



Does financial attachment encourage employees going to the extra miles? From distributive justice to organizational citizenship behavior

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Abstract. *Purpose.* This study aims to resolve the debated relationship between distributive justice and organizational citizenship behavior by proposing and testing a sequential mediation model. It investigates the roles of pay satisfaction and continuance commitment as mediating variables that explain how perceptions of fairness translate into discretionary workplace behaviors. *Study design.* A cross-sectional survey was conducted with a sample of 224 public and private sector employees in Indonesia. The hypothesized sequential mediation model was analyzed using structural equation modeling to test the direct and indirect effects between the variables. *Findings.* The results confirmed the mediating pathways. Distributive justice directly affected pay satisfaction, which in turn influenced continuance commitment, which subsequently predicted organizational citizenship behavior. Crucially, no direct effect was found between distributive justice and organizational citizenship behavior. Instead, pay satisfaction and continuance commitment fully and sequentially mediated this relationship, revealing a calculative “financial attachment” pathway to organizational citizenship behavior. *Research implications.* The study’s cross-sectional design precludes definitive causal conclusions. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to confirm the causal chain. The findings imply that managers cannot rely on fairness perceptions alone to foster organizational citizenship behavior. Organizations should develop holistic strategies that ensure distributive justice and actively manage pay satisfaction and understand the calculative commitments that financially bind employees to the organization, thereby encouraging extra-role contributions. *Originality.* This research provides original value by identifying a novel sequential mediation model that clarifies the mixed findings in the literature. It introduces the under-explored “financial attachment” pathway — where pay satisfaction and continuance commitment

act as crucial bridging mechanisms — offering a more nuanced understanding of how distributive justice, through calculative rather than purely affective means, influences organizational citizenship behavior.

Keywords: distributive justice; pay satisfaction; continuance commitment; organizational citizenship behavior; serial mediation; financial attachment; Indonesian context.

Introduction

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is a form of employees' contextual performance and is also referred to as extra-role behavior (Hennicks et al., 2022). OCB is vital for functional effectiveness at the organizational (Onyishi et al., 2020), group (Dey, 2023), and individual levels (Kumar et al., 2023), both for perpetrators and target employees in the organization. OCB contributes to the functional effectiveness of the organization by facilitating the functioning of the social machine (Vázquez-Rodríguez et al., 2021) and maintaining the psychological environment (Horsey et al., 2023), in turn, increases productivity and competitiveness (Hennicks et al., 2022). At the group (team) level, OCB increases effectiveness through group cohesiveness and efficacy (Reizer et al., 2021), which leads to improved group performance (Steffens et al., 2024). At the individual level, OCB becomes a source of satisfaction and personal meaning for employees and their colleagues (De Clercq, Belausteguigoitia, 2022). Furthermore, OCB enhances employee well-being through psychological empowerment (Albdareen, 2024) and co-worker support (Patterer et al., 2024).

In today's uncertain work environment, OCB is increasingly necessary, especially for non-routine work with a high level of complexity (Li et al., 2024). The significant role of OCB means that organizations must have employees who tend to exhibit it. Unfortunately, discretionary and voluntary behavior, such as OCB, is not mandated by formal job requirements and reward systems in organizations (Vázquez-Rodríguez et al., 2021). Organizations expect their employees to exhibit OCB even though it is not a formal agreement between the employee and the organization (Shukla, 2019). Therefore, organizations must identify various factors that encourage employees to engage in OCB. Previous empirical research indicates that a lack of fairness, satisfaction, or commitment can cause a lack of OCB (Vázquez-Rodríguez et al., 2021).

Perceptions of justice in the workplace play a vital role in driving employee behavior. A core aspect of organizational justice is distributive justice, which pertains to the fair allocation of resources, such as pay and bonuses (Im et al., 2023; Ito et al., 2023; Mustafa et al., 2023). However, the impact of distributive justice on OCB is complex and requires further investigation to better understand the underlying dynamics and mechanisms. Studies on the effect of distributive justice on OCB have been conducted for decades, but findings remain mixed (e.g., Bauwens et al., 2019; Farid et al., 2019; Ha, Moon, 2023; Marasi et al., 2018; Shimamura et al., 2021, necessitating further research to resolve these inconsistencies.

