Examining Organisational Citizenship Behaviour as an Outcome of an Ethical Work Culture in a Developing Country

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 Abstract

Drawing on both theory and research on organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and ethical work culture (EWC), this study examined the relationship between employees' perceptions of the work ethical culture (WEC) and their self-reported OCB. Convenience sampling (n=839) was used, which comprised of respondents who are permanently employed in a railway organisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The participants completed the Corporate Ethical Virtue Questionnaire (CEVQ), which measured the WEC and the OCB, which measured the OCB. The data was analysed by using multiple regressions to predict the relationship between EWC and employees' OCB. The results indicated that the participants perceived EWC significantly and positively in relation to OCB, and that participants perceived that WEC predicted their OCB. The results are beneficial for future researchers to understand the relationship between WEC and OCB, particularly in DRC organisations, which may be applicable to other developing countries. The study adds value to discretionary behaviour theory by suggesting that a work environment with a positive EWC will encourage workers to engage in discretionary behaviour that benefits both them and the organisation. It is suggested that this study could help human resource practitioners and managers to develop performance strategies that will create an ethical work environment, which encourages workers to display OCB, whilst enhancing job performance.

Key phrases

Ethical work culture; Democratic Republic of Congo and organisational citizenship behaviour

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1. INTRODUCTION

OCB has been a topic of interest and an important area of inquiry for both scholars and practitioners for at least the last three decades (Behery, Al-Nasser, Jabeen & EL Rawas 2018:796). OCB refers to individual discretionary behaviour that is above and beyond the call of specific job requirements and, which is not rewarded by an organisations' formal reward structure (Love & Kim 2019:25 Organ 1997:85). Research shows the importance of the antecedents of OCB (Treviño & Nelson 2010:150). Although the antecedents of OCB that have been identified are classified into two categories, namely organisational and individual, the latter has received the greatest attention from researchers (Love & Kim 2019: 26).

Among the most important organisational antecedents of OCB is ethical work culture (EWC). Recently, EWC, as a subset of organisational culture, has attracted attention mainly with regard to the effect that its dimensions have on employee attitudes and behaviour such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction, OCB, performance and turnover rate (Huhtala, Kaptein & Feldt 2016:335; Love & Kim 2019:26; Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2015:242). EWC refers to the application of principles that govern and address moral matters that arise in the business environment (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2015:243; Riivari & Lämsä 2019:224). EWC has been perceived to be an organisations' ability to inspire its members to act ethically, and to refrain from unethical acts (Riivari & Lämsä 2019:223). Previous studies established that corporate culture predicts work performance and long-term effectiveness (Ariyawan & Suharto 2018:30), and that organisational values relate to employees' level of OCB (Marinova, Cao & Park 2018:1). Although researchers agree that individual perceptions of the national culture and corporate culture are meaningful predictors of some work-related outcomes such as satisfaction and commitment (Scott, Dool & Mancini 2018:54), there is a paucity of research, which examines how EWC affects the display of OCB in the setting of a transport organisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Mitonga-Monga, Flotman & Cilliers 2016:327).

This research has investigated the way in which EWC influences OCB among employees within a DRC transport organisation. Drawing on literature that deals with ethics and OCB, we examine the way in which the existence of normative ethical virtues in an organisation influences individual displays of OCB. As we already know, ethical culture and values play an important role in supporting ethical behaviours, productivity, and organisational performance (Harwiki 2016:285). Encouraging ethical virtues in the work environment is associated with higher levels of employee work engagement (Kangas *et al.* 2017:134;

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Mitonga-Monga, Flotman & Cilliers 2015:243), discretionary OCB (Ruiz-Palomino & Martínez-Cañas 2014:95), and lower employee turnover intention (Kangas *et al.* 2018:710). Therefore, examining the factors that enhance ethical behaviour in the organisation may be seen as an important way of building a positive and ethical work environment that stimulates employees towards conducting themselves ethically, by encouraging productive behaviour. OCB, for its part, is important both in terms of workers' productivity and their organisational functioning (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2015:243). For example, extra-role behaviour can contribute to intrinsic motivation, the achievement of organisational goals, and performance (Andrew & León-Cázares 2015:71-72). Organisations may increase the productive behaviour of their members by creating a work environment that is both ethical and enjoyable, whilst promoting OCB, and can thereby prevent negative outcomes such as non-achievement of organisational goals and low performance (Love & Kim 2019:26). Further, this study contributes to the theoretical and empirical debate on corporate ethical virtue. In this way, perceptions of the meaning of ethical virtue and strong ethical work culture may be regarded as an indicator of a favourable working environment that inspires employees to display productive behaviour, which contributes to overall performance and the effective operations of an organisation. Corporate Ethical Virtue Model (Kaptein 2008:923), which offers a deeper understanding of ethical expectations and OCB, as well as the link to employee performance, is an important area of investigation in a developing-country setting such as the DRC.

2.   THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) WORK CONTEXT

In the DRC, which is a developing country with an unstable political and economic climate, a significant proportion of the manufacturing industry (private and public sectors) is located in urban centres. Hence, job seekers and those from rural areas who are employed in towns commute for long distances, and thus rely on railway transport. Like many other developing countries, the DRC has a railway organisation that provides low-cost transportation services for the vast majority of the population. The railway transport sector is experiencing serious challenges such as corruption, malpractices and the unethical use of organisational resources, impunity, dysfunctional equipment, and poor working conditions (Mitonga-Monga *et al.* 2016:327).

