that reveal acts directed towards the organization as well as other people in the organization. Certain amount of items, such as 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 11 asked about altruism acts that assisted coworkers with private as opposed to workplace issues. Items 8 and 9 were related to civic virtue; items 10, 13, 16, 19, and 14 were related to conscientiousness and items 1, 15, 18 and 20 were related to courtesy. The survey used a 5-point frequency scale that ranged from 1= never to 5= every day. The survey was estimated to take about 15-20 minutes to complete.

### c. Procedure

Since the purpose of this research study was to obtain information about organizational citizenship behavior in Mexico, Dominican Republic and the United States, the data was collected in each of these countries through the Internet. The survey questionnaires were administered to individuals who were employed and the data was collected during the months of April-July 2015.

The participants received an informed consent form, which specified in detail the purpose of the study. These individuals were informed that this research project was for educational purpose. Also, participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, anonymous and that it was not going to impact their work in any way. Contact information was provided to the participants in case of future questions or if they were interested in knowing the results of the study.

## Data Analyses

In order to summarize and describe data, descriptive statistics were used. An ANOVA was used to compare these three groups. The ANOVA test was used to reveal which, if any, of these groups statistically significantly outperforms the others. It allowed the researcher to find whether there is a significant difference in organizational citizenship behavior and ethnicity using an Alpha level or level of significance of 0.05.

### III. RESULTS

The main hypothesis of this study was that organizational citizenship behavior is significantly different across these cultures. It was based on the idea that differences in culture may influence employee's perception of the social exchange with coworkers, supervisors, and customers, because they may perceive different levels of importance of the relationship when they are holding different orientation (Ma, 2013).

#### ANOVA Analysis

The ANOVA test was run on four different dimensions of OCB. The questions for the survey were indexed in 4 out of the 5 dimensions of OCB, which were civic virtue, courtesy, conscientiousness and altruism. Sportsmanship was not included in the test since none of the questions belonged to that dimension.

The results for each dimension will be discussed separately. First, the information gathered for each country (Mexico, Dominican Republic and the United States) will be described to explore altruism between each specific culture. Second, the information obtained for each country to explore civic virtue will be detailed. Third, the information obtained from each country regarding conscientiousness will be explained. Finally, the information collected about courtesy will be described.

In altruism, although the curves present normality and the  $n > 30$ , the criteria of homogeneity of variance was not satisfied, since the significance (p) value of .004 is less than alpha level of .05.

In civic virtue, although the curves present normality and the  $n > 30$ , the criteria of homogeneity of variance was not satisfied, since the significance (p) value of .011 is less than alpha level of .05.

The same thing happened for conscientiousness, although the curves present normality and the  $n > 30$ , the criteria of homogeneity of variance was not satisfied, since the significance (p) value of .035 is less than alpha level of .05 (see Table 3).

The researchers detected that there were no significant difference between courtesy and each specific culture ( $p = .694$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ ). According to the responses the researchers found that there is no statistically significant difference in organizational citizenship behaviors between Latin American countries, Mexico and Dominican Republic, and the United States.

#### T-Test Analysis

Since the researcher obtained almost an equal amount of male and female participants from each country, a T-Test was run in order to determine if males outperformed females or vice versa in organizational citizenship behavior. This was based on the gender socialization and social role theory which suggest that women are more relationship oriented meaning that they

engage more in organizational citizenship behavior than men (Cloninger, Ramamoorthy, & Flood, 2011; Farrel & Finkelstein, 2007). The results revealed a level of 15.42 for females and 17.06 for males. Using an alpha level of .05, the p value of .001 suggests that there is a statistically significant difference in courtesy between genders. The results also revealed a level of 12.65 for females and 7.79 for males. Using an alpha level of .05, the p value of .000 suggests that there is a statistically significant difference in courtesy between genders. More details about these results are contained in Table 4 and Table 5.

### IV. DISCUSSION

The results of this study did not support the initial hypothesis, which was that organizational citizenship behavior is significantly different across cultures. This was based on the assumption that people from different cultures may behave quite differently when facing similar situations. Similarly, the same behavior could also be motivated by different factors from people with different cultures. Research indicates that people from Eastern cultures (e.g., China) hold different perceptions compared to people from the Western culture (e.g., United States).

The researchers hypothesized a difference in organizational citizenship behavior between Latin countries, such as Mexico and Dominican Republic, and the United States since these two Latin countries have a collectivistic oriented culture. They value the goals of the group more highly than their personal goals. On the other hand, an individualist believes that their personal goals are more important than the goals of a group and therefore consider that the attainment of his/her personal goals is of primary importance. This culture difference in terms of individualism or collectivism orientation may influence employees' perception of the social exchange with coworkers, supervisors and customers, because they may perceive different levels of importance of the relationships when they are holding different orientation (Ma, 2013). Contrary from the literature, which suggests that the dimensions of OCB might be different under different cultures (Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997) the results in this study indicate no significant difference between OCB in Dominican Republic, Mexico and U.S.A.

Some of the OCB dimensions can be divided by gender role such as altruism, courtesy, civic virtue and sportsmanship. Research studies as well as results from study indicate that courtesy is a role behavior for women (Kidder & Parks, 2001). The dimension of conscientiousness does not follow the norms of any particular gender (Kidder & Parks, 2001). However, results in this study indicate that males have higher level of conscientiousness.

