

## Predicting Public Servants' Organizational Citizenship Behavior through Work-Life Balance Initiatives: Evidence from Medics in Tanzania's Government Hospitals

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### Abstract

*Despite gaining substantial recognition and being highly advocated for adoption, the concepts of work-life balance and organizational citizenship behavior are still under-researched in the public service, especially in developing countries. This study examines the influence of work-life balance on dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior among medical staff members in Tanzania. A cross-sectional survey was employed to collect data from 335 stratified randomly selected medics working in hospitals operating under Local Government Authorities. The Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling technique was used in data analysis with the help of Amos software version 21. Results show that work-life balance initiatives have a positive and significant influence on organizational citizenship behavior. The study findings provide evidence of the applicability of the link between work-life balance and organizational citizenship behavior, as postulated in Social Exchange Theory, in the public service which is under-researched. The study implication for different stakeholders is presented at the end of the paper.*

**Keywords:** Organization citizenship behavior, work-life balance, medics, healthcare facilities

### Introduction

The hypercompetitive and dynamic business environment that most organizations are facing today and will continue confronting in the long future make them largely dependent upon creative, innovative, and fast-learning employees (Nazarian, Atkinson, & Foroudi, 2017). To adjust quickly to dynamic environmental conditions, organizations need employees who are highly innovative, flexible, fast learning, and who can work beyond the call of their formal employment contracts (Sung & Choi, 2018). However, creativity, innovativeness, and fast learning are said to be discretionary behaviors because an employee may opt to offer or not to; hence, the organization has little control over them (Organ, 2018). Discretionary behavior is technically referred to as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in human resources management (HRM) and industrial psychology. This is because it is a behavior that is not explicitly recognized by the formal employment agreement (job description and reward system), but in the aggregate, it promotes effectiveness in the functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988, 2018). In the contemporary business world, which is ever-changing, OCB is considered the lifeline of any organization by scholars (Cook & Hahn, 2021). However, the likelihood that employees will exhibit such behaviors depends on the ways they are treated in the workplace (Organ, 2018; Sanga, 2020; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). The extent to which managers elicit OCB among their employees as an approach to ensuring effective and efficient performance and eventually survival or success of their organizations is a question that has not been adequately explored in the public sector.

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Because of its link with organizational effectiveness, in the form of productivity, quality services, customer satisfaction, profitability, and overall success, OCB has for the past three decades gained popularity among practitioners both in private and public organizations (Manenzhe & Ngirande, 2021; Ocampo et al., 2018; Organ, 2018; Sanga, 2020; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). Managers especially of service-oriented organizations have been adopting different initiatives to promote OCB in their workplaces (Manenzhe & Ngirande, 2021; Rayner, Lawton, & Williams, 2012; Sanga, 2020; Tang & Tang, 2012). The extent to which such initiatives adopted are effective is a question that is under-researched in the public service, especially in the developing world. It is for this reason that this study sought to examine how OCB can be enthused among public servants as a strategy to improve public social service delivery which remains an issue of concern in most developing countries (de Geus, Ingrams, Tummers, & Pandey, 2020).

Poor service delivery is an established common problem in the public service of many countries, developing countries in particular (Makanyeza, 2013; Mehrotra & Jarrett, 2002; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). Also, the public sector in many developing countries has been facing serious challenges in maintaining consistent service delivery (Lufunyo, 2013; Oyatoye et al., 2016; Twaliwi et al., 2021; Yusuph & Guohua, 2017). Moreover, African countries' public service is characterized by bribery and nepotism (Oyatoye et al., 2016; Twaliwi et al., 2021). In Tanzania, it is common to observe misconduct among public servants. For instance, medics have been reported that they administer expired vaccines to patients or not administer medications timely (Basirudin et al., 2016; Mdee & Mushi, 2021). To overcome challenges in social service delivery, governments of different nations, especially in developing countries have tried different strategies including decentralization of the public service (Basirudin et al., 2016; Mdee & Mushi, 2021). The decentralization is done by cascading the management and supervision roles of public social services such as healthcare and education down to lower levels of government hierarchies. Therefore, decisions regarding the policies and regulations that are used to guide, monitor, and control service delivery are made at the lower levels (Liu, *et al.*, 2020). For example, since 1996, Tanzania's social services like education and healthcare are mostly managed by agencies and local government authorities rather than the central government as it used to be (Lufunyo, 2013). In 2004, the Government formalized the open performance review and appraisal system (OPRAS) for all its public servants with the aim of improving the delivery of public social services (Lufunyo, 2013; Mdee & Mushi, 2021). Despite all this effort, inconsistency is still prevalent in the delivery of public social service.