According to Mitonga-Monga and Flotman (2017:272), for this railway transport system to contribute to economic and social development, it has to be committed to ethical standards, and should increase its reliability and responsiveness (Gilpin & Boor 2012:12; Mminele

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2014:2). The DRC is trying to speed up institutional, economic, political, and social reforms to ensure stability, peace, and growth, and to reduce high levels of corruption and unethical behaviour (African Development Bank 2013). Achieving these goals will depend on the individual leaders' commitment to promoting an ethical and favourable working environment. This will encourage workers to engage in productive behaviour. Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers (2015:243) note that encouraging employees to perform better work hard, and 'go the extra mile', or beyond the formal requirements of their employment contract (indicative of OCB), is important to ensure the development of effective operations and performance growth in the railway sector. The findings of this study could be helpful to effect the required changes in organisational culture and employees' performance in the DRCs' railway organisation.

3.   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The article investigates how ethical work culture influences employees' level of organisational citizenship behaviour. It also proposes a mechanism for an ethical structure, which includes characteristics and a cultural environment that could serve to enhance employees' discretionary behaviour. Previous research findings on EWC and OCB places the research level at an infancy stage, hence the relationship of the variable is limited. To discuss the theoretical perspectives, both the Corporate Ethical Virtue (CEV) Model developed by Kaptein (2008:923-947), and the Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Model developed by Organ (1988:1-132) provide the theoretical and empirical background for this study. The next section discusses ethical work culture and organisational citizenship behaviour, followed by a theoretical relationship to prior studies.

3.1   Ethical work culture (EWC)

The CEV model is used to describe the ethics culture of an organisation, and this model is grounded in the virtue theory of business ethics (Riivari & Lämsä 2019:224). Adopting the virtue theory (Kangas *et al.* 2018), this study offers a theoretical viewpoint and increases ones' understanding of ethical work culture. Research on organisational context begins by describing the construct of ethical work culture (Huhtala, Feldt, Hyvönen & Muano 2013:335; Kaptein 2008:923; Treviño, Butterfield & McCabe 1998:447), which is distinct from ethical work climate (Treviño *et al.* 1998:448). EWC is described as a subset of organisational culture, with both formal (codes of ethics, reward system) and informal (peer behaviour, ethical norms) characteristics. Treviño and Youngblood (1990:378) maintain that WEC has developed from a uni-dimensional construct (Treviño & Weaver,1994:113) to one with multiple dimensions, as suggested by Kaptein (2008:923-947). Kapteins' (2008:924) model

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of corporate ethical virtue comprises eight normative qualities that encourage ethical behaviour in organisations. Each of the qualities is described below:

- Clarity refers to concrete, clear, and comprehensible beliefs about employees' conduct;
- Congruency of supervisor refers to the extent to which managers at all levels are role models of ethical behaviour;
- Congruency of management refers to the extent to which top management acts in accordance with virtuous or ethical expectations;
- Feasibility refers to the extent to which the organisation creates conditions that allow employees to comply with the normative expectations;
- Supportability is the extent to which the organisation enforces and supports the codes of conduct among management and employees;
- Transparency refers to the extent to which the consequences of the conduct are observable to both top management and employees in the organisation;
- Discussability refers to the extent to which the organisation provides opportunities to discuss unethical issues; and
- Sanctionability refers to the extent to which employees perceive that unethical behaviour is noticed and punished, and ethical behaviour is rewarded.

EWC is considered as a factor that organisational members have in common in a broad sense, and is thus related to the broad-spectrum concept of organisational culture (Schein 2010:7; & Treviño & Nelson 2010:150). The EWC, including the corporate values and norms, is conveyed through the socialisation process that occurs between employees within an organisation (Kangas *et al.* 2015:1). In an organisation with many workers and sub-units, a prolonged lack of collaboration between units could exacerbate the development of sub-cultures (Kangas *et al.* 2015:2; & Schein 2010:6). According to Kangas *et al.* (2015:1), employees in different work units tend to socialise through their sub-cultures, and have shared perceptions of the common indicators of the organisational culture or its characteristics such as ethicality. Shared perceptions of ethics in the DRC railway organisation have rarely been studied (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2015:243). Previous research shows that EWC influences employees' attitudes, behaviour, and engagement (Huhtala, Tolvanen, Mauno & Feldt 2014:5; Mitonga-Monga & Flotman 2017:271). The present study provides new insight into links between EWC and OCB. The next section discusses OCB.

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3.2 Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)

Outstanding employees perform tasks or activities in a way that it is above and beyond their job requirements (Organ 1988:1-120; Randhawa & Kaur 2015:65). This type of behaviour is important for the organisation to function (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2016:326). To succeed in the current turbulent world of business, successful organisations rely on their employees' enthusiasm and determination to display or engage in voluntary or discretionary behaviour, even though it may not be rewarded by the formal reward system (Organ, Podsakoff & MacKenzie 2006:1-7). These behaviours may lead workers to perform beyond their requirements' tasks (Bolino, Hsiung, Harvey & Lepine 2015:56; Love & Kim 2019:26). As mentioned above, OCB is advantageous for both employees and organisations. Individual employees who 'go the extra mile' show high levels of helping behaviour, mentor co-workers, are involved in and are well informed about the organisation, speak out about ethics, and motivate others to voluntarily take on additional responsibilities (Bolino *et al.* 2014:56).

