

What are the Relationships Between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior?—An Empirical Study

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Abstract. *Background:* In the turbulent environment of hospitals, how the transformational leadership (TL) affects the citizenship behavior of nurses would be a crucial issue. Leader behaviors appear to play a key role in influencing organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). Besides, job characteristics (JC) are important determinants of OCB and deserve more attention in future research. However, there is a paucity of research focusing on TL, JC, OCB, and empowerment, respectively among nurses. *Aims:* The purpose of this study particularly determined the mediating effects of empowerment on the relationship between TL, JC and OCB. Additionally, the hypotheses were tested. *Methods:* The self-administered questionnaire was conducted for data collecting. Three hundred and seventy-nine nurses participated in this study. To test the hypotheses, structural equation modeling (SEM) analyses were applied via the AMOS computer software. *Results:* The results showed that TL had significant positive relationships with JC and OCB. JC also significantly related to OCB. Besides, the results supported the hypothesis that empowerment had a partial mediating effect on the relationship between JC and OCB. However, empowerment did not mediate the relationship between TL and OCB. *Conclusion:* The finding suggests that nursing managers should improve TL and place greater emphasis on enhancing subordinates' empowerment in order to move up their OCB. The results of this study would help them to do the leadership more successfully and efficiently.

Keywords: transformational leadership, job characteristics, empowerment, organizational citizenship behavior

1. Introduction

The study of leadership continues to be a popular research endeavor, especially the domain of transformational leadership (TL). The leader is often the most salient person in the work environment and is likely to exert a direct influence on subordinate behavior [1]. Leadership is still often the “most studied and least understood topic in social science” [2]. The idea of TL was first developed by James McGregor Burns in 1978 and later extended by Bernard Bass in 1985 as well as others and now become the mainstream in leadership research. Since Burns presented the new paradigm of transformational notion in leadership, transformational leadership behavior has been widely linked to positive individual and organizational consequences [3]. Leader behaviors appear to play a key role in influencing organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs). As noted later, with a few exceptions, almost all of the leader behaviors show consistent relationships with employee OCBs. Unfortunately, the mechanisms through which these leader behaviors influence OCBs are not always clear. Besides, Podsakoff et al. [4] proposed that future research needs to examine the causal relationships among predictors of OCBs, namely indirect relationships should be taken into account. The majority of studies on TL behaviors have focused on the effects that behaviors have on in-role performance, rather than on extra-role or OCBs [5]. However, as noted by Podsakoff et al. [6], even though the effects of TL on in-role performance are important, they may not be as important as the effects of TL on OCB. OCB reflects an active orientation to a work behavior that is same as the essence of

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empowerment. Presumably, the relationships between TL and OCB would be moderated positively by empowerment. Podsakoff et al. [4] asserted that although not emphasized in the existing OCB literature, it appears that job characteristics (JC) are important determinants of OCB and deserve more attention in future research.

A number of previous studies of TL in Taiwan were highlighted in the educational context. There is a paucity of research focusing on TL, JC, OCB, and empowerment, respectively among nurses. Therefore, according to the suggestions of previous researchers, the main purpose of this study is to explore the relationships among TL, JC, and OCB. Most importantly, this study is to identify the mediating effect of JC between the relationship of TL and OCB.

1.1. Relationships of Variables

Mediator—Empowerment. Thomas and Velthouse [7] defined empowerment more broadly as increased intrinsic task motivation revealed in a set of four cognitions reflecting an individual's orientation to his/her work role. The four cognitions are meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Empowerment reflects positive and active behavior in his/her work context. By active orientation, Spreitzer [8] mentioned that an orientation in which an individual wishes and feels able to shape his/her work role. Thus, it will have an effect on OCB. One dimension of JC also is autonomy which is a very important characteristic of job. Accordingly, there is a relationship between JC and empowerment. However, there seems no research has examined TL might have effects on OCB through all facets of empowerment as mediators. Therefore, the hypothesis is developed as following:

Hypothesis 1a: Empowerment will positively mediate the relationship between TL and OCB.

Hypothesis 1b: Empowerment will positively mediate the relationship between JC and OCB.

TL and OCB. Previous studies have found a direct link between TL and OCB [9, 10]. Podsakoff, Mackenzie, and Bommer [10] noted that TL effects on OCB might be more important than the effects on in-role behaviors. General speaking, TL behaviors had significant and consistent positive relationships with 5-dimension of OCBs [4]. Taken together, this suggests that TL may have a number of important effects on OCBs. Therefore, the hypothesis is formed as following:

Hypothesis 2a: There will be positive relationship between TL and OCB.

