

Linking Employees’ Organizational Culture Perceptions with Their Citizenship and Deviant Behaviors Through Sequential Mediators: A Field Investigation in India

Soumendu Biswas¹

¹PhD Affiliation: [Department, OB&HRM, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon
Email ID: sbiswas@mdi.ac.in, soumendubiswas@gmail.com

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KEYWORDS <i>Organizational culture perceptions, Psychological contract, Organizational justice perceptions, Citizenship behaviors, Deviant behaviors, Social exchange theory</i>	ABSTRACT This article examines the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational culture and their organizational citizenship and deviant behaviors, considering how these relationships might be mediated through employees' perceptions of organizational justice and their psychological contract with the organization. The development of the study hypotheses was based on a theoretical background and a review of the relevant literature and was expressed through a conceptual latent variable model. Data were collected using a multi-item survey instrument that presented standard measures among 828 managerial executives across various organizations in India. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using several statistical techniques, including structural equation modeling procedures. Accordingly, the findings of this study supported all the hypotheses and proved the validity of the conceptual latent variable model. Discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of the findings leads the study to a close with the statement of limitations and the opportunities it opened up for further research
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1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary workplace, organizational growth and individual advancement are likely to occur simultaneously when employees' personal objectives are in line with the organizational goals (Velickovska, 2017). In light of this, it would be important to investigate how employees may be predisposed to experience job satisfaction, which not only reduces the likelihood of counterproductive behaviors but also encourages positive prosocial actions that exceed standard expectations (Cohen & Diamant, 2019). In this respect, the linkage of employee anticipations with organizational aims and objectives originates from the employees' perception of norms, customs, and conventions in the organization and their sense of justice and fairness within the organization (Gori et al., 2020; Gu et al., 2021; Lages et al., 2020). Furthermore, positive attitudes among employees are likely produced once there is perceived fairness in an exchange between an employee and the organization (Zhang et al., 2019).

Underpinning this assumption, the first aim of this study would therefore be to test whether employees' perceptions of what is normative and their shared organizational goals, as well as their sense of fairness within the organization, impact their motivation toward prosocial behaviors, on one hand, and away from deviant actions on the other. Second, it examines whether these associations become even stronger when employees feel their organization is just and equitable, which enhances their perception of the psychological contract (PC).

To be able to achieve these, this study first allows for a theoretical framework to underpin the key concepts. It then follows by reviewing literature that is relevant to such key concepts and formulates the hypotheses of the study to be then consolidated into a conceptual latent variable model (LVM). Afterward, standard measures are used to operationalize the constructs and collect the data. The results are critically analyzed not only to theoretically draw inferences but also to practically extrapolate the findings. Finally, its limitations and suggestions for further research are documented



Theoretical Background

People start to view groups, objects, or events due to recurring encounters with the subjects, often as an outcome of socioeconomic or socio-psychological exchanges (Park & Doo, 2020). Within the workplace scenario, this aptly shows how employees create social capital and organizational awareness by way of obeying complementary values (Roebuck *et al.*, 2019). This creation of collective value is the foundation of the social exchange theory (SET) (Blau, 1964). Studies have indicated that in organizations, after a couple of years, workers react according to the SET principles when certain systems, practices, and conventions are instituted and ingested and develop mutual mentalities and actions (Pham *et al.*, 2019). Such organizational interventions combined with the collective convictions of the employees form part of employees' perceptions of organizational culture (EPOC) (Sanchez-Teba *et al.*, 2019).

Besides, employees' motivation and commitment are not only encouraged by how positive they perceive the norms in the workplace to be but also if they believe that the positive EPOC elements are recognized and reciprocated appropriately (Harrington & Lee, 2015). Employees use a set of certain measures of cognition to assess their perceptions of organizational justice, which motivates them to retain and develop their PC, and this indicates their positive attitudes and behaviors (Estreder *et al.*, 2019). These cognitive measures of employees' perceptions of organizational justice (EPOJ) are based on the fairness heuristics theory (FHT) (Lind, 2001).

Not only does the SET form the theoretical basis of EPOC, but it also enables employees to form the PC they consider to be in place between themselves and their organization (Liu *et al.*, 2020). PCs at work are perceived to solidify through continuous exchanges of mutually perceived obligations between employees and employers, in keeping with the precepts of the SET (Rogozinska-Paweczyk, 2020).

