LEADERS AS ROLE MODELS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADER AND FOLLOWER ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIORS

by

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(Under the Direction of Charles E. Lance)

ABSTRACT

Employing a social learning theory framework, this study investigated the relationship between leaders' and followers' organizational citizenship behaviors, whereby identification with leader and frequency of interaction with leader were examined as potential boundary conditions. Based on social exchange processes, an indirect relationship mediated by perceived organizational support was predicted in addition to the direct relationship. This study used a sample of 281 leaders and 1034 followers employed at substance abuse facilities across the United States. Results show that leader OCBs are related to follower OCBs, both directly and indirectly, mediated by perceived organizational support. Neither identification with leader nor frequency of interaction moderated the relationship between leader and follower OCBs. The findings underline the importance of leader OCBs and have implications for leader development and training.

INDEX WORDS: OCB, Leadership, Role modeling, Perceived organizational support

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DEDICATION

To my family, for their endless support. And to my friends and professors at UGA, who make me feel at home 5,000 miles away from home.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The importance of role models has long been recognized in organizational research (Gioia & Manz, 1985; Weiss, 1977). For example, role modeling plays a critical role in mentoring relationships and in facilitating newcomers' transition to the organization (Kram, 1985). Furthermore, role models have been found to influence a wide range of employee values (Weiss, 1978) and behaviors (Lam, Kraus, & Ahearne, 2010; Latham & Saari, 1979; Maierhofer, Griffin, & Sheehan, 2000) by fostering employee imitation. Drawing on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), researchers have argued that employees, especially when new to the organization, attend to their social environment in order to learn organizational norms and appropriate work behaviors.

The current study seeks to examine whether role models have a positive impact on employee citizenship behaviors (OCBs) through social learning processes. More specifically, it will be examined whether leaders positively affect their followers' level of OCB by engaging in OCBs themselves, thereby triggering follower imitation. The examination of OCBs is well suited for the study of social learning in organizations: because OCBs are discretionary behaviors, employees cannot rely on the formal job description for cues on how to behave, and the organization's expectations may be somewhat ambiguous in regards to the extent and form of OCBs required. Therefore, learning from role models may be particularly important in the case of OCBs. Additionally, while many leadership theories state the importance of leader role

modeling, empirical evidence on this particular influence mechanism has been rather scarce (Yaffe & Kark, 2011).

Drawing on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), it will be argued that leaders may serve as role models from whom employees learn behaviors that might benefit their careers. Furthermore, employing a social exchange framework, it will be hypothesized that leaders who perform OCBs send the message to followers that the organization values and supports its employees, as leaders are perceived as agents of the organization (Levinson, 1965). This in turn may create followers' urge to reciprocate and thus increase their willingness to engage in OCBs.

The goal of the current study is twofold: By examining how leader OCBs are related to follower OCBs, the current study will provide further insight into the processes by which leaders influence their followers, as well as potential boundary conditions. Additionally, this study contributes to existing research aimed at identifying both antecedents and consequences of OCBs. A model will be presented that specifies a direct relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs, as well as an indirect relationship with perceived organizational support as a mediator. Furthermore, it will be examined whether the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs is moderated by the degree to which followers identify with the leader. Finally, the frequency of follower interaction with the leader will be examined as a potential moderator of both the direct relationship between leader OCB and follower OCB, and the effect of leader OCB on followers' perceived organizational support, as frequency of exposure to leader behaviors may determine to what degree followers can observe these behaviors.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

OCB

OCB has been defined as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988, p.4).

Researchers have proposed multiple different frameworks in regards to the dimensionality of OCBs (e.g. Smith, Near, & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988). Among the most widely accepted frameworks (Organ, 1997; Organ & Paine, 1999) is Williams and Anderson's (1991) two-dimensional model, which categorizes OCBs into helping behaviors directed at the individual (OCBI) and helping behaviors directed at the organization (OCBO). OCBs have been related to a multitude of positive outcomes on both the individual and the organizational level, such as better performance ratings and career outcomes (Allen & Rush, 1998; Johnson, Erez, Kiker, Motowidlo, 2002), as well as lower unit-level absenteeism and turnover (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). Thus, engaging in OCBs has been related to both positive career outcomes for the employee him- or herself and quantifiable measures of organizational success.

In light of the variety of positive outcomes of OCBs, it is not surprising that researchers and practitioners alike have displayed great interest in identifying its antecedents. For example, research has identified employee attitudes (Fassina, Jones, & Uggerslev, 2008; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2001; Moorman, 1991), personality characteristics (Borman,

Penner, Allen, & Motowidlo, 2001; Ilies, Fulmer, Spitzmuller, & Johnson, 2009; Organ & Ryan, 1995), and job characteristics (Todd & Kent, 2006) as antecedents of employee OCBs.

