

Interpersonal relationships at work: An examination of dispositional influences and organizational citizenship behavior

ABSTRACT

Positive interpersonal relationships at work foster a variety of beneficial outcomes for individuals and organizations. Past research has examined contextual and demographic antecedents of friendships at work. Forming interpersonal connections should have strong dispositional roots. The authors use structural equation modeling to analyze data from 438 front-line service employees from a casual dining, national restaurant chain in the United States. Results from this study support the hypotheses that extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability are each positively related to forming valued interpersonal relationships at work. In addition, interpersonal citizenship behavior is hypothesized and supported as an outcome of positive interpersonal relationships at work. Testing a full model of all the hypotheses enabled us to identify valued interpersonal relationships as an intermediary variable of the relationship between personality and interpersonal citizenship behavior.

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Positive interpersonal relationships at work have an advantageous impact on both organizational and individual variables. Research has demonstrated that friendships at work can improve individual employee attitudes such as job satisfaction, job commitment, engagement and perceived organizational support (Cherniss, 1991; Ellingwood, 2001; Jehn & Shah, 1997; Morrison, 2009; Riordan & Griffeth, 1995; Robinson, Roth, & Brown, 1993; Song & Olshfski, 2008; Zagenczyk, Scott, Gibney, Murrell, & Thatcher, 2010). In addition, employee's negative work attitudes can be mitigated when peers act as confidantes to discuss bad and unpleasant work experiences (Anderson & Martin, 1995; Fine, 1986; Morrison, 2009; Odden & Sias, 1997; Sias & Jablin, 1995; Song & Olshfski, 2008). Finally, valued work relationships can influence organizational outcomes by increasing institutional participation, establishing supportive and innovative climates, increasing organizational productivity and indirectly reducing the intent to turnover (Berman, West, Richter, & Maurice, 2002; Crabtree, 2004; Ellingwood, 2004; Riordan & Griffeth, 1995; Song & Olshfski, 2008).

Given that friendships at work provide valuable individual and organizational outcomes, one might ask, how can organizations generate positive interpersonal relationships? Previous research has examined contextual and demographic antecedents to workplace relationships to better understand what influences the likelihood that employees develop positive relationships at work. In this paper, we argue that forming interpersonal connections at work has strong dispositional roots and therefore, employees' personality will influence their development of meaningful interpersonal ties. We also explore interpersonal citizenship behavior (OCBI) as yet another potential advantage of positive interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal citizenship

behavior occurs when coworkers assist one another beyond their job requirements (Bowler & Brass, 2006, Settoon & Mossholder, 2002; Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Coworkers who are friends are more likely to help one another than coworkers who are not friends.

Given our supposition that differences in personality should predispose individuals to create and value social connections in the workplace differently, thus influencing one's level of interpersonal relationships and in turn impacting their work behavior, our exploration of personality, relationships, and OCBI proceeds from an intermediary variable framework. Research has demonstrated a positive relationship between personality and extra-role behaviors (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; McManus & Kelly, 1997). More specifically, studies conducted by Ilies et al. (2009) revealed that agreeableness had both a direct effect on OCBI and an indirect effect through job satisfaction. Because of the distal relationship between personality and behavior, there are likely to be other intermediary variables which link personality and OCBI. For example, communion striving, or the need for acceptance and getting along with others, has been suggested as an important intervening variable between personality and behavior (Barrick et al., 2001).

Thus, the three main objectives of the present study are (a) to establish dispositional characteristics, specifically extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability, as significant antecedents of valued interpersonal relationships at work, (b) to build on the existing literature concerning the benefits of friendships at work by examining OCBI as a potential outcome variable, and c) to explore whether interpersonal relationships function as an intervening variable that links personality to OCBI. To that end, structural equation modeling is used to

simultaneously test a full model representing each of these relationships as illustrated in Figure 1.