The extant researches show that EPOC and EPOJ are a mixture of the SET and the FHT, giving an understanding of attitudes the employees have toward jobs and forming the basis for socio-emotional relationships between organizations and their members based on a high level of PC (Lazauskaite-Zabielske *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, the literature associates those positive attitudinal outcomes of EPOC and EPOJ with increased levels of employees' organizational citizenship behaviors (EOCB) and decreased levels of employees' organizational deviance behaviors (EODB) (Abbas & Ayub, 2021; Christensen-Salem *et al.*, 2021; Kim *et al.*, 2018).

From such an abstraction, it is possible to contend that EPOC, through EPOJ and PC, is a precursor to EOCB and EODB, considering the SET-FHT interaction. The coming section will review the relevant literature to create hypotheses concerning these constructs for the empirical testing to follow.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

EPOC, EPOJ, and PC

Organizational culture and employees' perceptions of it emerge through exchange and collaboration between the employees much like EPOJ (Richard *et al.*, 2009). Employees rate their ability to realize organizational goals and objectives through these perceptions which also lead to their professional and personal development and support their shared organizational visions (Moore & Moore, 2012). This reconciliation is the basis both for transactional and relational contracts between employers and their employees (Cohen, 2013). Organizational socialization for new employees as well as long-standing staff members not only molds EPOC but also educates the employee about how it will be appreciated, valued, and rewarded (Manuti *et al.*, 2016). EPOC refers to employees' perceptions of the shared values, beliefs, and assumptions they hold along with their colleagues about their organization and how this influences their view of organizational policies and practices as fair or otherwise (Corder & Ronnie, 2018). On the other hand, EPOJ deals with the mutual obligations between employees and employers, and where an employee perceives that he or she has to follow organizational norms, and then the employer should treat him or her in a fair and just manner (Choi *et al.*, 2014; Rahman *et al.*, 2017).

Ideally, when the employees believe that the organization is fair and trustworthy, they tend to reciprocate by yielding to their employer in terms of the implementation of the PC (Costa & Neves, 2017). Perceived organizational justice violations tend to go hand-in-hand with PC violations (Neveu & Kakavand, 2019; van Stormbroek & Blomme, 2017). Based on different studies, in violation of the EPOJ, the employees have lesser chances to adhere to the reciprocity norms, which are part of the PC (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2020; Valcour *et al.*, 2011).

The distributive component of EPOJ, which focuses on equity within the exchange relation, is linked back to the transactional components of the PC (Arab & Atan, 2018). Organizational fairness and trust are found to be linked with the procedural and interactional components of EPOJ and associated with the relational components of the PC (Lupsa *et al.*, 2020). Positive attitudes and workers' behaviors are built when the PC is completed, especially when workers experience overall organizational justice (Anwar *et al.*, 2020). In most cases, attitudinal improvements are seen in the PC as employees become more committed and satisfied with their jobs (Schmidt, 2016). The PC influences task performance, job challenges, and organizational support perceptions (Collins & Beauregard, 2020; Itani *et al.*, 2019). This is especially true in collectivist cultures like India wherein EPOC and EPOJ are crucial to the employer-employee PC (Ravlin *et al.*, 2012).

As per the discussion above, the following hypotheses are posited.



Hypothesis 1 (H1). Employees' perceptions of organizational culture are associated positively with their perceptions of organizational justice.

Hypothesis 2 (H2). Employees' positive perceptions of organizational justice are associated with stronger psychological contracts.

PC, EOCB, and EODB

Previous studies state that when employees perceive their personal values and the organization's expectations to be aligned through EPOC and EPOJ, a positive PC prompts employees toward prosocial and organization-focused behaviors (Andreynkova, 2017; Bakotic, 2016; Emani & Soltani, 2018; Suwanti *et al.*, 2018).

When employees believe their needs have been met, they become more innovative in their approaches and manifest a greater interest in their professional improvement (Yeh, 2019). In reality, these practices display conscientiousness and civic virtues that are integral components of organizational citizenship (de Andrade *et al.*, 2017). As a result, such employees will be less likely to go on a spree of behaviors that cause interpersonal conflict or disrupt the workplace as this may lead to breaches in the PC (Czarnota-Bojarska, 2015). Even when factors in the work environment are against an employee's interest, for example, disruptive organizational politics or abusive supervision, those with a high PC are likely to keep calm and not deviate (Bashir *et al.*, 2019; Tuna *et al.*, 2016).

