



Career Development International

Employment status and employee service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviour: The mediating roles of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity
Su-Fen Chiu Shih-Tse Lin Tzu-Shian Han

Article information:

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Su-Fen Chiu Shih-Tse Lin Tzu-Shian Han , (2015),"Employment status and employee service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviour", Career Development International, Vol. 20 Iss 2 pp. 133 - 146

Permanent link to this document:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/CDI-07-2014-0096>

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Employment status and employee service-oriented organizational citizenship behaviour

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service-
oriented OCB

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The mediating roles of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity

Received 20 July 2014
Revised 28 January 2015
4 March 2015
Accepted 4 March 2015

Su-Fen Chiu

*Department of Business Administration,
National Taiwan University of Science and Technology,
Taipei, Taiwan*

Shih-Tse Lin

*Department of Business Administration, Vanung University,
Taoyuan City, Taiwan, and*

Tzu-Shian Han

*Department of Business Administration, National Chengchi University,
Taipei, Taiwan*

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of employment status on service-oriented organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) of customer contact employees. The authors also investigate the mediating roles of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity in the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB.

Design/methodology/approach – A survey methodology was used and data were collected from a dyad-sample of 270 employees and their supervisors of one retail and one banking companies in Taiwan. Product-of-coefficients approach and bootstrapping were used to test the multiple mediating model.

Findings – The results demonstrate that temporary employment related negatively to service-oriented OCB. Moreover, both internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity mediated the employment status – service-oriented OCB linkage.

Research limitations/implications – This study has three limitations. First, this study examined only fixed-term direct-hire temporary employees. Future research should explore voluntary job behaviors of different categories of temporary employment to confirm the results of the present study. Second, this study examined internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity as two mediators. Other alternative avenues may exist by which employment status may lead to service-oriented OCB. Future research may explore additional possible mediators. Finally, the participants of this study were selected by the human resource departments of the participating companies. This option could have introduced selection bias in this study.

Practical implications – This study suggests that management should be aware of why temporary customer contact employees have lower levels of service-oriented OCB. As service-oriented OCB may be vital for organizational success in the service context, management must consider the benefits and costs when hiring temporary employees. Moreover, management can motivate temporary employees to display higher service-oriented OCB by shaping their expectations of internal mobility possibilities, or reducing temporary employees' perception of job insecurity to enhance their service-oriented OCB.



Originality/value – This study makes two contributions. First, this study extends the effect of employment status in the OCB literature by investigating the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB for customer contact employees. The results of the present study lend support for the partial exclusion theory to predict that socially excluded group (i.e. temporary employees) tends to be less engaged in service-oriented OCB. Second, this study contributes to the literature by investigating two important links (i.e. internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity) to explain why temporary employment may lead to lower service-oriented OCB.

Keywords Employee behaviour, Job insecurity, Employee development, Attitudes, Employment status, Internal mobility opportunity, E-oriented organizational citizenship behaviour

Paper type Research paper

The past three decades have been witness to a growing trend of outsourcing, downsizing, and non-standard work arrangements, which reflects a new era of organizational strategy in search of flexibility and competitiveness. Increasingly, organizations have employed more temporary workers to replace traditional permanent workers (Foote, 2004; Kalleberg, 2000; Vidal and Tigges, 2009). Running parallel to this trend has been a growing body of research that has focussed on the effect of employment status on employee job behavior, such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (e.g. Ang *et al.*, 2003; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2002; Pearce, 1993; Van Dyne and Ang, 1998). However, scant research has been conducted on the effect of employment status on service-oriented OCB (i.e. a category of OCB specific to customer contact employees). Service-oriented (or customer-oriented) OCB can be defined as citizenship behaviors performed by customer contact employees targeted at customers (Bettencourt *et al.*, 2001). With the growth of service economy, customer contact employees' service-oriented behaviors are vital for organizational success in gaining customer loyalty and customer retention (Colwell *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, to achieve better management of different categories (permanent vs temporary) of customer contact employees, investigating the effect of employment status on employee service-oriented OCB is important.

