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Online Organizational Citizenship Behavior: An Exploration of New Avenues for Prosocial Behavior in the Digital Age

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ONLINE ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: AN EXPLORATION OF NEW
AVENUES FOR PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN THE DIGITAL AGE

by

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B.A. Georgetown University, 2016

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science
in the Department of Psychology
in the College of Sciences
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando Florida

Summer Term
2021

Major Professor: Mark Ehrhart

ABSTRACT

Internet use has changed modern workplaces and introduced new options for employee behavior, including organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). While prior research suggests the internet is a unique social environment, and not a simple extension of a traditional in-person workplace, OCB has not been studied in this context. This thesis aimed to identify and document the nature of online OCB and identify how it differs in form and function from traditional in-person OCB. This thesis used a mixed methods approach, with self-report data from 201 participants. Results indicate workers engage in OCB online at a lower rate than in person. Some traditional OCBs do not translate to online settings, but online settings do introduce new possibilities for OCB. Additionally, the nature of the relationships between OCB and other workplace constructs, such as cyberloafing, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, differ depending on if the OCB occurred in person or online. Directions for future research on online forms of OCB are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Rapidly evolving technological innovations have changed the nature of the modern workplace and introduced new options for behaviors and communication strategies. Technology brings many changes to the nature of employee relationships and associated behaviors. Digital communication tools, such as email and instant messaging, and social media platforms, such as Facebook and Slack, are now part of daily work routines for many workers. In a 2014 survey a sizeable portion of workers reported using social media for job relevant reasons, including, 24% of workers making or supporting professional connections, 20% getting information to aid in problem-solving, and 17% building or supporting relationships with coworkers (Pew Research Center, 2016). These numbers would likely be even higher if the survey were conducted in the current year with the higher rates of employees working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Society for Human Resource Management identifies workplace social media as a common phenomenon offering benefits for engagement, learning, and knowledge sharing, though they do identify several associated liabilities and opportunism for inappropriate use (SHRM, 2016).

One major topic worth examining in light of recent technological innovations is organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCB has become a central concept in the industrial/organizational psychology literature, likely due to robust relationships with performance and other desirable outcomes (Organ & Ryan 1995; Podsakoff et al., 2009). While interest in OCBs has endured, the nature of workplace has changed due to major advances in technology. Employees have integrated internet-enabled resources, such as social media, into their work routines, leading to changes in the nature and outcomes of their work-relevant social behaviors (Pillemer & Rothbard, 2018). These changes call for an examination of how

researchers understand OCB in the age of the internet. Further study is needed to investigate if or how OCB may differ in digital spaces, and the extent to which prior theory applies to novel circumstances.

Social media platforms and digital environments provide spaces for employees to engage in behaviors that impact their professional relationships and the organizations for which they work. The convenience and ubiquity of these technology-enabled spaces may allow for desirable prosocial behaviors, such as OCB, to be completed with increased ease and frequency as compared to traditional in person settings. Little is currently known about how OCB manifests in online spaces, though it seems the online social environment is a unique context. This thesis aims to identify and document the nature of OCB in the online context and identify how established OCB measures and theory relate to this new context. To meet these aims and make a meaningful contribution to the literature, this thesis seeks to answer three novel research questions:

1. What behaviors do employees consider to be instances of online OCB?
2. Do traditional OCBs translate to online settings?
3. Do online OCBs and traditional OCBs have the same relationships with other constructs?

Seeking answers to these questions provides a valuable contribution to the literature because of the way work has changed in past decades. The construct of OCB was developed before computers and internet use became key features of the workplace. To understand OCB in the present day, it is critical to understand how OCB has been impacted by these technological shifts.

The following sections present an overview of OCB and its relationship to the context in which it occurs, an introduction to the online environment as a unique social setting, and the research conducted as part of this thesis to explore how OCB manifests in online settings.

OCB Overview

Organizational citizenship behaviors, or OCBs, are "individual contributions in the workplace that go beyond role requirements and contractually reward job achievements" (Organ & Ryan, 1995, p. 775). These include behaviors targeting the organization (or OCB-O), and behaviors targeting individuals (or OCB-I), such as helping. Rather than OCBs being considered as a narrow, finite set of discrete behaviors, they are better understood as a multidimensional construct.

The OCB construct encompasses varied set of possible behaviors, which may be organized into themes. These themes include helping behavior, sportsmanship, organizational loyalty, organizational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue, and self-development (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Helping behaviors are voluntary efforts to assist others with work-relevant problems. Sportsmanship encompasses refraining from sharing of complaints and maintaining a positive demeanor in challenging situations. Organizational loyalty includes promoting the organization, protecting the organization from external harm, and sustaining organizational commitment regardless of circumstance. Organizational compliance is an acceptance and internalization of an organization's practices and policies, resulting in rigid adherence to the organization's rules. Individual initiative behaviors are related to the core work tasks but are marked by high levels of effort or performance that greatly exceed expectations, reflecting a voluntary component. Civic virtue behaviors serve the organization as a whole, such

as interest and input in organizational governance, and actively searching for opportunities for the organization to improve. Self-development behaviors are active pursuits to develop knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics, as an effort to better serve the organization.

OCBs are generally seen as desirable in the workplace context. The idea of employees that go above and beyond formal job requirements is inherently appealing. Research supports that OCBs do in fact have value in the workplace, as they predict desirable outcomes at individual, group, and organizational levels. At the individual level, OCBs predict higher managerial ratings of employees and lower levels of withdrawal behaviors, including absenteeism and turnover (Podsakoff et al., 2009). At the group level OCBs have shown positive relationships with quantity and quality of performance (Podsakoff et al., 1997). At the organizational level, OCBs are positively related to productivity, cost reduction, efficiency, and reduced unit-level turnover (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Evidence suggests that OCB may play a causal role in some of these relationships. Stronger relationships between OCBs and unit-level performance have been found in longitudinal studies as compared to cross-sectional research (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Research investigating the function of OCBs provides further support for causal relationships. OCBs are positively related to knowledge sharing, which may explain part of the relationship between OCBs and performance outcomes (Lin, 2008)

While OCBs are generally seen as positive, it is not the case that an increase in OCBs serves a cure-all for challenges faced by organizations. OCBs do not fix all problems and may introduce problems of their own. Daily OCB has been shown to both improve positive affect and negatively impact perceptions of work goal processes, resulting in simultaneous improvement in job satisfaction and increased emotional exhaustion (Koopman et al., 2016). Moreover, increasing OCB does not always improve outcomes. OCBs also have the potential to backfire

and lead to unintended consequences. Offers of help in the workplace that draw attention to workplace stress, feelings of inadequacy, and lead to worse physical and psychological outcomes for the recipient (Beehr et al., 2010). Overall, while OCBs are generally considered positive, it would be unwise to consider OCB without also giving proper regard to the possibility of limitations and negative repercussions.

OCB and Context

As is true for myriad workplace topics, a nuanced understanding of OCB calls for greater attention to the impact of contextual factors. Behaviors do not occur in isolation but are nested within broad contextual factors such as culture, and individual-specific contextual factors such as personal relationships This does extend to OCB, as the relationship between OCB and performance outcomes can vary across samples, with organizational factors and use of technology theorized as sources of variance (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Even the factor structure of OCB may change with context. In Dutch-speaking samples, there is support for the five dimensions suggested by Organ, but the fit is imperfect, with unsatisfactory convergent validity for civic virtue and sportsmanship (Lievens & Anseel, 2004). OCB research in Malaysian samples is generally supportive of the five dimensions, but also suggests inclusion of an effort dimension for self-ratings and a patience dimension for supervisor ratings (Khalid et al., 2009).

Cultural norms have been shown to relate how OCBs occur and are perceived by workers. In a 2002 study of engineers, American workers saw helping as an unwanted interruption and helped in order to increase their chance of receiving help in the future, while Indian workers framed helping as an opportunity for skill development and demonstrated greater general willingness to help when needed (Perlow & Weeks, 2002). In the United States, non-

white workers experience lower levels of job satisfaction and coworker social support than their white peers, leading to reduced performance of OCB (Jones & Schaubroek, 2004). However, there are certain factors that reduce OCB among white workers specifically. Non-contingent punishment, a form of interpersonal mistreatment, is negatively correlated with OCB for white workers, but not related to OCB for black workers (Thau et al, 2008). Context does not have to be at the scale of national culture to impact OCB. Occupation has been shown to account for variance in civic virtue and sportsmanship, above and beyond the variance accounted for by affect and commitment (Imer et al., 2014). Though limited attention has been given to the impact of context on civic virtue and sportsmanship, considerable attention has been given to the helping dimension.