One of the highly advocated approaches to handling service delivery deficiency in modern times is instilling and nurturing organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among employees (Manenzhe & Ngirande, 2021; Sanga, 2020; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). The OCB is said to increase organizational effectiveness through enhanced team spirit, morale, and cohesiveness among employees, which are translated into quality service delivery and customer satisfaction (Sanga, 2020). Employees' willingness to behave appropriately in the workplace is believed to be the key factor of organizational effectiveness in service organizations (Podsakoff, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Maynes, & Spoelma, 2014; Tang & Tang, 2012). The OCB is important for all organizations. However, it is more critical to service organizations such as healthcare facilities because their performance largely depends upon the interaction between employees and the

customers they serve (de Geus et al., 2020). The fact that the production and consumption of services occur simultaneously in the service sector implies that effective service delivery depends on employees, to a large extent. Service employees must be extra flexible, innovative, and proactive, all of which are forms of OCB (Schneider & Bowen, 1993). In the healthcare service setting, the promotion of OCB is likely to transform employees into people who can perform their jobs beyond their contractual responsibilities which will lead to improved service delivery. Thus, it has become important to understand how a service organization, particularly healthcare facilities in this study, creates an environment that motivates behaviors that go beyond formal job requirements for achieving desirable customer outcomes.

In light of the above background information, the current study sought to examine how OCB can be elicited in public service. Specifically, the study assesses the influence of work-life balance (WLB) initiatives on OCB in Tanzania's public healthcare services. In Tanzania, most healthcare facilities are operated by local governments which are alleged for poor service delivery (Makanyeza, 2013). It is noteworthy that healthcare service is one of the sectors in which WLB, in the form of breaks, shifts, and flexitime, is commonly practiced. The overall research question for which answers are sought is "To what extent do WLB initiatives influence OCB in public healthcare service delivery?". Based on this question, the specific objective of the study was to examine the influence of WLB on employees' (i) conscientiousness; (ii) sportsmanship; and (iii) civic virtue in public healthcare service.

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

The examination of WLB initiatives in relation to OCB fits well in Blau's (1964) social exchange theoretical perspective. The theoretical perspective postulates that employees trade their effort, loyalty, and commitment to the organization for the favorable treatment that the organization can provide. Based on the Social Exchange Theory (SET), WLB initiatives are expected to predict OCB. When employees are offered flexibility in ways through which they can attend to their job duties, they are likely to interpret such flexibility as the organization's favor that will create an obligation among them (employees) to repay through favorable attitudes and behaviors including OCB. This means that exhibiting OCB is one of the ways employees can use to repay the organization back for the beneficial actions directed to them. Snape and Redman (2010) suggest that SET is the best perspective for understanding the relationship between human resources management (HRM) practices or initiatives and OCB. In the public healthcare service setting, when medics are allowed satisfactory time for work and non-work matters, they are more likely to repay their organizations through positive discretionary behaviors. The logic is that public servants treat time setting initiatives as government favor towards them, which they are socially obliged to reciprocate through positive discretionary behaviors such as OCB. Therefore, SET is an appropriate theoretical framework for understanding how employees and organizations in public service relate to one another.

The analysis of the influence of WLB on OCB is also done with reference to the New Public Management (NPM) doctrine. The NPM doctrine inspires reforms in public institutions to enhance the quality of their service. Under the NPM doctrine, public institutions or government agencies are encouraged to adopt the management practice used by private organizations to improve the delivery of public services (Sulle, 2010). According to Hood (1995), the main developer and advocate of the doctrine, the main guiding principles of the NPM are (i)

professionalism, (ii) objective performance measurement, (ii) performance-linked rewards, (iv) decentralization, (v) competitive public service provision, as well as (vii) discipline and economy. The NPM has become a worldwide recognized model for initiating and implementing reforms as well as managing service delivery in public sectors (Yusuph & Guohua, 2017). In Tanzania, the Government has since the 1990s been undergoing reforms that are aimed partly at improving quality, access, and equity in public service delivery. Adoption of the NPM model in public service is expected to improve the use of public resources and the responsiveness to the citizens' demands (Yusuph & Guohua, 2017). Of much relevance to the study of work-life balance (WLB) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in public service is the principle of decentralization and delegation which involves the transfer of autonomy from the top down to the level where activities are actually performed. On one hand, WLB initiatives such as flexitime and breaks give employees the freedom to decide on the appropriate time to perform their job activities while they are in a position of attending to their personal matters. On the other hand, OCB enhances employees' creativity and innovativeness. With OCB, the employees are allowed to come up with ideas on how the organization's operations can be improved. In the healthcare setting, by the nature of their jobs, medics need both WLB and OCB.