Employees' work-related attitudes may be key to explaining the causal relationship between distributive justice and OCB. In formal organizations, employees are primarily motivated by financial compensation to meet their needs. Employee pay affects various aspects of employee work life, such as perception (Valet, 2023), motivation (Larsson et al., 2022), attitude (Marasi et al., 2018), and work behavior (Luna-Arocas et al., 2020). Unsurprisingly, pay satisfaction has become a significant concern for employees and organizations. P. Valett notes that pay satisfaction and fairness are closely related (Valet, 2023). Employees' evaluations of their pay are affected by their perceptions of organizational justice, particularly distributive justice (Tremblay et al., 2000). Another relevant attitude is

organizational commitment. This study focuses on the continuance commitment dimension, which arises from the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization (Allen, Meyer, 1990). There is a lack of empirical studies on the relationship between continuance commitment and OCB, often due to the assumption that their motives differ — continuance commitment is financially driven, while OCB is frequently seen as altruistic. Investigating this relationship is crucial for a more comprehensive understanding.

Although the literature on the substantial role of organizational justice, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment in increasing OCB is mature (Nguyen, Le, 2023), a lack of research reveals the relationship between specific dimensions of these variables. We argued that serious attention should be paid to the sequential relationship between distributive justice, pay satisfaction, continuance commitment, and OCB, as these factors significantly influence the retention of talented employees and organizational success. While the micro-level mechanisms between justice and OCB are our focus, it is critical to contextualize this behavior within broader organizational, economic, and cultural frameworks. The fundamental question is not just how OCB arises but also why it is considered vital and when its pursuit might be problematic (Colquitt et al., 2001).

In knowledge-based and service economies, where innovation and customer service are paramount, the rigid execution of formal job descriptions is often insufficient. OCB provides the “lubricant” for social and operational systems, facilitating coordination and adaptability in complex environments without formal directives (Podsakoff et al., 2009). This is particularly crucial in dynamic industries like technology or consulting. Conversely, in highly standardized, routine-based economies, the relative value of OCB may be lower compared to strict task performance. Culturally, the expression and expectation of OCB are not universal. In collectivistic cultures (e.g., across much of Asia and Latin America), behaviors that strengthen group harmony (a form of OCB-I) are often naturally embedded in social norms (Finkelstein, 2012). In more individualistic cultures (e.g., the United States, Western Europe), OCB might be more consciously exchanged for personal or organizational benefits (Cohen, Avrahami, 2006), as our study on continuance commitment suggests.

Furthermore, the dark side of OCB must be acknowledged. When the expectation to “go the extra mile” becomes an implicit requirement — a phenomenon known as “compulsory citizenship behavior” — it can lead to employee burnout, work-life conflict, and even deviance as employees compensate for OCB by neglecting core tasks (Bolino et al., 2013). It can also create inequity, unfairly burdening those who feel compelled to engage in these behaviors (Spence et al., 2014). Therefore, understanding the drivers of OCB is not merely about promoting it, but about managing it wisely to harness its benefits — such as enhanced cohesion, efficiency, and innovation — while mitigating its potential costs to individual well-being and organizational equity (Fu et al., 2022; Spanouli et al., 2024). This study, situated in the Indonesian context (a collectivistic, developing economy), contributes to this broader conversation by revealing a calculative, financially-anchored pathway to OCB that complements the traditionally cited altruistic or affective pathways.

It is imperative to acknowledge that organizations operate under significant constraints in managing justice perceptions, particularly distributive justice (Adamovic, 2023). Managerial limitations include the complexity of accurately measuring individual contributions and the inherent subjectivity in fairness judgments (Greenberg, 2011). More critically, resource-based constraints — finite budgets, fixed payrolls, and economic pressures — often create a zero-sum environment where enhancing one employee’s rewards may be perceived as reducing another’s (Rupp et al., 2014). These constraints are not uniform across organizational types. In private organizations, justice is often tied directly to performance metrics and profitability, allowing for (though not guaranteeing) more flexibility in resource allocation. In contrast, public and government organizations are typically bound by rigid civil service rules, standardized pay scales, and transparent but inflexible budgeting

processes, which can severely limit managerial discretion in rewarding individual performance and may systematically depress perceptions of distributive justice (Cohen, Vigoda, 2000). By sampling both public and private sector employees, this study can shed light on how these different structural contexts influence the psychological processes linking justice to behavior.

Literature review

Organizational citizenship behavior

OCB refers to discretionary and voluntary individual behavior that is not considered based on the organization's formal reward system (Patterer et al., 2024). Although the conceptualization of OCB can vary depending on context and environment (Deshmukh, Natu, 2023), two research streams are having relatively many followers: the two-dimensional and five-dimensional constructs. The former is based on the target behavior, namely OCB-O (OCB-Organization) and OCB-I (OCB-Individual). OCB-O aims to maintain effectiveness, efficiency, harmony, and productivity at the overall organizational level. In contrast, OCB-I is aimed at specific individuals such as colleagues, subordinates, and supervisors, by providing assistance and establishing good relationships with them (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2023). OCB as a five-dimensional construct is the most commonly accepted and researched, including altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue (Mohanty, Panigraha, 2022).