A tight PC, therefore, is expected to reduce deviant behaviors, such as incivility in the workplace, noncompliance, and misconduct (Malik & Lenka, 2019; Reza *et al.*, 2020). Based on the SET, employees with favorable perceptions regarding their PC are unlikely to engage in deviant behaviors since such would move away from reciprocity expectations (Auzoult & Mazilescu, 2021; Chen & Wang, 2019).

As such, the following hypotheses are proposed.

Hypothesis 3 (H3). Employees having a positive psychological contract are more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors above and beyond their formal roles.

Hypothesis 4 (H4). Employees who perceive their psychological contract has been satisfied are less likely to engage in organizational deviance.

EPOJ and PC as Mediators

Organizational justice is a salient factor that shapes individual sense-making and promotes equitable relationships through repeated exchanges (Widyastuti *et al.*, 2022; Yidong *et al.*, 2022). Findings reveal that the EPOJ is a crucial mediator between organizational characteristics and the attitudes and behaviors of employees (Lin & Shin, 2021).

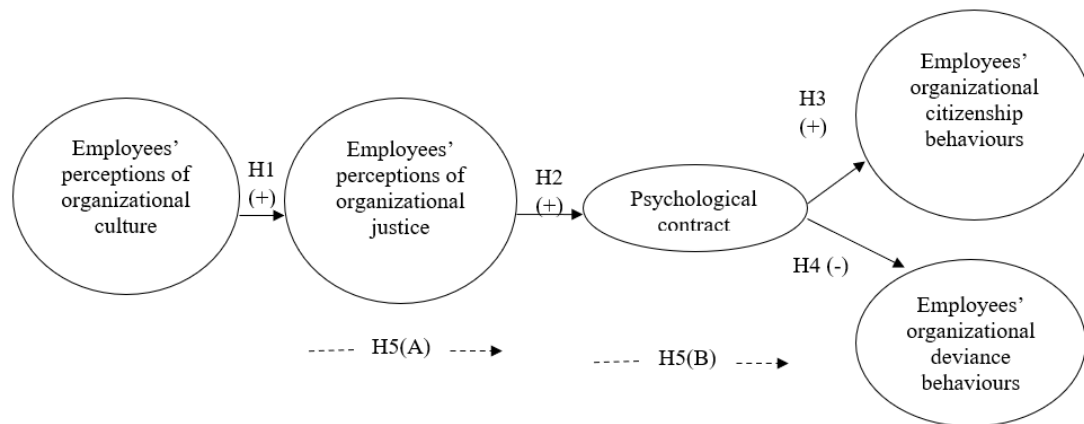
The PC expresses an implicit knowledge about the employment relationship that is composed of transactional and relational characteristics (Mishra & Gupta, 2014; Raheem & Khan, 2019). EPOC and EPOJ are recognized as perceptual antecedents that explain employer actions and develop PC that strengthens organizational citizenship and reduces deviant behaviors in the workplace (Choi *et al.*, 2019; Krasniqi, 2021).

Based on the discussion above, the following hypotheses are presented.

Hypothesis 5(A) (H5(A)). Employees' organizational justice perceptions mediate the relationship between their perceptions of the organizational culture and their psychological contract.

Hypothesis 5(B) (H5(B)). Employees' psychological contract mediates organizational perceptions of justice and organization-directed citizenship and deviant behaviors of the employees.

All the hypotheses presented above are summed up to a conceptual LVM for further empirical testing, and presented in Figure I.

**Figure I. The conceptual latent variable model**

3. METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection Procedure

This study used a random survey approach to gather information from different organizations in India. With exact data not available for the workforce population, the sample size was approximated using the method when the population was infinite (Liu, 2014). Accordingly, a minimum sample size of 261 was needed, whilst the recommended sample size was 786.

To collect the data, 40 organizations were randomly selected from the Indian business directory, "Yellow Pages". They were contacted through their human resource (HR) departments for permission to conduct the survey and 13 gave consent. Among them, seven came from the manufacturing sector. Included in this sector were automobiles, power transmission, agricultural tools, sheet cutting, metal fabrication, paints, and iron/steel products. Of the rest, six of them came from the service sector, which included life insurance, banking, hospitality, management consulting, IT-enabled services, and print media.