Furthermore, a substantial body of research has found that leaders play a central role in employees' OCBs: Ilies, Nahrgang, and Morgeson (2007) demonstrated that the quality of leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships is positively related to follower OCB. In the case of LMX, researchers have argued that social exchange processes underlie the influence of leaders on follower OCBs, in that employees who feel supported by their leaders wish to reciprocate, and therefore engage in OCBs. Moreover, the degree to which leaders engage in transformational leadership behaviors is positively correlated with employee OCBs (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Bommer, 1996). More specifically, transformational leadership has been found to have an impact on follower OCBs through fundamentally changing followers' values, beliefs, and attitudes. For example, Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, and Sutton (2011) found that transformational leaders positively influence followers' perceptions of person-organization value congruence, which in turn has been shown to be related to follower OCBs (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). Additionally, according to Piccolo and Colquitt (2006), transformational leadership has an impact on followers' OCBs through elevating employees' intrinsic motivation and positively influencing their perceptions of core job characteristics such as autonomy and significance.

In summary, these findings underscore the substantial impact of leaders' on their followers' OCBs. Another aspect of leadership has received relatively little attention in connection with follower OCBs: According to Yukl (2006), one important source of leader influence lies in his or her referent power, which is a leader's ability to trigger follower admiration of and identification with the leader. One way for leaders to exercise referent power is by setting an example through their own behaviors, thus serving as role models. However,

although the importance of leader role modeling has been emphasized in many leadership theories (e.g. Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Trevino & Brown, 2005), the vast majority of empirical research has assessed leaders' role modeling through surveys, rather than by examining actual leader behaviors (e.g. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). In contrast, to date only one study has examined how leaders' engaging in OCBs themselves is related to their followers' OCBs (Yaffe & Kark, 2011). Social learning theory provides the theoretical foundation for a potential relationship between leader and follower OCBs: According to social learning theory, behaviors are learned and individuals are motivated to imitate them through observing others engage in these behaviors, as well as observing the outcomes of others' behaviors (Bandura, 1977). In fact, Bandura (1986) claimed that "through the years, modeling has always been acknowledged to be one of the most powerful means of transmitting values, attitudes and patterns of thought and behavior" (p.47).

Bandura (1977) described several prerequisites for social learning to occur. First, an individual must direct his or her attention to a model. Whether an observer pays attention to a model depends on the functional value the observer ascribes to the behavior, which is the likelihood that the observed behavior will lead to rewards when imitated. At times, the contingencies between certain behaviors and the consequences thereof are not obvious, and the functional value of these behaviors is not immediately apparent to the observer. In this case, whether or not a behavior is functional is inferred from certain characteristics of the model, such as status, competence and power (Manz & Sims, 1981). In other words, the behavior of models with higher status, competence, and power is perceived as more valuable and thus is more likely to be imitated by others. Furthermore, the observer must be able to reproduce the observed

behavior. Lastly, observed behaviors will only be imitated when the observer is expecting for them to result in positive outcomes.

Applying these social learning principles to the study of OCBs suggests that employees may not only engage in OCBs as a means to reciprocate favorable treatment, or because they have been inspired by a transformational leader, as past research on leaders' influence on follower OCB has argued. More pragmatically, employees may engage in OCBs for instrumental reasons, because they have previously learned that positive career outcomes are associated with these behaviors (Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000; Yun, Takeushi, & Lui, 2007). However, despite knowing that engaging in OCBs leads to favorable outcomes, employees may not be entirely certain about the extent to which extra-role behaviors are valued and rewarded by organizations, due to their discretionary nature. For instance, employees may wonder whether it is more beneficial for their careers to help co-workers, which could take away resources needed to perform well on the job, or rather to devote their time to their own jobs (Bergeron, Shipp, Rosen, & Furst, 2011; Bolino, Turnley, & Niehoff, 2004). Likewise, going above and beyond minimum job requirements may be perceived favorably, but there is also the chance that it may be perceived as ingratiating behavior and impression management, which may even reverse the positive effects of engaging in OCBs (Eastman, 1994).

Examples such as the ones described illustrate that at times, employees may feel uncertain in regards to how best to engage in OCB. Here, a leader can serve as a model for employees by performing OCBs him- or herself, and in doing so, providing employees with examples of appropriate ways to engage in OCBs. A leader typically has higher status and power in the organization than followers, and is thus predestined to be considered a worthy role model by employees. Furthermore, due to the positive career outcomes associated with OCB,

employees are likely to see value in imitating OCB. As such, leaders may be able to influence their followers' OCB through engaging in OCB themselves.