Distributive justice

Distributive justice is the primary basis of organizational justice theory because the first dimension of justice widely studied is the distribution of organizational resources (Trimmel et al., 2024). Distributive justice was developed from equity theory (Adams, 1963; Adams, 1965) and became the basis for ethical decision-making for organizations to distribute organizational resources (Abeysekera, 2024). Distributive justice can be defined as the employees' perception of the balance between organizational rewards (e.g., salary, bonuses, incentives, benefits) and their contributions (efforts, experiences, motivations, skills) to the organization (Mustafa et al., 2023). Employee perceptions about distributive justice in the workplace encourage their positive work attitudes, such as job satisfaction (Mustafa et al., 2023), knowledge sharing (Im et al., 2023), organizational cynicism (Nan, Mohamad, 2022), and turnover intention (Mustafa et al., 2023). Empirical evidence supported the impact of distributive justice on OCB (Bauwens et al., 2019; Farid et al., 2019; Shimamura et al., 2021). Therefore, we expect:

Hypothesis 1: Distributive justice positively affects organizational citizenship behavior.

Pay satisfaction

Pay satisfaction reflects employees' subjective evaluations and responses to the rewards they receive from the organization for the contributions they provide (Montalvo-Arroyo et al., 2023). Employees' dissatisfaction with their pay often leads them to be absent, arrive late, take unnecessary time off, perform below expectations, and be more willing to strike or engage in misconduct (Ferozi, Chang, 2021). When the organization allocates a pay amount that matches the needs and expectations of employees (i.e., meets basic needs and improves living standards), employees are likely to feel pay satisfaction (Ismail et al., 2009). Employees' feelings and assessments of the quantity and quality of the pay they receive reflect their views on whether or not the organization's resources are well distributed to its members (Larsson et al., 2022). Consequently, employees' satisfaction with the pay results from their perceptions of distributive justice (Birnbau, Rouvere, 2023; Montalvo-Arroyo et al., 2023). Therefore, we expect:

Hypothesis 2: Distributive justice positively affects pay satisfaction.

Continuance commitment

Employees with a strong sense of continuance commitment believe that the benefits of staying with the organization outweigh the costs of leaving (Caliskan et al., 2024; Cesinger et al., 2023). These costs can take the form of lost personal investments such as skills, knowledge, abilities, and time in the present organization (Els et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2023). The cost of losing membership in an organization can take the form of loss of incentives and seniority (Al Balushi et al., 2022). Additionally, employees' level of continuance commitment also tends to be high when they feel that limited job alternatives are available outside their present organization (Kim et al., 2023). Employees may calculate the benefits of staying with their current organization versus the potential losses of leaving (Cesinger et al., 2023). Employees must give up pay, job status, investment in skills and abilities, and various positive work feelings, including pay satisfaction, if they decide to no longer be a member of an organization (Menatta et al., 2022). Therefore, it is unsurprising that pay satisfaction is the primary reason employees stay in their current organization (Leider et al., 2023). Although limited, previous research has concluded that continuance commitment is a logical consequence of pay satisfaction. For example, it was found that employees' task performance was affected by their affective and continuance commitment; continuance commitment strengthened the impact of pay satisfaction on task performance (Khalid, 2020). Thus, we expect:

Hypothesis 3: Pay satisfaction positively affects continuance commitment.

Employees will try their best to make extra efforts for their organization to survive because its existence is seen as the continuity of their work (Robert, 2023). Positive work-related attitudes such as organizational commitment have long been thought to encourage positive employee outcomes such as creativity, OCB, and job performance (Els et al., 2021). Previous research concluded that, in general, employees' organizational commitment directly impacts their OCB (Sanecka, 2023). However, the impact of continuance commitment as a dimension of organizational commitment on OCB is still being debated. For example, early studies found that employees' continuance commitment did not affect their OCB (Meyer et al., 2002) or affect it negatively (Chang, Chelladurai, 2003; Chen, Francesco, 2003). Recent studies have concluded that employees' continuance commitment positively affects their OCB (Johnson, Chang, 2006; Leephaijaroen, 2016; Wang, 2015). Therefore, this study tested:

Hypothesis 4: Continuance commitment has a positive effect on OCB.

The sequential mediations

According to Z. P. Szabó with colleagues, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are a substantial part of the management system called the high-performance cycle (Szabó et al., 2023). Meanwhile, P. M. Masukela with colleagues view job satisfaction and organizational commitment as the main parts of core work evaluation (CWE). Previous empirical studies have widely assumed that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are two constructs of job-related attitudes that always appear together (e.g., Olekalns, Caza, 2024). The researchers noted that the fit between humans and their environment would produce work attitudes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and OCB (Vleugels, Flatau-Harrison, 2023). Additionally, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and OCB result from professional self-concept (Garcia-Pereyra et al., 2023). Furthermore, previous studies found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment result from perceptions of organizational justice (Nguyen, Le, 2023).