Moreover, this study explores the mediating effects of internal job opportunity and job insecurity on the relationship between employment status and OCB. To date, although some research has studied the effect of employment status on OCB, few studies have focussed on why temporary employees may display less OCB than do permanent employees. This study aims to fill this research gap by proposing that internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity have important mediating effects in the relationship between employment status and employee service-oriented OCB. Compared to permanent employees, temporary employees may perceive less internal mobility opportunity and more job insecurity. Such factors may, in turn, provide them less incentive to engage in positive job behaviors, especially those behaviors not required by organizational formal rules and not rewarded by organizational reward systems (e.g. service-oriented OCB). Therefore, it is important to understand how employees perceive their chances of gaining future internal lateral or upward job mobility opportunity to serve as an incentive mechanism to foster current positive job behaviors of different categories of employees.

In summary, we aim to extend the literature on the effect of employment status by adopting two approaches. First, we investigate the effects of employment status on employee service-oriented OCB, which has been less studied in prior research. Second, we investigate the mediating roles of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity that underlie the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB.

Theory and hypotheses

Employment status and employee service-oriented OCB

In an era of searching for functional and numerical flexibility, employers attempt to segment their employees into a core (standard) sector and a peripheral (non-standard) sector, a segmentation that creates a distinction between organizational insiders and outsiders. Within an organization's employment system, permanent employees reside in the core sector, whereas temporary employees reside in the peripheral sector (Kalleberg, 2003). Temporary employment can be defined as "a job where the employee does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term continuous employment" (Polivka and Nardone, 1989, p. 11). Using the core-periphery concept from internal labor markets (Kalleberg, 2003; Kalleberg and Mastekaasa, 1994), temporary employment lacks a continuous employment contract, which exemplifies a higher degree of employment peripherality. The idea of temporary employment also reflects the core-periphery distinction in the internal labor market of a firm.

Within the core-peripheral employment system, temporary employees tend to perceive that they occupy the periphery of the organization's employment system. This perception may cause these temporary employees to categorize themselves as outsiders of the organization in contrast to their permanent co-workers (i.e. the inner group). The more peripheral the position of an employee in the employment system of an organization, the less immersed he or she is in organization-prescribed roles (Peters *et al.*, 1981). Consequently, the weaker engagement of temporary employees in organization-related roles may create or strengthen their sense of personal exclusion from the organization's social system. This situation, in turn, may decrease their pro-social behavior which depends on their perception that they firmly belong to the organization (Boyce *et al.*, 2007; Twenge *et al.*, 2007). Research demonstrates that social exclusion (or social rejection) is related to decreased pro-social behavior (Gest *et al.*, 2001; Twenge *et al.*, 2007). Accordingly, the social exclusion of peripheral employees may weaken their motivation to display pro-social behavior.

Among the empirical studies on the effect of employment status on employee OCB, with the exception of Pearce (1993), much research evidence demonstrated a negative relationship between temporary employment and OCB (e.g. Ang *et al.*, 2003; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2002; Van Dyne and Ang, 1998). For example, surveying 213 foreign workers from China and 233 local workers in Singapore, Ang *et al.* (2003) found that foreign employment status (a form of temporary employment) was negatively related to OCB. Considering that service-oriented OCB is a category of OCB specific for customer contact employees (Bettencourt *et al.*, 2001), we extend prior findings on the negative relationship between temporary employment and OCB to propose the following hypothesis:

- H1. Employee service-oriented OCB is lower for temporary compared to permanent employees.

The mediating role of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity

Internal mobility opportunity can be defined as an employee's expectations regarding opportunity for vertical (upward or downward) mobility and for lateral mobility within his or her organization (Prince, 2003). Downward mobility (i.e. demotion) may have de-motivating effects on employee job behaviors (Dohmen *et al.*, 2004). Hence, this study includes only upward and lateral mobility in the construct of internal mobility opportunity. Job insecurity can be defined as an individual employee's perception of threat of losing or involuntary change of his (her) present job in the organization (De Witte, 2000; Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt, 1984).