Antecedents of Interpersonal Relationships at Work

Past research has focused on the formation of interpersonal relationships at work as a function of employee demographics and the work environment. Song and Olshfski (2008) proposed that who we claim as our friends is influenced by our family ties, class, ethnic background, race, gender, age, experience, interests, and geography. Many theories support the proposition that demographic characteristics impact social relationships between individuals (Sacco & Schmitt, 2005). Social categorization (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1987) and social identity theories (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1982) put forth that people categorize themselves and others into in-groups and out-groups according to salient characteristics, including race and sex. Individuals tend to minimize differences among in-group members and maximize perceived differences between groups. Individuals react more positively to interactions with people in the same group, even when group distinctions are arbitrary (Sacco & Schmitt, 2005; Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). Similarly, the similarity-attraction paradigm (Berscheid & Walster, 1978; Byrne, 1971) and relational demography theory (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989) suggest that demographic similarity leads to attraction and liking and positively impacts the social relationships between employees. Interestingly, these theories suggest that demographic effects on workplace relationships and the consequences of such relationships may occur even without extensive employee interaction.

In addition to demographic antecedents, organizations have many environmental characteristics that can facilitate friendship making (Pogrebin, 1987). Song and Olshfski (2008)

suggest that organizational cultures which foster informal communication provide more opportunities to form friendships. Specifically, organizational norms and rules that encourage communication between immediate superiors and subordinates have a positive impact on friendship opportunity. Further, friendships at work may form simply because of the close proximity, interactions and shared experiences of coworkers (Lu, 1999; Berman et al., 2002). Rousseau (1995) suggested that managers may be instructed to promote a climate of openness and friendship among their staff and to set positive examples of desired workplace relationships. In a study of senior managers, Berman et al. (2002) identified common strategies for promoting a climate of friendship. The strategies included providing employees the opportunity to socialize; encouraging them to act friendly toward one another and to seek each other for emotional support; and training supervisors to establish positive relationships with employees.

Personality and Interpersonal Relationships at Work

The research focus thus far on demographic and situational antecedents of interpersonal relationships at work neglects the argument that an individual's dispositional differences likely also influence the formation of positive work relationships. Indeed, researchers have paid limited attention to identifying individual, non-demographic attributes that facilitate the construction of social ties even though meaningful relationships on the job are likely to be a function of the nature of two people who come together. Developing positive interpersonal relationships at work should be rooted in dispositional differences. Kalish and Robins (2006) suggest that psychological predispositions are critical factors at the most basic level of a social relationship between two individuals. The five-factor model of personality (Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001; Hogan, 1991; Hough & Furnham, 2003), including openness, conscientiousness, extraversion,

agreeableness, and emotional stability, provides a meaningful theoretical framework for postulating the likelihood that certain traits lead to the development of interpersonal relationships at work. The last three traits, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability, are of interest here. These three dispositional tendencies represent core elements of interpersonal behavior and represent interpersonal traits that have been demonstrated to be positively related to social cohesion (Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, & Mount, 1998; van Vianen & De Dreu, 2001). More specifically, each trait supports the development of social ties with others.

Extraverts are described as energetic, participative, gregarious and expressive. Because they tend to be social, assertive and bold in nature, extraverted individuals should form and maintain interpersonal relationships at work. Employees high on extraversion enjoy socializing and developing relationships. They are therefore more likely to cultivate social interaction and build new connections. Taking a social networks perspective, Kalish and Robins (2006) provide evidence that extraverted workers tend to construct broad, dense, heterogeneous social networks. Extraverts not only have a higher quantity of interpersonal relationships, but they also perceive those relationships to be of higher quality. Extraverted individuals feel closer to their friends and value those relationships more highly (Berry, Willingham & Thayer, 2000).

Hypothesis 1: Extraversion will be positively related to having valued interpersonal relationships at work.

Agreeable individuals are described as compassionate, flexible, fair, generous and considerate (Goldberg, 1992). They have the tendency to be highly approachable because of their supportive nature and sensitivity. Costa and McCrae (1992) suggested that agreeable people are altruistic, sympathetic, and eager to help others, with an expectation that such behavior will be

reciprocated. Such individuals strive for cooperation over competition. The formation and development of interpersonal relationship are partially a function of warmth and kindness, both attributes of agreeableness (Sprecher & Regan, 2002). Klein, Lim, Saltz, and Mayer (2004) found that agreeable individuals are central in friendship networks, perhaps due to their longing for close relationships (Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Hair, 1996), their ability to provide social and emotional support to others and their welcoming of new friends. Agreeable individuals are predisposed to seek out interpersonally supportive and accepting environments (e.g., Barrick et al., 2002; Wiggins, 1991). Agreeable people strive to foster pleasant and harmonious interpersonal relationships (Ilies et al, 2009) and increase group harmony (Graziano et al., 1996). People prefer to be friends with individuals high on agreeableness because there is less irritation in the friendship (Berry et. al., 2000). They like other people more and tend to be liked by others in return.