### **The Concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior**

As stated earlier, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to the discretionary acts people do at work that are beneficial to the organization but that individuals are not mandated to do. It reflects the tendency for employees to engage in positive acts that go beyond the call of their job descriptions (Sanga, 2020). The OCB is conceptualized differently by different scholars (Podsakoff et al., 2014). However, in recent years, it is commonly described based on the two-factor model developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). The two factors are based on discretionary behaviors that benefit the organization as an entity (OCB-O) and discretionary behaviors that benefit individuals (OCB-I). The current study focuses solely on organization-oriented OCB (OCB-O) which directly contributes to the efficient and effective functioning of the organization.

On one hand, behaviors that are directed towards the organization include conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue (Pradhan, Jena, & Kumari, 2016). Williams and Anderson (1991) describe conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue as follows. Conscientiousness is synonymous to general compliance which includes following company rules without the need to be watched, caring for organizational resources, using company time properly, attending to work as expected, maintaining company cleanliness, and adhering to the rules of the organization. Sportsmanship refers to tolerance and refraining from complaining or creating grievances in the organizational working environment while civic virtue refers to responsible participation in the political life of the organization through sharing insights for improvements, participating in organizational meetings, and promoting the organization and its business or services. All these kinds of behavior facilitate the organization to function efficiently and effectively. On the other hand, behaviors that are aimed at benefitting individuals (OCB-I) are grouped into courtesy and altruism (Sanga, 2020). While courtesy involves avoiding causing work-related problems to others, altruism refers to an employee's helping behaviors offered to other people in the workplace. For instance, courtesy involves giving advance notice to co-workers who can be affected by one's acts whereas helping behaviors include showing a new employee how to use a machine or helping him/her serve a customer (Organ, 2018).

### **The Concept of Work-Life Balance**

For the organization, WLB refers to initiatives aimed at maintaining the right balance between time for work duties and time for family responsibilities of employees whereas for employees, it reflects the satisfaction derived from both the work and family roles (Sheikh, Ashiq, Mehar, Hasan, & Khalid, 2018). Such initiatives aid workers in dealing with their personal and family endeavors in an improved manner. The WLB involves a time schedule that includes work shifts, work breaks, and flexitimes arrangements. Work shift setting includes having a fixed amount of time that is rotated among employees under employer guidance. Work shift applies more to organizations that operate on 24-hours service time like hospitals and police forces work stations (Johari, Tan, & Zulkarnain, 2018). Work breaks are another initiative under WLB. They involve an employee switching to something else during working hours (Sheikh et al., 2018). This allows employees to recover from exhaustion if not prevented. There are different forms of breaks, ranging from sabbaticals and vacations to short micro-breaks within a working day. Flexitime refers to a scheduling program that gives workers room to arrange their own starting and ending times (Okemwa, 2016).

Okemwa (2016) asserts that employees of these times demand work settings and policies that balance time to deal with work and non-work matters. However, if well organized, shift work may turn employees into more energetic and productive (Okemwa, 2016). But if care is not taken, WLB initiatives may lead to detrimental consequences including counterproductive work behavior. When there is time scheduling at work, the work does not contradict employees' personal life, instead, it creates a strong tie between the employee and work. Also, employees feel a sense of belongingness to the company; hence discretionally commit to its growth (Pradhan et al., 2016). When employees are happy with their work and the organization, they engage more in positive work behaviors including OCB. Stressing this argument, Baral and Bhargava (2011) posit that WLB has implications for employees' attitudes and behavior which in turn determine organizational effectiveness.