Citing the opportunity structure model (Kanter, 1977), we contend that internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity exert mediating roles in the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB. Based on the opportunity structure model by Kanter (1977), “employees in core position” (analogous to “men” in Kanter’s concept, i.e. permanent employees) and “employees in peripheral position” (analogous to “women” in Kanter’s concept, i.e. temporary employees) are located in different opportunity structures in organizations. In an organization, permanent employees usually receive better terms and conditions of work (e.g. pay and benefit, promotion opportunity, job security) than do temporary employees. When working alongside permanent employees, temporary employees may feel relatively deprived when they compare their input-outcome ratio with that of permanent employees. To counterbalance the sense of relative deprivation, temporary employees may display less positive job behaviors (e.g. less service-oriented OCB) (Feldman and Turnley, 2004). Accordingly, temporary employees who occupy peripheral positions may perceive limited mobility opportunity and more job insecurity. In addition, such employees may be less likely to exhibit service-oriented OCB than permanent employees who perceive higher level of internal mobility and less job insecurity. The incentive effect of internal mobility opportunity and job security may be stronger for permanent employees than for temporary employees (Gibbons and Murphy, 1992; Landers *et al.*, 1996).

On the linkage between internal mobility opportunity and OCB, literature suggests that internal mobility opportunity may serve as an incentive mechanism to motivate employees to display positive attitudes and behaviors (Gong and Chang, 2008; Kalleberg and Mastekaasa, 2001; Kanter, 1977; Markham *et al.*, 1985, 1987; Prince, 2003). As Feldman (2006) states, employees evaluate the opportunity to be promoted in their current organization to decide whether or not they should display OCB as an impression management act in order to receive future possible rewards from the act (Bolino, 1999; Hui *et al.*, 2000). As for the relationship between job insecurity and OCB, research has demonstrated contradictory results (e.g. Debus *et al.*, 2012; Feather and Rauter, 2004; Probst, 2005; Sverke *et al.*, 2002). Feather and Rauter (2004), in a study comparing permanent and involuntary temporary contract teachers, found that compared to permanent employees, involuntary temporary contract teachers perceived higher level of job insecurity and displayed higher level of OCB as a way of impression management in order to get permanent positions. By contrast, much research evidence has demonstrated that job insecurity has detrimental effects on employee organizational attitudes (e.g. organizational commitment), job attitudes (e.g. job satisfaction, turnover intention), and job behaviors (e.g. task performance, withdrawal behaviors) (Debus *et al.*, 2012; Probst, 2005; Sverke *et al.*, 2002). OCB literature has indicated that organizational commitment and job satisfaction relate positively to OCB (or service-oriented OCB) (e.g. Bateman and Organ, 1983; Bettencourt *et al.*, 2001; Bettencourt and Brown, 1997; Organ and Ryan, 1995; Paine and Webber, 2006; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). Accordingly, we may reasonably assume that when a customer contact employee perceives high job insecurity, he (she) may decrease his (her) organizational commitment and job satisfaction, which in turn lead to lower level of service-oriented OCB.

In sum, we propose the following hypotheses:

- H2. Internal job mobility opportunity mediates the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB.
- H3. Job insecurity mediates the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB.

Methods

Participants and procedures

The participants of the present study consisted of the sales and customer service employees and their immediate supervisors (matched $n = 270$). The participants came from one company of the consumer-product retail industry, and another company from the personal-finance sector and the credit-card sector of the banking industry in Taiwan. We chose the two companies because, in Taiwan, they usually employ more customer contact employees with temporary employment status than other industries (e.g. manufacturing). Such a situation is suitable for the research focus on employment status and service-oriented OCB. We gained access to the two companies by using direct contacts and by gaining approval from the heads of their human resource (HR) departments.

For the sampling of the individual respondents, we presented broad definitions of employment status categories (i.e. permanent and temporary) to the HR head of each company. Temporary work is defined in this study as, “[...] any job in which an individual does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment” (Polivka and Nardone, 1989, p. 11). The above definition is consistent with the definition of temporary work defined in the labor legislation of Taiwan. The HR heads generally agreed the definitions of employment-status categories were consistent with their employee classifications and with their recruiting and staffing practices (i.e. recruitment advertisements and employee placements).

Moreover, because research suggests that the diversity of temporary employment statuses (e.g. direct-hires, temporary-help agencies, independent contractors, seasonal contractors, and student employees) may have different impacts on employees’ attitudes and behaviors (Chambel and Castanherira, 2006), only fixed-term direct-hire temporary employees were included in the current study. This sampling strategy was executed in accordance with interviews with the HR heads, who stated that fixed-term (normally half-year to three-year) direct-hire temporary workers belonged to the main category of temporary employees in their companies. In addition, these employees were given opportunities to obtain contract renewals that depended on demands of the company and on their performance.