Pay satisfaction is one aspect of employee job satisfaction (Kioulepoglou et al., 2024), while continuance commitment is the second dimension of the organizational commitment construct (Allen, Meyer, 1990; Caliskan et al., 2024). Pay satisfaction and continuance commitment, in turn, are two specific constructs of job-related attitudes that are also very closely related. As highlighted in the previous section, pay satisfaction is a direct result of perceptions of distributive justice (Montalvo-Arroyo et al., 2023; Tremblay et al., 2000), whereas continuance commitment, on the other hand,

can be a driver for employees to engage in OCB because they want to maintain their current position within the organization (Johnson, Chang, 2006; Leephaijaroen, 2016; Wang, 2015). Therefore, it is rational to expect:

Hypothesis 5: Pay satisfaction and continuance commitment mediate the effect of distributive justice on OCB.

The conceptual framework depicted in Figure 1 illustrates the causal effect of distributive justice, pay satisfaction, continuance commitment, and OCB. Furthermore, Figure 1 also highlights the direct and indirect impact of distributive justice on OCB and the sequential mediation of pay satisfaction and continuance commitment in bridging the relationship between distributive justice and OCB.

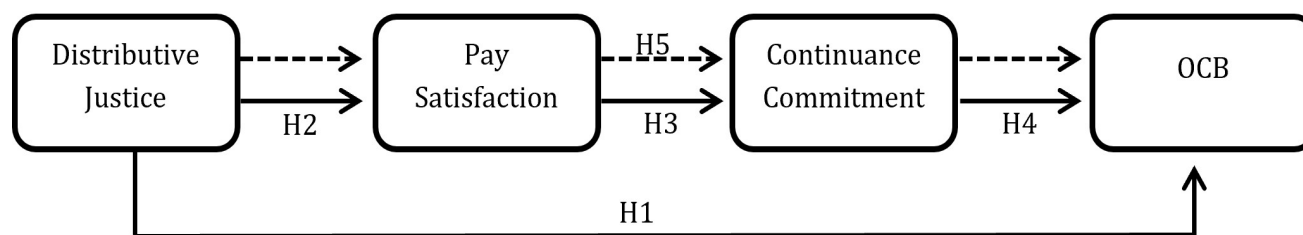


Figure 1. Conceptual framework (*Note:* ———> Direct effect; - - - - -> Mediating Effect)

Methods

Respondents

The study surveyed civil servants and private employees who were graduate students enrolled in three programs at a public university in Bengkulu province, Indonesia. Questionnaires were distributed offline through lecturers who teach in the programs. Out of the 427 questionnaires distributed, only 224 were completed and returned to the researchers. Two hundred and three respondents did not return the questionnaire, attend lectures, or meet the eligibility criteria because they did not work in any formal organization at the time of the research. Frequency and percentile respondents based on specific characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Characteristics of respondents

No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentile
1. Gender			
	Male	132	58.90
	Female	92	41.10
2. Age			
	≤ 30 years old	41	18.30
	31 to 40 years old	59	26.34
	41 to 50 years old	103	45.98
	≥ 51 years old	21	9.38
3. Tenure			
	≤ 5 years of service	44	19.64
	6 to 15 years of service	72	32.14
	16 to 25 years of service	96	42.86
	≥ 26 years of service	12	5.36
4. Organizational type			
	Civil servants	171	76.34
	Private employees	53	23.66
5. Job level			
	Staff employees ⁹⁴	141	62.95
	Middle managers or supervisors	73	32.59
	Top managers	10	4.46

Measures

The four items measuring distributive justice were adopted from J. A. Colquitt (Colquitt, 2001). An example statement for distributive justice is, “The financial rewards I receive are comparable to the effort I put into my job.” Additionally, we used five self-report statements adopted from the work of J. M. Stanton with colleagues to measure employee pay satisfaction (Stanton et al., 2002). The sample statement is, “My pay at this job is better than elsewhere.” Furthermore, we used a six-item statement from N. Allen and J. Meyer to measure employees’ continuance commitment, including “My life will be disrupted if I decide to leave my organization now” (Allen, Meyer, 1990). Finally, twenty-one OCB items were adopted from E. Dominic with colleagues (Dominic et al., 2021). The item statements included “I help my absent colleagues with their tasks” and “I attend events that are not mandatory but help the organization’s image.” A semantic differential scale was provided on the instrument to respond to the distributive justice and OCB items, 1 (never) to 5 (always). Respondents were asked to respond to pay satisfaction and continuance commitment items by selecting one of 5 answers on a Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Several items used reverse score, 1 (always/strongly agree) to 5 (never/strongly disagree).