### **Previous Research on Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Work-Life Balance**

Because of its strong association with organizational performance, OCB is today one of the most investigated concepts in different fields of management (de Geus et al., 2020; Manenzhe & Ngirande, 2021; Ocampo et al., 2018; Organ, 2018). Much of the research on OCB has focused on assessing its antecedents and consequences. It has been established that numerous factors influence employees to exhibit OCB. They include job satisfaction, interpersonal trust, organizational commitment, perceived justice, leader reward behavior, employee empowerment, and employee mood (de Geus et al., 2020; Ocampo et al., 2018; Organ, 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2014). The outcome of OCB includes service quality, productivity, sales revenue, customer service, employee turnover, and customer satisfaction (Podsakoff et al., 2014). However, the OCB literature indicates that most of these studies have been conducted on the private sector and mostly in developed economies with little attention being paid to public service in low-income countries (Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). Studies that have specifically examined the influence of WLB on OCB in the context of public service are scarce in the mainstream literature and in HRM in particular.

The empirical findings obtained from studies conducted in the private sector cannot be generalized to the public service because of the difference in management approach that exists between the two sides (Basirudin et al., 2016). The delivery of public service is much regulated, with decision-making involving serving levels of hierarchies whereas in the private sector, an employee has substantial autonomy in deciding the manner by which work can be performed. However, Getting inspiration from the new public management perspective, public organizations have been increasingly adopting management practices that are used by their counterparts with the aim of improving their service delivery (Basirudin et al., 2016; Islam, 2015; Rubakula, 2014; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). Therefore, it is important that the public sector is fully included in the OCB research agenda. The few studies that have been conducted on the public sector establish that some factors such as leadership style, compensation systems, organizational politics, organizational support, HRM practices, and procedural justice influence OCB (Basirudin et al., 2016; Rayner et al., 2012; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). The current study examines the influence of the WLB initiatives on the OCB of medical practitioners in public healthcare facilities. As defined earlier, WLB refers to an individual's perception of the time investment required for work activities relative to non-work or personal responsibilities (Pradhan et al., 2016). As Pradhan et al. (2016) argue, balancing work and personal or family life responsibilities has significant implications not only for employee attitudes, behaviors, and well-being but also for organizational effectiveness. Among the many factors that influence OCB, WLB is the one that suits better in the healthcare service setting. In contemporary times, many organizations pay attention to WLB and have programs on it as a strategy to promote positive work attitudes and behaviors among their employees. However, given the nature of the medics' work, they may be called on duty at any time when circumstances require it. Moreover, in low-income countries like Tanzania, medics serve multiple healthcare facilities. As a result, if care is not taken, there is a high potential for work activities to be attained at the expense of personal responsibilities. The WLB initiatives are a common practice in healthcare operations (Mullen, 2015; Suifan, Abdallah, & Diab, 2016). Therefore, it is important that an examination is done on their ability to induce positive employee behavior including OCB.

Studies conducted with samples drawn from private organizations suggest that WLB is positively associated with employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, employee commitment, organizational identity, and OCB (Eriyanti & Noekent, 2021; Mullen, 2015; Pradhan et al., 2016). For instance, a review of more than 70 research papers conducted by Harikaran and Thevanes (2018) indicated positive relationships between WLB and organizational performance with the mediation of OCB. In a study to determine the influence of WLB on OCB and organizational commitment in the manufacturing industry in Eastern India, Pradhan et al. (2016) found that WLB had significant effects on OCB and organizational commitment. The study also shows a mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between WLB and OCB. The WLB initiatives may be perceived by employees as favorable treatment of the organization which they may pay through discretionary behaviors, OCB included (Pradhan et al., 2016).

The reviewed empirical literature suggests a positive link between WLB initiatives and the dimensions of OCB. In line with SET, public medical practitioners would feel obligated to practice discretionary behavior to repay the healthcare facilities for containing their needs. On the basis of the provision of SET (Blau, 1964) and the foundations of the reviewed empirical

studies (Amano, Fukuda, Shibuya, Ozaki, & Tabuchi, 2021; Eriyanti & Noekent, 2021; Harikaran & Thevanes, 2018), it is logical to expect WLB initiatives to have a positive effect on employees/ OCB. Therefore, the following specific hypotheses are formulated for the present study.

H<sub>1</sub>: WLB has a positive effect on employees' conscientiousness.

H<sub>2</sub>: WLB has a positive effect on employees' sportsmanship.

H<sub>3</sub>: WLB has a positive effect on employees' civic virtue.