As helping does not occur in isolation, rather in an interaction between two or more individuals, elements in the greater social and relational context are predictive of helping. An individual's helping behavior is predicted by perceived organizational support, fairness, and affective commitment, and trust among group members moderates the relationship between both perceived organizations support and helping, and fairness and helping (Choi, 2006). The relationship among team members appears to be particularly valuable to predicting and understanding interpersonal helping. High quality social exchange relationships with team members are related to increased levels of helping coworkers (Kamdar & Van Dyne, 2007). Going beyond the level of interpersonal relationships, the nature of the workplace influences helping. Certain work context variables, including extrinsic rewards and work unit stability are positively related to interpersonal helping (Karambayya, 1990). Helping behaviors exist in the context of ongoing social relationships and workplace routines, not as isolated, meticulously calculated events. In interdependent workplaces, seeking and giving help may constitute an

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ongoing process, or helping routine, that multiple employees engage with (Grodal, Nelson, & Sino, 2015). A conceptualization such as this one sees helping events as interconnected and considers how the presence of an overarching routine may impact the likelihood to engage this particular form of OCB.

Introducing the Online Context

Based on the previous section, OCB is best understood when including relevant interpersonal and contextual factors. A currently relevant and understudied contextual factor that impacts the performance of OCB is the use of the online platforms for completing work-related tasks. In response to rapid expansion use of in online platforms, researchers have begun giving consideration to the implications of internet use. This use of online platforms has the potential to both introduce novel challenges and disrupt existing patterns of behavior associated with the social environment. This section provides a general overview of the impact of online platforms for employees and their work; the following section will delve deeper into the implications of these issues for OCB specifically.

Online Risks and Benefits

Research within and beyond the scope of traditional industrial and organizational psychology has established the risk and challenges associated with interactions facilitated by online platforms and has indicated areas of concern relevant to workers and organizations. Online harassment is a pervasive problem, and disproportionately targets women and minorities (Tynes et al., 2013; Finn, 2004; Behm-Morawitz & Schipper, 2016). Other workplace social media pitfalls include wasting time and distributing confidential or unflattering information

about the organization. While organizations have attempted to use policies, filters, bans, and monitoring to curtail these undesirable outcomes, their efforts have been generally unsuccessful (Oppenhaffen & Claeys, 2017; Whitty & Carr, 2006). Employees also demonstrate concern about the integration of social media into work routines. They see that this technology can distract them from completing work tasks, and threaten their personal privacy (Walden, 2016).

Though organizations and employees do have cause to be concerned about social media's impact on the workplace, the potential to improve performance makes workplace social media an appealing option. While use of platforms with instant messaging capabilities are known to cause task interruption, this negative effect can be outmatched by significant improvement to communication performance (Ou & Davison, 2011). Social media can also improve performance without the use of synchronous communication channels, like instant messaging. Facebook, a relatively low synchrony medium, has been shown to be particularly advantageous for improving performance on independent tasks (Lee & Lee, 2018). Despite encouraging findings, employees may have a difficult time clearly seeing the benefit to social media in the workplace. Employees can successfully identify certain social media behaviors that are harmful to job performance, but fail to correctly identify the behaviors that are beneficial to job performance (Landers & Callan, 2014). Organizations would do well to provide clear social media use guidelines that explain and encourage beneficial use.

Workplace social media use is also related to organizational factors beyond impact on performance. Moderate levels of social media can be a strategy for lowering employee burnout, though too much can increase burnout (Charoensukmongkol et al., 2017). The degree to which employees are connected to their coworkers online has implications for how employees perceive their jobs and workplaces. The percentage of an employee's social media connections that are

coworkers is positively related to perceptions of organizational support and spontaneity (Schmidt, 2016). The percentage of coworker connections and amount of time spent engaging in social media with coworkers are both positively related to job satisfaction (Huang & Liu, 2017, Robertson & Kee, 2017). Workplace social media appears to offer both considerable risks and benefits. Continued research in this area, including on OCB in an online context, has the potential to assist organizations in maximizing benefits, while reducing risk of negative effects.

The Unique Nature of the Online Environment

The relationship between work-relevant use of social media and positive work outcomes is more complex than the online space functioning as an extension of the social context. An employee having experience and skills using social media for reasons unrelated to work does not necessarily indicate they will be able to use social media for work-related purposes. Frequent users of Facebook do not have better relationships with coworkers than less frequent users of Facebook, and the frequent users tend to like their jobs less and be more inclined to consider leaving their jobs (Chou et al., 2013). There appears to be a set of unwritten rules for using social media with coworkers. The decision to connect with or "friend" a co-worker on social media is influenced by both the individual's personal approach online privacy management and their perceptions of their organization's privacy orientation (Frampton & Child, 2013). The nature of the offline relationship with a coworker also influences this decision. Social media users are more comfortable friending highly trusted coworkers than coworkers they trust less, and users generally find it inappropriate to receive friendship requests from supervisors, with female subordinates more likely to find this inappropriate as compared to male subordinates (Jiang et al., 2014).

For employees that do decide to engage with coworkers using social media, they must decide the degree to which they integrate their private and personal identities, or separate them using various strategies, including setting up separate accounts for different audiences, using privacy filters targeting coworkers, increased use of private groups and messages, and increased restraint on what information is publicly shared. When individuals perceive their colleagues as moral and sociable, they demonstrate reduced preference to separate the professional and private social media use (van Prooijen et al., 2018). The choice to use a segmented or integrated strategy has potential to impact how colleagues perceive the users. Individuals using an integrated strategy are seen as more likeable than individuals using a segmented strategy (Batenburg & Bartels, 2017). Needs to project a consistent self-portal further complicate the decision to integrate or separate. If employees find their coworkers online self-portrayals inconsistent with offline behavior, this can lead them to see work acquaintances as misleading, hypocritical, and untrustworthy (DeAndrea & Walther, 2011). The way in which online spaces challenge the boundaries of professional and private sphere has real consequences for impression management.

The nature of communication in online spaces demonstrates that offline norms do not always operate in the same way as they typically do to online spaces. In the offline context, diffusion of responsibility occurs when an individual is less likely to respond to situation, due to perceiving others who may be able to respond to the situation (Darley & Latané, 1968). The simple presence of bystanders does not lead to diffusion of responsibility if the characteristics of the bystanders are not consistent with an ability to respond to the striations (Ross & Braband, 1973). While diffusion of responsibility is certainly possible in online spaces, the characteristics of others does not seem to prevent inaction. In email request for information sent to multiple addresses, access to information relevant to other individual's ability or inability to help does not

impact diffusion of responsibility (Barron & Yechiam, 2002). Internet users do not experience the same need to adhere to social norms as they do offline. The online disinhibition effect is particularly likely when platforms increase anonymity and utilize asynchronous communication (Suler, 2004). The nature of these online spaces may afford improper behavior and reduce pressure to preform prosocial tasks.

Another distinguishing factor of the online space is information richness, or lack thereof as compared to in-person communications. Seemingly small details can become magnified in importance in the absence of other information. For example, the specific content of an email signature has been shown to impact whether recipients respond to requests to complete tasks (Guéguen & Jacob, 2002). The lack of information also produces misunderstandings. Online communications often lack the contextual and social cues used to clarify the intent behind otherwise ambiguous exchanges (Kowalski, et al., 2018). Finding such as these support the idea that the online space is not a straightforward extension of an in-person social environment.

OCB in an Online Environment

Online spaces could allow for convenient prosocial exchanges between coworkers. Employees have several potential options for engaging in these constructive behaviors. This thesis focuses on three particular online spaces: private messaging applications, coworker-only social media platforms, and personal social media accounts. While all these online spaces are similar in convenience and means of access, they do have distinct differences. Private messaging applications, such as email or instant messages, may only allow two individuals access to an exchange. Co-worker only social media, such as Slack channels or private Facebook groups, allow many members of an organization to view content, but are not accessible to those outside

the organization. Personal social media, such as personal accounts on Facebook or Twitter, can be seen by people both inside and outside the organization.