When OCB is present and encouraged in the workplace, the organisation is a more positive, inspiring, and attractive place at which to work (Organ *et al.* 2006:3). OCB may also benefit the organisation, because such behaviour contributes to the development of social capital, and lubricates the social gears of the organisation, whilst sustaining its operational functioning (Bolino *et al.* 2014:56; Organ *et al.* 2006:3; Podsakoff, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Maynes & Spoelma 2014). The vast majority of OCB research has focused on the effects of OCB on individual-, task-, and contextual performance (Podsakoff *et al.* 2014:87). Research on OCB has followed three streams: the first emphasised conceptualisation, the second explored the antecedents, and the last stream focused on the outcomes of OCB (Podsakoff *et al.* 2014:89; Salehzadeh, Shahin, Kazemi & Shaemi Barzoki 2015:601).

OCB consists of five main components, namely altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2016:327; Organ 1988:12; Organ *et al.* 2006:3; Thomsen, Karsten & Oort 2016:1-19).

- Altruism refers to behaviours such as volunteering to help other colleagues with work-related issues such as a heavy workload and personal matters, and supporting new employees when they first arrive;
- Courtesy refers to discretionary behaviour aimed at preventing work-related conflict with others;

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- Sportsmanship refers to an individuals' willingness to tolerate less than ideal organisational circumstances without complaining and blowing problems out of proportion;

- Conscientiousness is characterised by behaviour that goes well beyond the minimum role requirements; and

- Civic virtue refers to behaviours that indicate the employees' deep concern for and active interest in the organisations' political process, including expressing views, reading e-mails, attending meetings, and keeping abreast of concerns that involve the organisation. Previous studies indicate that helping others with their work, putting in extra hours as needed, participating in meetings, and offering new ideas to improve processes and structures are tangible examples of discretionary or extra-role activities that might be enhanced by an EWC (Erkutlu 2011:523; Khan & Abdul-Rashid, 2012:83; & Ruiz-Palomino & Martínez-Cañas 2014:96). The next section discusses the relationship between EWC and OCB.

3.3   The relationship between EWC and OCB

As mentioned previously, researchers have recently explored mechanisms associated with WEC and employees' attitudes and behaviours (Mitonga-Monga, Flotman & Cilliers 2016:326-327). Several studies have shown that a higher level of organisational ethics related positively to different work-related outcomes such as in-role and extra-role behaviour (Ruiz-Palomino, Martínez-Cañas & Fontodona 2013:173; Yu, Lou, Eng, Yang & Lee 2018:20). WEC is considered to be an organisational resource for both workers and managers. Thus, organisations emphasise ethical virtues by providing clear norms and expectations, which relate to ethical behaviour. This, in turn, may increase employees' job performance and OCB. (Chun, Shin, Choi & Kim 2013:853) found a positive relationship between WEC and social beliefs. A study by Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez, and Sanaz-Valle (2016:30-41) and Vivek (2016) found that organisational culture relates to innovation and performance, but the extent to which ethical virtues influence employees' willingness to become involved in discretionary activities that contribute to the functioning of an organisation in a developing country such as the DRC, is unclear. Therefore, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:

H$_1$: Ethical work culture relates positively to organisational citizenship behaviour.

H$_2$: Ethical work culture positively predict organisational citizenship behaviour

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4.   GOAL OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study was to explore whether EWC related to OCB, and whether EWC predicted OCB in the setting of a transport organisation in the DRC. In view of the known problems, this study was planned to fill a gap in the body of knowledge by addressing the following question: Would EWC influence employees' level of OCB? The findings of this study should contribute to both the theory and empirical knowledge of an ethical culture. It may also inform future human resource interventions about encouraging employees' performance and productivity. These kinds of interventions should lead to positive outcomes in the organisation by encouraging ethical expectations to be present, respected, and applied.

5.   METHOD

5.1   Research approach

A non-experimental quantitative approach, and a cross-sectional design was used for this study, as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2014). Employees completed a questionnaire that required them to provide demographic information, namely the Corporate Ethical Virtue Questionnaire (CEVQ) (Kaptein, 2008:924), and the Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Questionnaire (OCBQ) (Organ, Podsakoff, and MacKenzie, 2006:1-7), which was used randomly for groups, while participation was voluntary.

5.2   Participants and setting

A purposive sample, comprising 839 respondents, of which 32% were women, was selected from a railway transport organisation in the DRC. Participants were full-time employees; most were married (47%), held a university degree (38%), and were in the establishment stage of their careers (between ages 26–40 years). A total of 31% of the participants had six to ten years of tenure in the organisation.

5.3   Measuring instruments

WEC was measured using the CEVQ (Kaptein, 2008:923-947). The CEVQ is a 58-item self-report measure, which is scored on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). The CEVQ measured eight dimensions: Clarity (e.g. "The organisation makes it sufficiently clear to me how I should deal with confidentiality"); Congruency of supervisor (e.g. "My supervisor sets a good example in terms of ethical behaviour"); Congruency of management (e.g. "Senior management reflects a shared set of norms and values"); Feasibility (e.g. "I have adequate resources at my disposal to carry out my tasks

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responsibly"); Supportability (e.g. A mutual relationship of trust exists between workers and management at my workplace"); Transparency (e.g. "My immediate work environment allows workers to discuss ethical issues"); Discussability (e.g. In my immediate working environment, there is adequate scope to discuss unethical conduct) ; and Sanctionability (e.g. In my immediate working environment, ethical conduct valued highly). Kaptein (2008:946-947) reports reliability coefficients of 0.78 to 0.93 for the CEVQ. The present study obtained Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0.79 to 0.97 for internal consistency.

