

Examining organizational citizenship behavior of Japanese employees: a multidimensional analysis of the relationship to organizational commitment

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Although there is now considerable research concerning organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), little is known about the possibility of the transposition of such a research topic to a Japanese context. This study proposes and substantiates a three-dimension model of OCB in the Japanese context, comprising voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry. Furthermore, the examination of the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB indicates that affective commitment is positively associated with voluntary involvement and personal industry. Also, continuance commitment is positively related to generalized compliance and, simultaneously, negatively associated with voluntary involvement. Finally, theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: generalized compliance; Japanese employees; organizational citizenship behavior; organizational commitment; personal industry; voluntary involvement

Introduction

A large volume of literature concerned with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has emerged during the past decades (Organ 1988; Organ, Podsakoff and MacKenzie 2006), including examination of the dimensions of OCB and its antecedents. OCB is defined as an individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and overall promotes organizational effectiveness (Organ 1988). Among various studies on OCB, a five-dimension model has stimulated the research interests of many scholars (Organ et al. 2006). However, studies carried out in a number of different countries suggest that any research into the multidimensional structure should remain sensitive to the special characteristics of the sample group, such as national traits attributable to cultural factors, as with the study on the structure and dimensionality of organizational commitment (Wang 2004). In particular, it has been pointed out that OCB might be enacted differently in different cultural contexts, given that what it means to be a 'good citizen' may vary (Gautam, Dick, Wagner, Upadhyay and Davis 2005). While the individual helping behavior of OCB is expected and appreciated in many cultures, overemphasis on helping might be viewed as excessive interference and lack of confidence in others, and possibly cause unexpected troubles in interpersonal relationships at the workplace in some other contexts. Given that little previous research has touched upon the issue of OCB regarding Japanese employees, the present study focuses on the examination of the concept of OCB among Japanese employees with concerns touching

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traditional Japanese values and cultures, while drawing on the possibility of the transposition of the OCB research methodology to the Japanese context.

In particular, this study focuses on the examination of the validity of the concept of OCB in the Japanese context. Also, the dimensionality of OCB among Japanese employees is studied by examining the possibility of the transposition of the current OCB research methodology to the Japanese context. After examining OCB dimensions proposed by the western scholars in light of their meanings in the Japanese context, this study presents a model of OCB comprising the following three dimensions: voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry. A questionnaire is applied to substantiate the three-dimension model of OCB with Japanese industrial employees. Furthermore, the present study addresses the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. Although organizational commitment is among the most examined antecedents of OCB, it is intriguing that the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB is distinct in various studies. When multiple dimensions of organizational commitment are taken into consideration, the relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions become more complex. Consequently, in addition to the discussion and clarification of the multidimensional structure of OCB among Japanese employees, the present study also examines the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB with samples from Japanese employees. Particularly, two dimensions of organizational commitment, affective and continuance commitments are examined as to their possible impacts on the voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry dimensions of OCB in the Japanese context.

Nature of OCB among Japanese employees

Although the methodology applied in OCB research has not been addressed in Japanese studies, individual behavior that is not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, but somehow promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization (Organ et al. 2006), is expected and valued highly by individuals in Japanese companies. Also, given that the influence of cultural value placing collective interest ahead of the individual might generate more OCB (Moorman and Blakely 1995; Paine and Organ 2000; Gautam et al. 2005), the highly collectivist culture of Japan might generate more OCB than countries with individualist cultures. A typical and familiar example of OCB in Japanese companies might be the participation of quality circles (QC), during which small groups of front-line supervisors meet voluntarily to study QC techniques (Amaya 1984; Suzuki 1994; Kōno and Clegg 1998). While encouraged and supported by management, the groups, which are always formed on the employees' own initiative, have no particular connection with the regular organizational hierarchy (Suzuki 1994).

Furthermore, the concept of OCB is congruent with the idea of the traditional Japanese company man, who is called *Kaisyanningen* (Tao 1997). Employees in Japanese companies are selected partly on the basis of their perceived ability to fit in with the company values and philosophy, and such congruence increases the motivation of employees both to remain as organizational members and to be productive (Lawlyer 1973; Ouchi 1980; Hatvany and Pucik 1981). The traditional company man, a Toyota man or a Fuji man or a Nomura man, learns to meet the expectations of a specific company (Yoshimura and Anderson 1997) and internalizes the values linked to their lifetime employment and tacit mutual commitment (Debroux 2003). Also, as Japanese employees remain in an organization over an extended period of time, they tend to adopt the positive values,

attitudes, and performance levels of their coworkers (Hatvany and Pucik 1981). The traditional Japanese company man strives hard to work for the benefits of the organization regardless of his individual interests. Consequently, *Kaisyanningen* is willing to engage in voluntary activities to improve the organizational effectiveness, and to contribute to the organization and to others, which indicates that the concept of OCB is in line with the work cultural values of traditional Japanese company man.