#### Limitations

The sample used in this research was a convenient sample. Therefore, generalizations to the populations studied cannot be made. Although all of this research has been conducted through the Internet, the geographical constraints played an important part to obtain the data, especially in Mexico. Having not satisfied the criteria for the ANOVA and T Test the results were less robust, and it requires that the researcher to run a non-parametric test.

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Appendix A  
Organizational Citizenship Behavior

What is your gender? Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

What is your age in years? \_\_\_\_\_ years

What best describes your racial/ethnic identity?

White/Non Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Black/African American \_\_\_\_\_

Hispanic/ Latino \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_

Multiracial \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

In which country are you currently living?

Mexico \_\_\_\_\_ Dominican Republic \_\_\_\_\_ United States \_\_\_\_\_

How many years of education have you completed? (If you finished high school you would answer 12, if you have bachelor's degree you would answer 16, a doctoral degree would be 20) \_\_\_\_\_ years

Which best describes your current job?

Entry-level \_\_\_\_\_ Professional \_\_\_\_\_

Managerial \_\_\_\_\_ Executive \_\_\_\_\_

Self-employed \_\_\_\_\_ Retired \_\_\_\_\_

Unemployed \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

How many years of experience do you have in your current field?

\_\_\_\_\_ years of experience

What is your annual income? \_\_\_\_\_ thousand a year

Please respond these questions depending on how they represent you

How often have you done each of the following things on your present job?	Never	Once or twice	Once or twice per month	Once or twice per week	Every day
1. Picked up meal for others at work	1	2	3	4	5
2. Took time to advise, coach, or mentor a co-worker	1	2	3	4	5
3. Helped co-worker learn new skills or shared job knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
4. Helped new employees get oriented to the job	1	2	3	4	5
5. Lent a compassionate ear when someone had a work problem	1	2	3	4	5
6. Lent a compassionate ear when someone had a personal problem	1	2	3	4	5
How often have you done each of the following things on your present job?	Never	Once or twice	Once or twice per month	Once or twice per week	Every day
7. Changed vacation schedule, work days, or shifts to accommodate co-worker's needs	1	2	3	4	5
8. Offered suggestions to improve how work is done	1	2	3	4	5
9. Offered suggestions for improving the work environment	1	2	3	4	5
10. Finished something for co-worker who had to leave early	1	2	3	4	5

How often have you done each of the following things on your present job?	Never	Once or twice	Once or twice per month	Once or twice per week	Every day
11. Helped a less capable co-worker lift a heavy box or other object	1	2	3	4	5
12. Helped a co-worker who had too much to do	1	2	3	4	5
13. Volunteered for extra work assignments	1	2	3	4	5
14. Took phone messages for absent or busy co-worker	1	2	3	4	5
15. Said good things about your employer in front of others	1	2	3	4	5
16. Gave up meal and other breaks to complete work	1	2	3	4	5
17. Volunteered to help a co-worker deal with a difficult customer, vendor, or co-worker	1	2	3	4	5
18. Went out of the way to give co-worker encouragement or express appreciation	1	2	3	4	5
19. Decorated, straightened up, or otherwise beautifies common work space	1	2	3	4	5
20. Defended a co-worker who was being "put-down" or spoken ill of by other co-worker or supervisor	1	2	3	4	5

Table 1 Descriptive characteristic for the three countries

Gender						
Country			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Dominican Republic	Valid	Female	18	50.0	50.0	50.0
		Male	18	50.0	50.0	100.0
		Total	36	100.0	100.0	
Mexico	Valid	Female	16	48.5	48.5	48.5
		Male	17	51.5	51.5	100.0
		Total	33	100.0	100.0	
U.S.A	Valid	Female	21	61.8	61.8	61.8
		Male	13	38.2	38.2	100.0
		Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 Descriptive characteristics for the three countries

Education						
Country			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Dominican Republic	Valid	High School	3	8.3	8.3	8.3
		Bachelor's	23	63.9	63.9	72.2
		Doctoral	10	27.8	27.8	100.0
		Total	36	100.0	100.0	
Mexico	Valid	High School	1	3.0	3.0	3.0
		Bachelor's	24	72.7	72.7	75.8
		Master's	2	6.1	6.1	81.8
		Doctoral	6	18.2	18.2	100.0
		Total	33	100.0	100.0	
U.S.A	Valid	Bachelor's	19	55.9	55.9	55.9
		Master's	9	26.5	26.5	82.4
		Doctoral	6	17.6	17.6	100.0
		Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Multiple Comparisons

Table 3 One Way ANOVA for courtesy

Dependent Variable: Courtesy

Sidak

(I) Country	(J) Country	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Dominican republic	U.S.A	-.855	.866	.694
	Mexico	-.245	.873	.989
U.S.A	Dominican republic	.855	.866	.694
	Mexico	.610	.885	.869
Mexico	Dominican republic	.245	.873	.989
	U.S.A	-.610	.885	.869

Table 4 T-Test for Conscientiousness

**ANOVA**

Conscientiousness					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	69.301	1	69.301	11.286	.001
Within Groups	620.194	101	6.141		
Total	689.495	102			

Table 5 T-Test for courtesy

**ANOVA**

Courtesy					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	606.113	1	606.113	85.219	.000
Within Groups	718.353	101	7.112		
Total	1324.466	102			