Employees' OCB was assessed by using the OCBQ that Organ, Podsakoff and MacKenzie (2006:1-7) developed. The OCBQ is a 20-item self-report measure, which is scored on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree). It measures five components of OCBQ: Altruism (e.g. "Help others who have a heavy workload"); Conscientiousness (e.g. "Always ready to extend a helping hand to my colleagues"); Sportsmanship (e.g. "Attend functions that may help my organisations' image"); Courtesy (e.g. "Help others who remain absent"); and Civic virtue (e.g. "Take steps to solve others' problems"). Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman and Fetter (1990:107-142) report an internal consistency in the form of a Cronbachs' alpha coefficient, which ranges from 0.70 to 0.85. The present study obtained Cronbach alpha coefficients of 68 to 0.93.

5.4   Research procedure

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the institutions' Higher Research Committee and the organisations' management to conduct the research. The data was purposively collected from an accessible, available, and willing population.   The participants received a package containing hard copies of the following: an invitation letter, indicating the purpose for the research; an approval letter from management, stating its support for the research; confirmation of the safekeeping and confidentiality of the responses; a form, clarifying the individuals' consent and voluntary involvement in the research project, requiring his or her signature; and instructions to complete the socio-demographic information, as well as the two questionnaires. By completing the questionnaires, participants consented to participating in the study. They were also requested to sign a consent form, and to include this with the completed instruments in an envelope, which they had to submit to the researcher.

5.5   Statistical analysis

The researchers used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25 to analyse the data (Arbuckle 2018). The first stage of the analysis calculated the descriptive

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statistics, the mean, standard deviations, and Cronbach alpha coefficients, while the second stage involved correlational analyses to specify the relationship between the CEVQ and OCBQ variables. A cut-off value of a 95% confidence interval level ($p \leq 0.005$) for statistical significance was set (Tabachnick & Fidell 2014), with practical effect sizes of $r \geq 0.30 \geq r \leq 0.49$ (medium effect), and $r \geq 0.50$ (large effect size). During the third stage standardised multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine whether corporate ethical values (CEVs), the independent variable, predicted the (dependent) variables of the OCBQ. For the purpose of this study R^2 values larger than ≥ 0.26 (large practical effect) at $p \leq 0.05$ (Millsap & Maydeu-Olivares 2009:285-310) were regarded as practically significant.

6. RESULTS

6.1 Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis

The mean, standard deviations, Cronbach alpha, and correlations for all study variables are presented in Table 1a and Table 1b, which are illustrated below.

In terms of the CEVQ (EWC) variables, Sanctionability obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.10; SD = 0.62), followed by Overall EWC (M = 4.08; SD = 0.51), Discussability (M = 4.07; SD = 0.60), Congruency of management (M = 4.05; SD = 0.64), Supportability (M = 4.05; SD = 0.67), Transparency (M = 4.02; SD = 0.67), Congruency of supervisor (M = 4.01; SD = 0.68), Clarity (M = 3.63; SD = 0.57), and Feasibility (M = 3.42; SD = 0.83).

In terms of the OCBQ variables, the sample scored highest on Conscientiousness (M = 4.14; SD = 0.55), followed by Altruism (M=4.13; SD = 0.51), Overall organisational citizenship behaviour (M = 4.06; SD=0.53), Courtesy (M = 4.03; SD = .62), Sportsmanship (M = 4.01; SD = 0.64), and Civic virtue (M = 3.98; SD = 0.68). All five components indicated a relatively high level of OCB in the sample. Next, the descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients and correlations are illustrated in Table 1a and Table 1b.

Table 1a: Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients, and correlations between CEVS and OCB

Variables	Mean	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Overall CEVS	4.08	.51	.97	1	0.87***	0.82***	0.76***	0.50***	0.83***	0.84***	0.85***	0.79***

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Variables	Mean	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Clarity	3.63	.57	.88		1	0.76***	0.62***	0.37**	0.67***	0.77***	0.68***	0.62***
Congruency of supervisor	4.01	.68	.84			1	0.70***	0.41**	0.71***	0.74***	0.73***	0.65***
Congruency of management	4.05	.64	.79				1	0.35**	0.65***	0.61***	0.58***	0.57***
Feasibility	3.42	.83	.68					1	0.39**	0.41**	0.29*	0.28*
Supportability	4.05	.67	.83						1	0.74***	0.66***	0.57***
Transparency	4.02	.69	.87							1	0.76***	0.61***
Discussability	4.07	.60	.88								1	0.67***
Sanctionability	4.10	.63	.89									1

CEVS: Corporate Ethical Virtue Scale, OCBQ: Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Questionnaire

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

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Table 1a and Table 1b also show the significant correlation coefficients that were identified between the CEVQ and OCBQ variables. The inter-correlations ranged from $r \geq 0.24$ (small practical effect size) to $r \geq 0.87$ (large practical effect size). These results showed that the zero-order correlations were below the threshold level of concern ($r \geq 0.90$) of multi-collinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell 2014). Overall EWC, Clarity, Congruency of supervisor, Congruency of management, Feasibility, Supportability, Transparency, Discussability, and Sanctionability were positively and significantly related to the OCBQ variables of Overall OCB, Altruism, Conscientiousness, Sportsmanship, Courtesy, and Civic virtue (the p-values ranged between $p \leq 0.001$ and $p \leq 0.005$). These results proved the hypothesis that EWC is positively related to OCB variables.