Hypothesis 2: Agreeableness will be positively related to having valued interpersonal relationships at work.

Emotionally stable individuals are described as confident, controlled, and well-adjusted. They have a tendency to be calm, unemotional and secure (Barrick & Mount, 1996). These characteristics combined with their positive disposition attract others to emotional stable individuals as a source of support. Emotionally stable individuals are pleasurable to be around because they tend to be happy (Hills & Argyle, 2001; Vitterso, 2001). Contrarily, individuals low in emotional stability (i.e., high in neuroticism) often express anger, moodiness or insecurity and are not central in their friendship networks (Klein et. al., 2004). Individuals high on emotional stability experience more positive relationships with others because they possess higher levels of

tolerance, forgiveness, and an even-temperedness resulting in less conflict (Berry et al., 2000; Walker & Gorsuch, 2002). Emotionally stable individuals are more likely to be liked by others, a basic prerequisite for forming and maintaining interpersonal relationships at work (Xia, Yuan, & Gay, 2009).

Hypothesis 3: Emotional stability will be positively related to having valued interpersonal relationships at work.

Outcomes of Interpersonal Relationships at Work

Valued interpersonal relationships positively impact individual attitudes, opinions and organizational outcomes (Becker, 1992; Dotan, 2009; Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, & Allen, 2007; Morrison, 2004; Mossholder, Settoon, & Henagan, 2005; Rioran & Griffeth, 1995). This is true for both relationships between coworkers and relationships between supervisors and subordinates. In a study of government workers in South Korea and the United States, Song and Olfshki (2008) found that in both countries friendships between superiors and subordinates positively affect work attitudes. Robinson et al. (1993) found similar results when examining work units of nurses. Unit morale was directly related to supervisor support and co-worker relationships. Results from a Gallup study suggest that friendships and socially supportive environments at work are related to employee engagement and commitment (Ellingwood, 2001). Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) found that coworker support, including coworker mentoring, friendliness and positive affect, was associated with increased levels of job satisfaction, job involvement and organizational commitment. In the same study, coworker support was negatively associated with detrimental aspects of role perceptions (e.g., role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload). Further, communicating with others for affection or inclusion eases

frustration and job-related anxiety and stress (Anderson & Martin, 1995). Positive work relationships help to reduce turnover and improve performance by providing functional-, task- or career-related benefits. In a study of employees in a small electric utility organization, Riordan and Griffeth (1995) found that perceptions of friendship opportunities in the workplace had a direct effect on job involvement and job satisfaction and an indirect effect on organizational commitment and intention to turnover. Supervisors who establish positive work relationships with subordinates (i.e., adopt a relational management style) can improve employee retention (Newman, 2007). Case evidence from the service industry found that stores experienced lower turnover rates when managers built social webs and cultivated a close culture among workers. As characterized by a district manager for a national food-service chain, "...it's not the pay that makes employees stick around, it's their relationship with their manager" (White, 2005, pp. A1). Performance levels improve because social ties help sustain productivity via coworker support (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Further, informal learning is more likely to take place between coworkers with higher quality relationships, leading to higher levels of learning (Eraut, 2004) and increased performance.

Interpersonal Relationships at Work and Interpersonal Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined as helping behavior that is not formally rewarded by the organization, but which aids in the functioning of the organization (Organ, 1997). OCB is distinguishable from task performance, which refers to activities that appear in a formal job description like transforming raw materials into goods and services or maintaining the technical core, and enables the organization to function more effectively and efficiently.