Analyses

Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. PLS is a soft modelling technique because it does not require a particular scale, so that it can be used for samples with relatively small sizes. PLS is a variant-based structural equation analysis (SEM) that simultaneously tests measurement and structural models. Testing the measurement model includes using an outer model to conduct validity and reliability tests by determining the relationship between latent variables and their indicators. Structural model testing (inner model) is carried out to test the relationship between latent variables based on the hypothesized relationship.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations

Variables	Means	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	.59	.493								
2. Age	40.46	8.458	.193**							
3. Tenure	14.42	7.699	.165*	.953**						
4. Organization type	.76	.426	-.038	-.049	-.064					
5. Job level	1.42	.578	.113	.167*	.126	-.146*				
6. Distributive justice	3.58	.710	-.087	.014	.027	.077	.005			
7. Pay satisfaction	3.59	.726	-.080	.007	.025	-.043	-.069	.608**		
8. Continuance commitment	3.71	.614	-.063	.126	.124	.062	.055	.309**	.319**	
9. OCB	3.87	.596	-.073	.073	.047	.074	-.028	.333**	.354**	.539**

Results

Descriptive statistics

Mean scores, standard deviations, and correlations between the variables studied are reported in Table 2. The mean scores for distributive justice, pay satisfaction, continuance commitment, and OCB were moderate to high (3.58, 3.59, 3.71, and 3.87, respectively). The correlation between the

main research variables also showed the desired direction, ranging from .309 (distributive justice and continuance commitment) to .608 (distributive justice and pay satisfaction). Four control variables (i.e., gender, age, tenure, organization type, and job level) did not correlate with the main variables.

Table 3. Measurement model (outer model)

Variable	Indicator	Loading factor	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability	Cross Loading			
						X1	M1	M2	Y1
Distributive justice (X1)	DJ1	.779	.668	.834	.889	.779	.454	.414	.266
	DJ2	.842				.842	.528	.438	.1
	DJ3	.852				.852	.535	.388	.282
	DJ4	.794				.794	.474	.374	.280
Pay satisfaction (M1)	PY1	.862	.764	.923	.942	.566	.862	.456	.386
	PY2	.872				.526	.872	.461	.327
	PY3	.874				.511	.874	.511	.312
	PY4	.894				.510	.894	.462	.280
	PY5	.869				.552	.869	.474	.279
Continuance commitment (M2)	CC1	.793	.610	.872	.904	.352	.398	.793	.441
	CC2	.798				.399	.402	.798	.396
	CC3	.806				.400	.488	.806	.414
	CC4	.749				.325	.364	.749	.411
	CC5	.754				.452	.436	.754	.445
	CC6	.784				.379	.436	.784	.496
Organizational citizenship behavior (Y1)	AL1	.690	.503	.945	.950	.274	.258	.406	.690
	AL2	.727				.251	.232	.329	.727
	AL3	.676				.238	.232	.349	.676
	AL4	.715				.268	.277	.434	.715
	AL5	.691				.215	.235	.385	.691
	CB2	.655				.264	.266	.388	.655
	CB3	.709				.239	.269	.499	.709
	CU1	.719				.260	.274	.359	.719
	CU2	.737				.293	.289	.412	.737
	CU3	.739				.255	.274	.399	.739
	CU4	.737				.275	.304	.436	.737
	CU5	.706				.258	.305	.430	.706
	CV1	.702				.181	.226	.375	.702
	CV2	.713				.154	.185	.352	.713
	CV3	.659				.136	.144	.287	.659
	SP1	.658				.227	.228	.339	.658
	SP2	.726				.283	.273	.381	.726
	SP3	.698				.267	.279	.434	.698
	SP4	.796				.278	.267	.415	.796

Measurement model

The measurement model tests were performed by examining the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values, which were required to exceed 0.7 and 0.5 for each variable in the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results of the validity and reliability tests are shown in Table 3. All items measured have a loading factor value of > 0.60 and an AVE value of ≥ 0.50 , indicating that the measurement items for each variable meet the criteria for good convergent validity.

Regarding the cross-loading values presented in Table 3, the overall correlation value of each construct with its indicators exceeds that of other constructs. This implies that each measurement item correlates strongly with its respective latent variable. Therefore, it can be inferred that the latent construct of each variable is valid as it meets the criterion for discriminant validity through

cross-loadings. Table 3 also displays the result of the reliability test. Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.6, and CR values surpass 0.6, indicating that distributive justice, pay satisfaction, continuance commitment, and OCB are reliable.