Ideally, employees would be able to use these spaces to seek help when needed, quickly fulfill others requests for assistance when possible, and provide support for their organization. However, research suggests that online social interactions do not necessarily adhere the same social norms that govern offline interactions. Online disinhibition and increased diffusion of responsibility may undermine an employee's willingness to help. The group-based nature of certain online spaces may cause reciprocity norms to become less relevant, as employees can make requests for or offers of help that simultaneously target a group and do not clearly connect to past helping events. When OCBs do occur online, they may not be perceived in the same way as would be expected in traditional settings. Perhaps the convenience of online platforms leads OCBs to be seen as easier and less impressive. Conversely, the public, lasting nature of public platforms use may add weight to certain actions. An employee's other online behaviors may also shape the impact of their online OCBs. If their personal online self-portrayals are not consistent with workplace self-portrayals, perhaps their online OCBs are seen as insincere. Given these concerns, it is likely that online spaces are not conclusive to facilitating OCBs in the exact same way as face-to-face environments.

The proposed research seeks to examine the nature of OCB online by asking the following questions:

Research question 1: What behaviors do employees consider to be instances of online

OCB?

It is not known how employees perform or conceptualize OCB in online spaces. It is possible they may resort to novel behaviors that are only possible online, as well as new versions of

classic OCBs that have been modified for new environments. The proposed research will examine the behaviors employees identify as online OCB and how they are described.

Research question 2: Do traditional OCBs translate to online settings?

While many behaviors traditionally seen as OCB can be used both in-person and online, it is not a given that employees do engage these acts online. The proposed research will investigate which in-person OCBs employees use in online spaces and any OCBs that are not used.

Research question 3: Do online OCBs and traditional OCBs have the same relationships with other constructs?

If online OCBs and traditional OCBs are different in meaningful ways, online OCBs may have unique relationships with constructs that correlate with OCB. Investigating the relationship between online OCBs and established correlates (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, and cyberloafing) may reveal differences in the role these behaviors play for workers.

The answers to these questions will help to clarify how OCBs are used in online spaces and identify major similarities and differences as compared to face-to-face contexts. As the concept of online OCB is an emerging topic lacking formal documentation in academic literature, this thesis utilizes an exploratory, mixed methods approach in order to clarify the construct with empirical evidence. This information will provide utility when determining the application of prior theory in a new context, and in providing key background information for further research in this space.

METHODS

Sample

The sample included 190 participants recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk, and 11 participants from the University of Central Florida Psychology Research Participation system. All participants were at least 18 years old, employed and working at least 20 hours in a typical week, and used social media to communicate with coworkers. 59.2% of respondents were female, the average age was 36.6, and the mean number of hours worked per week was 40.1. 70.6% of respondents identified as white, 15.4% as Black, 6.0% as Hispanic, Latino or Spanish, 3.5% as Asian, 3.0% as two or more races, 1.0% as some other race, and .5% American Indian or Alaskan Native. The most common job types were Computer and Mathematical Occupations at 19.4%, Business and Financial Operations Occupations at 17.4%, Management Occupations at 12.4%, and Sales and Related Occupations at 11.9%.

Measures

Open-ended questions were used to allow for participants to share online OCB experiences that may not be fully captured by multiple choice questionnaires. After participants were given definitions of key terms, participants were asked to describe how they have engaged in organizational citizenship behavior in four settings: their workplace, private messages with a coworker, coworker-only social media, and personal social media.

A questionnaire was specifically developed for assessing OCB in workplace social media. Given the exploratory nature of this project, the measure utilizes Podsakoff's broader conceptualizations of OCB. The foundation of this measure is an instrument by Podsakoff et al. (1990) designed to measure the five OCB constructs as identified by Organ (1988). Later

theoretical work by Podsakoff et al. (2000) suggested three potential additional dimensions labeled self-development, organizational loyalty, and organizational compliance, but this work did not include clear guidance for measuring these potential dimensions. As Podsakoff et al.'s (1990) instrument does not capture these three proposed dimensions, additional items were used to expand upon the primary instrument. Items for organizational loyalty and organizational compliance were sourced from established measures (Moorman & Blakely, 1995; Smith et al., 1983). Established items for self-development were not identified, so three new items were developed using Podsakoff et al.'s (2000) conceptualization of this dimension.

Items were modified to measure workplace and online contexts by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement for each item in four contexts: their workplace, private messages with coworkers, coworker-only social media, and personal social media. Certain OCB items, such as "I am punctual" were identified as potentially closely tied to a physical workplace context and may have resulted in participant confusion if applied to online contexts. To ensure items had relevance to online contexts, pilot testing was used to identify problematic items. Fourteen graduate students in industrial/organizational psychology reviewed the items, and indicated if each item was not applicable, possibly applicable, or clearly applicable to each of the three online contexts. Content validity ratios were calculated with the responses and used to differentiate items that were clearly or possibly applicable to the online content from items that were not relevant (Lawshe, 1975). Lawshe's (1975) minimum critical value for fourteen raters is .51, and items that did not meet the minimum critical value were dropped from the measure (see Table 1).

Table 1: OCB Items Dropped After Pilot Testing

Dropped Item	Content Validity Ratio
I keep abreast of changes in the organization [applicable to personal social media]	-0.286
I read and keep up with organization announcements, memos, and so on. [applicable to personal social media]	-0.429
I take steps to try to prevent problems with other workers. [applicable to personal social media]	0.286
I help others who have been absent. [applicable to personal social media]	0.143
I help others who have heavy workloads. [applicable to personal social media]	-0.286
I help orient new people even though it is not required. [applicable to personal social media]	-0.143
I willingly help others who have work related problems. [applicable to personal social media]	0.429
I research developmental opportunities to expand the range of my contributions to an organization. [applicable to personal social media]	0.143
I keep up with the latest developments in the field. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	0.429
I learn new skills to expand the range of one's contributions to my organization. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	0.429
I learn new skills to expand the range of one's contributions to my organization. [applicable to personal social media]	0.429
I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	0.286
I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products. [applicable to coworker-only social media]	0.143
I defend the organization when outsiders criticize it. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	0
I defend the organization when outsiders criticize it. [applicable to coworker-only social media]	-0.143
I show pride in representing the organization in public. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	-0.286
I show pride in representing the organization in public. [applicable to coworker-only social media]	0
I actively promote the organization's products and services to potential users. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	-0.143
I actively promote the organization's products and services to potential users. [applicable to coworker-only social media]	0
I am the classic "squeaky wheel" that always needs greasing. [applicable to personal social media]	0.286
My attendance at work is above the norm. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	0
My attendance at work is above the norm. [applicable to coworker-only social media]	0
My attendance at work is above the norm. [applicable to personal social media]	-0.571
I do not take extra breaks. [applicable to private messages with a coworker]	0
I do not take extra breaks. [applicable to coworker-only social media]	0
I do not take extra breaks. [applicable to personal social media]	-0.426
I am one of my organizations most conscientious employees. [applicable to personal social media]	-0.286

Note: N=14; Minimum critical value for 14 raters =.51

Cyberloafing was measured with Lim's (2002) eleven item measure (α = .93). Turnover

intentions were measured with three items (α = .96) from Adams & Beehr (1998). Job

Satisfaction was measured with three items (α = .89) from Cammann et al. (1983).

Organizational commitment was measured with three items ($\alpha = .77$) from Allen & Meyer

(1990). Perceptions of coworker social media use were measured with six items ($\alpha = .79$) from

Pew's (2016) measure of how workers use social media platforms. Participants were also asked

about their age, gender, race, occupation type, and numbers of hours worked in a typical week.

Complete survey measures are shown in Appendix A.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What behaviors do employees consider to be instances of online OCB?

Responses to open-ended questions on experiences with online OCB were reviewed using a template analysis approach. Known types of OCB, such as helping and sportsmanship, were used as a priori themes. Every response was coded by assigning one or more themes that applied to the content of the text. In the cases where responses included content that was not fully captured by the a priori themes, new themes were created. Four new themes were identified: abstaining, sharing information, supporting interpersonal relationships, and spreading positivity.

In some cases, participants provided responses that confirmed they did perform OCB in the given context, but they did not describe the nature of the behavior. One common way this was done was a participant naming the platform they used, such as saying they used Facebook or Twitter. This response content was coded as a non-specific confirmation of OCB. Table 2 shows the frequency of codes for all categories across the three on-line contexts. Excluding the non-specific theme, the most frequently identified theme for private messages and coworker social media was helping, and the most frequent theme for personal social media was organizational loyalty. Below is a summary of each of the new themes identified, with an example quote for each.