In addition, OCB might be regarded as in-role behavior in the Japanese context, as implied by the argument that individuals who engage in OCB may do so because they define such behavior as in-role (Morrison 1994; Coyle-Shapiro, Kessler and Purcell 2004; Kwantes, Karam, Kuo and Towson 2008). It has been pointed out that, in the Japanese context, job functionality is not as clearly defined as that in the Western context (Shimozaki 2003). Employees share common responsibilities toward the job because the individual job assignment is not clearly defined. Although such ambiguity might be found uncomfortable in countries outside Japan and criticized by non-Japanese employees, it helps in developing collective actions and commitment to work as the result of a loosely defined job role. While the negative aspect of an ambiguous job requirement might be the avoidance of individual responsibility, the positive side is that employees get used to helping behavior in order to accomplish the commonly shared job responsibilities. Japanese employees might take it for granted that individuals are expected by the company to engage more efforts beyond their formal work assignments. Consequently, as indicated by the above analysis of job assignment, the management system also supports and encourages OCB in the Japanese context.

Examination on the multidimensional structure of OCB among Japanese employees

As OCB has increasingly evoked great interest among researchers in the past several decades, a vast amount of work has been done with respect to the dimensionality and nature of OCB (Organ et al. 2006). Among them emerges the most popular theory of a multidimensional model of OCB involving five dimensions, namely altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy (Organ 1988). However, not all the studies could replicate each of the five dimensions. As highlighted by Paine and Organ (2000), the meaning, perception, and classes of OCB may vary from culture to culture (Gautam et al. 2005). Given that the five-dimension model of OCB has gained widespread support, the structure of OCB among Japanese employees could be examined by applying the possibility of the transposition of the OCB research methodology to the Japanese context. Therefore, a reasonable way to start is to study the five dimensions of altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy, in the light of their meanings in the Japanese context.

Altruism refers to behavior that is directly and intentionally aimed at helping a specific person in face-to-face situations (Smith, Organ and Near 1983), which is regarded as an important dimension of OCB in a number of studies. In Japanese companies, behavior such as orienting new people and assisting someone with a heavy workload is expected and encouraged by management. However, the underlying mechanism of such behavior is not motivated by specific individual-oriented, but rather by, voluntary involvement in the activities contributing to other individuals and the organization. In this respect, the dimension of civic virtue is very similar, in that civic virtue also involves voluntary involvement. Civic virtue is defined as describing a posture of responsible, constructive involvement in the political or governance process of the organization such as the ongoing activities pertaining to governance (Organ et al. 2006). In the Japanese context, active

participation in the activities, which might contribute to the organizational process, could be considered in the same category as helping behavior. Therefore, rather than being distinguishable dimensions, altruism and civic virtue might be combined together as an overall dimension of voluntary involvement, which refers to active behavior that might benefit both other individuals and the organizational process following the employees' own initiatives.

In addition, in a Western model of OCB, generalized compliance refers to the particularly high order of compliance with the constraints upon individuals necessary to bring about a cooperative system, such as punctuality in arriving at work or at meetings, and exemplary attendance (Konovsky and Organ 1996). Such an explanation might be confusing in the Japanese context. Many traditional Japanese employees engage in overtime work without any complaint. Punctuality and exemplary attendance are considered as taken for granted reflecting individual working attitudes and indicating personal industry and seriousness toward the job, rather than compliance to the organizational constraints. Such meaning of generalized compliance could be combined with the conscientiousness dimension, and so be regarded as personal industry in the Japanese context.

On the other hand, the dimension of sportsmanship in the Western context might indeed reflect what Japanese think about generalized compliance. Sportsmanship is often reflected as a form of OCB relating to things people choose not to do, including tolerance toward occasional inconveniences and not complaining about work assignments (Organ et al. 2006). In the Japanese context, the behavior of choosing not to do something and tolerance implies a high level of compliance and obedience. Also, given that the concept of sportsmanship is not familiar to Japanese, generalized compliance could be viewed as an OCB dimension, although it should be noticed that the meaning of generalized compliance dimension in the Japanese context resembles that of sportsmanship in the Western context.

Finally, the basic idea behind the courtesy dimension in the Western context is to avoid practices that make other people's work harder and to give them enough notice when you have to add to their load (Organ 1988; Organ et al. 2006). Although courtesy is definitely important in Japanese culture, it is a commonsense attitude rather than something that deserves discussion at the workplace. In some sense, courtesy is a fundamental virtue that is pursued by all Japanese people. Being courteous is a basic requirement for every citizen and far from what it means to be a 'good citizen.' Therefore, it is not desirable to include courtesy in the OCB dimensions in the Japanese context.