Table 1b: **Descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients, and correlations between CEVS and OCB**

Variables	Mean	SD	α	10	11	12	13	14	15
Overall CEVS	4.08	.51	.97	0.73***	0.65***	0.58***	0.67***	0.68***	0.65***
Clarity	3.63	.57	.88	0.61***	0.58***	0.48**	0.56***	0.54***	0.55***
Congruency of supervisor	4.01	.68	.84	0.68***	0.59***	0.54***	0.61***	0.62***	0.61***
Congruency of management	4.05	.64	.79	0.58***	0.52***	0.47**	0.55***	0.59***	0.48**
Feasibility	3.42	.83	.68	0.31**	0.26*	0.24*	0.30**	0.30**	0.22*
Supportability	4.05	.67	.83	0.57***	0.50***	0.44**	0.54***	0.56***	0.48**
Transparency	4.02	.69	.87	0.66***	0.55***	0.54***	0.61***	0.58***	0.60***
Discussability	4.07	.60	.88	0.65***	0.56***	0.52***	0.62***	0.59***	0.58***
Sanctionability	4.10	.63	.89	0.61***	0.59***	0.46**	0.51***	0.59***	0.56***
Overall OCBQ	6.06	.53	.93	1	0.82***	0.84***	0.86***	0.88***	0.86***
Altruism	4.13	.51	.87		1	0.67***	0.70***	0.77***	0.74***
Conscientiousness	4.14	.55	.81			1	0.72***	0.71***	0.67***
Sportsmanship	4.01	.64	.79				1	0.83***	0.78***
Courtesy	4.02	.62	.77					1	0.74***
Civic virtue	3.98	.68	.81						1
CEVS: Corporate Ethical Virtue Scale, OCBQ: Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Questionnaire									
* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$									

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6.2 Standardised multiple regression

Table 2a below presents the standardised multiple regression results of models 1, 2 and 3. Sanctionability, Clarity, Congruency of supervisor, Congruency of management, and Discussability showed a significant regression model ($F_{(5.826)}$ = 136.560), accounting for 44% (R^2 = 0.44; $p \leq 0.001$; large practical effect) of the variance in Altruism (OCB). More specifically, Sanctionability (β = 0.279; $p \leq 0.001$), Clarity (β = 0.10; $p \leq 0.001$), Congruency of supervisor (β = 0.133; $p \leq 0.001$), Congruency of management (β = 0.114; $p \leq 0.001$), and Discussability (β = 0.092; $p \leq 0.001$) contributed significantly towards explaining the variance in the Altruism variable.

The CEVQ variables Transparency, Congruency of supervisor, Discussability, and Congruency of management produced a statistically significant regression model ($F_{(5.826)}$ = 111.960), accounting for 35% (R^2 = 0.35; $p \leq 0.001$) of the variance in Conscientiousness (OCB). More specifically, Transparency (β = 0.234; $p \leq 0.001$), Congruency of supervisor (β = 0.187; $p \leq 0.001$), Discussability (β = 0.145; $p \leq 0.001$), and Congruency of management (β = 0.105; $p \leq 0.001$) contributed significantly towards the variance in the Conscientiousness variable.

The CEVQ variables, namely Discussability, Congruency of management, Transparency, and Congruency of supervisor produced a statistically significant regression model ($F_{(5.826)}$ = 182.019), accounting for 47% (R^2 = 0.47; $p \leq 0.001$) of the variance in Sportsmanship (OCB). More specifically, Discussability (β = 0.263; $p \leq 0.001$), Transparency (β = 0.180; $p \leq 0.001$), Congruency of management (β = 0.176; $p \leq 0.001$), and Congruency of supervisor (β = 0.163; $p \leq 0.001$) contributed significantly towards the variance in Sportsmanship (OCB).

Table 2a: Standardised multiple regressions for CEVS as a predictor of OCBQ (*N* = 831)

Variables		B	SE	Beta	*t*	*P*	*R*	*R²*	*ΔR²*	*F*(5;826)	*ΔF*
Model1	(constant)						0.453	0.449+++	0.003	136.560***	4.968
		1.551	0.103		15.023	0.000					
	Sanctionability	0.028	0.004	0.279	7.507	0.000					

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Variables	B	SE	Beta	*t*	*P*	*R*	*R²*	*ΔR²*	*F*(5;826)	*ΔF*
Congruency of supervisor	0.017	0.006	0.133	2.778	0.006					
Clarity	0.015	0.004	0.170	4.031	0.000					
Congruency of management	0.023	0.007	0.114	3.059	0.002					
Discussability	0.008	0.004	0.092	2.229	0.026					
Model 2 (Constant)	1.875	0.114		16.396	0.000	0.351	0.348+++	0.005	111.960***	6.891
Transparency	0.027	0.005	0.234	4.935	0.000					
Congruency of supervisor	0.025	0.007	0.187	3.810	0.000					
Discussability	0.013	0.004	0.145	3.139	0.002					
Congruency of managemen t	0.022	0.009	0.105	2.625	0.009					