Participating subjects for the survey were based on their willingness to complete the questionnaires, which were distributed with a cover letter detailing the objectives of the study, background about the researcher, guarantees of anonymity, and that the information sought would only be used in academic contexts. Out of the 1,400 questionnaires that were distributed, 828 completed and usable ones were returned for the analysis, denoting a response rate of 59.14%.

All the respondents were permanent and full-time managers of their organizations. They had, on average, an age of 35.04 years and working experience of 10.13 years. The sample comprised 477 respondents from manufacturing organizations and 351 from service organizations. There were 513 males while 315 respondents were females. Among the respondents, 83 belonged to senior management, 407 to middle management, and 338 to junior management.

Measures

The present study used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for measuring the main constructs.

EPOC. EPOC was measured in this research by eight adapted items from the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP) questionnaire developed by O'Reilly *et al.* (1991). The OCP measures eight dimensions of organizational culture perceived by the employees, including innovation, attention to detail, and outcome orientation. An example survey item was 'This organization takes risks, is innovative, and is open to experimenting with different ways of doing things'. The Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .83.

EPOJ. This variable was measured using Niehoff and Moorman's (1993) Organizational Justice Scale, which contains 20 items. The scale includes three dimensions of organizational justice namely, distributive, procedural, and interactional. They have five, six, and nine items respectively, relating to these three aspects. Examples of survey items were 'My work schedule is fair' for distributive justice, 'Decisions at work are made without bias' for procedural justice, and 'Adequate explanations for job decisions are provided' for interactional justice. The Cronbach's alpha for this measure was .84.

PC. This is assessed by the psychological contract 18-item questionnaire constructed by Raja *et al.* (2004), which consists of both transactional and relational contracts and has nine items for each. Sample survey items were 'I only work the hours



outlined in my contract' for the transactional contract, and 'I expect to grow within this organization' for the relational contract. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for this measure was .89.

EOCB. Four items were taken from Saks (2006), which particularly focus on employee citizenship behaviors toward the organization. For instance, 'Employees take steps to protect the organization from potential issues'. The Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency for this measure was .92.

EODB. From Bennett and Robinson's (2000) scale of organizational deviance, 12 adapted items measured employees' deviations from the norm. One sample item stated 'Employees deliberately extend work time in order to earn more overtime hours'. The Cronbach's alpha was .78.

Control Variables. This study controlled several respondent characteristics, including age, work experience, sector of the organization, gender, and managerial level that predict their behavior and attitudes. Age and work experience were treated as continuous variables, while organizational sector (manufacturing was coded as 1 and services as 2) and gender (male was coded as 1 and female as 2) were treated as dichotomous categorical variables. Managerial level (LoM) was coded as a categorical variable that included senior, middle, and junior management, coded as 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Similar categorizations were used in previous studies (Kim *et al.*, 2020).

4. RESULTS

Common Method Bias

A single latent factor approach was used to test common method bias (CMB) as given by Siemsen *et al.* (2010). A common latent variable model (CLVM) was built by connecting all the indicators of the study variables, that is, EPOC, EPOJ, PC, EOCB, and EODB. The fit of this was then compared with the conceptual LVM. The fit indices for the CLVM were .75 for the CFI as well as for the IFI, while the corresponding indices for the conceptual LVM were both .97. Based on these results, the CLVM was rejected, and consequently, CMB was not a significant issue in the proposed model.

Measurement Model Evaluation

In this study, guidelines were followed to evaluate the measurement model for reliability and validity (Ramayah *et al.*, 2011). Construct reliability was confirmed with composite reliability values ranging from .81 to .86. Convergent validity was established by average variance extracted (AVE) values, which were found to range from .63 to .79. As per the results denoted in Table I, the squares of the intercorrelations between the study variables were less than the AVE values which provided substantiation of discriminant validity (Koufteros, 1999). In addition, the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio was applied (Henseler *et al.*, 2016). As per Table I, these ranged from .29 to .62, also evidencing discriminant validity. These results are presented in Table I.