JC and OCB. The Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) [11] identifies five significant characteristics of jobs such as (1) skill variety, (2) task identity, (3) task significance, (4) autonomy, and (5) feedback. Task significance and variety help workers see the larger picture of how the organization works [12]. It means that JC will contribute to citizenship behaviors. In previous study, Hatcher, Ross, and Collines [13] ascertained that three facets of the JC, i.e. variety, autonomy, and feedback, were positively related to employee suggestion-making that was moderated by assisting behavior, a dimension of OCB. JC and leadership behaviors have been found as antecedents of OCB [10]. Therefore, the hypotheses can be stated as follows:

Hypothesis 2b: There will be positive relationship between JC and OCB.

TL and JC. Transformational leaders deeply interact with their followers. In other words, they participate profoundly in their work organizations. Capplli and Rogovsky [12] noted that the process of participation may affect the variety of tasks one performs, a key aspect of job characteristics, because participation in decisions literally attaches a new task to one's job. In conclusion, TL may directly lead to greater variety, significance, autonomy, identity, and autonomy of job. On the theory, TL provides a mechanism for workers to meet their needs. Thus, the hypothesis is declared as following:

Hypothesis 3: There will be positive relationship between TL and JC.

2. Methods

Convenient sampling was used in order to increase the response rate. The sample population in this study consisted of 380 nurses employed by from two district hospitals in the northern Taiwan. The effective response rate overall was 79.2 per cent after deducting the invalid questionnaires, which was rather high.

The questionnaire was designed using a number of existing, field-tested instruments to assess TL, JC, OCB, empowerment and control variables. Initial exploratory factor analyses were conducted and have been

extracted factors for each variable. Indeed, the internal consistency reliability of each scale is tested and between .86 to .97. The hypothesized model in this study was analyzed using SEM techniques with maximum likelihood estimation with the AMOS 16.0 program that assumes the measurement variables normally distributed.

3. Results and Discussion

After correlational analysis, the results indicated that TL was positively correlated with the OCB ($r = .20, p < .001$). Besides, there was a strongly significant positive relation between TL and JC ($r = .56, p < .001$). Moreover, JC was significantly related to OCBs ($r = .32, p < .001$). Finally, empowerment was all significantly correlated with other three constructs: TL ($r = .34, p < .001$), JC ($r = .61, p < .001$), and OCB ($r = .20, p < .001$).

Table 1 depicted the results of regression analyses for dependent variable which was OCBs. JC explained 10.9% of the variance of OCBs, with the beta weights of JC significant at $p < .0001$. Then the empowerment added an additional 1.6% of explained variance which was also significant at $p < .009$.

Table 1 Results of regression analyses for dependent variable (organizational citizenship behaviors)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.330(a)	.109	.107	.56741	.109	44.599	1	364	.000
2	.354(b)	.126	.121	.56294	.016	6.810	1	363	.009

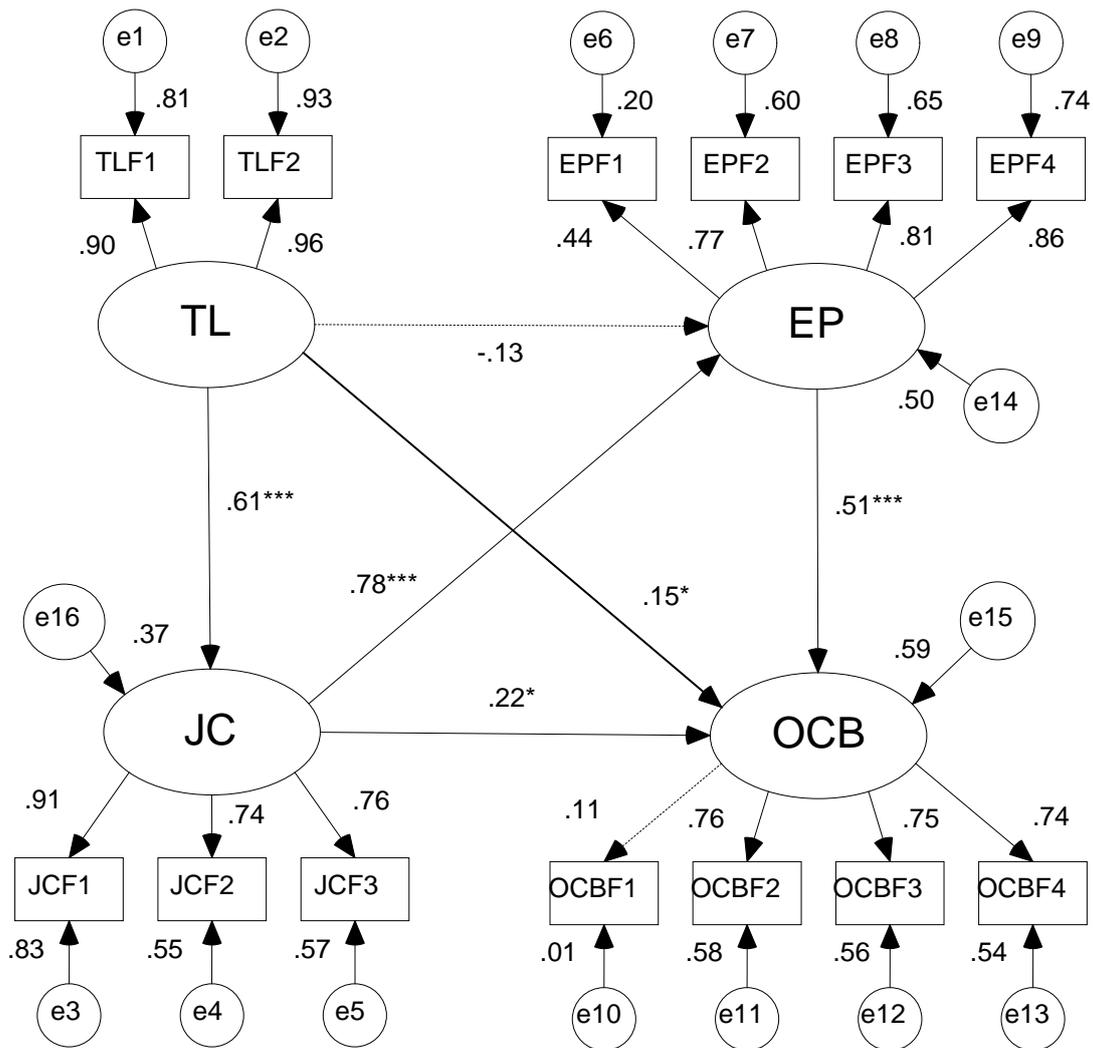
a Predictors: (Constant), job characteristics