Researchers have distinguished between two distinct components of OCB as determined by the target of the helping behavior: the organization as a whole (OCBO) or the individual worker or supervisor (OCBI) (Ilies et al., 2009; Williams & Anderson, 1991). OCBI, also referred to as interpersonal facilitation (Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996), refers to citizenship behavior which directly helps coworkers or assists supervisors and indirectly contributes to the organization (Williams & Anderson, 1991) by enhancing productivity, increasing coordination and developing and maintaining a positive work climate (Podsakoff et al., 2000). OCBI requires that a specific person benefits from the helping behavior. Helping a coworker to complete a project, perform a task or solve a problem (Organ, 1988) or sharing work related information are all examples of OCBI. Ilies et al. (2007, 2009) provided evidence that OCBI is distinct from OCBO and that there is value in examining them separately. Specifically, the two different types are likely to have different antecedents. Employees are likely to be more inclined to help coworkers and supervisors who are friends (Bowler & Brass, 2006), suggesting that the formation of valued interpersonal relationships should support OCBI.

Close social ties should enhance OCBI because individuals more readily engage in prosocial behavior directed at in-group members than out-group members (Piliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner & Clark, 1982). Employees engage in altruistic, helping and cooperative behaviors to benefit their friends at work (Ilies et al., 2009). In doing so, they are more likely to share knowledge and assist their friends compared to other employees with whom they lack a positive interpersonal relationship. Additionally, individuals working with friends are more likely to experience positive moods at work. Positive moods foster helping and prosocial behavior (George, 1990, 1991; Isen & Levin, 1972). The association between relationships at work and OCB has typically been examined using social exchange theory (Blau, 1964, 1986). A social

exchange perspective suggests that strong friendship ties lead to reciprocity of behavior (Bowler & Brass, 2006). After an initial act of OCBI, friends will reciprocate such behavior by continuously performing OCBI directed at one another. Drawing on social exchange theory and using a social network perspective, Bowler and Brass (2006) found that the strength of friendship between two people is positively associated with the performance and receipt of OCBI. Based on similar exchange principles, Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) found that employees will respond to co-worker support and helping behavior by reciprocating such actions and engaging in more OCBI. Finally, Settoon et al. (1996) found that leader member exchange had a strong relationship with OCBI suggesting that employees will also engage in these types of behaviors toward supervisors with whom they have a good relationship.

Hypothesis 4: Valued interpersonal relationships will be positively related to interpersonal citizenship behavior.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 438 front-line service employees from a casual dining, national restaurant chain in the United States. The sample was 60% female and 85% White. The average age was 26 years old. Forty-six percent of the sample was currently enrolled in school and 85% had completed some college courses.

Procedure

Nine-hundred and ninety eight front-line service employees were invited to participate in a study about their work environment. The employees received a packet that contained information about the study, a survey with measures of personality, interpersonal relationships,

and demographics, instructions for completing the survey, and an assurance that their responses would remain confidential. Employees who voluntarily chose to participate completed the survey during work time. From the 998 research packets sent out, 438 were returned with useable data, yielding a participation rate of 44%. At the same time, up to three different supervisors were asked to provide interpersonal citizenship behavior ratings for each employee. Supervisors received packets that contained information about the study, an OCBI rating form, instructions for completing the form, and an assurance that their responses would remain confidential and would not be used for making administrative decisions about employees. Of the 438 employees with usable data, 429 received OCBI ratings from at least one supervisor.

Measures

Personality. The Agreeableness, Extraversion and Emotional Stability scales of the Mini-IPIP (International Personality Item Pool) served as measures of the three five-factor model traits (Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006). Each scale consisted of four items administered with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very inaccurate, 5 = very accurate). Scale scores were calculated by computing the average response across items within a given scale.

Valued Interpersonal Relationships. The extent to which participants had developed positive interpersonal relationships with others at work was measured using an expanded version of the Constituent Attachment scale (Maertz & Campion, 2004). This scale captures whether individuals have constructed valued ties to people or groups in an organization. High scores on the scale are associated with coworker support, close friendships with coworkers and supervisors, and high levels of work group cohesion. The expanded version consisted of the two items provided by Maertz and Campion (2004) combined with five additional items written to

more fully capture the extent of coworker and supervisor interpersonal relationships. Sample items include “I would lose valuable working relationships with the people here if I quit” and “I enjoy working here because of the people I work with”. Items were administered with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Scale scores were calculated by computing the average response across items within the scale.

Interpersonal Citizenship Behavior. OCBI was measured using four items from Williams and Anderson (1991) written to assess citizenship behaviors directed at individuals. A sample item from the scale is “This employee helps others who have heavy workloads”. Items were administered with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Scale scores were calculated by computing unit-weighted composites of the item-level averages of the supervisor ratings. Prior to calculating the composite scores, the reliability of the mean ratings was estimated by calculating an intraclass correlation coefficient ($ICC = .67$) which confirmed moderate agreement, indicating that aggregation to item-level averages was appropriate (Lebreton & Senter, 2008).