Table I. Evaluation of the measurement model

Variables	CR	1	2	3	4	5
1. EPOC	.84	.63				
2. EPOJ	.82	.15 (.48)	.79			
3. PC	.86	.13 (.39)	.19 (.31)	.73		
4. EOCB	.84	.06 (.29)	.14 (.33)	.07 (.42)	.64	
5. EODB	.81	.08 (.49)	.05 (.57)	.04 (.51)	.02 (.62)	.71

Note. $n = 828$; CR is 'Composite reliability'; The diagonal values of the matrix represent the average variance extracted while the off-diagonal values are the squares of the inter-correlations between the study variables; Off-diagonal values in parentheses are results of the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) analysis; 'EPOC' is 'Employees' perceptions of organizational culture', 'EPOJ' is 'Employees' perceptions of organizational justice', 'PC' is 'Psychological contract', 'EOCB' is 'Employees' organizationally-directed citizenship behaviours' and 'EODB' is 'Employees' organizational deviance behaviours'

1. Configural Invariance Testing

Before proceeding for further analysis, configural invariance was proven between the groups, that are, sector, gender, and LoM. Configural invariance would mean that the measurement model is similar across various groups. The results indicate



that the measures carried out for this study were invariant across sector ($\Delta\chi^2_{df} = 522.2_{530}, p = .59$), gender ($\Delta\chi^2_{df} = 551.2_{552}, p = .50$), and LoM ($\Delta\chi^2_{df} = 1386.8_{1386}, p = .49$), hence justifying the generalizability of results across all groups.

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliability

Table II reports the descriptive statistics, correlations, and Cronbach's alpha for all variables involved in the study. As conjectured, significant positive correlations were found between EPOC and EPOJ, $r = .39, p \leq .01$, and between EPOJ and PC, $r = .44, p \leq .01$. A significant positive correlation was also found between PC and EOCB, $r = .27, p \leq .05$, though a significant negative correlation was found between PC and EODB with $r = -.20$ and $p \leq .01$.

Table II. Descriptive statistics, inter-correlations, and alpha reliability indices

Values (→) Variables (↓)	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	35.04	8.58	1.00									
2. Work experience	10.13	7.58	.08	1.00								
3. Sector	1.33	.47	-.05*	-.06*	1.00							
4. Gender	1.21	.41	-.19	-.10	.18*	1.00						
5. LoM	2.47	.63	-.27*	-.10	.07	.06	1.00					
6. EPOC	3.59	.66	.09	.04	.01	.04	.02*	(.83)				
7. EPOJ	3.10	.62	-.08	-.08	.23	.10	.01**	.39**	(.84)			
8. PC	3.42	.51	.04*	.07	.11	.18	.08	.36**	.44**	(.89)		
9. EOCB	3.51	.67	.07	.06	-.08	-.04	.03*	.24*	.24**	.27*	(.92)	
10. EODB	2.26	.52	-.02	.02	.06	.13	.04	-.28**	-.23**	-.20**	-.15**	(.78)

Note. $n = 828$; $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$; SD, Standard Deviation. Cronbach's Alpha reliability indices are reported in parentheses on the diagonal; Short-forms are as mentioned in the previous tables and in text.

Path Analysis for the Tested Model

The relationship among the study variables was analyzed through the application of AMOS version 24.0 in carrying out the path analyses. It was found that EPOC positively and significantly predicted EPOJ with standardized $\beta = .40, p \leq .01$, for H1. Similarly, PC significantly regressed on EPOJ with standardized $\beta = .46, p \leq .01$, for H2. Moreover, PC positively predicted EOCB (standardized $\beta = .25, p \leq .05$), thereby confirming H3, whereas EODB was negatively associated with PC (standardized $\beta = -.19, p \leq .01$), thereby supporting H4. The results as well as the hypothesized relations are presented in Table III.

Table III. Path analyses

Values (→) Paths (↓)	Unstandardized coefficients (b)	Standardized β estimates	C.R. [†]	Remarks
EPOC → EPOJ	.52	.40	9.53	H1 accepted
EPOJ → PC	.71	.46	5.81	H2 accepted
PC → EOCB	.43	.25	2.33	H3 accepted
PC → EODB	-.24	-.19	-3.67	H4 accepted



Note. $n = 828$; short-forms are as mentioned in the previous table(s) and in text; *LVM' is 'Latent Variable Model'; †C.R. is 'Critical Ratios', a recommended basis for testing the statistical significance of SEM components. C.R. $\geq \pm 1.96$ indicates significance at the 95% level and C.R. $\geq \pm 2.58$ indicates significance at the 99% level.