For the sampling frame, considering that each of the two surveyed companies hired approximately 190 sales and customer service employees, we determined to recruit 300 (approximately 80 percent of the 380 target employees) employee-supervisor dyads for our research sample. We then asked the HR heads of each company to provide us the names and the titles of 300 permanent and temporary employees (150 from banking, 150 from retail) and their 37 immediate supervisors (16 from banking, 21 from retail).

Questionnaire surveys were mailed to the employees (who were requested to fill out all questionnaire items except those concerning OCB) and supervisors (who were to rate the service-oriented OCB of their subordinates). In a cover letter that accompanied the questionnaire, we explained the academic objectives and the voluntary participation nature of the study. The cover letter assured respondents that responses would be kept confidential and only the researchers would have access to individual responses. The survey pack containing the questionnaire also had a two USD gift and a pre-stamped pre-addressed envelope. The instructions therein requested that respondents seal the completed surveys in the pre-addressed envelopes and mail them directly to us. Of the surveys sent to the subordinates and the supervisors, 288 employees (142 from banking, 146 from retail) and 34 supervisors (15 from banking, 19 from retail) returned the surveys. We number coded the surveys

to match the supervisor responses with the appropriate employee responses. We checked the surveys and removed five incomplete questionnaires. After sorting, 270 matched employee-supervisor surveys (141 from banking and 129 from retail) remained for this study.

Among the 270 employees, 105 (39.0 percent) were male with a mean age of 25.1 years ($SD = 4.91$). The mean organizational tenure of the total sample employees was 2.2 years. A slightly larger percentage (52.4 percent) of the employees worked in banks and the remainders (47.8 percent) were retail store staff. As to the employment status of the employees, 115 (42.3 percent) were permanent employees, and 155 (57.7 percent) were temporary employees. No statistical difference surfaced in terms of gender ($\chi^2 = 0.763$, $p > 0.05$) between the two categories of employees. The differences of average ages and average organizational tenures of permanent (27.4 years old and 3.2 years of tenure) and temporary (23.6 years and 1.49 years of tenure) employees were both significant ($t = 5.10$ and 7.14 , respectively, $p < 0.001$). We verified with the managers of the sampled branches the representational accuracy of the sample in this study.

Measures

The scale items were originally constructed in English. Thus, the scale items were translated into Chinese by a professional translator and translated back into English by another professional translator at a language college. These two steps ensured comparability in cross-linguistic meaning (Brislin, 1980). We used three procedures to ensure the adequacy of the measures of the current study. First, three PhD candidates majoring in business administration read through all items to confirm the equivalence of the meanings in English and Chinese. Second, we conducted meetings with four HR managers (two from banking and two from retail) at the sample companies to review and to reword the questionnaire items, thus, ensuring the readability of the questionnaire to their employees. Finally, we conducted a pilot study of 54 working adults enrolled in an evening business administration course in a local university. The pilot study ensured the content validity of the measures.

Employment status. The HR departments of the companies provided the information that enabled us to classify employment status of the participants into two categories: permanent (coded "0") and temporary (coded "1") employment.

Internal mobility opportunity. Internal mobility opportunity refers to expectations of an employee for upward mobility (i.e. promotion opportunity) as well as lateral mobility within his or her organization. We adopted Prince's (2003) five-item scale on upward and lateral mobility opportunity. Sample items were: "I will have a chance to be promoted to a higher grade job in this company," and "I will have a chance to move to a similar job at the same grade in a different job family in this company." Cronbach's α for the internal mobility opportunity scale was 0.74.

Job insecurity. Job insecurity was measured with a four-item scale developed by De Witte (2000). Sample items were: "I think I might lose my job in the near future" and "I fear I will lose my job." Cronbach's α for the internal mobility opportunity scale was 0.71.