Analyses

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze these data for two reasons. First, because of the potential for common method variance (CMV) to bias any bivariate estimates involving the personality and interpersonal relationships variables, we sought to conduct a more conservative test of the hypotheses by simultaneously estimating the relationships among the variables while at the same time accounting for an associated uncorrelated method factor (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Second, SEM is recommended for testing for the presence of an intermediary variable when multiple antecedent

variables are included in a model containing both manifest and latent variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Hoyle, 1995; Lebreton, Wu & Bing, 2009). When testing this type of model, SEM allows for simultaneous estimation of the direct, indirect, and total effects contained within the model. The resulting individual parameter tests and overall model fit indices, in addition to comparative chi-square goodness-of-fit tests, permit one to draw conclusions about the likelihood of an indirect effect and the extent to which that effect operates primarily or secondarily through the intermediary variable of interest (Bing, Davison, LeBreton & LeBreton, 2002; Byrne, 1998; Lebreton, Wu & Bing, 2009). AMOS was used to estimate the parameters of the hypothesized models.

Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the study variables. Internal consistency reliability coefficients are presented on the diagonal. The study hypotheses proposed that extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability would be positively related to valued interpersonal relationships, and that valued interpersonal relationships would be positively related to OCBI. The bivariate relationships between valued interpersonal relationships and each of the other variables were positive and significant, providing initial support for all of the hypotheses.

Following the approach laid out by Podsakoff et al. (2003) for the incorporation of an unmeasured latent variable, the initial model tested using SEM included only the five latent variables of extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability, valued interpersonal relationships and OCBI. All of the variables had four indicators, with the exception of valued interpersonal relationships which was measured by seven indicators. When testing the model, covariance paths

among the three personality dimensions were constrained to facilitate an examination of the discrete relationships of each dimension with the endogenous factor in the model (Hirschfeld, Jordan, Thomas, & Field, 2008). The goodness-of-fit indices used to judge the fit of the path model indicate the likelihood that the hypothesized model could have produced the observed data. The initial model produced acceptable fit statistics ($\chi^2(226) = 859, p < .001, CFI = .848, NFI = .807, RMSEA = .08$; Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

To examine the extent of CMV, an alternative model was estimated that included a sixth latent variable which represented an uncorrelated method factor. All of the indicators for extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and valued interpersonal relationships were allowed to load on this factor. Fit statistics for this model improved relative to the initial model ($\chi^2(210) = 658, p < .001, CFI = .893, NFI = .852, RMSEA = .070$) indicating that CMV may be an issue. Thus, the parameter estimates used to test the hypotheses were drawn from this alternative model since the presence of the uncorrelated method factor accounts for the associated method variance. As can be seen in Figure 1a, the relationships between valued interpersonal relationships and all three of the personality variables, extraversion ($\beta = .19, p < .001$), agreeableness ($\beta = .23, p < .001$) and emotional stability ($\beta = .08, p < .05$) were statistically significant. These results support Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 indicating that extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability are all positively related to having valued interpersonal relationships at work. Hypothesis 4 was also supported. As also indicated in Figure 1a, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between valued interpersonal relationships and OCBI ($\beta = .20, p < .001$).

To understand the nature of valued interpersonal relationships as an intermediary variable, we tested a third model which contained direct effects from each personality variable to

OCBI. Testing this model allowed us to identify if the effect of personality on OCBI is direct, indirect, or both. The model fit for the third model was good ($\chi^2(207) = 650, p < .001, CFI = .895, NFI = .854, RMSEA = .071$) and slightly better than the model without direct effects ($\chi^2_{diff}(3) = 8, p < .05$). The indirect effect of personality on OCBI through valued interpersonal relationships was significant for extraversion (.04, $p < .01$), agreeableness (.05, $p < .01$), and emotional stability (.02, $p < .05$). As displayed in Figure 1b, for extraversion and emotional stability, neither the total effects (i.e., the simple relationship between the personality traits and OCBI) nor the direct effects (i.e., the effect of the personality traits on OCBI after controlling for valued interpersonal relationships) were significant. Extraversion and emotional stability influenced OCBI exclusively through their effect on the experience of positive interpersonal relationships. Though a significant total effect was found for agreeableness ($r = .10, p < .05$), a result that may account for the slight improvement in fit statistics, the lack of a significant direct effect suggests that agreeableness also operated on OCBI exclusively through its effect on valued interpersonal relationships.