### **Methodology of the Study**

This quantitative research study involved a sample of 335 participants drawn from a population of medical practitioners working in district hospitals in Tanzania. Stratified random sampling was used to select participants based on gender and age. Grouping the sample by gender and age was important because previous studies have evidence that individuals differ in appreciating WLB initiatives on grounds of demographic differences. For example, in Doble and Supriya's (2010) study on work-life balance across genders in Indian organizations, it was established that men and women differed in their perception of WLB with women appreciating work-life balance initiatives more than men. In addition to gender and age information about respondents' marital status and level of education was also corrected. Of the total number of participants, 231 (68.9%) were females and 104 (31.1%) were males. In terms of marital status, 42.1% were single, 45.7% were married, and 12.2% were either widows/widowers or divorced/separated. As regards age, the majority of participants were aged above 40 years (60%) while the remaining part was 40%. Regarding education level, the majority of participants, that is 236 (68.3%) had below a bachelor's degree whereas those with a bachelor's degree and above were 99 (32.7%).

The data were collected using a self-administered survey questionnaire developed by adapting some items as elaborated in the following details. The study involved two major variables, WLB as an independent latent variable and OCB as a dependent latent variable. WLB, which was conceptualized as a unidimensional latent variable, was measured using eight items adapted from the scale developed by Barton et al. (1995). The eight items were selected on the basis of their high factor loadings observed in similar studies. The sample items for WLB are "I break as per prior office arrangements with colleagues", "Flexible work options are suitable for me" and "My work activities continue for 24 hours daily". The organization-oriented OCB (OCB-O) was conceptualized in three dimensions, namely conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. These dimensions were measured using a total of twelve items (four items each) all adapted from the OCB questionnaire developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). The sample items are "I like being precise in everything I do to find new approaches for executing tasks (conscientiousness) and "I can tolerate challenges at work (sportsmanship). The original instruments have been used extensively in previous research studies and were adapted to suit the context of Tanzanian public service. A 5-point likert scale was used, with every item scoring between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree).

This study's hypotheses were empirically tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) with the help of the IBM-SPSS Amos version 21 software. The SEM is a data analytical technique that allows a researcher to test a full conceptual model with multiple variables and relationships simultaneously. It was considered the most appropriate technique for this study because of its powerful framework for estimating causal and effect models with multiple relationships (Hair,

Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013; Kline, 2023). Using the two-step approach (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988), the measurement and structural models were examined separately. The four-factor measurement model was specified and assessed first for the adequacy of the hypothesized factor structure. Upon attainment of the fit of the measurement model, the structural model representing the hypothesized relationships was then specified and evaluated. Prior to the testing of the hypothesized influence of WLB on the OCBO dimensions, the assumptions of multivariate data analysis were tested to check for any violation. These assumptions are related to issues such as normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, influential outliers, and multicollinearity (Kline, 2023) and all of these were tested with the help of IBM-SPSS software. The test results indicated that there were no issues of serious concern. Results are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 and Figure 1.

## Findings and Discussions

### Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the study's latent variables are presented in Table 1. As the bivariate correlation coefficients indicate, all the study variables were positively associated with one another. WLB, the sole independent latent variable in this study, is positively related to the dimensions of OCBO: conscientiousness ( $r = 0.541, p < .001$ ), sportsmanship ( $r = 0.547, p < .001$ ), and civic virtue ( $r = 0.590, p < .001$ ). This provides support to the anticipation that WLB initiatives might influence OCBO in its dimensions. In addition, Table 1 also shows that the mean values were moderate for most of the study constructs, with conscientiousness having the highest score ( $mean = 4.10, Std. Dev. = 1.48$ ) and Sportsmanship having the lowest score ( $mean = 3.5, Std. Dev. = 1.35$ ). This may suggest that conscientiousness behavior is valued more, followed by civic virtue and sportsmanship.

**Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations**

	Mean	Std. Dev.	No. of Items	1	2	3	4
Work-Life Balance	3.7	1.32	8	1			
Conscientiousness	4.1	1.48	4	.541**	1		
Sportsmanship	3.5	1.35	4	.547**	.505**	1	
Civic Virtue	3.6	1.40	4	.590**	.506**	.559**	1

### The Measurement Model - Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed to evaluate the measurement model for the study sample of 335. The model fitness was determined through several fit indices, namely CMIN/DF, the goodness of fit index (GFI), normed fit index (NFI), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), Root Mean Square of Error Approximation (RMSEA), and comparative fit index (CFI) (Hair et al., 2013). The hypothesized four-factor model comprising WLB (8 items), conscientiousness (4 items), sportsmanship (4 items) and civic virtue (4 items) provided a poor fit. Examination of the modification indices indicated high cross-loading of three items (Wlb4, Wlb5, and Wlb7) of WLB with those of the OCB dimensions. Since they were cross-loading with the endogenous variable, the appropriate decision was to delete them from the model (Hair et al., 2013). The new model resulted in a reasonable overall fit ( $CMIN/DF = 1.170, df = 113; RMR = 0.069; CFI = 0.995; GFI = 0.956; TLI = 0.994; RMSEA = 0.023$ ). In addition, all indicators loaded significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) on their respective latent variables as Table 2 shows. This indicates that the hypothesized factor structure fits the data well.



### Reliability and Validity Analyses

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ), Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were computed to confirm the internal reliability of the scale and the validity of the factor structure (Hair et al., 2013). As shown in Table 2, the results indicate that all Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values were greater than the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming the internal reliability of the measurement scale. Moreover, the results show that the AVE values for the study constructs are greater than the recommended 0.50, indicating that convergent validity was achieved. The fact that all indicators loaded substantially and significantly ( $p < 0.001$ ) on their respective latent variables as shown in Table 2 and that the inter-factor correlations were not too high ( $r < 0.80$ ) also confirms that discriminant validity among the latent variable has been achieved. Generally, the measurement model satisfies all the conditions hence allowing the evaluation of the structural model to proceed.

**Table 2: Measurement Model - Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Latent Variable	Standardized Loadings	$\alpha$	CR	AVE		
Work-Life Balance		0.867	0.868	0.665		
wlb1	0.767					
wlb3	0.787					
Wlb8	0.819					
wlb2	0.842					
Wlb6	0.859					
Conscientiousness		0.904	0.884	0.724		
consc1	0.821					
consc2	0.860					
consc3	0.860					
consc4	0.862					
Sportsmanship		0.859	0.791	0.608		
sport3	0.721					
sport4	0.764					
sport1	0.778					
sport2	0.851					
Civic Virtue		0.891	0.847	0.673		
civic4	0.797					
civic1	0.807					
civic3	0.822					
civic2	0.855					
Model Fit Statistics						
CMIN/DF	df	RMR	CFI	GFI	TLI	RMSEA
1.170	113	0.069	0.995	0.956	0.994	0.023

### Structural Model and the Test of Hypotheses

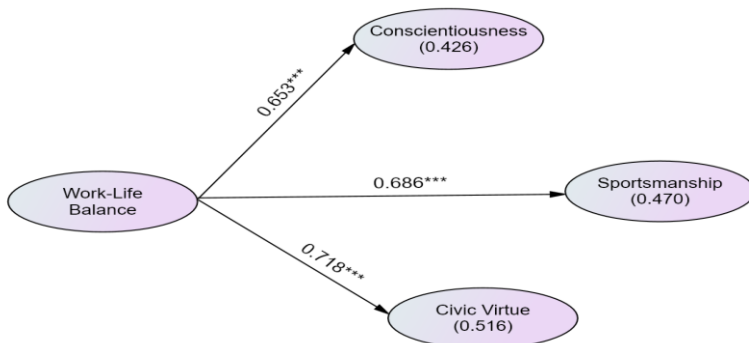
The second step of the data analysis process involved specification and evaluation of a structural model based on the hypothesized relationships. The modeled relationships between the latent variables (WLB  $\rightarrow$  CONS; WLB  $\rightarrow$  SPORT; and WLB  $\rightarrow$  CIVIC) are shown in Figure 1. As Figure 1 indicates, the standardized coefficients for all the paths are positive and statistically

significant as predicted. Thus, all the hypotheses (*H1*, *H2*, and *H3*) are supported. In general, the model fit statistics indicate that the model adequately fits the data (*CMIN/DF* = 1.418, *df* = 116; *RMR* = 0.076; *GFI* = 0.944; *CFI* = 0.986; *TLI* = 0.983; *RMSEA* = 0.035) as shown in Table 3. This implies that these structural relationships alone do not adequately explain the relationships present in our data.