Table 2: OCB Themes in Open-Ended Responses

Theme	Private Messages	Coworker Social Media	Personal Social Media
Helping	83	53	13
Sportsmanship	5	8	9
Organizational Loyalty	0	5	54
Organizational Compliance	1	6	7
Conscientiousness	8	1	2
Civic Virtue	9	27	9
Self-Development	0	1	9
Abstaining	4	11	26
Non-Specific Confirmation of OCB	80	77	50
Spreading Positivity	4	9	7
Friendship	20	15	29
Sharing Information	3	4	4

Note: Single responses may contain multiple themes.

Abstaining

In some instances, participants discussed refraining from engaging online as a form of OCB. This may be a way to protect privacy and reduce distractions. An example of abstaining as OCB is:

I don't allow people from work to access my private social media in order to prevent a conflict of interest.

Sharing Information

Participants described sharing work or industry-related information that colleagues may find interesting or useful. While this is similar to helping, it differs in that it is not directed at solving or preventing specific problems. It may be a more closely aligned with civic virtue, but the behavior does not necessarily serve the organization as a whole. An example of this theme is:

I share work related information that I come across and others may find helpful in

coworker-only message channels.

Supporting Interpersonal Relationships

Participants described using work-relevant social media to build or improve upon

friendship with coworkers. One participant described this type of behavior with the following:

Sometimes I have conversations with co-workers on public social media. I like to keep in

touch with some of my co-workers, and plan personal outings and get togethers with a

few of them. I find it is healthy and beneficial for maintaining work relationships outside

of the office.

Spreading Positivity

Participants described engaging in behaviors intended to boost morale or motivation of

individuals in their organization. This differs from sportsmanship, as it is not in response to

challenging situations. An example of this theme is:

I have posted encouraging and friendly messages meant to bolster the spirits of other

team members. I like to post cheerful images and things that convey good vibes.

Research Question 2: Do traditional OCBs translate to online settings?

Average OCB scores for each setting indicated traditional OCBs appear in all four

contexts, the workplace ($M = 3.87$, $SD = .52$), private messages ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .48$), coworker-

only social media ($M = 3.77$, $SD = .51$), and personal social media ($M = 3.59$, $SD = .52$). A

repeated measures ANOVA with a Greenhouse-Geisser correction showed that mean OCB levels

differed significantly across contexts (F (2.213, 442.584) = 43.461, $p < .001$). The differences between mean scores for each OCB context were statically significant ($p < .001$), with the exception of coworker social media and private messages ($p = 1.000$). Though the differences in mean levels were generally statistically significant, these differences may lack practical significance given that all averages fall between 3 and 4 on a 5-point scale.

To determine which specific forms of OCB occur in the workplace and in online spaces at comparable levels, repeated measures ANOVAs with pairwise comparisons were conducted for each behavior stem to identify statically significant differences in workplace OCBs as compared to the three online settings (see Table 3). Thirty-three online items occurred at lower rates than their workplace equivalents, one online item occurred at a higher rate, "on personal social media, I always find fault with what the organization is doing" (reverse coded), and no significant differences were found for the remaining thirty-two items. These results are summarized in Table 4. Most items had average scores above 3, the scale midpoint. The only items with average scores below 3 were organizational compliance items on refraining from personal or idle online conversations.

Table 3: Comparing Online OCBs to Equivalent Workplace OCBs

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Pairwise Comparison p value
Conscientiousness			
I obey company rules and regulations even when no one would notice.			
at my workplace	4.29	.793	
in private messages with a coworker	4.04**	.945	.003
on coworker-only social media	4.09**	.840	.005
on personal social media	3.76***	1.037	.000
I am one of my organizations most conscientious employees.			
at my workplace	3.82	.937	
in private messages with a coworker	3.68	.999	.068
on coworker-only social media	3.65**	.979	.007
Sportsmanship			
I consume a lot of time complaining about trivial matters. (R)			
at my workplace	3.54	1.345	
in private messages with a coworker	3.35	1.345	.103
on coworker-only social media	3.63	1.306	1.000
on personal social media	3.42	1.317	1.00
I always focus on what's wrong, rather than the positive side. (R)			
at my workplace	3.48	1.327	
in private messages with a coworker	3.40	1.382	1.000
on coworker-only social media	3.52	1.312	1.000
on personal social media	3.52	1.308	1.000
I tend to make "mountains out of molehills." (R)			
at my workplace	3.65	1.353	1.00
in private messages with a coworker	3.62	1.388	.434
on coworker-only social media	3.75	1.300	1.000
on personal social media	3.70	1.289	1.000
I always find fault with what the organization is doing. (R)			
at my workplace	3.59	1.282	
in private messages with a coworker	3.47	1.357	.325
on coworker-only social media	3.73	1.272	.213
on personal social media	3.76*	1.190	.035
I am the classic "squeaky wheel" that always needs greasing. (R)			
at my workplace	3.62	1.303	
in private messages with a coworker	3.55	1.341	.617
on coworker-only social media	3.61	1.288	1.000
Civic Virtue			
I keep abreast of changes in the organization			
at my workplace	4.04	.916	
in private messages with a coworker	3.93	.938	.158
on coworker-only social media	3.92	.918	.145
I read and keep up with organization announcements, memos, and so on.			
at my workplace	4.19	.823	
in private messages with a coworker	3.94***	.936	.000
on coworker-only social media	3.99*	.922	.010

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Pairwise Comparison p value
Courtesy			
I am mindful of how my behavior affects other people's jobs.			
at my workplace	4.14	.919	
in private messages with a coworker	3.99*	.933	.037
on coworker-only social media	4.02	.897	.116
on personal social media	3.78**	1.069	.000
I do not abuse the rights of others.			
at my workplace	4.35	.812	
in private messages with a coworker	4.37	.857	1.000
on coworker-only social media	4.35	.853	1.000
on personal social media	4.36	.750	1.000
I try to avoid creating problems for coworkers.			
at my workplace	4.34	.823	
in private messages with a coworker	4.31	.857	1.000
on coworker-only social media	4.28	.863	1.000
on personal social media	4.02***	.959	.000
I consider the impact of my actions on coworkers.			
at my workplace	4.30	.802	
in private messages with a coworker	4.21	.898	.698
on coworker-only social media	4.24	.846	1.000
on personal social media	3.94***	.963	.000
I take steps to try to prevent problems with other workers.			
at my workplace	4.11	.876	
in private messages with a coworker	4.07	.894	1.000
on coworker-only social media	3.94*	.944	.013
Altruism			
I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around myself.			
at my workplace	4.19	.853	
in private messages with a coworker	4.08	.942	.245
on coworker-only social media	4.01*	.908	.014
on personal social media	3.81***	1.057	.000
I help others who have been absent.			
at my workplace	4.08	.827	
in private messages with a coworker	3.90**	.954	.008
on coworker-only social media	3.64***	1.073	.000
I help others who have heavy workloads.			
at my workplace	4.14	.807	
in private messages with a coworker	3.98*	.940	.046
on coworker-only social media	3.76***	1.056	.000
I help orient new people even though it is not required.			
at my workplace	3.97	1.005	
in private messages with a coworker	3.70***	1.101	.000
on coworker-only social media	3.60***	1.136	.000
I willingly help others who have work related problems.			
at my workplace	4.10	.874	
in private messages with a coworker	4.08	.951	1.000
on coworker-only social media	3.90**	1.015	.004

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Pairwise Comparison p value
Self-Development			
I research developmental opportunities to expand the range of my contributions to an organization.			
at my workplace	3.68	1.062	
in private messages with a coworker	3.48*	1.145	.014
on coworker-only social media	3.39***	1.136	.000
I keep up with the latest developments in the field.			
at my workplace	4.06	.892	
on coworker-only social media	3.80***	.981	.000
on personal social media	3.72***	1.017	.000
I learn new skills to expand the range of one's contributions to my organization.			
at my workplace	4.05	.928	
on coworker-only social media	3.70***	1.115	.000
Organizational Loyalty			
I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products.			
at my workplace	3.46	1.212	
on personal social media	3.44	1.203	.774
I defend the organization when outsiders criticize it.			
at my workplace	3.70	1.077	
on personal social media	3.52**	1.118	.006
I show pride in representing the organization in public.			
at my workplace	3.88	1.000	
on personal social media	3.76*	1.051	.036
I defend the organization when other employees criticize it.			
at my workplace	3.49	1.132	
in private messages with a coworker	3.30*	1.184	.024
on coworker-only social media	3.34	1.190	.121
on personal social media	3.16***	1.252	.000
I actively promote the organization's products and services to potential users.			
at my workplace	3.82	1.004	
on personal social media	3.57**	1.152	.001
Organizational Compliance			
I spend a great deal of time with personal conversations. (R)			
at my workplace	3.14	1.277	
in private messages with a coworker	2.87**	1.274	.007
on coworker-only social media	3.08	1.332	1.000
on personal social media	2.28***	1.114	.000
I do not spend time in idle conversation.			
at my workplace	3.46	1.127	
in private messages with a coworker	3.21*	1.203	.014
on coworker-only social media	3.34	1.181	.885
on personal social media	2.80***	1.205	.000