Overall, the above examination on the five dimensions proposed in the Western context in comparison to their meanings in the Japanese context suggests that OCB might be enacted differently in Japanese companies. First, altruism and civic virtue might be considered together as an overall dimension of voluntary involvement, which refers to active behavior that might contribute both to other individuals and to organizational process. Second, what is called generalized compliance in the Western context could be combined with the conscientiousness dimension and so be regarded as the personal industry dimension of OCB in the Japanese context. Finally, although distinct from its original meaning in the Western context, generalized compliance could be viewed as a third dimension of OCB, which resembles the meaning of sportsmanship in the Western context. Based on the above analysis, the following hypotheses are focused on the relationship between organizational commitment and the three dimensions of voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry in the Japanese context.

Hypotheses

Many researchers have shown interests in the relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. Table 1 briefly reviews previous literature regarding the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB. As shown in the table, previous studies have mostly confirmed the assumption that affective organizational commitment is positively related to OCB (e.g. Schappe 1998; Alotaibi 2001; Riketta and Landerer 2002; Somech and Bogler 2002) with a little exception (e.g. Williams and Anderson 1991). Affective commitment is positively related to individual target OCB (Bolon 1997), helping behavior (Dyne and Pierce 2004; Feather and Rauter 2004), loyalty, service delivery and participation (Lin, Hung and Chiu 2008), and altruism and compliance (Shore and Wayne 1993; Gautam et al. 2005). However, the relationships between affective commitment and particular OCB dimensions might be sensitive to the sample characteristics, as with the difference shown between Indian and USA sample in Kwantes (2003). While in the Indian sample, affective commitment is positively related to personal industry, individual initiative, and loyal boosterism, affective commitment in the USA sample is positively related to individual initiative, interpersonal helping, and loyal boosterism. In contrast to the relationship between affective commitment and OCB dimensions, as pointed out by Meyer and Allen (1997), a quite different pattern emerges when the relationship between continuance commitment and OCB is examined. As indicated by Table 1, some suggest negative relationships (Shore and Wayne 1993; Gautam et al. 2005; Cohen and Keren 2008) between continuance commitment and OCB, while others report that continuance commitment and OCB are not related (Bolon 1997; Kwantes 2003). Overall, the above studies suggest that although a straightforward positive relationship might exist between affective commitment and OCB, the nature of the relationship is also dependent on the particular dimensions of OCB examined (e.g. Kim 2006) as well as the sample characteristics (e.g. Kwantes 2003). Also, the relationships between OCB and other commitment dimensions should be examined with great prudence.

Thus far, there has been no consensus with respect to the dimensions of organizational commitment with a sample taken from Japanese employees. However, various empirical research carried out by Japanese scholars imply that two common dimensions were demonstrated by most studies, including affective and continuance commitment (Tao 1997; Suzuki 2002). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed concerning whether affective and continuance commitment is related to the three OCB dimensions of voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry in the Japanese context.

Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (Meyer and Allen 1997). A positive exchange process with the organization might encourage employees to contribute in a spontaneous way to the organization, such as OCB (Cohen and Keren 2008). In Japanese companies, the development of cohesiveness within the firm is a major objective of Japanese personnel policies throughout the working life of an employee (Hatvany and Pucik 1981). Workers have high loyalty because the company cares for them through extensive welfare provisions (Taylor 2001). Also, the high levels of loyalty and obligation toward the organization result from social rather than financial contracts (Horn and Cross 2009). Consequently, traditional Japanese company men might feel indebted to the company and are willing to contribute to the organization. Such willingness to contribute might be transformed to their voluntary involvement with the organization and others, as reflected

Table 1. Previous studies on the direct relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions.

<i>Author(s)</i>	<i>Organizational commitment</i>	<i>OCB measurement</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Relationships between organizational commitment and OCB</i>
Alotaibi (2001)	(Affective) organizational commitment	30 items including a variety of behaviors such as compliance, altruism, dependability, house-cleaning, complaints, etc. Individual-targeted OCB (OCBI), OCB primarily benefiting the organization (OCBO)	Employees from six government organizations in Kuwait	Positive relationship supported (after adding job satisfaction, justice, and other demographic variables, the positive relationship disappears)
Bolon (1997)	Affective, continuance, and normative commitment	Altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue	Hospital employees from USA	While affective commitment is among the two important predictors of individual-target OCB, continuance commitment and normative commitment are not related to OCB While affective commitment is positively related to altruism and civic virtue, continuance commitment is negatively related to altruism. Normative commitment is not related to any OCB dimensions
Cohen and Keren (2008)	Affective, continuance, and normative commitment	Helping behavior	Secular Israeli teachers	Positive relationship supported
Dyne and Pierce (2004)	Affective commitment	10-item OCB scale, including helping behavior and extra work	Employees from USA companies	Positive relationship supported
Feather and Rauter (2004)	Affective, continuance, and normative commitment	Altruism and compliance	School teachers from Victoria, Australia	Both affective commitment and normative commitment are both positively related to altruism and compliance, and continuance commitment is negatively related to compliance
Gautam et al. (2005)	Affective commitment	Altruism and compliance	Employees from Nepalese organizations	Affective commitment is positively related to altruism but not compliance
Kim (2006)	Affective commitment	Altruism and compliance	Public employees from Korean government agencies	