As mentioned above, to date only one study has examined the influence of leader OCB on their followers' OCB. Employing a social learning framework, Yaffe and Kark (2011) found that leader OCB is indeed positively related to followers' group-level OCB. This effect was mediated by work groups' belief in the value of OCB. Furthermore, their study included group beliefs about the leader and leader distance as moderators. The current study will test a similar model, however, in contrast to Yaffe and Kark's (2011) study, all constructs will be assessed at the individual rather than the group level. In Yaffe and Kark's (2011) sample, leader distance was homogeneous within workgroups, and could thus be treated as a group-level variable. In contrast, in the current sample, there was considerable variability among followers working under the same leader in regards to how frequently they interacted with their follower. As such, aggregating scores from followers of the same workgroup would not be appropriate in the current study, as it may bias results. Following recommendations from Yaffe and Kark (2011), additional mediating mechanisms will be examined to further elucidate the mechanisms by which leader OCBs influence follower OCBs.

In summary, due to leaders' status and power, followers may perceive leaders as role models whose behavior is worth being imitated. Furthermore, prior research indicates that employees are aware of the contingencies between engaging in OCBs and positive career outcomes, rendering OCBs behaviors worth performing (Hui et al., 200, Yun et al., 2007). As such, social learning principles may apply to the relationship between leader OCB and follower OCB, which is supported by Yaffe and Kark's (2011) findings. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

Hypothesis 1): The level of leader OCB will be positively related to the level of followers' OCB.

While a direct effect of leader OCB on follower OCB is predicted based on social learning theory, past research on leader effectiveness shows that leader behaviors have an indirect effect on followers' behavioral outcomes through influencing follower attitudes and perceptions (e.g. Hoffman et al., 2011; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). These findings imply that leaders' engaging in OCBs likely has an impact on follower OCBs beyond merely modeling appropriate behaviors. As such, potential mediator and moderator effects will be discussed in the following sections.

Perceived Organizational Support

Followers profit from leader OCBs in several ways. As described above, from a social learning perspective, followers may learn how and when to engage in discretionary behaviors that may be conducive to their own careers by observing their leaders' OCB. In this case, the target of the leader's OCB does not matter as much as the behaviors themselves. However, in addition, employees may profit more directly from their leader's OCBs: a leader who takes time to listen to followers' problems and worries, or helps employees who have been absent, may make the organization a more attractive place to work (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Likewise, a leader who engages in OCBs directed at the organization rather than the individual, such as not taking undeserved work breaks and adhering to formal rules may contribute to the effective functioning of his or her work unit, thus promoting a favorable work environment for his or her followers.

As employees reap the benefits of their leader's OCBs, they may feel supported and valued by the leader. This, in turn, may be related to employees' beliefs about how much their

organization values them and cares for their well-being. Because employees tend to view leaders as agents of the organization, their feelings towards leaders generalize to attitudes about the organization as a whole (Levinson, 1965). In fact, Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa (1986) suggested that leader behaviors might contribute even more to employees' perceptions of organizational support than organizational practices and policies, because the former are more personally geared towards employees. Additionally, perceptions of organizational support may be stronger when employees perceive an agent's actions as discretionary, rather than mandated by organizational policies (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This implies that leader OCBs, which by definition are discretionary behaviors, may communicate to employees how much the organization cares about their welfare and values their contributions. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

Hypothesis 2a): Leader OCB will be positively related to followers' perceived organizational support.

Perceived organizational support may in turn positively influence employees' attitudes towards the organization. Social exchange theory states that individuals who received a favor of some sort feel indebted to return the favor (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). This applies to the workplace, too, where employees who feel supported by their organization may feel urged to reciprocate (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). There are various ways by which employees may reciprocate favorable treatment by the organization, such as choosing to increase their task performance. However, depending on the nature of the job, task performance might at times be influenced by factors that are beyond the immediate control of employees, such as in highly interdependent tasks, where one's own performance is partially dependent on coworkers' performance.

In contrast, OCBs such as helping new employees, protecting organizational property, and not complaining about insignificant things at work do not require sophisticated skills and can be performed by everyone. Thus, employees may consider engaging in OCBs as a viable means to reciprocate favorable treatment by the organization (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). In fact, previous research has shown that employees do indeed engage in OCBs when they feel supported by their organization (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000; Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). As described above, leader OCBs may be related to employee perceptions of organizational support. Employees in turn may feel indebted to support the organization, and therefore engage in OCBs. As such, the following hypotheses emerge:

Hypothesis 2b): Followers' perceived organizational support will be positively related to follower level of OCB.

Hypothesis 2c): Followers' perceived organizational support will partially mediate the relationship between leader OCB and follower OCB.

Identification with the Leader

Social learning theory implies that leaders, by virtue of their power and status in the organization, as well as their perceived competence, represent role models, and as such a source of information about how to appropriately engage in OCBs. Therefore, as hypothesized above, followers may imitate their leaders' OCBs because of the benefits associated with these behaviors and the leaders' status in the organization, regardless of the quality of the leaders' relationship with individual followers.