Note: * indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$, *** indicates $p < .001$

Table 4: Online OCBs to in Relation to Equivalent Workplace OCBs

Online OCB higher than Workplace OCBs

Sportsmanship
I always find fault with what the organization is doing. (R)
        on personal social media

Online OCBs lower than Workplace OCBs

Conscientiousness
I obey company rules and regulations even when no one would notice.
        in private messages with a coworker
        on coworker-only social media
        on personal social media
I am one of my organizations most conscientious employees.
        on coworker-only social media

Courtesy
I am mindful of how my behavior affects other people's jobs.
        in private messages with a coworker
        on personal social media
I try to avoid creating problems for coworkers.
        on personal social media
I consider the impact of my actions on coworkers.
        on personal social media
I take steps to try to prevent problems with other workers.
        on coworker-only social media

Altruism
I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around myself.
        on coworker-only social media
        on personal social media
I help others who have been absent.
        in private messages with a coworker
        on coworker-only social media
I help others who have heavy workloads.
        in private messages with a coworker
        on coworker-only social media
I help orient new people even though it is not required.
        in private messages with a coworker
        on coworker-only social media
I willingly help others who have work related problems.
        on coworker-only social media

Self-Development
I research developmental opportunities to expand the range of my contributions to an organization.
        in private messages with a coworker
        on coworker-only social media
I keep up with the latest developments in the field.
        on coworker-only social media
        on personal social media
I learn new skills to expand the range of one's contributions to my organization.
        on coworker-only social media

Online OCBs lower than Workplace OCBs

Organizational Loyalty

I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products.
> on personal social media

I defend the organization when outsiders criticize it.
> on personal social media

I show pride in representing the organization in public.
> on personal social media

I defend the organization when other employees criticize it.
> in private messages with a coworker
> on personal social media

I actively promote the organization's products and services to potential users.
> on personal social media

Organizational Compliance

I spend a great deal of time with personal conversations. (R)
> in private messages with a coworker
> on personal social media

I do not spend time in idle conversation.
> in private messages with a coworker
> on personal social media

No Significant Difference in Workplace and Online OCBs

Conscientiousness

I am one of my organizations most conscientious employees.
> in private messages with a coworker

Sportsmanship

I consume a lot of time complaining about trivial matters. (R)
> in private messages with a coworker
> on coworker-only social media
> on personal social media

I always focus on what's wrong, rather than the positive side. (R)
> in private messages with a coworker
> on coworker-only social media
> on personal social media

I tend to make "mountains out of molehills." (R)
> in private messages with a coworker
> on coworker-only social media
> on personal social media

I always find fault with what the organization is doing. (R)
> in private messages with a coworker
> on coworker-only social media

I am the classic "squeaky wheel" that always needs greasing. (R)
> in private messages with a coworker
> on coworker-only social media

Civic Virtue

I keep abreast of changes in the organization.
> in private messages with a coworker
> on coworker-only social media

Courtesy

I am mindful of how my behavior affects other people's jobs.

      on coworker-only social media

I do not abuse the rights of others.

      in private messages with a coworker

      on coworker-only social media

      on personal social media

I try to avoid creating problems for coworkers.

      in private messages with a coworker

      on coworker-only social media

I consider the impact of my actions on coworkers.

      in private messages with a coworker

      on coworker-only social media

I take steps to try to prevent problems with other workers.

      in private messages with a coworker

Altruism

I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around myself.

      in private messages with a coworker

I willingly help others who have work related problems.

      in private messages with a coworker

Organizational Loyalty

I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products.

      on personal social media

I show pride in representing the organization in public.

      at my workplace

I defend the organization when other employees criticize it.

      on coworker-only social media

Organizational Compliance

I spend a great deal of time with personal conversations. (R)

      on coworker-only social media

I do not spend time in idle conversation.

      on coworker-only social media

Research Question 3: Do online OCBs and traditional OCBs have the same relationships with other constructs?

Participant responses were used to compute overall scores for OCB, cyberloafing, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Means, standard deviations, and correlations for each are presented in Table 5. All forms of OCB had moderate to strong positive correlations. A series of multiple regressions were conducted to determine

whether the four OCB contexts could significantly predict cyberloafing, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Cyberloafing

As shown in Table 6, results indicated that the model explained 19.4% of the variance in cyberloafing ($F_{(4,196)} = 11.814$, $p < .001$). Personal social media OCB had a negative, significant relationship with cyberloafing ($\beta = -.455$, $p < .001$). Workplace OCB, private message OCB, and coworker-only social media OCB did not have statistically significant relationships with cyberloafing.

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Cyberloafing	2.457	.924							
2. Turnover intentions	3.144	1.963	.434**						
3. Job Satisfaction	3.964	.858	.083	-.477**					
4. Organizational commitment	3.589	.789	.238**	-.128	.572				
5. Workplace OCB	3.886	.524	-.288**	-.511**	.527**	.230**			
6. Private message OCB	3.762	.482	-.256**	-.436**	.436**	.157*	.828*		
7. Coworker-only social media OCB	3.771	.510	-.242**	-.383**	.427**	.149*	.827**	.888**	
8. Personal social media OCB	3.595	.523	-.434**	-.486**	.280**	-.034	.648**	.653**	.640**

Note: * indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$

Table 6: OCB Predicting Cyberloafing

OCB	B	SE	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Overall model					11.814	4	.000	.194
Workplace	-.209	.221	-.119	.345				
Private messages	.078	.291	.041	.790				
Coworker-only social media	.200	.272	.111	.462				
Personal social media	-.802	.155	-.455	.000				

Turnover Intentions

As shown in Table 7, results indicated that the model explained 32.1% of the variance in turnover intentions (F (4,196) = 23.140, *p* < .001). Coworker-only social media OCB (β = .306, *p* <.05) had a positive, significant relationship with turnover intentions, while workplace OCB (β = -.467, *p* <.001) and personal social media OCB (β = -.295, *p* <.001) had negative, significant relationships. Private messages did not have a statistically significant relationship with turnover intentions.

Table 7: OCB Predicting Turnover Intentions

OCB	B	SE	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Overall model					23.140	4	.000	.321
Workplace	-1.752	.430	-.467	.000				
Private messages	-.519	.568	-.127	.363				
Coworker-only social media	1.178	.530	.306	.028				
Personal social media	-1.108	.303	-.295	.000				

Job Satisfaction

As shown in Table 8, results indicated that the model explained 28.5% of the in job satisfaction (F (4,196) = 19.489, *p* < .001). Workplace OCB (β = .574, *p* <.001) had a positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction. Private message OCB coworker-only social

media OCB, and personal social media OCB did not have statistically significant relationships with job satisfaction.

Table 8: OCB Predicting Job Satisfaction

OCB	B	SE	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Overall model					19.489	4	.000	.285
Workplace	.939	.193	.574	.000				
Private messages	.103	.255	.058	.686				
Coworker-only social media	-.046	.238	-.027	.847				
Personal social media	-.183	.136	-.112	.179				

Organizational Commitment

As shown in Table 9, results indicated that the model explained 11.1% of the variance in organizational commitment (F (4,196) = 6.126, p < .001). Workplace OCB (β = .442, p <.01) had a positive and significant relationship with organizational commitment, and personal social media OCB (= -.314, p <.001) had a negative significant relationship. Private message OCB and coworker-only social media OCB did not have statistically significant relationships with organizational commitment.