Service-oriented OCB. Service-oriented OCB was measured with a 16-item scale developed by Bettencourt *et al.* (2001). The scale consisted of three dimensions: loyalty (five items), service delivery (six items), and participation (five items). Sample items of loyalty OCB were: "This employee says good things about the organization to others" and "this employee actively promotes the company's products and services." Sample items of service delivery OCB were: "This employee follows customer service

guidelines with extreme care” and “this employee performs duty with unusually few mistakes.” Sample items of participation OCB were: “This employee encourages co-workers to contribute ideas and suggestions for service improvement” and “this employee contributes many ideas for customer promotions and communications.” A higher-order confirmatory factor analysis showed that a second-order latent factor predicted the three first-order latent factors (i.e. the three dimensions of service-oriented OCB) with paths estimated to the respective scale items. The fit indexes for the higher-order model were acceptable ($\chi^2 = 411.50$, $df = 101$, $p < 0.001$; $RMSEA = 0.09$, $CFI = 0.93$, $IFI = 0.93$, $TLI = 0.91$). The service-oriented OCB hypothesis operates at the construct level of this study. Hence, the average composite of the three dimensions represents the latent construct of service-oriented OCB in the analysis. Cronbach’s α for the service-oriented OCB scale was 0.85.

Supervisors rated the service-oriented OCB of multiple employees (an average of 8.4 employees, a range from three to 15), which might result in observations of dependent variable lacking independence. Consequently, we conducted a 15° Within and Between Analysis (WABA) test for service-oriented OCB to assess the appropriate level of analysis for our study data (Yammarino, 1998; Yammarino and Markham, 1992). The results of the 15° WABA I test for service-oriented OCB ($E = 0.70$, $F = 0.50^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) was below the cutoff point ($E \leq 0.77$, $F \leq 0.64$, $p < 0.01$) suggested by Dansereau *et al.* (1984, p. 173), which indicates individual level analysis was appropriate for our study data.

Control variables. Company, gender, education, organizational tenure, status voluntary, and perceived organizational support (POS) were included as control variables because research shows that they may relate to customer contact employee’s service-oriented OCB (e.g. Bettencourt *et al.*, 2001). For this purpose, company was coded as a dummy variable (1 = retail, 0 = banking). Gender was coded as a dummy variable (1 = female, 0 = male). Education was coded as an ordinal variable (1 = junior high school, 2 = senior high school, 3 = vocational school, 4 = college, 5 = graduate school). Status voluntary was coded as a dummy variable (1 = voluntary, 0 = involuntary) by asking employees whether or not their current status (one of the two categories) was their preferred one. POS was measured with a nine-item short form version of the Survey of Perceptions of Organizational Support (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). Sample item included: “The organization strongly considers my goals and values.” Cronbach’s α was 0.86 for the scale.

Results

Table I presents means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables. The bi-variable relationship of employment status to the outcome variable of service-oriented OCB ($r = -0.22$, $p < 0.001$) was in line with the hypothesized direction and was significant. Thus, *H1* gained support. Furthermore, the bi-variable relationships of employment status to the mediating variables of internal mobility opportunity ($r = -0.19$, $p < 0.01$) and job insecurity ($r = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$) were significant. The bi-variable relationships of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity to service-oriented OCB ($r = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$; $r = -0.28$, $p < 0.001$, respectively) were also significant and in line with the predicted direction of the hypotheses. The results provided initial supports for *H2* and *H3*.

H2 and *H3* hold that internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity have mediating effects in the relationship between temporary employment and service-oriented OCB.

Table I.
Descriptive statistics
and correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Company	0.48	0.50	–									
2. Gender	0.61	0.49	0.00	–								
3. Education	3.14	0.84	–0.25***	–0.06	–							
4. Organizational tenure	2.21	1.94	–0.10	–0.01	0.12*	–						
5. Status voluntary	0.68	0.47	0.07	–0.01	0.10	0.18**	–					
6. Perceived organizational support	3.18	0.52	0.25***	–0.12*	–0.10	–0.03	0.17**	(0.86)				
7. Employment status	0.57	0.50	–0.00	–0.04	0.03	–0.42***	–0.43***	–0.06	–			
8. Internal mobility opportunity	3.42	0.57	0.18**	–0.12	–0.06	0.01	0.24***	0.61***	–0.19**	(0.74)		
9. Job insecurity	2.64	0.57	–0.12*	0.04	–0.03	–0.16**	–0.11	–0.26***	0.20**	–0.21**	(0.71)	
10. Service-oriented OCB	3.87	0.40	0.24**	–0.10	–0.10	0.09	0.20**	0.46***	–0.22***	0.50***	–0.28***	(0.85)