Kwantes (2003)	Affective, continuance, and normative commitment	Loyal boosterism, interpersonal helping, individual initiative, and personal industry	Employees from Indian and USA companies	For Indian sample, affective commitment is positively related to personal industry, individual initiative, and loyal boosterism; and for USA sample, affective commitment is positively related to individual initiative, interpersonal helping, and loyal boosterism. Continuance commitment and normative commitment are not related to any OCB dimensions Positive relationships between organizational commitment and loyalty, service delivery, and participation dimensions are supported Positive relationship supported
Lin et al. (2008)	(Affective) organizational commitment	Loyalty, service delivery, and participation	Employees from Taiwan companies	Positive relationships between organizational commitment and loyalty, service delivery, and participation dimensions are supported
Ricketta and Landerer (2002)	Affective commitment	Seven items of OCB including extra work and helping behavior	Employees from a German health-care organization	Affective commitment is positively related to altruism and conscientiousness
Schappe (1998)	(Affective) organizational commitment	Altruism and conscientiousness	Employees from a USA company	Affective commitment is positively related to altruism and conscientiousness
Shore and Wayne (1993)	Affective and continuance commitment	Altruism and compliance	Employees from a USA company	Affective commitment is positively related to altruism and compliance commitment is negatively related to altruism and compliance
Somech and Bogler (2002)	(Affective) organizational commitment	OCBs toward the student, OCBs toward the team, OCBs toward the organization	School teachers from Israel	Positive relationships between affective commitment and all OCBs are supported
Williams and Anderson (1991)	Compliance-, identification-, and internalization-based (affective) organizational commitment	Extra-role behavior (individual-targeted OCB and OCB primarily benefiting the organization)	Full-time employees from USA companies	Significant relationship is not found

in the QC circle activities. Similar to the studies with samples from other countries, affective commitment might be considered as positively related to the voluntary involvement dimension of OCB in the Japanese context.

On the other hand, continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization (Meyer and Allen 1997). Individuals with a high level of continuance commitment primarily care about instrumental interests and benefits with little concern for others and the overall organization (Wang 2004). Traditionally, it is not easy for Japanese employees to leave the company and find a new employer, because it has been thought that individuals should stay with and work for one company for their lifetime in Japan. Although such traditional thought is changing, the cost of leaving the company is still substantially high. Employees with strong continuance commitment are less likely to engage in voluntary involvement activities because they might figure out that voluntary behavior to help others is of no use to their interests. Consequently, it could be speculated that continuance commitment is negatively related to voluntary involvement of OCB in the Japanese context.

H1a: Affective commitment is positively related to the voluntary involvement dimension of OCB in the Japanese context.

H1b: Continuance commitment is negatively related to the voluntary involvement dimension of OCB in the Japanese context.

It has been argued that in Japanese organizations, the complex web of vertical relationships determined by age and gender is manifested by strict behavioral norms, stratification based on position and rank, and long vertical chains of superior–subordinate relations (Peltokorpi 2008). Individuals are expected to show great respect and absolute compliance to their supervisors and leaders. In such an organizational culture, the loyalty and commitment to the company might be reflected in individual compliance. Employees with high levels of affective commitment might positively show reciprocation to the organization with high levels of compliance, and without questioning various company rules and norms, or the decisions made by supervisors and top management teams. However, on the other hand, affective commitment might also allow Japanese employees to challenge the status quo. Rather than showing silence and compliance in the face of problems, actively solving the various issues that arise is viewed as a positive contribution to the company, regardless how trivial the issue might be. Therefore, in the situation where complaints about trivial issues might turn out to be a positive contribution to the company, Japanese employees with a high affective commitment are not considered to be high in generalized compliance. The complex meaning involved in generalized compliance makes it hard to contemplate a straightforward positive relationship between affective commitment and generalized compliance in the Japanese context.

However, if a Japanese employee cares about the costs associated with leaving the company, the person will be careful to follow the company rules and show great compliance to their environment. As argued above, in the Japanese context, strict behavioral norms and absolute compliance to supervisors and leaders are implicitly embedded in the organizational culture. Individuals with a high degree of continuance commitment would not break the behavioral norms because they want to protect their self-interests. Also, in contrast to individuals with a high level of affective commitment, individuals with a high level of continuance commitment would not risk losing the current benefits and challenge the status quo because it might be very costly for them if they could not stay with the company any longer. Therefore, although in a passive sense, it could be speculated that

individuals with high levels of continuance commitment might be high in generalized compliance in the Japanese context.

H2: Continuance commitment is positively related to the generalized compliance dimension of OCB in the Japanese context.