Table 9: OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment

OCB	B	*SE*	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Overall model					6.126	4	.000	.111
Workplace	.666	.198	.442	.001				
Private messages	.080	.261	.049	.761				
Coworker-only social media	-.091	.244	-.059	.708				
Personal social media	-.474	.139	-.314	.001				

Coworker Social Media Use as a Moderator

To follow up on the unexpected findings that organizational commitment has a positive relationship with workplace OCBs but negative and non-significant relationships with online OCBs, moderator analyses were conducted. These analyses determined if the relationships

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between organizational commitment and each form of online OCB differed depending on an employee's perception of coworker social media use.

Perceptions of coworker social media use were examined as a moderator of the relationship between private message OCBs and organizational commitment. Private message OCBs and perceptions of coworker social media use were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between private message OCBs and perceptions of coworker social media use was entered. The model including the interaction term was significant, $(F(3, 197) = 9.049, p < .001)$, and explained significantly more variance than the model without the interaction term $(\Delta R^2 = .045, p < .01$; see Table 10). Perceptions of coworker social media moderated the relationship such that the relationship was positive when perceptions of coworker social media were low, and negative when perceptions were high (see Figure 1). The unstandardized simple slope for participants 1 SD below the mean of perceived coworker social media use was .379, the unstandardized simple slope for participants with a mean level of perceived coworker social media use was .068, and the unstandardized simple slope for participants 1 SD above the mean of perceived coworker social media use was -.242.

Table 10: Private Message OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment

OCB	B	SE	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Step 1					8.125	2	.000	.076
Private message OCB	.136	.118	.083	.251				
Perceived coworker social media use	.279	.084	.238	.001				
Step 2					9.049	3	.000	.121
Private message OCB	1.815	.540	1.108	.001				
Perceived coworker social media use	1.972	.538	1.686	.000				
Private message OCB X Perceived coworker social media use	-.461	.145	-2.029	.002				

Figure 1: Private Message OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment Moderated by Coworker Social Media Use

Perceptions of coworker social media use were examined as a moderator of the relationship between coworker-only social media OCBs and organizational commitment. Coworker-only social media OCBs and perceptions of coworker social media use were entered in the first step of the regression analysis. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term between coworker social media OCBs and perceptions of coworker social media use was entered. The model including the interaction term was significant, $(F (3, 197) = 8.754, p < .001)$, and explained significantly more variance than the model without the interaction term $(\Delta R^2 = .045, p < .01;$ see Table 11). Perceptions of coworker social media moderated the relationship such that the relationship was positive when perceptions of coworker social media were low, and negative when perceptions were high (see Figure 2). The unstandardized simple slope for participants 1 SD below the mean of perceived coworker social media use was .339, the unstandardized simple slope for participants with a mean level of perceived coworker social

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media use was .058, and the unstandardized simple slope for participants 1 SD above the mean

of perceived coworker social media use was -.223.

Table 11: Coworker-Only Social Media OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment

OCB	B	SE	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Step 1					7.795	2	.000	.073
Coworker social media OCB	.096	.114	.062	.400				
Perceived coworker social media use	.283	.086	.242	.001				
Step 2					8.754	3	.000	.104
Coworker social media OCB	1.638	.501	1.058	.001				
Perceived coworker social media use	1.822	.495	1.557	.000				
Coworker social media OCB X Perceived coworker social media use	-.417	.132	-1.926	.002				

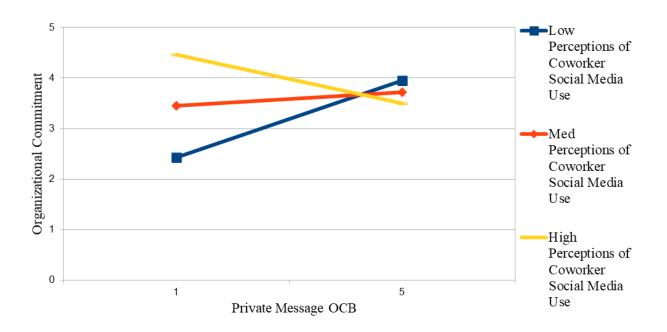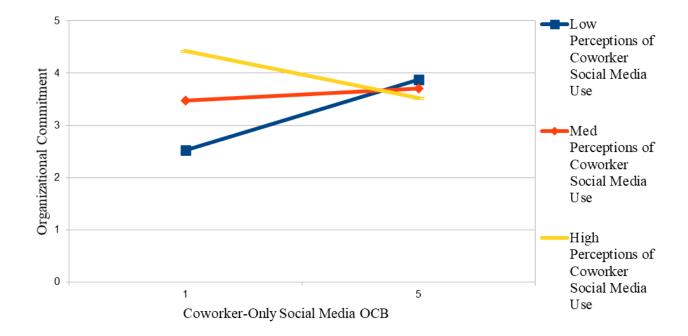Figure 2: Coworker-Only Social Media OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment Moderated by Coworker Social Media Use

Perceptions of coworker social media use were examined as a moderator of the

relationship between personal social media OCBs and organizational commitment. Personal

social media OCBs and perceptions of coworker social media use were entered in the first step of

the regression analysis. In the second step of the regression analysis, the interaction term

between personal social media OCBs and perceptions of coworker social media use was entered.

The model including the interaction term was significant, $(F (3, 197) = 7.440, p < .001)$, and

explained significantly more variance than the model without the interaction term ($\Delta R^2 = .027, p$

$< .05$; see Table 12). Perceptions of coworker social media moderated the relationship such that

the relationship was positive when perceptions of coworker social media were low, and negative

when perceptions were high (see Figure 3). The unstandardized simple slope for participants 1

SD below the mean of perceived coworker social media use was .087, the unstandardized simple

slope for participants with a mean level of perceived coworker social media use was -.140, and

the unstandardized simple slope for participants 1 SD above the mean of perceived coworker

social media use was -.367.

Table 12: Personal Social Media OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment

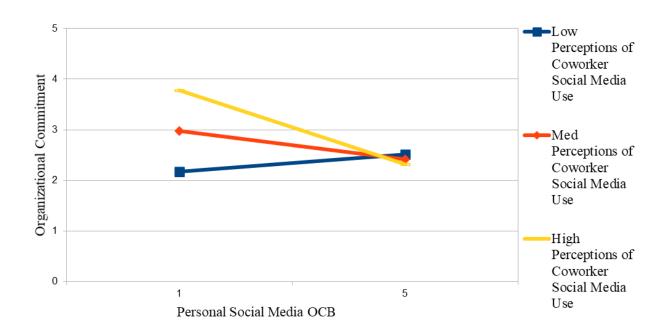| OCB	B	SE	β	p	F	df	p	R^2
Step 1					8.046	2	.000	.075
Personal social media OCB	-.113	.104	-.075	.279				
Perceived coworker social media use	.322	.081	.275	.000				
Step 2					7.440	3	.000	.102
Personal social media OCB	1.133	.526	.751	.032				
Perceived coworker social media use	1.530	.507	1.308	.003				
Personal social media OCB X Perceived coworker social media use	-.336	.139	-1.425	.017				

Figure 3: Personal Social Media OCB Predicting Organizational Commitment Moderated by Coworker Social Media Use

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this thesis was to document and explore the nature of online OCB by answering three research questions:

1) What behaviors do employees consider to be instances of online OCB?

2) Do traditional OCBs translate to online settings?

3) Do online OCBs and traditional OCBs have the same relationships with other constructs?

Overall results indicate that employees perform traditional and novel forms of OCB online, and that online OCB and traditional in person OCB have differing relationships with other constructs. The specific results for each research question are reviewed below, along with the implications for research and practice.

Research Question 1: What behaviors do employees consider to be instances of online OCB?

When prompted to discuss the OCBs they engage in online, participants typically discussed behaviors that fall into traditional ideas of OCB. The frequencies of each OCB theme depended on the specific online setting, such as helping being identified most often in private messages, civic virtue being identified frequently in coworker-only social media, and organizational loyalty occurring on personal social media. This suggests respondents may associate certain OCBs with certain online contexts more than others.

Respondents also described behaviors that were not fully captured by established OCB themes. These behaviors were categorized into four emergent themes: abstaining, sharing

information, supporting interpersonal relationships, and spreading positivity. While these themes are consistent with the broader construct of OCB, they are not specifically defined by prior theory or instruments. This suggests that the way employees think about and engage with OCB online may be a bit different than what researchers and practitioners have traditionally examined. Thus, although respondents do report in engaging in established OCBs online, there also seem to be novel opportunities for OCB related to online settings.