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Variables	B	SE	Beta	*t*	*P*	*R*	*R²*	*ΔR²*	*F*(5;826)	*ΔF*
Model 3 (constant)	0.889	0.120		7.409	0.000	0.468	0.466+++	0.009	182.019***	13.385
Discussability	0.028	0.004	0.263	6.305	0.000					
Congruency of management	0.043	0.009	0.176	4.859	0.000					
Transparency	0.024	0.006	0.180	4.198	0.000					
Congruency of supervisor	0.025	0.007	0.163	3.658	0.000					

B = beta; SE = standard error; *t* = *t*-statistic; *R²* = *R*-squared; ΔR² = adjusted *R*-squared; *F*= *F*-value

*** *p* ≤ 0.001

Notes: *N* = 831. *** *p* ≤ 0.001 ** *p* ≤ 0.01 * *p* ≤ 0.05

 +++ *R²* ≥ 0.26 (large practical effect size)

Table 2b below presents the standardised multiple regression results of models 4 and 5. The CEV variables Congruency of management, Sanctionability, Discussability, Congruency of supervisor, and Supportability produced a statistically significant regression model ($F_{(5.826)}$ = 155.538), accounting for 48% (R^2 = 0.48; p ≤ 0.001) of the variance in Courtesy (OCB). More specifically, Congruency of management (β = 0.216; p ≤ 0.001), Sanctionability (β = 0.186; p ≤ 0.001), Discussability (β = 0.176; p ≤ 0.001), Congruency of supervisor (β = 0.151; p ≤ 0.001), and Supportability (β = 0.176; p ≤ 0.001) contributed significantly towards the variance in Courtesy (OCB).

The CEV variables Congruency of supervisor, Transparency, Sanctionability, Feasibility, Discussability, and Supportability produced a statistically significant regression model ($F_{(5.826)}$ = 138.762), accounting for 46% (R^2 = 0.46; p ≤ 0.001) of the variance in Civic virtue (OCB).

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More specifically, Congruency of supervisor (β = 0.292; p ≤ 0.001), Transparency (β = 0.278; p ≤ 0.001), and Sanctionability (β = 0.208; p ≤ 0.001) contributed significantly towards the variance in Civic virtue.

Table 2b: Standardised multiple regressions for CEVS as a predictor of OCBQ (N = 831)

Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	P	R	R^2	ΔR^2	$F(5;826)$	ΔF
Model 4 (constant)	0.784	0.120		6.527	0.000	0.485	0.482+++	0.004	155.528***	6.029
Congruency of supervisor	0.023	0.007	0.151	3.405	0.001					
Sanctionability	0.023	0.004	0.186	5.197	0.000					
Congruency management	0.052	0.009	0.216	5.808	0.000					
Discussability	0.018	0.004	0.176	4.402	0.000					
Supportability	0.015	0.006	0.094	2.455	0.014					
Model 5 (Constant)	1.060	0.166		6.394	0.000	0.459	0.456+++	0.003	138.762***	4.505
Congruency of supervisor	0.049	0.007	0.292	6.553	0.000					

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Variables	B	SE	Beta	*t*	*P*	*R*	*R²*	*ΔR²*	*F*(5;826)	*ΔF*
Transparency	0.040	0.007	0.278	5.919	0.000					
Sanctionability	0.028	0.005	0.208	5.729	0.000					

B = beta; SE = standard error; *t* = *t*-statistic; R^2 = R-squared; ΔR² = adjusted *R*-squared; *F*= *F*-value

*** $p \leq 0.001$

Notes: *N* = 831. *** $p \leq 0.001$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ * $p \leq 0.05$

 +++ $R^2 \geq 0.26$ (large practical effect size)

7.   DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between EWC and OCB. The broader objective was to determine whether EWC had an impact on employees' OCB in a railway organisation in the DRC.

Overall, the results indicate that EWC does indeed have an impact on employees' levels of OCB. Specifically, Sanctionability, Congruency of supervisor, Clarity, Congruency of management, and Discussability significantly and positively influenced Altruism (OCB). Moreover, Transparency, Congruency of supervisor, Discussability, and Congruency of management positively and significantly influenced Conscientiousness (OCB). The results also indicate that Discussability, Congruency of management, Transparency, and Congruency of supervisor positively and significantly influenced Sportsmanship (OCB). Furthermore, Congruency of supervisor, Sanctionability, Congruency of management, Discussability, and Supportability positively and significantly influenced Courtesy (OCB), while Congruency of supervisor, Transparency, and Sanctionability positively influenced Civic virtues (OCB).