However, followers might still differ in the degree to which they identify with their leaders. Some followers may consider the leader as a role model not solely due to his or her

status in the organization, but beyond that as someone they admire, whose values and behaviors they strongly identify with, and who they therefore strive to be like (Yukl, 2006). Along these lines, Kelman (1958) noted that individuals may imitate a role model's behaviors as a means to establish and maintain a close personal relationship with the role model, if being similar to the role model defines part of their identity, a process called personal identification. This implies that, while all followers may imitate their leader's OCB in hopes of promoting their careers, those followers who consider their leader a role model and regard being similar to their leader as an integral part of their self-concept may make a greater effort towards imitating their leader's behaviors. Therefore, follower identification with their leader may enhance the extent to which followers imitate leader behaviors. As such, the following hypothesis emerges:

> *Hypothesis 3): The degree to which followers identify with the leader will moderate the relationship between leader OCB and follower OCB, such that the more followers identify with their leader, the stronger the relationship will be.*

Frequency of Interaction with the Leader

One pivotal prerequisite for observational learning to occur is that the observer be provided with sufficient opportunities to observe the model (Bandura, 1977). In the context of this study, this implies that followers are only able to imitate their leader's OCB when they have the opportunity to directly observe them engaging in OCB.

In support of this notion, leadership distance theory states that the mechanisms by which leaders influence followers differ depending on how close leaders are to their followers (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Shamir, 1995). Shamir (1995) examined these different mechanisms, as well as the outcomes of close versus distant leadership and found that close

leaders influence followers most effectively by setting an example through their behaviors, which is related to follower identification with the leader, as well as follower emulation of leader behaviors. Distant leaders, on the other hand, primarily rely on articulating a vision and utilizing rhetoric skills to influence their followers, which is associated with follower trust and confidence. Leading by example plays only a secondary role in distant leadership, as followers may seldom or never be near the leader and thus be unable to observe the leader's behaviors.

Leadership distance has been defined in various different ways. After reviewing the existing literature on leadership distance, Antonakis and Atwater (2002) proposed that frequency of interaction with leader constitutes one of several dimensions of leader distance, which are leader physical proximity, psychological distance, and frequency of interaction with followers. In the current study, leader distance will be operationalized as frequency of interaction with followers, as the time spent with one's leader determines to what degree one is able to directly observe leader behaviors. As such, this type of leader distance is most relevant for the hypothesized effect of leader OCBs on follower OCBs due to learning through observation. Leader physical proximity and psychological distance will not be examined here, because leaders who do not regularly work in immediate proximity to their followers may still interact frequently with their followers. For example, this could occur during meetings, potentially providing employees with opportunities to observe leader OCB. Additionally, due to characteristics of the current sample, leader physical proximity is relatively homogeneous across participants and therefore, meaningful differences are not expected. Psychological distance, defined as perceived differences between leaders and followers which affect the degree of intimacy and social contact (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002), will not be considered in this study because, as has been argued above, social learning does not primarily rely on the quality of the relationship between leader

and followers, but rather on whether followers perceive the leader's exhibited OCBs as worth imitating. As social learning can only occur when the leader is present, the following hypothesis emerges

Hypothesis 4): Frequency of interaction will moderate the positive relationship between leader OCB and follower OCB, such that the more frequently the leader interacts with the follower, the stronger the relationship will be.

A similar argument may apply to the hypothesized effect of leader OCB on follower perceived organizational support: through interacting with their leaders, followers are better able to directly witness leader OCBs. As such, the positive effects of leader OCB on followers' perceived organizational support might be increased when followers are provided with more occasions to observe leader behaviors. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

Hypothesis 5): Frequency of interaction will moderate the positive relationship between leader OCB and followers' perceived organizational support, such that the more frequently leaders and followers interact, the greater followers' perceived organizational support will be.

Figure 1 shows the proposed model. It contains the hypothesized direct effect of leader OCB on follower OCB and an indirect effect through perceived organizational support. Frequency of interaction is hypothesized to moderate both the effect of leader OCB on follower OCB and the effect of leader OCB on perceived organizational support. Identification with the leader is hypothesized to be an additional moderator of the direct effect.