As these emergent themes relate to existing OCB dimensions, it is possible that broader reconceptualization of these traditional OCB themes may capture the novel behaviors documented in this work. For example, it may be appropriate to combine the classic theme of sportsmanship with the emergent theme of spreading positivity and to combine the classic theme of helping with the emergent theme of sharing information.

While new OCB themes were identified in the online settings, these themes could also appear in traditional workplace settings. It may be the case that these types of behaviors predated the internet but did not occur regularly enough to be included in prior OCB theory or measures. As technological advancements have changed workplaces, these behaviors may have become more frequent or important. For example, the process of sharing an interesting article with colleagues is quite different today than it was in 1990. Because of these changes, it may be time to question if traditional OCB themes and instruments are due for revision.

Existing OCB measures are one area where updates may be needed. Because many of these items specify or allude to a traditional face-to-face work environment, they are not useful for measuring online behaviors that are a daily reality for many workers. Some of these items also use dated language that may not resonate with all workers. Table 13 presents a list of classic

OCB items that may be outdated or overly context-specific, along with revised alternatives that may better capture work in its current form.

Given the limited scope of this work, caution should be taken before fully embracing a new conceptualization of OCB. This thesis examined OCB from the actor's point of view and did not examine how these behaviors might be received. It remains possible that the emergent behaviors discussed in this thesis are do not provide meaningful benefits, or even severe as disruptions or annoyances to other workers. If this is the case, it may not be appropriate to consider these behaviors legitimate forms of OCB.

Table 13: Classic and Alternative OCB Items

Classic OCB Items	Alternative OCB Items
Podsakoff et al. (1990)	
I read and keep up with organization announcements, memos, and so on.	I read and keep up with organization announcements, news, updates, posts, and so on.
I obey company rules and regulations even when no one is watching.	I obey company rules and regulations even when no one would notice.
I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around him/her.	I am always ready to lend a helping hand to others.
I help others who have been absent.	I help others who have taken time off.
I tend to make "mountains out of molehills." (R)	I tend to overreact to adverse circumstances. (R)
I am the classic "squeaky wheel" that always needs greasing. (R)	I raise more complaints than others. (R)
Moorman & Blakely (1995)	
I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products.	I encourage friends, family, and other connections to utilize organization products and/ or services.
I show pride in representing the organization in public.	I show pride in representing the organization.
I actively promote the organization's products and services to potential users.	I actively promote the organization's products and/ or services.
Smith el. (1983).	
My attendance at work is above the norm.	My use of paid time off is below the norm.
I do not take extra breaks.	I do not waste time.
I give advance notice if unable to come to work.	I give advance notice if unable to work
I spend a great deal of time with personal phone conversations. (R)	I spend a great deal of time spent with personal conversations. (R)

Research Question 2: Do traditional OCBs translate to online settings?

The results of this work do suggest that while many traditional OCB items do translate to online settings, many items do not. For instance, a behavior like having good attendance is tied to traditional ideas of a physical workplace. Additionally, behaviors that include interacting with outsiders to the organization are not possible in private communication media, like coworker-only social media. This is not to say that the construct of OCB does not apply online, but rather that established ways of thinking about and measuring OCB are specific to a physical, traditional workplace.

For the OCB items that do translate to online settings, they appear to occur at somewhat lower levels than they do in the workplace. About half of the online items were found to occur at a lower level than the equivalent workplace item. This is somewhat surprising, as these online settings could increase the convenience and ease of engaging in OCB. Only one online item, "on personal social media, I always find fault with what the organization is doing" (reverse coded), was found at a higher level than the workplace equivalent. This may be related to the theme of abstaining that was found in the qualitative analyses, where employees believe that their choice not to engage online benefits their organization.

Online OCBs and workplace OCBs have strong, positive correlations. This suggests that employees that engage in OCB in one setting are likely to be engaging in OCB in other settings. This may indicate that employees that already perform traditional workplace OCB extend this behavior to online settings.

Research Question 3: Do online OCBs and traditional OCBs have the same relationships with other constructs?

Overall, online OCBs and traditional workplace OCBs had different relationships to the other constructs measured in this study. In some cases, statistically significant relationships only existed for certain contexts. For others, the relationships changed from positive to negative depending on the context.

Cyberloafing

Cyberloafing had a negative relationship with OCBs on personal social media but did not have a statistically significant relationship with OCBs in the other three contexts. It is possible that employees constructive use of personal social media supplants inappropriate use of social media. OCB may be a way for employees that enjoy personal social media to take advantage of their interests and perform behaviors their organization condones.

Turnover Intentions

Turnover intentions had a negative relationship with workplace and personal social media OCBs, a positive relationship with coworker-only social media OCBs, and no significant relationship with private message OCBs. The finding for coworker-only social media is surprising, as higher levels of OCBs are generally associated with reduced turnover intentions. The causal direction and mechanism of this relationship are unclear and will require further research to fully understand. Perhaps use of coworker-only social media can magnify preexisting negative attitudes employees have with about work. On the other hand, maybe employees

already considering leaving their roles perform OCBs on coworker-only social media as an impression management strategy.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction had a positive relationship with traditional workplace OCBs, but no significant relationships with online OCBs. This suggests that job satisfaction does not promote engagement in OCB online, and online OCB cannot be used to make inferences about employees' job satisfaction. It may be the case that employees who dislike their work use social media as an avoidance strategy. It is also possible that there are negative impacts of being online that can spillover and impact an employee's work attitudes. Employees may see posts from successful peers that lead the employee to make unfavorable self-other comparisons, which could undermine job satisfaction.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment had a positive relationship with traditional workplace OCBs, a negative relationship with personal social media OCBs, and no relationship with the other OCB contexts. The finding for personal social media is surprising, as higher levels of OCB are generally associated with greater organizational commitment. This relationships between organizational commitment and online OCBs were moderated by perceptions of coworker social media use such that the relationship was positive when perceptions of coworker social media were low, and negative when perceptions were high. In simpler terms, when employees do not think their coworkers regularly use social media, increases in their own online OCBs are associated with increased organizational commitment. When employees do think their coworkers

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frequently use social media, increases in their online OCBs are associated with reduced

organizational commitment. While further study would be appropriate to fully unpack this

moderated relationship, it does suggest organizational norms impact the relationship between

online OCB and organizational commitment. Perhaps when employees believe that most people

in their organization regularly use social media, behavior on social media feels like compulsory

performance rather than discretionary action. Social media norms may also change how

behaviors are perceived; if social media use is expected, OCBs may be seen as performative

more so than sincere.

Limitations

While this research was able to identify meaningful results, there are limitations related to

the design, scope, sample, and time of data collection. As all data was collected at a single time

point, it is not able to clearly identify the casual direction of the relationships found in this work.

This project was limited in scope and did not measure all variables relevant to employees' online

behavior, such as organizational practices or policies that encourage or discourage social media

use. The sample used may have impacted results. Most participants were users of Amazon's

Mechanical Turk, and it is possible that this group approaches and experiences online behavior

differently than other workers. Each form of the OCB was correlated in this sample, and

multicollinearity may have impacted results of regression analyses. This introduced limitations in

the ability to identify independent effects of the predictor variables. Additionally, this research

was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have impacted results. Many

organizations and individuals have increased use of internet-enabled technology, including social

media. Challenging economic conditions related to the pandemic may have also impacted employee attitudes, such as turnover intentions.

Directions for Future Research

Future research may be able to clarify and build upon findings in this work, such as investigating the mechanisms that relate online OCB to undesirable outcomes. Research on how employees use social media for impression management may clarify the unexpected relationship between coworker-only social media OCBs and turnover intentions. Further study on negative impacts of social media on employee attitudes may reveal if social media causes reduced job satisfaction, or if unsatisfied employees are more inclined to spend time online.

Researchers that study OCB should evaluate their approach to measuring OCB. If online behavior is relevant to their research topic, traditional methods of measuring OCB may not be adequate.

This research only included participants that currently use social media to engage with coworkers, and subsequent studies could investigate a broader population. This could be particularly relevant considering the finding that some participants identified refraining from social media use as a form of OCB. Changing practices in organizations may also provide opportunities for research, such as examining changes in OCB when organizations adopt or restrict various social media platforms.