7.1   The relationship between EWC and OCB

The results show that EWC is related to altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, civic virtues, and overall OCB. High levels of EWC were related to high levels of overall OCB. This could be explained by the fact that when individuals perceive their work environment to be favourable and ethical, they are likely to engage in discretionary

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behaviours that contribute to the functioning of the organisation. This finding is supported by Ruiz-Palomino and Martínez-Cañas' (2014:104-106) study.
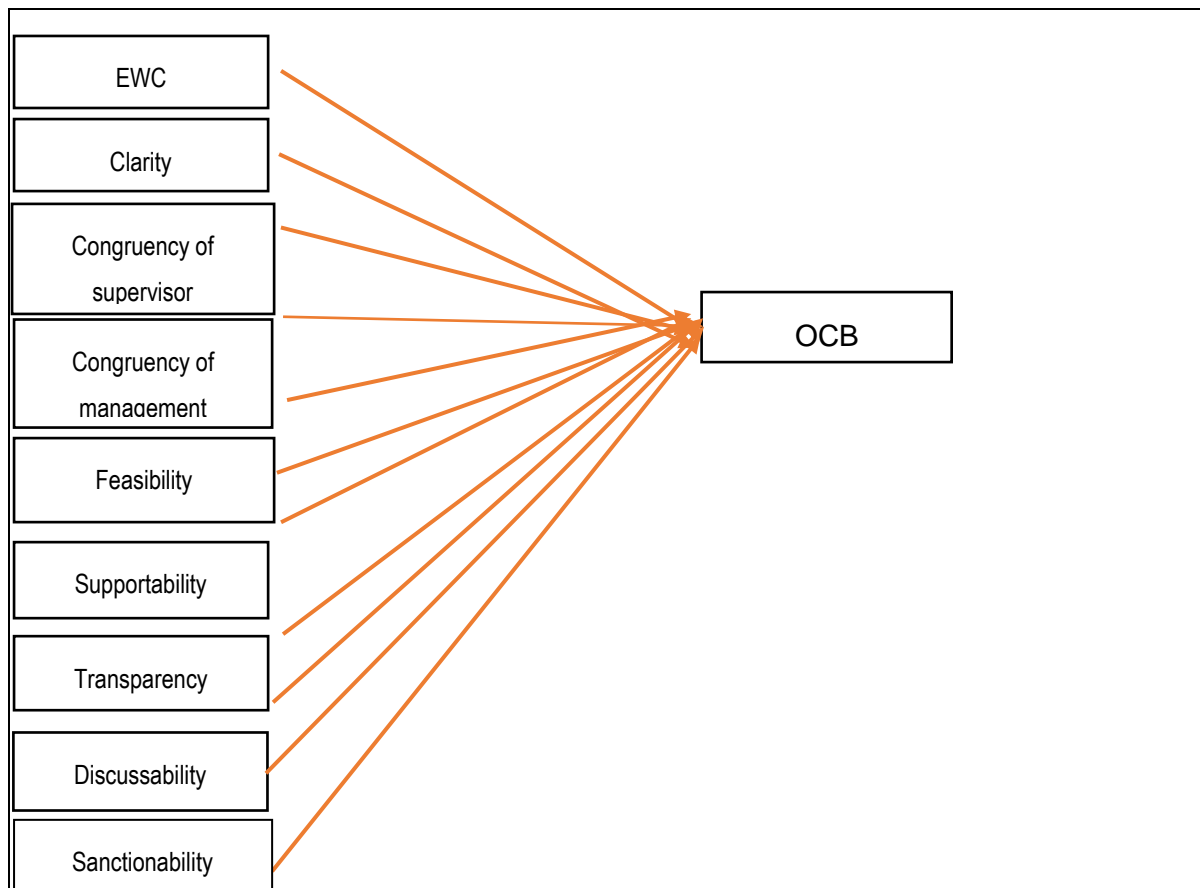
The findings suggest that high levels of clarity, congruency of supervisor, and congruency of management relate to OCB. The finding is likely explained by the fact that when employees perceive clear, concrete, and understandable ethical expectations, and believe that leaders act as role models and respect the organisations' ethical values, then they are likely to exceed predetermined job requirements. These results are similar to those of previous studies (Randhawa & Kaur 2015:67).

The findings of this study indicate that high levels of feasibility, supportability, and transparency relate to high levels of OCB. This suggests that when employees perceive their work environment to be enabling, allowing them to fulfil their obligations, identify with the ethics, and enable organisational members to see the consequences of their conduct, then they will likely engage in in-role and extra-role behaviours that benefit the organisation. This finding mirrors that of previous studies (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2016:326).

Moreover, the findings indicated that high levels of Discussability and Sanctionability correlate with high levels of OCB. This implies that when employees perceive their organisation to provide opportunities to raise and discuss ethical matters, and believe that ethical behaviour is rewarded, while unethical behaviour is punished, then they will likely display OCB. These findings corroborate the findings of Ebrahimpour, Zahed, Khaleghkhah and Sepehri (2011:1920), Erkutlu (2011:524), and Mohanty and Rath (2012:68). It is evident that EWC has a strong relationship with OCB.

The findings are likely to be explained by the fact that OCB activities reflect an employees' willingness to exceed the demands of the formal employment contract. This behaviour also develops when employees see that their own values are aligned with those of the organisation (Mohanty & Rath 2012:65). The main findings in the relationship between EWC and OCB variable are illustrated in the Figure 1 shown below.

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Figure 1:   Main findings in the relationship between EWC and OCB variables

Source: Researchers' own data

7.2   EWC as a predictor of OCB

The regression analyses showed the following: Altruism (OCB) was predicted by EWC (Sanctionability, Congruency of supervisor, Clarity, Congruency of management, and Discussability). Hence, if employees perceive that their work environment acknowledges and punishes wrongdoing and rewards ethical behaviour, and that their managers model ethical conduct and provide a platform to discuss ethical issues, then they will likely engage in helping their co-workers with their workload/s. These results align with those of previous studies (Love & Kim 2019:26; Ruiz-Palomino & Martínez-Cañas 2014:100).