Additionally, the relationship between organizational commitment and personal industry might be straightforward. Japanese employees are known for their long working hours. Individuals with high level of affective commitment might work hard for the benefits of the organization, which could be considered to be individual diligence. As a result, affective commitment might be related to personal industry. On the other hand, there is no evidence to support the speculation that continuance commitment might be related to personal industry. Individuals with high level of continuance commitment might show personal industry if their efforts are directly linked to profits and losses. However, while the evidence shows that in traditional Japanese companies, the connection between personal efforts and benefits is not clear (Debroux 2003), it might not be necessary for individuals, who care about their self-interests and the costs associated with leaving the company, to show personal industry. Consequently, although affective commitment might be considered as positively associated with personal industry, continuance commitment is not related to personal industry in the Japanese context.

H3: Affective commitment is positively related to personal industry dimension of OCB in the Japanese context.

Method

Participants

The present study is carried out in a mid-sized family-owned manufacturing company located in Kyoto, Japan. The company president is the fourth generation of the family business with a history of over 60 years. The company has established global networks of good reputation with its excellent and advanced weighing technology. As a traditional Japanese company with a relatively long period of history, the company has developed its own management philosophy of great commitment to customers and technology to guide the business management. With the permission of the president, a total of 1300 questionnaires were distributed to all the full-time employees, along with envelopes that were stamped and addressed to the researchers to allow for anonymous reporting. For the purpose of secrecy and to respect privacy, respondents were asked not to write any characters other than circling appropriate options in the questionnaires. As a result, 753 of the questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 57.92%. However, 54 questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete data, leaving a total of 699 response sets.

The final 699 questionnaires include 553 males and 146 females: 204 were in their twenties, 245 in their thirties, 165 in their forties, and 85 in their fifties. Among the 699 participants, 491 have long been working for the company since their graduation from school.

Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment is measured by eight items from a revised version of Meyer and Allen (1991). Affective commitment is measured by four items: 'I am very happy to be a member of this organization,' 'I feel great loyalty toward this organization,' 'I would

feel guilty if I left my organization now,' and 'I owe a great deal to my organization.' Continuance commitment is measured by another four items: 'Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization right now,' 'It would be very hard for me to leave the organization right now, even if I wanted to,' 'It would be too costly for me to leave my organization right now,' and 'I would be spending the rest of my career in this organization.' The original alphas of affective commitment and continuance commitment are 0.83 and 0.73, respectively.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)

In this study, the OCB is measured by items with reference to Konovsky and Organ (1996) and Organ (1988). However, because some questions do not make sense to the Japanese, finally 11 items are used with some original questions that would be easily understood by Japanese employees, following the suggestion of native Japanese researchers. Voluntary involvement is measured by five items: 'I always help others who are in need of support,' 'I would like to help others even by sacrificing my own time,' 'I always try to give others useful advice for avoiding failure,' 'I am always actively involved in any change in my company,' and 'I am always actively involved in the developments and activities of the company.' Generalized compliance is measured by four items: 'I would not complain a lot about trivial matters,' 'I would not complain about any change in work methods in my department,' 'I would not find fault with the company,' and 'I would not hurt others' feelings even as a joke.' Furthermore, personal industry is measured by two items: 'I never take a break without a legitimate reason' and 'I never stop the work at hand during job time unless it is necessary.' The original alphas of voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, personal industry, and the overall OCB measures are 0.72, 0.69, 0.76, and 0.76, respectively.

Control variables

Gender (female = 0, male = 1), age (20–29 = 1, 30–39 = 2, 40–49 = 3, over 50 = 4), status (junior employee = 1, assistant manager = 2, manager = 3, general manager = 4, board member = 5), and turnover experience (individuals with no turnover experience = 0, individuals with previous turnover experience = 1) are added as control variables in this study.

Analyses and results

Factor analysis

To testify the theoretical validity of the three-dimension model of OCB, a principal factor method with a varimax rotation is performed on the 11 items developed to measure OCB. The result of the factor analysis is shown in Table 2. Three clear factors emerge as the result. The first factor, defined by the first five items, is based on the voluntary involvement behavior. The second factor is measured by four items as generalized compliance. The third factor, using the two remaining items, reflects personal industry.

Discriminant validity

The discriminant validity of the constructs is assessed with confirmatory factor analysis. First, a five-factor model (affective commitment, continuance commitment, voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry) is examined. This model has a good fit to the observed covariance matrix with all standardized factor loadings being

Table 2. Factor analysis results ($n = 699$).