Discussion

Understanding the causes and effects of interpersonal relationships at work is becoming increasingly important. Schneider's (1987) assertion that "the people make the place" is true now more than ever. Workplace interactions are becoming more frequent as organizations emphasize teamwork and flatter organizational structures (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Increased interactions intensify relationship dynamics at work, highlighting the value of research addressing interpersonal relationships in the workplace. While theorists have emphasized the importance and potential benefits of positive interpersonal relationships at work, few have

looked beyond contextual and demographic causes of forming such relationships. Though OCBO has been recognized as one of the positive benefits associated with valued interpersonal relationships at work, less work has explored OCBI as a potentially positive outcome of friendships at work.

The purpose of this paper was to provide a clearer understanding of the antecedents and consequences of positive interpersonal relationships at work. There were three main objectives of the present study. The first objective was to establish dispositions as important antecedents of valued interpersonal relationships in the workplace. The second objective was to establish OCBI as an important outcome of valued interpersonal relationships. The third objective was to explore whether valued interpersonal relationships function as an intervening variable that links personality to OCBI.

Results support the assertion that dispositional differences influence one's likelihood of forming positive relationships at work. In particular, this study found that three personality dimensions, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability were all positively related to forming friendships at work. This finding is consistent with past research suggesting that social relationships are based on psychological predispositions (Kalish & Robbins, 2006) and that these three traits in particular support the development of social ties (Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, & Mount, 1998; van Vianen & De Dreu, 2001). Extraverts are more likely develop and maintain friendships at work because they tend to be social, assertive, and enjoy developing relationships. Agreeable individuals are compassionate, approachable, cooperative, warm and kind; all characteristics that lead to the formation and development of positive interpersonal relationships. Emotionally stable individuals have valued interpersonal relationships at work because they are calm, even-tempered and a pleasure to be around. Thus, though their work environment and their

demographic makeup will certainly play a role, as has been previously established, some people are inherently more likely to make friends at work than others.

Results also support the claim that valued interpersonal relationships will enhance OCBI. This finding is noteworthy, given that it could be argued that employees who have developed more social relationships at work may subsequently engage in more socializing on the job versus helping or assisting others with job tasks. This argument does not appear to hold, however, as positive interpersonal relationships resulted in greater levels of employee OCBI. This finding is consistent with past research drawing from social exchange theory and suggesting that employees are more likely to help coworkers and supervisors who are friends (Bowler & Brass, 2006; Ilies et al., 2009). Although the organization is not the direct target of OCBI, such behavior indirectly benefits the organization by promoting stable, efficient and effective organization functioning.

We simultaneously tested these relationships, and in doing so, we also found that agreeableness, extraversion and emotional stability have an indirect effect on OCBI through their effect on the forming of valued interpersonal relationships. Specifically, we found evidence for an intermediate linkage model wherein individuals who are extraverted, agreeable or emotionally stable construct and value more social connections at work, which in turn, positively impacts their performance of OCBI. This finding is consistent with meta-analytic results demonstrating that personality traits operate through more proximal antecedents to affect performance (Barrick et al., 2001; Zimmerman, 2008). Theory-driven, empirical research demonstrating the effects of dispositions on work behavior through other more proximal antecedents has been limited. Research has shown that personality traits can determine work behavior, yet, little is known about the mechanisms through which these distal traits influence such behavior (Barrick et al.,

2001). Because of the distal relationship between personality and behavior, valued interpersonal relationships may function as a mechanism through which these distal traits can affect OCBI.

Managerial Implications

Past studies suggest that management interventions may be instrumental in promoting friendships at work. Appropriately socializing newcomers (Allen, 2006), promoting a climate of openness and fun at work (Rousseau, 1995), initiating social activities both inside and outside of the workplace (Berman et al, 2002) and providing ongoing team building efforts are all strategies that encourage valued relationships at work. Beyond these workplace variables, though, trait differences might be leveraged during selection to impact employee work relationships. For example, managers could assess these traits when hiring to increase the chance of building a cohesive workforce based on positive interpersonal relationships. Selection on the basis of these attributes requires minimal effort given the general availability of low-cost pre-employment tests designed to screen on the basis of dispositions.