Table 4. Results of hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Path coefficient	T-statistics (O/STDEV)	p-values	Result
Distributive justice → OCB	.095	1.222	.247	Not supported
Distributive justice → Pay satisfaction	.610	8.435	< .001	Supported
Pay satisfaction → Continuance commitment	.541	9.259	< .001	Supported
Continuance commitment → OCB	.511	7.034	< .001	Supported
Distributive justice → Pay satisfaction → Continuance commitment → OCB	.169	3.940	< .001	Supported

Structural model and hypotheses testing

Table 4 shows the result of the direct and indirect effects analysis. There was an insignificantly positive relationship between distributive justice and OCB ($\beta = 0.095$, $t = 1.222$, $p > 0.005$). Thus, hypothesis 1 was not supported. Distributive justice statistically affects pay satisfaction ($\beta = 0.610$, $t = 8.435$, $p < 0.01$). These results show that hypothesis 2 was supported. Next, pay satisfaction significantly positively affects continuance commitment ($\beta = 0.541$, $t = 9.259$, $p < 0.01$), thus supporting hypothesis 3. Then, the continuance commitment positively affected OCB ($\beta = 0.511$, $t = 7.034$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, hypothesis 4 was supported. Afterwards, pay satisfaction and continuance commitment significantly mediate distributive justice's effect on OCB ($\beta = 0.169$, $t = 3.940$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, hypothesis 5 is supported.

Discussion

The current study concludes that distributive justice did not directly affect OCB. These findings differ from several main findings from various previous research (e.g., Bauwens et al., 2019; Farid et al., 2019; Shimamura et al., 2021). Different conclusions may arise due to varying research contexts or when the relationship between perceptions of distributive justice and OCB involves other variables in the model. For instance, it was found that distributive justice harms OCB when the model tested included other variables such as pay communication, informational justice, and workplace deviance (Marasi et al., 2018). Because the impact of informational justice suppressed the effect of distributive justice on OCB, distributive justice only clarifies the relationship between informational justice and OCB (Marasi et al., 2018). Similarly, T.-S. Ha and K.-K. Moon little scholarly attention has been paid to how leadership styles shape the impact of distributive justice and goal clarity on employees' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB concluded that distributive justice negatively impacts OCB in a civil servant context (Ha, Moon, 2023). They argued that input-output comparisons, as explained by equity theory, are not very relevant in the context of civil servants. Public sector employees tend to derive pure enjoyment from their work (Ha, Moon, 2023).

Our findings present an equally exciting conclusion, which at first glance could be seen as challenging the arguments of equity theory. Based on equity theory, employees will react to their subjective perceptions about the fairness of the organization with positive attitudes (Marescaux et al., 2019). Our study explains the linking mechanisms between distributive justice perception and OCB. Based on research results, the tendency of employees to engage in OCB is not only determined by their subjective perception of the fairness or unfairness of the distribution of organizational results. However, it can also be caused by other attitudes, such as pay satisfaction and continuance commitment, which will be revealed and highlighted in the next section.

Our research strengthens the empirical evidence from earlier studies that employees' perception of distributive justice positively correlates with pay satisfaction (Ismail et al., 2009; Tremblay et al., 2000). Employees who perceive that pay-related decisions are made fairly and transparently tend to be more satisfied with their pay (Allen, Meyer, 1990; Montalvo-Arroyo et al., 2023). Regardless of the type of job or organization, employees expect fair pay distribution based on relevant factors such as job performance, experience, and responsibility. Employees' satisfaction with their pay is improved by their subjective perception of the organization's fairness of resource distribution. Previous empirical research has shown that distributive justice in pay distribution is reflected in the comparison of employee needs and expectations (Ismail et al., 2009), employee contributions and results (Luna-Arocas et al., 2020), and co-workers' salaries (Javdani, Krauth, 2020).

Our findings complement the theoretical explanation provided by equity theory regarding the effect of organizational justice perceptions on OCB. According to equity theory (Adams, 1963), employees' perceptions of the fairness of organizational resource distribution to its members improve their positive feelings toward their pay (Montalvo-Arroyo et al., 2023). Therefore, organizations must ensure that their employees perceive the distribution of organization resources, such as pay, as fair. Additionally, equity theory suggests that employees constantly match their contribution (e.g., skills, experience, and skill) and rewards (e.g., pay and recognition) with those of their co-workers, which can lead to feelings of unfair treatment if they perceive that they are receiving less income for the same or more contributions. Consequently, it negatively impacts their pay satisfaction (Lee et al., 2021).