	<i>Item</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
1	I am always actively involved in any change in my company	0.70***	0.11	0.15
2	I am always actively involved in the developments and activities of the company	0.70***	0.06	0.21
3	I always help others who are in need of support	0.53***	0.18	-0.02
4	I always try to give others useful advice for avoiding failure	0.51***	0.02	0.04
5	I would like to help others even by sacrificing my own time	0.43***	0.19	0.03
6	I would not complain about any change in work methods in my department	0.07	0.69***	0.14
7	I would not complain a lot about trivial matters	0.18	0.56***	0.10
8	I would not find fault with the company	0.06	0.52***	0.11
9	I would not hurt others' feelings even as a joke	0.16	0.51***	0.16
10	I never take a break without a legitimate reason	0.08	0.21	0.79***
11	I never stop the work at hand during job time unless it is necessary	0.16	0.26	0.68***
	Percentage of variance explained	16.40	13.77	11.12
	Eigenvalues	1.80	1.51	1.22

Note: *** $p < 0.001$.

significant. Then, a series of conceptually reasonable models is compared with the baseline model. Table 3 summarizes these results and shows that the baseline model with five factors to be the best fit. In addition to the three dimensions of OCB, affective commitment and continuance commitment are also shown to be effective dimensions of organizational commitment.

Correlations

Table 4 indicates descriptive statistics and correlations of all the variables of the present study. As indicated by Table 4, affective commitment is positively related to voluntary involvement ($r = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$), generalized compliance ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$), and personal industry ($r = 0.18$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, continuance commitment is positively associated with voluntary involvement ($r = 0.23$, $p < 0.05$), generalized compliance ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.01$), and personal industry ($r = 0.12$, $p < 0.05$). The above relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions are consistent with H1a, H2, and H3. In addition, while the positive relationship between continuance commitment and voluntary involvement is not congruent with H1b, the positive relationship might be the result of a high correlation between continuance commitment and affective commitment. Further methods are needed in examining the hypotheses regarding the relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. Similarly, the positive correlations between affective commitment and generalized compliance, continuance commitment, and personal industry could not simply confirm that straightforward positive relationships exist between these variables.

Multiple regression analyses

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses are used to examine the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. In the first step, the four control variables of gender, age, status, and turnover experience are included. Next, affective commitment and continuance commitment are added in the second step. The results of

Table 3. Comparison of measurement models.

Model	No. of factors	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA
Baseline	Five factors: voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, personal industry, affective commitment, continuance commitment	626.2	142		0.91	0.88	0.89	0.07
1	Four factors: voluntary involvement + generalized compliance, personal industry, affective commitment, continuance commitment	1008.9	146	382.7***	0.85	0.80	0.80	0.09
2	Four factors: voluntary involvement + personal industry, generalized compliance, affective commitment, continuance commitment	959.2	146	333***	0.87	0.83	0.81	0.09
3	Four factors: voluntary involvement + generalized compliance + personal industry, affective commitment, continuance commitment	841.6	146	215.4***	0.88	0.85	0.84	0.08
4	Three factors: voluntary involvement + generalized compliance + personal industry, affective commitment, continuance commitment	1243.0	149	401.4***	0.82	0.77	0.74	0.10
5	Two factors: voluntary involvement + generalized compliance + personal industry, affective commitment + continuance commitment	1291.6	151	48.6***	0.82	0.77	0.73	0.10
6	One factor: voluntary involvement + generalized compliance + personal industry + affective commitment + continuance commitment	1914.9	152	623.3***	0.74	0.67	0.58	0.13

Note: *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 4. Means, standard deviation, and inter-correlations among study variables (n = 699).

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Voluntary involvement	3.99	0.56								
2. Generalized compliance	3.59	0.75	0.29**							
3. Personal industry	3.87	0.95	0.25**	0.37**						
4. Affective commitment	3.68	0.83	0.37**	0.28**	0.18**					
5. Continuance commitment	3.47	0.85	0.23**	0.27**	0.12**	0.66**				
6. Gender	0.79	0.41	0.04	-0.10*	-0.03	0.02	0.05			
7. Age	2.19	0.99	0.12**	0.17**	0.12**	0.26**	0.10**	0.30**		
8. Status	1.49	0.83	0.21**	0.12**	0.05	0.27**	0.13**	0.30**	0.53**	
9. Turnover experience	0.29	0.46	0.06	0.13**	0.07	0.06	0.05	-0.08*	0.18**	-0.04

Note: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01.

hierarchical multiple regression analyses are shown in Table 5. For the regressions on voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry, the significance of the ANOVAs reaches the levels $p < 0.001$ in all the models including affective and continuance commitment. Model 1b indicates that while affective commitment is positively related to voluntary involvement ($\beta = 0.34, p < 0.001$), continuance commitment is negatively related to voluntary involvement ($\beta = -0.08, p < 0.05$), which suggests that H1a and H1b are supported. Also, consistent with H2, Model 2b shows that continuance commitment ($\beta = 0.20, p < 0.01$) is positively related to generalized compliance. However, the positive relationship between affective commitment ($\beta = 0.8, p < 0.05$) and generalized compliance is beyond expectation. Additionally, regarding the regression on personal industry, Model 3b shows that while affective commitment ($\beta = 0.12, p < 0.05$) is positively associated with personal industry, continuance commitment is not associated with personal industry. The above result indicates that H3 is also supported.