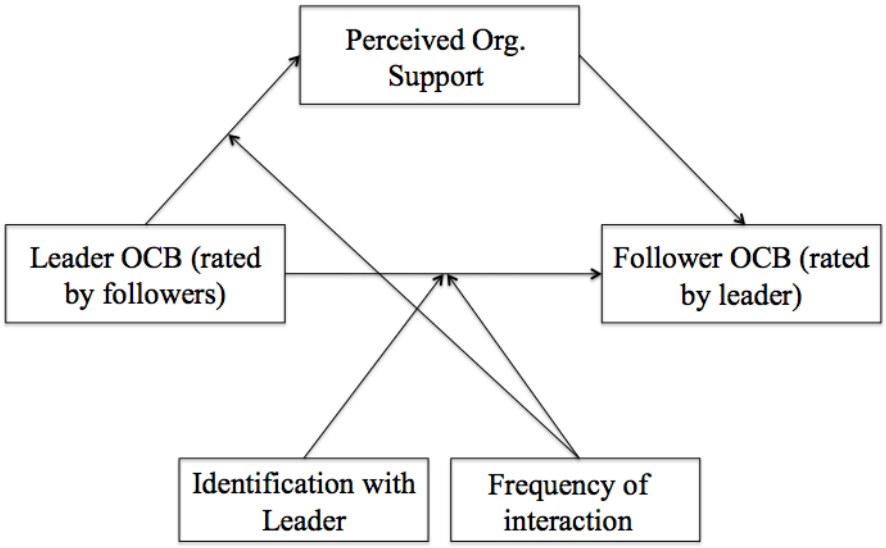

Figure 1. Proposed model

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants and Procedures

Survey data were obtained from 281 leaders and 1034 followers employed at 27 substance abuse treatment facilities across the United States. Of the 1034 followers, 63.8% were female. The follower sample was comprised of 64% Caucasian, 17.4% African-American, 13.1% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 0.3% American Indian, and 2.2% multi-racial participants. The remaining followers indicated their race as "other". The average age of followers was 43.6 years. The majority of the 281 leaders were female (65.6%) and Caucasian (75.8%). In addition, there were 10.7% African-American, 6.9% Hispanic, 0.9% Asian, and 4.1% multiracial participants, whereas 1.7% indicated their race as "other". Leaders were on average 47 years old.

Data collection took place in three waves from 2007 to 2009 as part of the "Managing Effective Relationships in Treatment Services" (MERITS) project, which examines factors related to turnover in counselors and supervisors working in the substance abuse treatment field, including the variables examined in this study. Participants were provided with a paper- and pencil survey and were informed about the purpose of the study. The confidentiality of their answers was assured. Followers provided ratings on their leader's OCBs, of the degree to which they identify with their leader, and of perceived organizational support. Furthermore, followers indicated how frequently they interact with their leader. Each leader rated his or her follower on OCB. A majority of the surveyed leaders supervised several followers and as such, provided

several ratings at a time. The average response rate across the three years of data collection was 80.6%.

Measures

Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Both leader and follower organizational citizenship behaviors were measured using a 14-item scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). Of these 14 items, seven items measured OCBI, and seven items measured OCBO. Leaders rated their followers' level of OCB, and followers in turn rated their leaders' OCB. Participants provided ratings on a five-point Likert-type scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither agree nor disagree*, 4 = *agree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*. Sample items for OCBI include "takes time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries", and "goes out of way to help new employees". Example items for OCBI are "gives advance notice when unable to come to work" and "adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order". The scales were reliable both for OCBI (leaders: coefficient alpha = .90, followers: coefficient alpha = 89.) and OCBO (leaders: coefficient alpha = .82, followers: coefficient alpha = .83).
Confirmatory factor analyses provided only moderate support for a 2-factor structure in the current sample (leader OCB: $\chi 2(76) = 260$, $p < .01$, CFI = .86, TLI = .84, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .07; follower OCB: $\chi 2(76) = 362.23$, $p <. 01$, CFI = .84, TLI = .81, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .07). As fit indices did not meet conventional criteria (Lance & Vandenberg, 2002), an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with oblimin rotation and principal axis factoring as extraction method was subsequently performed to uncover the factor structure. The EFA resulted in a three-factor solution, whereby the third factor was not interpretable. However, leader OCBI was highly correlated with leader OCBO ($r = .60$, $p < .01$). Likewise, follower OCBI was highly correlated with follower OCB-O ($r = .50$, $p < .01$). Preliminary model analyses did not yield different

results for OCBI and OCBO. Therefore, the OCBI- and OCBO-scales were collapsed into one overall OCB scale for both leader OCB and follower OCB, and the model was subsequently analyzed using one overall factor of leader OCB, and one overall factor of follower OCB. The overall OCB scales were reliable both for follower OCB (coefficient alpha = .90) and leader OCB (coefficient alpha = .89).

Identification with Leader. Followers rated the degree to which they identify with their leaders on a three-item role modeling subscale, which was part of a mentoring scale developed by Ragins and McFarlin (1990). The items are: "My supervisor serves as a role model for me", "My supervisor is someone I can identify with", and "My supervisor represents who I want to be." Response options ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree* on a Likert-type scale. The scale was reliable with a coefficient alpha of .94.

Frequency of Interaction with Leader. Followers indicated how many hours per week on average they interact with their leaders.