Our study concludes that employees' satisfaction with pay influences their continuance commitment positively. Employees who leave an organization must give up their financial compensation, job title, and investment in skills and abilities. They also lose positive job-related feelings and attitudes at the workplace, such as job satisfaction and well-being. Thus, employees who experience high pay satisfaction become financially attached to their current organization, indicating a high level of continuance commitment (Menatta et al., 2022). In contrast, employees who experience low pay satisfaction tend to react negatively. They may not care about the organization or seek alternative income opportunities to meet their financial targets better.

Our results support the conclusions of previous studies regarding the positive impact of continuance commitment on OCB (Leephaijaroen, 2016; Wang, 2015). Employees exhibit more free and voluntary behaviors when they perceive a substantial organizational investment. Although OCB does not provide immediate financial benefits to employees, they still engage in it for various reasons. Firstly, employees may view OCB as an additional investment that can ensure the long-term financial security of their organization. Employees believe that performing OCB can help maintain the organization's financial-related facilities, such as pay, benefits, position, and status. OCB also helps employees feel they have a strong position in the organization and can ensure they continue to meet organizational expectations. Secondly, employees with strong continuance commitment may engage in OCB because it provides desired personal outcomes and benefits (Johnson, Chang, 2006). These benefits include positive relationships with co-workers, supervisors, and the organization. Such relationships can act as a safety net if employees face difficulties or uncertainties in their work. By engaging in OCB, employees can cultivate goodwill, trust, and reciprocity, which can be beneficial in the long run.

Thirdly, employees' strong continuance commitment is driven by difficulties in finding alternative work opportunities, making it difficult for them to leave the organization (Kim et al., 2023). Staying in an organization can encourage employees to exhibit positive behavior, such as OCB, that benefits the organization, as they have a vested interest in its success. Employees with a higher level of continuance commitment may lean toward following organizational policies and norms and supporting their co-workers when needed (Dongrey, Rokade, 2021). This compliance

and support behavior can be considered a form of OCB, as it helps the organization to function well and effectively in the long term. Finally, employees may exhibit OCB to avoid the potential negative consequences of leaving the organization (Vleugels, Flatau-Harrison, 2023). Employees may find it beneficial to maintain a long-term relationship with the organization, as it allows them to preserve their contributions over time (Leephaijaroen, 2016). Employees may believe performing their role better can help maintain a good reputation. It may be beneficial if they need to rely on the organization for support, such as referrals or help finding alternative employment.

Based on the statistical result, we concluded that pay satisfaction and continuance commitment played a serial mediating role in the relationship. Therefore, pay satisfaction and continuance commitment serve as mediating mechanisms that bridge the path from distributive justice to OCB. This study clarifies the inconsistent results found in existing research (e.g., Bauwens et al., 2019; Farid et al., 2019; Ha, Moon, 2023; Marasi et al., 2018; Shimamura et al., 2021). The findings suggest that employees exhibit OCB, which is not necessarily driven by their perceptions of distributive justice. Instead, it is motivated by their high level of pay satisfaction and strong continuance commitment to the organization. Employees happy with their pay may become more prone to engage in OCBs and consider it a form of reciprocity, or because they are generally more comfortable at work. They become less likely to consider the potential loss of financial compensation, benefits, seniority, or the inconvenience of finding a new job. In other words, perceptions of distributive justice create feelings of satisfaction with the pay received. Employees' satisfaction with the pay increases their continuance commitment, encouraging them to engage in OCB because they believe they have invested long-term in the organization's success.

Theoretical implications

Our findings indicate that employee satisfaction with the pay they receive and the strength of their continuance commitment are crucial in bridging the relationship between perceptions of distributive justice and OCB. The supported sequential mediation model clarifies the mixed findings in prior literature by revealing a specific pathway through which distributive justice operates. Employees exhibit OCB not necessarily because they feel an affective bond from fair treatment, but because fair treatment leads to pay satisfaction, which in turn fosters a calculative commitment based on the costs of leaving, ultimately motivating OCB as a means to protect their investment.

The sequential mediation we identified reveals a nuanced, calculative pathway to OCB that is often overlooked in favor of affective or moral drivers. This has several broader implications: firstly, the pathway may be particularly critical for organizations in highly competitive or volatile economies where employee retention is challenging. Fostering a sense of financial attachment can be a stable foundation for eliciting discretionary effort, even when affective commitment is low. It suggests that a straightforward "transactional" relationship, if perceived as fair, can still yield positive organizational outcomes in specific contexts, a finding that aligns with research in high-turnover industries (Shaw et al., 2009). Secondly, in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance (like many in Southeast Asia), the security offered by continuance commitment may be a powerful motivator. The fear of loss associated with leaving (a core tenet of continuance commitment) can be a stronger driver of behavior than the desire for gain, a notion supported by cross-cultural commitment studies (Chigeda et al., 2022; Gifford et al., 2022). Our analysis shows that this motivation can be channelled into constructive, albeit calculated, citizenship. Thirdly, this pathway also highlights a potential risk. An organization reliant on continuance commitment-driven OCB may lack the resilience and innovative capacity fostered by affective commitment (Meyer et al., 2002).