b Predictors: (Constant), job characteristics, empowerment

The measurement and structural components of the hypothesized model were presented in Figure 1 which presented significant standardized path coefficients for the theoretical model. The model provided a marginally acceptable fit to the data, with X^2 value of 338.74 ($p < .01$) and 59 degrees of freedom; goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .86; normed fit index (NFI) = .86; comparative fit index (CFI) = .89; parsimonious normed fit index (PNFI) = .66; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .11. Therefore, the model indicated an acceptable predictor for this sample.

The results did not support the hypothesis 1a that empowerment positively mediated the relationship between TL and OCB (Table 2). The empirical findings supported hypothesis 1b; empowerment would positively mediated the relationship between JC and OCB. Moreover, this study also found a support for hypothesis 2a; there would be a positive relationship between TL and OCB. ($\beta = .15, p < .05$). Similarly, the test showed a support for hypothesis 2b; there would be a positive relationship between JC and OCB ($\beta = .22, p < .05$). Subsequently, this research demonstrated a significant support for hypothesis 3; there would be a positive relationship between TL and JC ($\beta = .61, p < .05$). Therefore, the statistical findings of the study illustrated empirical support for all hypotheses except hypothesis 1a.

This study built on prior research investigating various aspects of contextual to articulate a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between TL, JC, empowerment, and OCBs. Fortunately, TL was positively correlated with OCB that confirmed the results of previous research such as Koh et al. [9] and Podsakoff et al. [10]. Our findings with regards to empowerment were quite striking. In contrast to the findings on the effect of TL to empowerment [14], we found no effect on empowerment by TL. In this study, JC has been found to be the most powerful variable to OCBs which was the dependent variable. The result was accordance with the finding of Podsakoff et al. [4] asserted that JC was an important determinant of OCB and it deserved more attention in the future research. The implications of the results contributed profoundly meaning to managers, leaders, and organizations. Nursing managers should improve TL and place greater emphasis on enhancing subordinates' empowerment in order to move up their OCB. The results of this study will help them to do the leadership more successfully and efficiently.



* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

p.s.: The relationships indicated with the dotted lines were not significant.

Fig. 1 Derived Path Coefficients Based on a Structural Equation Analysis

Table. 2 Structural Model Equation Results

Hypothesis	Path	Standardize Regression Weight (β)	Result
Hypothesis 1a	TL→empowerment→OCB		Not supported (no mediating effect)
	TL→empowerment empowerment→OCB	-.13 .51***	
Hypothesis 1b	JC→empowerment→OCB		Supported (partial mediating effect)
	JC→empowerment empowerment→OCB	.78*** .51***	
Hypothesis 2a	TL→OCB	.15*	Supported
Hypothesis 2b	JC→OCB	.22*	Supported
Hypothesis 3	TL→JC	.61*	Supported

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