Mediation Analysis through Competing LVMs

Competing LVMs were tested through structural equation modeling (SEM) procedures to explore mediation effects using respective fit indices. Absolute fit indices such as normed χ^2 , the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were calculated as were the comparative fit indices like the comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), normed fit index (NFI), and relative fit index (RFI). As seen in other research (Byrne, 2001), the fit indices were taken at the cut-off values: $RMSEA \leq 0.06$, $1.00 \leq \text{normed } \chi^2 \leq 3.00$, and all fit indices (GFI, CFI, IFI, NFI, RFI) ≥ 0.90 .

In this section, three LVMs were tested. The first was LVM1 with EPOC as an exogenous latent variable and EOCB and EODB as endogenous variables, without mediators. The next was LVM2, representing *quasi*-mediation with EPOJ and PC as mediators between EPOC and the outcome variables that were, EOCB and EODB and with direct paths linking EPOC, EOCB, and EODB. The final model was LVM3 where no direct linkages were considered between EPOC and the outcome variables and which included EPOJ as the first-order and PC as the second-order mediators, thus, representing *full*-mediation.

The best among these models was LVM3, that is, the model with *full*-mediation, with the values for normed $\chi^2 = 2.82$, GFI = .97, RMSEA = .04, CFI = .97, IFI = .97, NFI = .95, and RFI = .93. As all fit indices were above the threshold value, LVM3 was used for further analysis. The fit indices are shown in Table IV.

Table IV. Analysis of the competing models

Values (→) Models(↓)	Fit Indices						
	Absolute Fit Indices			Comparative Fit Indices			
	Normed χ^2	GFI	RMSEA	CFI	IFI	NFI	RFI
LVM1 (<i>no</i> mediation)	3.38	.84	.08	.83	.83	.79	.77
LVM2 (<i>quasi</i> -mediation)	3.61	.87	.06	.86	.86	.83	.81
LVM3 (<i>full</i> mediation)	2.82	.97	.04	.97	.97	.95	.93

Note. $n = 828$; short-forms are as mentioned in the previous table(s) and in text; Minimum acceptable values of the fit indices are as mentioned in the text.

Additional Mediation Analysis

For robustness of mediation effects, additional tests were carried out which comprised Sobel's (1982) test, Aorian's (1944) test, and Goodman's (1960) test suggested by MacKinnon *et al.* (2002). These tests confirmed the absence of Type I error. The indirect-to-total effect ratios were calculated and presented as percentages of mediation. In addition, indirect effects were addressed by using the AMOS 24.0 plugin (Gaskin & Lim, 2018) and proved to be significant in all paths within LVM3, which caused the verification of H5(A) and H5(B). These results are depicted in Tables V and VI.

Table V. Additional Analysis of Mediation

Values (→) Paths (↓)	Additional Mediation Tests			Percentage of mediation	Path Analyses		Results of the additional mediation analyses
	Sobel's test	Aorian's test	Goodman's test		Whether regression estimate of (direct paths) > (paths under mediated condition)?	Whether regression estimate of (paths under mediated condition) is significant?	
EPOC → EPOJ → PC	16.48**	16.47**	16.49**	47.22			All



EPOJ → PC → EOCB	5.45**	5.44**	5.47**	35.49	NO	YES	variables designated as mediators fulfill <i>full</i> -mediation
EPOJ → PC → EODB	-7.85**	-7.89**	-7.84**	32.98			

Note. $n = 828$; ** $p \leq .01$; short-forms are as mentioned in the previous table(s) and in text.

Table VI. Specific indirect effects

Indirect Path	Unstandardized Estimate	Standardized Estimate
EPOC --> EPOJ --> PC	.64	.46**
EPOC --> EPOJ --> PC --> EOCB	.57	.31*
EPOC --> EPOJ --> PC --> EODB	-.33	-.34*
EPOJ --> PC --> EOCB	.87	.84**
EPOJ --> PC --> EODB	-.46	-.54*

Note. $n = 828$; * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$; short-forms are as mentioned in the previous table(s) and in text.

5. DISCUSSION

The empirical study found support for all the hypotheses, which, therefore, validates the conceptual model proposed as LVM3. In the next section, the theoretical and practical implications of these findings are explored.