**Table 3: Regression Coefficients and Model Fit Statistics**

Latent Variables		Standardized Coefficients	S.E.	C.R.	P	
Work-Life Balance → Conscientious		0.653	0.068	10.302	***	
Work-Life Balance → Sportsmanship		0.686	0.066	10.378	***	
Work-Life Balance → Civic Virtue		0.718	0.065	11.117	***	
Model Fit Statistics						
CMIN/DF	df	RMR	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1.418	116	0.076	0.944	0.983	0.986	0.035

The final model presented in Figure 1 is used as a basis for drawing conclusions regarding the significance of the effect of WLB on the OCBO dimensions: conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Consistent with *Hypothesis 1* to *3*, Figure 1 demonstrates that WLB has a significant positive influence on conscientiousness ( $\beta = 0.653$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), sportsmanship ( $\beta = 0.686$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and civic virtue ( $\beta = 0.718$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). These results show that WLB is more influential on civic virtue compared to conscientiousness and sportsmanship. The overall model explains 42.6%, 47%, and 51.6% of the variance in conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue respectively. These statistics are higher enough to meet the 10% threshold recommended for results to be considered meaningful in the field of HRM (Ringle, Sarstedt, Mitchell, & Gudergan, 2020). In general, these results demonstrate the influence of WLB on OCBO which is critical for the enhancement of quality of service delivery in public institutions like healthcare facilities. Given the significant positive relationship that has been confirmed between WLB and OCBO, public servants will discretionally engage in discretionary behaviors when there is proper management of flexitime programs, work shifts, and work breaks in the workplace.



**Figure 1: Structural Model of the Influence of WLB on OCB Dimensions**

## Discussion

In this study, it was hypothesized that WLB initiatives such as flexitime, work shifts, and work breaks would predict employees' OCB behavior directed towards the organization which include conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. The results from the analysis conducted using SEM confirm a statistically significant positive influence of WLB initiatives on all the dimensions of OCB. These findings suggest that an employee's positive perceptions of WLB initiatives, such as flexitime, work shifts, and work breaks have a direct influence on the employees' attitudes and behaviors in general but OCB in particular. This means that high levels of perceived WLB increase the likelihood that employees will exhibit OCB. Therefore, to elicit OCB among public servants in general and medical practitioners in particular, managers must implement WLB policies or programs in ways that create a balance in time investment spent between work activities and personal or family responsibilities. According to SET and the reviewed empirical literature, perception of WLB will make employees happier, enjoy work, and become productive (Heeks, Graham, Mungai, Van Belle, & Woodcock, 2021; Peiró, Kozusznik, Rodríguez-Molina, & Tordera, 2019). Therefore, organizations with WLB policies that are well managed are likely to elicit more OCB from employees than those which do not have such policies.

The results are also consistent with other relevant studies that have been conducted in the private sector, mostly in developed countries (in Europe and Asia), which found that WLB initiatives positively influence work attitude and behavior. Such studies include Harikaran and Thevanes (2018), Pradhan et al. (2016), Eriyanti and Noekent (2021), as well as Eriyanti and Noekent (2021). These studies established that WLB is positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational identity, turnover intentions, and OCB. Nevertheless, studies examining the role played by WLB initiatives in public service are scarce in the mainstream literature and the OCB literature in particular. Therefore, this study validates what has been established in the private sector in the public sector within the context of developing countries in general and Tanzania context in particular.

In line with SET, perceptions of WLB make employees feel that they are valued members of the organization. Happy employees are said to be more productive compared to coerced employees (Peiró et al., 2019) and WLB is an established major determinant of happiness at work (Heeks et al., 2021). The positive influence of WLB initiatives on the dimensions of OCB confirmed in this study corroborates the results from studies conducted in private organizations mostly in Europe and Asia. Studies by scholars such as Eriyanti and Noekent (2021), Harikaran and Thevanes (2018), Mullen (2015), Pradhan et al. (2016), and Suifan et al. (2016) also established a significant positive relationship between WLB either with OCB or other related employee outcomes. In other words, the findings of this study confirm the applicability of the concepts, WLB and OCB in the public service where they have been under-researched.