Another viable strategy for engendering valued interpersonal relationships at work is to involve employees in the recruitment and selection process through increased use of employee referrals. Referrals are a simple and low cost recruitment source that generally operate through highly homogeneous, close knit, social networks (Henly, 1999; Marsden & Gorman, 2001). As an internal labor force becomes comprised of friends or relatives of current employees, off-the-job friendships become on-the-job friendships that should foster valued interpersonal work relationships. Thus, the adoption of both selection and recruitment strategies may help employees develop greater interpersonal relationships at work.

Limitations and Future Research

This study is not without limitations. First, the personality and relationship variables were collected from the same respondents at the same time. Efforts were undertaken to reduce and account for the effects of CMV by psychologically separating the measurement of these variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003), and the use of supervisory ratings of OCBI represents the addition of a unique measurement source. Further, testing the model with an uncorrelated method factor provided for more conservative estimates of the hypothesized relationships. However, the potential for CMV to influence the estimates cannot be ruled out.

Second, OCBI was measured from only the supervisor perspective. In a restaurant setting, supervisors are typically aware of employee behavior and able to report whether each employee helps their coworkers and supervisors. Yet, co-workers may interpret OCBI differently than supervisors, especially since OCBI always has a specific individual target that may influence the nature of the behavior expressed. Since employees were not asked directly about co-worker OCBI, it is possible that their assessment of the extent of helping behavior experienced may differ. Research using performance ratings from different sources clearly demonstrates that ratings can vary as a function of source (Hoffman, Lance, Bynum, & Gentry, 2010; Viswesvaran, Schmidt, & Ones, 2002). Indeed, it is generally acknowledged that peer ratings combined with supervisor ratings produce assessments that are less deficient, encapsulating the extent of performance as perceived via multiple lenses. Though OCBI ratings were obtained from up to three supervisors increasing the likelihood that the extent of OCBI was accurately assessed, future research should incorporate co-worker ratings of OCBI to help ensure that such behavior is perceived and interpreted fully.

Lastly, we were unable to explore whether personality impacts the formation of valued interpersonal relationships independent of workplace factors and employee demographics. Future research should test the role of dispositions in influencing the development of work relationships above and beyond situational and demographic influences. In fact, a model that includes situational, demographic and dispositional antecedents could examine how these variables interact to influence interpersonal relationships. One would expect that an extraverted, agreeable or emotionally stable individual in a workplace that also promotes friendship would experience the most valued interpersonal relationships at work and be even more likely to perform OCBI. Research that can isolate the contribution of personality, relative to the influence of other antecedents of workplace relationships, would add to our understanding of the impact of dispositions on the formation of valued interpersonal relationships at work.

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Table 1

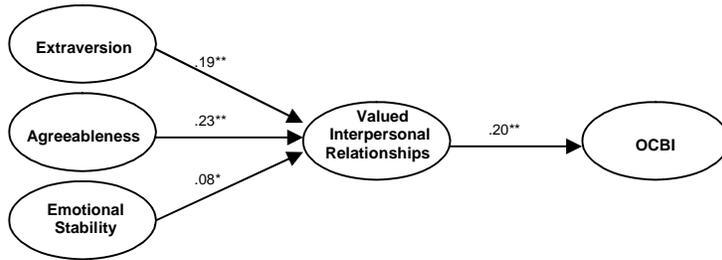
Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5
1. Emotional stability	3.84 (.73)	(.60)				
2. Agreeableness	3.98 (.74)	.18**	(.71)			
3. Extraversion	3.91 (.77)	.18**	.25**	(.72)		
4. Interpersonal relationships	3.63 (.75)	.12*	.33**	.29**	(.85)	
5. OCBI	3.53 (.67)	.04	.10*	-.01	.17**	(.94)

Note. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Figure 1

1a. Structural parameters estimating the hypothesized relationships after accounting for common method variance.



1b. Structural parameters estimating the hypothesized relationships with direct effects after accounting for common method variance.