Notes: $n = 270$. Reliability coefficients are shown in parentheses. Company: 1 = retailer, 0 = bank; Gender: 1 = female, 0 = male; Education: 1 = junior high school, 2 = senior high school, 3 = vocational school, 4 = college, 5 = graduate school; Employment status: 1 = temporary employee, 0 = permanent employee. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

To assess the two hypotheses, following Preacher and Hayes (2008), MacKinnon *et al.* (2002) and Shrout and Bolger's (2002) suggestions, we use the product-of-coefficients approach and bootstrapping confidence intervals to test the indirect effects of the two mediators. As shown in Table II, after controlling for industry, gender, education, organizational tenure, status voluntary, and POS, the path coefficients associated with our hypothesized model indicated that employment status was negatively related to internal mobility opportunity ($P = -0.17, p < 0.05$) and positively related to job insecurity ($P = 0.19, p < 0.05$). Internal job opportunity was positively related to service-oriented OCB ($P = 0.20, p < 0.001$) and job insecurity was negatively related to service-oriented OCB ($P = -0.08, p < 0.05$). The directions of the path coefficients were consistent with our hypothesized model that temporary employees had lower internal mobility opportunity and higher job insecurity, which in turn leads to lower service-oriented OCB. To test the indirect effects of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity in the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB, we used bootstrapping with 1,000 re-samples. The results for the two indirect effects demonstrated that a bias-corrected 95 percent confidence interval was of -0.0711 to -0.0084 for internal mobility opportunity and of -0.0461 to -0.0010 for job insecurity.

Model	Path coefficient	SE	<i>t</i>
<i>IV to mediators (a paths)</i>			
Employment status→Internal job opportunity	-0.17*	0.07	-2.52
Employment status→Job insecurity	0.19*	0.08	2.35
<i>Direct effects of mediators on DV (b path)</i>			
Internal job opportunity→Service-oriented OCB	0.20***	0.05	4.45
Job insecurity→Service-oriented OCB	-0.08*	0.04	-2.18
<i>Total effect of IV on DV(c path)</i>			
Employment status→Service-oriented OCB	-0.14**	0.05	-2.63
<i>Direct effect of IV on DV (c' path)</i>			
Employment status→Service-oriented OCB	-0.09	0.05	-1.7
<i>Partial effect of control variables on DV</i>			
Industry→Service-oriented OCB	0.09*	0.04	2.10
Gender→Service-oriented OCB	-0.04	0.04	-0.87
Education→Service-oriented OCB	-0.02	0.03	-0.83
Organizational tenure→Service-oriented OCB	0.01	0.01	0.67
Voluntary→Service-oriented OCB	0.02	0.05	0.44
POS→Service-oriented OCB	0.16**	0.05	3.12
<i>Model summary for DV model</i>			
R^2	0.34		
Adjusted R^2	0.32		
F	14.82***		
<i>Bootstrap results for indirect effects</i>			
Bias corrected confidence intervals	Lower	Upper	
Total	-0.0917	-0.0179	
Internal job mobility	-0.0711	-0.0084	
Job insecurity	-0.0461	-0.0010	

Notes: POS, perceived organizational support. Employment status: 1 = temporary employee, 0 = permanent employee. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table II.
Results of multiple
meditational
analyses on
service-oriented OCB

The two confidence intervals do not contain zero, which provides support for the conclusion of the indirect effects of the two mediating variables (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Accordingly, the results demonstrated that both internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity had mediating effects linking the relationship of employment status to service-oriented OCB. Thus, *H2* and *H3* received support.

Discussion

In this study, we set out to examine the effect of employment status on employee service-oriented OCB and to propose two mediating variables of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity between the relationship of employment status and service-oriented OCB. The results demonstrate that temporary employment related negatively to service-oriented OCB. Moreover, both internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity mediated the employment status – service-oriented OCB linkage.