Conscientiousness and Sportsmanship (OCB) were predicted by Transparency, Congruency of supervisor, Discussability, and Congruency of management. This implies that when workers perceive their organisation to be ethical, namely clarifying ethical expectations and providing opportunities and platforms to debate ethical concerns, then they will likely displays OCB and tolerate unfavourable situations in the organisation. This finding mirrors

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that of Hakim, Nimran, Haerani and Alam (2014:10), who found that an ethical culture predicts OCB.

The present study found that Courtesy (OCB) was predicted by Congruency of supervisor, Sanctionability, Congruency of management, Discussability, and Supportability. This may be explained by the fact that when employees perceive their managers to provide clear normative expectations and comply with the code of conduct, and if they perceive that ethical behaviour is rewarded and unethical behaviour is punished, then they will likely refrain from creating difficulties for the employing organisation and their colleagues. These results are similar to those of previous studies (Yu *et al.* 2018:19-26).

Civic virtue (OCB) was predicted by Congruency of supervisor, Transparency, and Sanctionability. This implies that when a positive ethical culture is perceived, namely when employees perceive that their top management complies with the normative expectations, and that the organisation punishes wrongdoers and rewards ethical behaviour, then they are likely to volunteer for and participate in the organisations' operations by attending meetings and functions, for example (Yu *et al.* 2018:27-28). These findings confirm those of previous studies by Erkutlu (2011:525) and Khan and Abdul Rashid (2012:83-84), who found that organisational culture was positively associated with OCB.

7.3   Implications for human resource management

The studies' results offer several implications for practising human resource managers. Organisations attract skilled and qualified workers by creating and developing aspects of EWC that foster an environment that promotes OCB. It is clear from the literature that workers tend to search for and want to devote their time, skills, and competences to companies that have a positive culture, clear values, and a code of conduct (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers 2016:333). Specifically, working in a favourable and ethical organisation that reinforces a code of conduct may facilitate the development of OCB more rapidly through formal and informal organisational systems.

Although previous studies indicate that organisational culture positively influences some work-related outcomes such as performance, satisfaction, and OCB, it is not yet clear how to motivate employees to display high levels of discretionary and helping behaviour, conscientiousness, courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue (OCB behaviours). In this regard, this article suggests that a possible technique to bolster OCB among employees to contribute to the functioning of the organisation is to create an ethical work environment that rewards ethical behaviour and punishes transgression. Employees who perceive their

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organisation as one that has a positive EWC, which supports ethical values and practices experience better fit with their workplace. Consequently, they display high levels of OCB. This finding could assist human resource practitioners and managers when developing performance strategies to create a positive and conducive work environment that encourages workers to display OCB. By fostering an ethical and positive workplace, organisations can attract employees who perceive it to be a desirable place at which to work, and hence spend more time there, and contribute more. This will generate positive attitudes and behaviours amongst employees, and motivate them to display productive behaviour.

As noted previously, a high level of OCB is likely to impact positively on organisational success, which contributes to the well-being of employees, the organisation, and society at large. Positive perceptions of an organisations' EWC may also make the organisation attractive to highly skilled prospective employees, thereby fostering organisational functional success by enhancing the organisations' image, whilst producing a competitive advantage in recruitment and selection of workers, who would display OCB (Yu *et al.* 2018:26).

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study, like any other, has several limitations. Firstly, asking questions concerning an ethical culture may result in social desirability bias, especially when employees believe that their leaders may see their responses. Therefore, a limitation of this study was the use of self-report measures to measure the constructs. Another limitation was the use of a cross-sectional research design, which did not allow for the identification of strong causal influences among variables. Thirdly, the impact of EWC on OCB in the context of only one organisation in a developing country was a limitation, as the findings cannot be generalised to other settings. Future research should replicate the present study and examine EWC together with other employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment and retention. However, the study provides empirical evidence that can be used in future studies to inform appropriate interventions when designing employee performance strategies in developing country settings.

9. CONCLUSION

This research has shown that the employees who perceived EWC reported high levels of helping others when they are busy, adhering to the organisational rules, following organisational procedures, being proactive, and showing loyalty to the organisation. These effects are likely explained by positive perceptions of the organisational ethics culture, which offers a favourable work environment. In other words, the organisation was perceived to be a

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positive and ethical work environment, characterised by concrete and understandable expectations, where leaders behaved as role models, enabled workers' compliance with normative expectations, supported and enforced the code of conduct, provided opportunities to discuss ethical issues, and punished or rewarded (un)ethical behaviour. This, in turn, influenced employees' OCB in the railway organisation in a developing countries' transport sector. The results of the research also highlighted that as an organisational resource; EWC has a significant influence on promoting individual employees' ethical behaviour and attitudes, and affects their willingness to engage in discretionary OCB. Cultivating a positive and ethical work environment would encourage employees to exhibit OCB; it will strengthen their sense of empowerment, responsibility, competence, accomplishment, and feelings of self-esteem, and improve their well-being and health (Dormann & Zapf 2002:58). The study adds to the literature and empirical research on work-related outcomes among railway employees in a politically and economically challenging environment such as the DRC.

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