Perceived Organizational Support. Followers rated the degree to which they feel supported by their organization on an 8-item scale (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997). Response options ranged from 1= *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree* on a Likert-type scale. Example items are "My organization cares about my well-being" and "Help is available from my organization when I have a problem." Coefficient alpha was .91, thus, the scale was highly reliable.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

Data were analyzed with SPSS. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations are displayed in Table 1. Due to the fact that most leaders provided ratings on several followers' level of OCB, there was a possibility of non-independence effects, that is, correlated residuals among followers who were rated by the same leader. One way to determine if clustering in the data threatens to distort results is by calculating the design effect (Muthén, 1999; Muthén & Satorra, 1995). The design effect is defined as

$$1 + (\text{average cluster size} - 1) * \text{ICC}; \quad (1)$$

whereby a value below 2.00 indicates that non-independence of the data does not have to be taken into account for hypothesis testing (Muthén, 1999). In the current sample, the average cluster size, which is the number of followers rated by a leader, was 3.68, and the ICC was .18, resulting in a design effect of 1.48. As such, multilevel analyses were not necessary.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1 predicted a direct relationship between leader and follower OCBs and was tested by correlating leader OCBs and follower OCBs. The correlation was significant ($r = .26$, $p < .01$), thus, hypothesis 1 was supported. A procedure outlined by LeBreton, Wu, and Bing (2009) was employed to test hypothesis 2, in which perceived organizational support was proposed as a partial mediator. According to LeBreton et al. (2009), three conditions must be met in order to support partial mediation: First, the predictor variable must be significantly related to

the criterion variable. This relationship was established by testing hypothesis 1. Second, the predictor variable must be significantly related to the mediator variable. Third, the mediator variable must be significantly correlated with the criterion variable after controlling for the predictor variable. Partial mediation is supported if the strength of the relationship between the predictor and the criterion variables is reduced, but still significantly different from zero when the mediator variable is included.

Results for the mediation test are presented in Table 2. The findings supported the hypothesized partial mediation effect: Leader OCBs were significantly related to follower perceived organizational support ($ß = .47$, $p < .01$), thus hypothesis 2a was supported. Next, follower OCBs were regressed on leader OCB and perceived organizational support. In support of hypothesis 2b, the mediator variable perceived organizational support was significantly related to follower OCBs ($ß = .17$, $p < .01$). With perceived organizational support added to the equation, the effect of leader OCB on follower OCB was reduced, yet remained significant ($ß = .18$, $p < .01$), thus supporting a partial mediation effect as anticipated in hypothesis 2c.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 predicted that identification with the leader and frequency of interaction were moderators of the direct relationship between leader and follower OCBs, and were tested through hierarchical moderated regression. Prior to estimating the models, all predictor variables were centered to remove effects of nonessential multicollinearity (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). In step one, the main effects leader OCBs, identification with leader and frequency of interaction were entered. In step two, the cross-product terms of leader OCB and identification with leader, and leader OCB and frequency of interaction, respectively, were entered. Adding the cross-product terms did not lead to a significant increase in R^2 ($\Delta R^2 = .001$, $F(2,992) = 24.82$, $p = .36$). Neither identification with leader nor frequency of interaction

moderated the relationship between leader OCB and follower OCB (ß = -.01, p = .66, and ß = -.04, p = .212, respectively), thus, hypotheses 3 and 4 were disconfirmed. The results of the moderation tests are shown in Table 3.

Hypothesis 5 was tested by employing a moderated mediation framework developed by Edwards and Lambert (2007). The current model was classified as a first stage and direct effect moderation model, as frequency of interaction with leader was hypothesized to moderate the effect of leader OCBs both on follower OCBs and perceived organizational support. As such, the authors recommend to first test whether the hypothesized moderator has a significant effect on the relationship between the predictor and the mediator variable, as is shown in equation (2). In the following equations, OCB-L denotes leader OCBs, OCB-F = follower OCBs, IL = identification with leader, FI = frequency of interaction, and POS = perceived organizational support.

$$POS = a_0 + a_{OCB\text{-}L} * OCB\text{-}L + a_{FI} * FI + a_{OCB\text{-}L*FI} * OCB\text{-}L*FI + e_{POS}; \quad (2)$$

According to Edwards and Lambert (2007), if found significant, the interaction term is subsequently included in a reduced form equation that combines tests of all moderator and mediator effects simultaneously:

$$OCB\text{-}F = b_0 + a_0*b_{POS} + (b_{OCB\text{-}L} + a_{OCB\text{-}L}*b_{POS})*OCB\text{-}L + (b_{FI} + a_{FI}*b_{POS})*FI + (b_{OCB\text{-}L*FI} + a_{OCB\text{-}L*FI} * b_{POS})* OCB\text{-}L*FI + b_{IL}*IL + b_{OCB\text{-}L*IL}* OCB\text{-}L*IL + e_{OCB\text{-}F} + b_{POS}*e_{pos;} \quad (3)$$

Moderated mediation is supported if the path linking the mediator and the criterion variable (b_{POS}) is significant, and if the coefficient of the interaction ($a_{OCB\text{-}L*FI}$) term is no longer significant in the presence of the mediator variable. Testing equation (2) did not yield a significant interaction between leader OCBs and frequency of interaction (ΔR^2 = .001, F(1,995)

= 99.24, p = .40). As such, hypothesis 5 was disconfirmed. Table 4 shows the results of the moderated mediation test.