This study makes two contributions to the existing literature on the effect of employment status. First, existing research studies the relationship between employment status and OCB, but little research focusses on the effect of employment status on service-oriented OCB. To extend the effect of status in the OCB literature, our results demonstrate that fixed-term direct-hire temporary employees have lower service-oriented OCB than do permanent employees. This finding is consistent with Foote (2004). The results of the present study lend support for the partial exclusion theory to predict that socially excluded group (i.e. temporary employees) tends to be less engaged in organizational social spontaneous behavior (e.g. service-oriented OCB) (Boyce *et al.*, 2007; Twenge *et al.*, 2007).

Second, in addition to demonstrating the negative relationship between temporary employment and service-oriented OCB, which is consistent with prior research findings (e.g. Ang *et al.*, 2003; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2002; Van Dyne and Ang, 1998), this study contributes to the literature by adding two important links (i.e. internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity) to explain why temporary employment may lead to lower service-oriented OCB. Citing the opportunity structure model, we propose the mediating roles of internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity in the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB. As suggested by the opportunity structure model, employees with different distances from the organization's core employment system are located in different opportunity structures in organizations. Compared to permanent employees, temporary employees may perceive less internal mobility opportunity and more job insecurity than their permanent counterparts, and this perception may influence their display of service-oriented OCB. The results of this study show that internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity serve as explanatory mechanisms in understanding the relationship between temporary employment and service-oriented OCB. Specifically, the perception of internal mobility opportunity provides more incentives to permanent employees to exert greater effort in enhancing their service-oriented OCB to obtain actual future job promotion. This finding is consistent with Feldman (2006). As the study pointed out, even peripheral employees with high perceived expectation of gaining permanent employment are more likely to experience the possibility of unmet expectations (i.e. psychological contract violations). Therefore, they are less likely to display positive spontaneous behavior (e.g. service-oriented OCB).

In terms of managerial implications, in an era of increasing employment of non-standard employees, this study suggests that management should be aware of why temporary customer contact employees have lower levels of service-oriented OCB.

Considering that service-oriented OCB may be important for organizational competitiveness in the service context, management must consider the benefits and costs when hiring temporary employees (Colwell *et al.*, 2009). To motivate temporary employees, management can encourage temporary employees to display higher service-oriented OCB by shaping their expectations of internal mobility possibilities or providing them with actual chances for internal lateral or upward mobility. Management can also adopt organizational practices to reduce temporary employees' perception of job insecurity to enhance their service-oriented OCB (Foote, 2004).

The present study is not without its limitations. First, this study examined only fixed-term direct-hire temporary employees. Hence, the present study did not include all possible categorizations of temporary employment (e.g. independent contractors, seasonal contractors, and student employees). Different categories of temporary workers may have different attitudes and behaviors (Chambel and Castanherira, 2006). Future research should explore voluntary job behaviors of different categories of temporary employment to confirm the results of the present study. Moreover, this study examined internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity as two mediators linking employment status to service-oriented OCB. Other alternative avenues may exist by which employment status may lead to service-oriented OCB. Future research may explore additional possible mediators (e.g. organizational commitment, job satisfaction). Finally, although we decided the sampling frame of this study, the participants of this study were selected by the HR departments of the participating companies. This option could have introduced selection bias in this study. For example, only those who were familiar with the management were selected to participate in this study. Future studies may request the participating companies to select the sample employees by alphabetical order of employee names to minimize possible selection bias.

Despite the limitations, this study offers new insights into the effects of employment status on customer contact employees' service-oriented OCB. In particular, we argue that temporary employment has a negative effect on employee service-oriented OCB. Moreover, internal mobility opportunity and job insecurity mediate the relationship between employment status and service-oriented OCB.

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About the authors

Su-Fen Chiu is a Professor in Business Administration at the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology. She received her PhD degree from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Her research interests include organizational citizenship behavior, employee deviant behavior, and stress management. Professor Su-Fen Chiu is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: chiu1@mail.ntust.edu.tw

Shih-Tse Lin is a PhD Candidate in Business Administration at the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology. His research interests include employee deviant behavior and organizational change management.

Tzu-Shian Han is a Professor in Business Administration at the National Chengchi University. He received his PhD degree in industrial relations from the University of Minnesota. His research areas focus on industrial democracy, high-performance work teams, and strategic human resource management.

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