The findings moreover demonstrate that WLB initiatives are an important determinant of the OCB of public servants. This also provides more proof of the applicability of the social exchange theoretical explanation that management practices and organizational conditions such as WLB initiatives are normally reciprocated by employees through positive behavior like OCB. Indeed, WLB initiatives enable public servants to have a time balance between their work and their personal or family responsibilities, which according to the SET obligates employees to

repay. When employees feel that they have WLB in their workplaces, they feel happy and become more innovative and productive (Eriyanti & Noekent, 2021; Pradhan et al., 2016). More importantly, happy employees are motivated to engage in discretionary behaviors such as hard working, ethical conduct, tolerance to organizational shortcomings, and offering to the management ideas that can lead to improvement in the organization's operations (Organ, 2018; Sanga, 2020). Public servants are more likely to observe quality standards of service delivery if offered work conditions that ensure WLB.

## **Conclusion**

The major limitation observed in the OCB literature is that despite the recognition and the popularity they have gained the WLB and OCB concepts are under-researched in the public service, especially on how they relate to one another. While the promotion of OCB is highly advocated as a strategy for enhancing the quality of service delivery (Organ, 2018; Podsakoff et al., 2014; Tang & Tang, 2012), this is an area in which the public sector is reported to have been struggling for many years (Amano et al., 2021; de Geus et al., 2020; Okemwa, 2016; Rayner et al., 2012; Turyasingura & Nabaho, 2021). On the other hand, WLB is in recent years highly recommended for eliciting positive employee attitudes and behaviors among employees, especially discretionary behaviors (Adnan Bataineh, 2019; Eriyanti & Noekent, 2021; Suifan et al., 2016). Therefore, it was on this ground that this study examined the influence of WLB on OCB measured in its dimensions. As presented in the preceding sections, the results of this study confirm a statistically significant positive influence of OCB on conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Thus, the results of the current study validate the applicability of the two concepts together with the SET in public service.

The current study also contributes to the social exchange theory by providing more evidence of the reciprocity that exists between organizations and employees. The study informs managers of public service organizations in Local Government Authorities (LGAs) on how OCB can be promoted through WLB initiatives. The research findings will also serve as a source of information for researchers, academics, and policymakers. As for academics, the findings of the current study will help them to develop more understanding of the organizational conditions influencing OCB in public service. The current study's findings also affirm what is advocated under the NPM doctrine that public institutions can improve the delivery of their services by adopting management approaches and practices adopted by private organizations. The fact that the influence of WLB on OCB has been confirmed using the sample drawn from the public sector provides evidence that the concepts can work well in public service the same way they do in private organizations. The current study has shifted the focus on OCB from the private sector to the public sector which is under-researched. Thus, the findings contribute more knowledge to the determinants of OCB.

## **Implication of the Study Findings**

The study makes a number of important contributions to the HRM and industrial psychology literature in general but to the OCB literature in particular. First, the study is among the early studies that have investigated WLB in relation to OCB within the public service context in sub-Saharan Africa in general and Tanzania context in particular. Despite the well-established positive association between OCB and happiness in the workplace, there is a paucity of empirical research linking WLB and OCB. It has to be noted that WLB is an established major

determinant of workplace happiness, especially for medical employees whose service is normally 24-hour work. Moreover, the current study's results provide evidence of the applicability of SET in public service where social exchanges such as organizations' WLB and employees' OCB-O are under-researched. The study has confirmed that favorable WLB programs or policies offered by the organization may be interpreted by employees as favors that need to be valued and repaid in the form of positive work attitudes and behavior like OCB. Overall, the study findings have added more knowledge to our understanding of the relationship between WLB and OCB.

The findings of the current study are important from the management perspective, especially in the public sector. The employees' high rating of their perceptions of WLB initiatives as reflected in the mean values presented in Table 1 provides evidence that public servants recognize the importance of constructs of WLB and OCB-O. The average mean values in Table 1 indicate that medical employees working in public healthcare facilities are receptive to the concepts of WLB and OCB-O. Specifically, the study has shown how proper treatment of employees through appropriate management of WLB programs can lead to an effort that goes above and beyond the call of duty among members of medical practitioners in public healthcare facilities. Managers of public institutions in general and healthcare facilities in particular must consider WLB initiatives as a strategy for promoting OCB and improving service delivery in their institutions. Policymakers should enact laws or develop policies that safeguard opportunities for public servants to enjoy WLB in their jobs so that they be more productive.

The current study's results provide insights that can facilitate the formulation and implementation of labor laws and employment policies. For example, the importance of WLB as indicated by the findings of the current study may imply that the policymakers may need to consider coming up with strict conditions on hours of work and employment standards in general. Relevant government units should ensure that employers are offered training programs that improve their management skills and practices.

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