Theoretical Implications

Accepting the first hypothesis of associating EPOC with EPOJ is consistent with the referent cognitions theory (Folger, 1986). This theory highlights how social cognition helps in building shared values, beliefs, and assumptions within an organization. It means that employees judge their treatment by an organization in integrity and fairness, in particular, as presented in this case, compared to other entities of similar context. The results establish the fact that if EPOC is high, then the value and maintenance of the relationship with the employer is intense and the organization is perceived in terms of justice and fairness.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the PC between employees and employers is a mutually advantageous one that can be understood better by applying the social contract theory (Wang *et al.*, 2010). This explains how EPOC and perceptions of fairness (EPOJ) enhance the PC that leads to mutual benefit in the employee-employer relationship.

The findings that support hypotheses three and four further emphasize the expected utility theory (Hassan *et al.*, 2021). This theory asserts that employees who develop a sense of strong transactional and relational contract with their organization want to do something to meet with expectations established by this PC. This need is well articulated in higher levels of EOCB and minimized levels of EODB. In short, employees exhibit benevolent and prosocial behaviors if these are congruent with their job satisfaction; alternatively, they abstain from acting in line with deviant behaviors that would detrimentally affect the organizational interest as well as their own employment benefits.

Lastly, the acceptance of both parts of hypothesis five, H5(A) and H5(B) support the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). Employees learn from social interactions to see their organization's culture as ethical and just and maintain positive EPOJ, and this, therefore, favorably affects their PC. These perceptions culminate in augmenting EOCB and adversely impact EODB.

Practical Implications

The acceptance of the first hypothesis underlines how the encouragement of a benign organizational culture, which in turn raises the perceptions of organizational justice among employees, is important. The role of managers should then focus on the alignment of organizational policies and practices to match the personal values held by employees to create a sense of shared purpose. Socialization of the recruited employees should start during this process. Ratiocination should be provided to explain why an individual was selected and how he or she fits into the big picture of the organization with a component of fairness and parity.

With the second hypothesis, organizations should strive to develop objective work norms that are defined and aligned with the compensation and reward systems. Paying people for equal work and rewarding them for superior performance enhance



the transactional character of distributive justice and increase the aggregate distributive outcomes. Moreover, by making workers co-decision makers in policy formulation and creating an open communication environment, trust is built between the two, which helps them develop the procedural and interactional components of EPOJ and the relational psychological contractual aspects. The outcomes substantiating hypotheses three and four suggest that HR planning must align job responsibilities with the skill sets and motivation levels of the employees, enriching their jobs and providing fulfillment to the PC. It is via such measures that organizations will be able to motivate employees to go beyond their assigned roles and exhibit citizenship behaviors. EOCB can be motivated through managers encouraging a helping work culture and extending empathy towards employees, rewarding creativity, and expediting the redress of grievances. A strong PC will significantly reduce EODB because the employee is more likely to be attached to a working environment and thus less likely to disrupt it.

Support for the mediation hypotheses (H5(A) and H5(B)) underlines this aspect of managers' recognizing that cohesion and morale building may lead to positive short-term behaviors; however, managers should reinforce EPOJ and PC to sustain such behaviors in the long run and prevent groupthink.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite the implications of the findings, the results in this study should be interpreted considering several limitations. This study, being cross-sectional, does not allow the drawing of causal inferences. Longitudinal studies may investigate how these constructs are associated with each other over time. Additionally, since this study is centered around the employee-organization relationship, future studies can include additional constructs such as perceived organizational support, person-organization fit, or organizational trust.

Further, the cross-cultural study of the accepted LVM (LVM3) can be highlighted concerning the current practices of global HR management while making use of variance-invariance approaches for comparing differences across cultures. Finally, having a more representative sample that includes not only non-management employees but also temporary ones could open up the understanding of this research's findings.

6. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to explore the dynamics of EPOC with respect to its influence on positive behaviors, such as EOCB, and on negative behaviors, such as EODB. Particularly, it used the mediating roles of EPOJ and the PC between employees and their organization to analyze the nature of these relationships. SEM analysis was applied to a set of data in order to test the hypotheses and validate the conceptual framework.

Within this context, findings realized from the research are important contributions toward understanding the interrelation of employees' perceptions of the organization and its behavior. The results have theoretical as well as applied value by understanding the ways organizational justice and psychological contracts shape employee behavior. Conclusions reached within the study provide valuable directions for future research into these associations within many different contexts and settings

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