Although there was no such prediction made in the current study, one additional finding is worth reporting. The moderator analyses revealed a significant main effect for identification with leader ($ß$ = .28, p < .01). Additionally, in the presence of the main effect of identification for leader, the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs became nonsignificant.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

			Correlations				
Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1. Leader OCB[2]	3.69	.65	-				
2. Perceived org. support[2]	3.53	.91	.47**	-			
3. Identification with leader[2]	3.33	1.12	.71**	.50**	-		
4. Frequency of interaction[2]	6.55	8.78	.16**	.11**	.17**	-	
5. Follower OCB[3]	3.82	.58	.26**	.25**	.33**	.06*	-

Note. N = 281 leaders, 1034 followers. [2] rated by followers [3]rated by leaders

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

Table 2

Mediator Analysis

	Dependent Variable		
	Follower OCB	Perceived Org. Support	Follower OCB
Leader OCB	.26**	.47**	.18**
Perceived org. support	-	-	.17**
R^2		.23**	.09**
Overall *F*		295.32**	50.73**
df		(1, 1020)	(2, 1019)

Note. N = 281 leaders, 1022 followers,

*p < .05, **p < .01

Table 3

Moderator Analysis

	Follower OCB	
Independent Variable	Step 1 β	Step 2 β
Leader OCB	.06	.06
Identification with leader	.28**	.28**
Frequency of interaction	.01	.01
Leader OCB x identification with leader		-.01
Leader OCB x frequency of interaction		-.04
ΔR^2	-	.002
ΔF	-	1.03
R^2	.109**	.111**
Overall F	40.68**	24.82
df	(3, 994)	(5, 992)

Note. N = 281 leaders, 998 followers

*p < .05, **p < .01

Table 4
Moderated Mediation Analysis

	Perceived Org. Support	
Independent Variable	Step 1 β	Step 2 β
Leader OCB	.47**	.48**
Frequency of interaction	.04	.17
Leader OCB x frequency of interaction		-.13
ΔR^2	-	.001
ΔF	-	49.41
R^2	.23**	.23**
Overall F	148.56**	99.24**
df	(2, 996)	(3, 995)

Note. N = 281 leaders, 999 followers
*p < .05, **p < .01

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Main findings

In the current study, the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs was explored. It was predicted that followers would imitate their leaders' OCBs due to both the leaders' status and the positive career outcomes associated with OCBs and that leaders who set an example through engaging in OCBs could therefore potentially elicit follower OCBs.

In support of the central hypothesis, leader OCBs and follower OCBs were found to be related. This is consistent with Yaffe and Kark's (2011) findings and as such, provides further support for the applicability of social learning theory in organizational settings. Furthermore, the findings illustrate the importance of leading by example as one way for leaders to exert influence on their followers.

Perceived organizational support emerged as a mediator. As hypothesized, leader OCBs were positively related to followers' perceptions of organizational support, which in turn were positively correlated with follower OCBs. Therefore, this study supports Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) assertion that leaders represent agents of the organization and that followers generalize from leader behaviors to the organization in its entirety. This is in line with previous research (Baranik, Roling, & Eby, 2010) and further highlights the importance of leader OCBs as a potential antecedent of multiple positive employee outcomes, as employees who feel supported by the organization are not only more prone to engage in OCBs, but also more satisfied with their jobs, more highly committed to the organization, perform better at their jobs, and have

lower turnover intentions (Riggle, Edmondson, & Hansen, 2009; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). As such, the findings in this study imply that by engaging in OCBs, leaders may not only benefit the organization directly, but also indirectly through their impact on follower OCBs. Furthermore, this finding answers the call of Yaffe and Kark (2011) to identify additional mediators of the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs, thereby extending our knowledge of mechanisms that account for the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs.

The degree to which followers identify with their leaders did not moderate the direct relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs. However, as mentioned above, there was a significant main effect of identification with leader on follower OCBs. Additionally, leader OCBs and follower identification with leader were highly correlated. These findings suggest that followers' identification with the leader may mediate the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs, rather than moderate it. Kark, Shamir and Chen (2003) have argued that certain leader behaviors make followers' self-concept salient, in that they recognize that they share values with the leader and therefore identify more strongly with their leader. Additionally, leader behaviors may instill followers' desire to change their self-concept so that they become more similar to their leader. Previous research has indeed shown that followers identify more with leaders who are setting a personal example through their own behaviors (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003). Furthermore, followers who identify with their leaders have been found to exhibit more OCBs than those followers who do not identify with their leaders (Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010). Future research should thus investigate the role of followers' identification with their leaders as a mediator between leader OCBs and follower OCBs.