Future research may also uncover how the nature of certain jobs features may impact online OCB. The nature of certain jobs may either encourage or limit online OCB. Employees in office settings are likely to have access to internet-enabled devices, and they may have formal polices and informal norms that determine what online behaviors are and are not appropriate.

Employees that perform manual labor or interact directly with customers may not have regular

access to internet-enabled devices during work, leaving them unable to perform online OCB

during work hours. Job features such as these may change the frequency and nature of online

OCB.

Practical Implications

Practitioners working in this area are advised to consider the ramifications of employees'

online behavior. Even though online OCB may happen outside the formal structure of the

organization, this behavior still has meaningful relationships with outcomes within the

organization. While employee social media use has been tied to favorable results, such as

improved communication performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, it is

also associated with time wasting and threats to employee and organizational privacy.

Practitioners must keep in mind that online environments are not a simple extension of

the traditional workplace, and established constructs such as OCB may not function as expected.

Practitioners should question actions that encourage employees to engage online, such as

creating Slack channels and Facebook groups. It would be wise to consider the specific nature of

the online platforms being used, and the unique risks and benefits associated to each online

platform. Given the continuously evolving nature of technology, it is also recommended that

practitioners regularly monitor academic research in this area.

Conclusion

As internet use continues to be a major factor for workers in the present day, this thesis

sought to explore how OCB may occur in online spaces. It was found that workers do engage in

OCB online, though at a somewhat lower rate than in person. While some behaviors do not translate from in person settings, online settings introduce new possibilities for OCB. Additionally, the nature of the relationships between OCB and other workplace constructs, such as cyberloafing, turnover intentions, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, differ depending on if the OCB occurred in person or online.

APPENDIX A: COMPLETE MEASURES

Online OCB Instructions and Definitions
This survey will ask questions about your use of social media and your voluntary behaviors as an employee. We would like to learn about the behaviors you carry out in different settings.

Your Workplace: the physical location where you perform work tasks, such as an office.

Private Messages with a Coworker: typed correspondence between you and one coworker at a time (e.g. email, texts, instant messages, etc.)

Coworker-Only Social Media: online spaces that are used by multiple people in your organization, and not accessed by people outside your organization (e.g. group messages, private groups or pages, restricted access message boards, etc.)

Personal Social Media: your online presence that can be accessed by both people in your organization and people outside your organization, such as friends and family (e.g. personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)

Definition Check Please select the setting that best matches each of the following definitions. 1 = My Workplace 2 = Private Messages with a Coworker 3 = Coworker-Only Social Media 4 = Personal Social Media	My Workplace / Private Messages with a Coworker / Coworker-Only Social Media / Personal Social Media
My online presence that can be accessed by both people in your organization and people outside your organization, such as friends and family (e.g. personal accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)	1 2 3 4
The physical location where I perform work tasks, such as an office.	1 2 3 4
Online spaces that are used by multiple people in my organization, and not accessed by people outside my organization (e.g. group messages, private groups or pages, restricted access message boards, etc.)	1 2 3 4
Typed correspondence between me and one coworker at a time (e.g. email, texts, instant messages, etc.)	1 2 3 4

Qualitative Online OCB

Organizational citizenship behaviors are the contributions employees make at work, even though they are not formally required for the role. These contributions may benefit other employees or the organization.

Please describe how you have engaged in organizational citizenship behaviors in each of the settings below. Write at least one sentence in each of the four boxes. Do not include personally identifying information such as names of people or specific businesses.

At my workplace	
In private messages with a coworker	
On coworker-only social media	
On personal social media	

Quantitative Online OCB	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Please answer the following questions in relation to your current workplace. Read each item and indicate your level of agreement for each setting. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree					
I consume a lot of time complaining about trivial matters.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I defend the organization when other employees criticize it.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I obey company rules and regulations even when no one would notice.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I always focus on what's wrong, rather than the positive side.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to make "mountains out of molehills."					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I always find fault with what the organization is doing.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I am mindful of how my behavior affects other people's jobs.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I do not abuse the rights of others.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5

Quantitative Online OCB Please answer the following questions in relation to your current workplace. Read each item and indicate your level of agreement for each setting. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I try to avoid creating problems for coworkers.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I consider the impact of my actions on coworkers.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I am always ready to lend a helping hand to those around myself.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I spend a great deal of time with personal conversations.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I do not spend time in idle conversation.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I keep abreast of changes in the organization					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I read and keep up with organization announcements, memos, and so on.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I take steps to try to prevent problems with other workers.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I help others who have been absent.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5

Quantitative Online OCB Please answer the following questions in relation to your current workplace. Read each item and indicate your level of agreement for each setting. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I help others who have heavy workloads.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I help orient new people even though it is not required.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I willingly help others who have work related problems.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I research developmental opportunities to expand the range of my contributions to an organization.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I am the classic "squeaky wheel" that always needs greasing.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I am one of my organizations most conscientious employees.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
in private messages with a coworker	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
I keep up with the latest developments in the field.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I learn new skills to expand the range of one's contributions to my organization.					
at my workplace					
on coworker-only social media	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5
I encourage friends and family to utilize organization products.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I defend the organization when outsiders criticize it.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5
I show pride in representing the organization in public.					
at my workplace	1	2	3	4	5
on personal social media	1	2	3	4	5

Quantitative Online OCB Please answer the following questions in relation to your current workplace. Read each item and indicate your level of agreement for each setting. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Agree Strongly Agree

I actively promote the organization's products and services to potential users.
    at my workplace
    on personal social media
	
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5

Cyberloafing Measure (Lim, 2002) Please indicate how frequently you engage in the following activities during working hours. 1 = never 2 = rarely 3 = sometimes 4 = often 5 = frequently	never	rarely	sometimes	often	frequently
Visit sports related Web sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Visit investment related Web sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Visit entertainment related Web sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Visit general news sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Visit non-job related Web sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Download non-work related information.	1	2	3	4	5
Shop online for personal goods.	1	2	3	4	5
Visit adult-oriented (sexually explicit) Web sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Check non-work related e-mail.	1	2	3	4	5
Send non-work related e-mail.	1	2	3	4	5
Receive non-work related e-mail.	1	2	3	4	5

Turnover Intentions (Adams & Beehr, 1998) Please answer the following questions in relation to your current workplace. Indicate your level of agreement for each item. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Somewhat Disagree 4 = Neither Disagree Nor Agree 5 = Somewhat Agree 6 = Agree 7 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am planning to leave my job for another in the near future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often think of quitting this job and finding another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would like to quit this job and find another in the near future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Job Satisfaction (Cammann et al., 1983) Think about your own feelings about your present job. Use the following scale to rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree Nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neither Disagree Nor Agree / Agree / Strongly Agree
In general, I like my job.	1 2 3 4 5
In general, I like working here.	1 2 3 4 5
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	1 2 3 4 5

Organizational Commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990) Please use the following scale to rate the extent to which each item reflects your feelings about your work organization: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree Nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel personally attached to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
Working at my organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5
Select neither disagree nor agree.	1	2	3	4	5
It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.	1	2	3	4	5
Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.	1	2	3	4	5

Coworker Social Media Use (Pew Research Center, 2016)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Please answer the following questions in relation to your current workplace. Indicate your level of agreement for each item. 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Disagree Nor Agree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree					
People inside my organization use social media to take a mental break from work.	1	2	3	4	5
People inside my organization use social media to connect with friends and family.	1	2	3	4	5
People inside my organization use social media to build and strengthen personal relationships with coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5
People inside my organization use social media to get information that helps solve problems at work.	1	2	3	4	5
People inside my organization use social media to learn about people they work with.	1	2	3	4	5
People inside my organization use social media to make or support professional connections.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

January 29, 2021

Dear Sarah Rabon:

On 1/29/2021, the IRB determined the following submission to be human subjects research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Online Organizational Citizenship Behavior
Investigator:	Sarah Rabon
IRB ID:	STUDY00002668
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• IRB Faculty Advisor Scholarly Review of Research - signed.pdf, Category: Faculty Research Approval; • HRP 254 - Online OCB Explanation of Research mturk.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • HRP 254 - Online OCB Explanation of Research SONA.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • HRP 255 - Online OCB Request for Exemption 2021-01-28.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • language for SONA & mturk listings.docx, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Online OCB Study Measures.docx, Category: Survey / Questionnaire

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made, and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please submit a modification request to the IRB. Guidance on submitting Modifications and Administrative Check-in are detailed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system.   When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

Katie Kilgore
Designated Reviewer

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