Structural equation modeling

Finally, structural equation modeling is further used to test the overall relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. Figure 1 presents the results of the structural equation model. Numbers shown along the paths in Figure 1 represent standardized regression coefficients. In line with the general argument, affective commitment and continuance commitment are allowed to be correlated in the model. Also, the fit of the model is shown as following: $\chi^2 (142, N = 699) = 626.2, p < 0.001$, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.07, goodness of fit index (GFI) = 0.91, adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) = 0.88, and comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.89. Affective commitment is positively related to voluntary involvement ($\beta = 0.69, p < 0.001$) and personal industry ($\beta = 0.15, p < 0.05$). Consistent with the results of multiple regression models, the above results suggest that H1a and H3 are supported. Furthermore, continuance commitment is negatively related to voluntary involvement ($\beta = -0.29, p < 0.001$), which suggests that H1b is supported. In addition, consistent with H2, continuance commitment is positively associated with generalized compliance ($\beta = 0.43, p < 0.001$). In the structural equation modeling, the positive relationship between affective commitment and generalized compliance shown in the hierarchical multiple regression analyses no longer exists, which indicates that, when the correlation between affective commitment and continuance commitment is taken into consideration, all the relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions are consistent with the original hypotheses.

Implications

Theoretically, the present study extends the understanding of OCB with respect to traditional Japanese culture and values. Although there is now considerable research regarding OCB, the issues of the OCB of Japanese employees have seldom been touched upon. Recent studies begin to examine the OCB in terms of national culture differences. For example, the cultural collectivism of China has been compared with other countries, with the results that extended dimensions of OCB exist, such as self-training and social welfare participation (Farh, Zhong and Organ 2004). Although Japan is also regarded as a country with a highly collectivist culture, the social culture foundation of collectivism is different. In Japan, interpersonal relationship is bounded by contextual social culture rather than by the pursuit of mutual benefits. Therefore, in the Japanese sense, OCB is a kind of behavior benefiting all others and also the organization. For example, voluntary

Table 5. Multiple regression analyses on OCB.

	Voluntary involvement		Generalized compliance		Personal industry	
	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3a	Model 3b
Gender	-0.02	0.00	-0.16***	-0.16***	-0.06	-0.05
Age	0.02	-0.03	0.12**	0.11*	0.11*	0.09*
Status	0.21***	0.13**	0.12*	0.07	0.00	-0.02
Turnover experience	0.08*	0.07	0.09*	0.08*	0.05	0.04
Affective commitment		0.34***		0.08*		0.12*
Continuance commitment		-0.08*		0.20**		0.04
F	9.33***	21.08***	10.82***	17.02***	2.80*	4.26***
Df	698	698	698	698	698	698
R ²	0.05	0.16	0.05	0.12	0.02	0.04

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.

Note: The coefficients shown here are standardized regression coefficients.

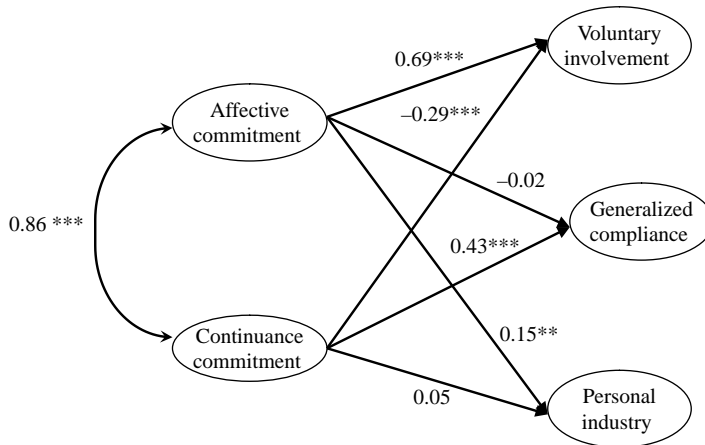


Figure 1. Structural equation modeling results of organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. Control variables are included in the analysis but are not shown for simplicity.

involvement does refer not only to the helping behavior that would benefit any particular individuals but also to various activities that are of benefit to the company. Also, generalized compliance is consistent with traditional Japanese culture in laying emphasis on conforming to authority. In addition, personal industry is desirable in the Japanese context, because it might improve organizational effectiveness rather than individual performance.

Furthermore, the results not only indicate that the way individuals create and visualize their relationships with the organization might affect the way that they contribute to the organization but also imply that the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions should be considered in the light of the specific social context. Conceptually, while organizational commitment refers to the psychological linkage with the organization, focusing on the individual cognitive and emotional linkage with the organization, OCB centers on individual self-definition on how to contribute to the organization in a way where individuals can use their own initiative. Although the linkage between individual attitudes and behavior might be straightforward, the results show more complex patterns once the dimensions of organizational commitment and OCB are taken into consideration. The present research not only replicates the results of some other studies but also provides new evidence with Japanese employees. For example, although affective commitment is related to voluntary involvement and personal industry, it is not associated with generalized compliance once the association between affective commitment and continuance commitment is considered. Also, while continuance commitment is considered as a negative or a non-related factor of OCB in many other studies, the present research suggests that continuance commitment is positively associated with generalized compliance. In the Japanese context, individuals with a high level of continuance commitment would work hard to protect their self-interest by following behavioral norms and showing compliance to authority and organization. As a result, continuance commitment is positively related to generalized compliance.