Contrary to Yaffe and Kark's (2011) findings, followers' frequency of interaction with leader did not moderate the direct relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs. This implies that opportunity to observe leader behaviors may not be the deciding factor in whether employees choose to imitate leader behaviors. Rather, other factors in social learning theory, such as leaders' status and the degree to which OCBs are valued and rewarded in the organization might play a more important role. Additionally, the quality of the leader-follower relationship might be another determinant of whether followers are prone to imitate their leaders' behaviors. Future research should thus investigate the role of leader status, organizational norms in regards to OCBs and relational quality as potential moderators. Similarly, followers' frequency of interaction with their leaders did not moderate the relationship between leader OCBs and follower perceived organizational support. Here, a possible explanation may be that observing leader OCBs may not matter as much for followers' perceived organizational support as the actual benefits followers derive from leader OCBs.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

A number of limitations of this study should be recognized. One major drawback is that the direction of causality cannot be unequivocally determined due to the research design employed in the current study. While it was argued that leader OCBs have a positive effect on follower OCBs due to social learning processes, there is the possibility that follower OCBs influence leader OCBs instead, or that there is reciprocal causation. Future research should re-investigate the nature of the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs by employing methods that allow determining the direction of causality (Cortina, Chen, & Dunlap, 2001; Vandenberg & Lance, 1992). Alternatively, longitudinal growth modeling provides the opportunity to detect how change in one variable is related to change in another variable, thus

enabling researchers to make causal interpretations. (Ployhart &Vandenberg, 2010). As such, future studies should include predictors of both leader OCB and follower OCB in the model, or examine the research questions in a longitudinal, rather than a cross-sectional design.

Another limitation lies in the nature of the sample. All participants surveyed in the current study were employed at substance abuse facilities. As such, the findings reported in this study may be idiosyncratic to the health care profession and thus may not generalize to employees from other professions (however see Highhouse & Gillespie [2009]). Future research should investigate a more diverse sample from a wide range of occupational fields, so that results may be more applicable to other professions. Lastly, future research should explore additional potential mediators to further elucidate mechanisms that account for the relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs.

Implications

Both theoretical and practical implications can be derived from these findings. Previous research on antecedents of OCBs has predominantly employed a social exchange framework to explain the impact of various antecedents on employee OCBs (e.g. Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009) . While this study supports predictions derived from social exchange theory in that followers who felt supported by the organization were more likely to engage in OCBs, the direct effect between leader and follower OCBs suggests that social learning theory provides an additional valid theoretical framework. This in turn implies that employees do not only engage in OCBs in order to reciprocate to the organization, but rather, that followers might to some degree simply imitate their leaders' behaviors because they perceive them as functional and worth imitating. Research on employees' motives to engage in OCBs supports the latter notion. In a broader sense, the direct relationship between leader OCBs and follower OCBs

implies that social learning should be further examined as an explanatory mechanism that might account for employee values, attitudes and behaviors.

Lastly, as Yaffe and Kark (2011) have stated, while many leadership theories highlight the importance of leading by example, there is a lack of empirical research on the mechanisms by which leaders transmit their influence to followers through setting a personal example. The current study helps answer the question of why leading by example is such a powerful way to influence followers: First, it may provide guidance to followers as to how they are expected to behave, which is important particularly for discretionary behaviors such as OBCs. Secondly, by setting an example, leaders impact followers' perception of the organization.

Furthermore, several practical implications can be derived from the findings in this study. With work tasks becoming more complex and interdependent (Stout, Salas, & Fowlkes, 1997), employees who go above and beyond for their coworkers may represent a competitive advantage for their organization. Furthermore, given that employees are increasingly committed to their career rather than their organization (Baruch, 2003), employees who are loyal to the organization are particularly valuable. However, since OCBs are by definition discretionary behaviors that are not part of the formal job description (Organ, 1988), organizations that explicitly reward employees for engaging in OCBs are in danger of facing legal challenges. Therefore, organizations may profit from alternative ways to foster employee OCBs. The findings of this study imply that organizations should focus on leaders as one way to positively influence employee OCBs, as this study has shown that their level of OCBs is related to follower OCBs. It may hardly be possible to select leaders based on their level of OCBs or their propensity for engaging in them for the above-mentioned legal reasons. However, in light of the current findings, leaders should be made aware of the importance for them to not only serve as good role

models and to set examples through their own behaviors, but at the same time to also to ensure the visibility of their OCBs, so that employees are able to observe them. Additionally, the importance of engaging in OCBs should be stressed in leadership development and trainings.

Conclusion

Overall, the current study provided support for the relationship between leader and follower OCBs. Furthermore, it demonstrated that followers feel supported by their organization when their leaders engage in OCBs, and consequently engage in more OCBs themselves. As such, this study underscores the importance of leaders' setting an example both as a way to model appropriate work behaviors and to positively influence followers' perception of the organization, thus ultimately influencing long-term organizational success.

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