Practically, the intricate relationships between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions suggest that Japanese companies should pay more attention to maintaining a high loyalty workforce in the positive sense. As indicated by the argument that high power

distance and hierarchical societal structures are likely to generate compliance (Gautam et al. 2005), Japanese employees are generally known as high loyalty individuals, in that they show great compliance to supervisors and authority. However, some offer the criticism that Japanese employees are loyal only because they would suffer loss if their company failed (Gill and Wong 1998). The association between continuance commitment and generalized compliance suggests that loyalty to authority might be based on their awareness of the cost of leaving, rather than on a positive sense of emotional attachment to the company. Other evidence also shows that Japanese might be less satisfied with their jobs and less committed to their organizations than the British or the Americans (Reitsperger 1986), which is contrary to popular opinion (Gill and Wong 1998). Japanese companies should try to create a more friendly organizational culture, atmosphere, and environment to boost the affective commitment of individuals.

In addition, this research provides intriguing implications with regard to appraisal systems in Japanese companies. Traditionally, morale and attitude appraisal has been included as an important part of appraisal systems, which implies that traditional Japanese companies encourage OCB by evaluating individuals with high morale performance factors, such as altruistic behavior and personal diligence. However, since the 1990s, there has been a growing acknowledgment that traditional patterns of human resource management are under structural pressures to change (Sano 1993). Wage and performance appraisal systems have been shifting to a performance basis (Shibata 2000), which might improve individual motivation by clearly specifying outputs that will be rewarded. However, the argument with respect to the pros and cons of the adoption of a pay-for-performance appraisal system continues. It is considered that in general, pay-for-performance systems, which narrowly define performance to include only task performance, might decrease the frequency of OCB (Deckop, Mangel and Cirka 1999; Organ et al. 2006). The overemphasis on individual performance in Japanese companies might decrease voluntary involvement behavior and, as a result, negatively impact the overall organizational performance. In contrast to the consequence-oriented appraisal system in many Western countries, the process-oriented appraisal system of Japanese companies, which incorporates individual efforts in morale and attitude into appraisal system, might encourage individual OCB behavior. Japanese companies should be cautious in adopting pay-for-performance systems given that they might discourage OCB at the workplace.

Conclusions and limitations

This study helps to deepen the understanding of OCB among Japanese employees and the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB dimensions. Hypotheses are suggested in light of the two dimensions of organizational commitment that are related to the three dimensions of OCB, given that the study proposes a three-component model of OCB which might fit the construct of the OCB of Japanese employees. The structural equation analysis shows that organizational commitment might be related to OCB directly. The key findings are that affective commitment might contribute to voluntary involvement and personal industry of OCB positively, and continuance commitment might be negatively related to voluntary involvement and, simultaneously, positively associated with generalized compliance. It can be inferred from the results that management should focus on the three dimensions of OCB, voluntary involvement, generalized compliance, and personal industry, in order to improve organizational effectiveness. Also, given that the study demonstrates that relationships between organizational commitment and OCB

dimensions are complex, Japanese management should pay attention to maintaining a high loyalty workforce in a positive sense. In addition, the adoption of a pay-for-performance appraisal system should be considered carefully in the light of its possible negative influence on OCB in Japanese companies.

Finally, limitations of the present study could be discussed in terms of its sample and methodology weaknesses. Although participants of the study are recruited from a manufacturing family business, which could be a typical representation of traditional Japanese companies, the family business cannot represent various types of Japanese companies, such as non-family-owned business and foreign-funded companies in Japan. Given that the sampling employed might weaken the generalization of the research findings, future research might be extended to companies of various industries and types of companies. Another possible limitation is the cross-sectional design of the present study. Although most previous studies with regard to organizational commitment and OCB have applied cross-sectional research designs, undoubtedly more future research should be carried out with a longitudinal design to investigate the possible causal relationship. Furthermore, the self-reported OCB might cause bias in this research. As OCB reflects individual contribution behavior, evaluation of OCB by co-workers and supervisor might be more objective. Finally, some studies imply that the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB might be mediated or moderated by other variables (e.g. Donaldson, Ensher and Grant-Vallone 2000; Riketta and Landerer 2005; Baker, Hunt and Andrews 2006; Chughtai 2008). Further research might be done to examine more moderators and mediators between organizational commitment and OCB with Japanese samples, such as leader–member exchange, leadership styles, and psychological contract.

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