Furthermore, it can create a culture of compliance rather than genuine engagement, where employees help others not out of goodwill, but to protect their own investment, potentially leading

to the “citizenship fatigue” associated with compulsory OCB (Bolino et al., 2013). Finally, the effects of this pathway are likely a double-edged sword. On one hand, it can ensure a baseline of cooperative and compliant behavior, maintaining system stability. Conversely, it may suppress constructive dissent and lead to adverse outcomes for employees, such as stress and emotional exhaustion, if they feel their extra-role behaviors are an unacknowledged obligation (Spence et al., 2014).

Practical Implications

Executives and human resource managers may find it helpful to understand the mediating relationship of this series. There may need to be more than just improving distributive justice to increase OCB. While OCB is discretionary and voluntary, organizations should also consider aspects related to financial rewards that make employees feel comfortable in their current position and keep the organization as their primary career option. Organizations should consider the substantial role of distributive justice in improving employees’ pay satisfaction and continuance commitment, as employees may evaluate their contributions in the long term. Strategies to increase OCB should focus on fair pay and fostering a sense of commitment and attachment among employees.

The findings on the sequential mediation pathway must be interpreted within the practical reality that organizations face severe limitations in “justice management.” Our model suggests that even when direct financial rewards are constrained, fostering perceptions of distributive justice is paramount, as it initiates the chain reaction leading to OCB. However, managers must be astute in recognizing that the levers of justice are not solely financial. The difference between public and commercial sectors is instructive here. In commercial settings, where resources may be more fluid, managers might have a more direct ability to align pay with performance, directly influencing our model’s first link (Distributive Justice → Pay Satisfaction). In public sectors, where pay is often standardized, managers must focus on non-monetary aspects of distributive justice, such as the fair allocation of other resources like desirable tasks, training opportunities, flexible schedules, or public recognition (Rubenstein et al., 2018). This shifts the focus from the amount of reward to the fairness of the process for distributing all valued resources.

Furthermore, our model implies that external factors can profoundly “shift” justice perceptions. For instance, employees’ frames of reference change during an economic crisis. The same pay once considered satisfactory might be re-evaluated against a backdrop of job market scarcity and inflation. This can severely strain perceptions of distributive justice, as employees feel their financial security is threatened regardless of the organization’s actual intent or capacity (Shoss, 2017). In such contexts, transparent communication about organizational constraints (a form of informational justice) becomes critical to mitigate the negative impact on pay satisfaction and subsequent commitment. Therefore, managing justice is not a one-time effort but a dynamic process of managing employee expectations and perceptions in the face of internal constraints and external shocks. The indirect pathway uncovered in this study highlights that investments in perceived fairness can yield returns in discretionary effort even when direct financial investments are not feasible.

Limitations and future recommendations

This study has several limitations that also present opportunities for future research. First, the cross-sectional design prevents definitive causal conclusions. Although our model is theoretically grounded, longitudinal or experimental designs are needed to confirm the causal chain. Second, using a convenience sample of graduate students, while providing access to working professionals, may limit the generalizability of the findings. The specific characteristics of our sample, including the Indonesian cultural context (collectivistic, high uncertainty avoidance) and its composition from a developing economy, mean that the strength of the observed relationships might differ in other cultural or economic settings.

We propose a more robust research design for future investigations to overcome these limitations and advance the field. First, a multi-sectoral cross-sector sample of public, high-profit, and low-margin private organizations was used to test the model's boundary conditions explicitly. Second, a time-lagging three-wave design that separates predictor (T1: distributive fairness), mediator (T2: salary satisfaction, continuity commitment), and outcome (T3: OCB), using multi-source ratings (e.g., supervisor-rated OCB) to reduce common method bias. Third, the analysis uses the cross-lagged panel model (CLPM) to test causal priority and multi-group SEM (MGSEM) to rigorously test model path differences across sectors and cultures. This approach would be more effective in separating "pure" psychological mechanisms from their contextual manifestations.

Conclusion

The research concluded that pay satisfaction and continuance commitment sequentially mediate the relationship between distributive justice and OCB. This reveals a "financial attachment" pathway where employees' satisfaction with their pay and their calculative commitment to remain with the organization are the explanatory factors that connect the impact of distributive justice to OCB. This research demonstrates that the journey from organizational fairness to discretionary effort is not direct but travels through the pragmatic channels of financial satisfaction and attachment. Our findings suggest that the pro-social concept of OCB can, in specific contexts, be underpinned by a rational, cost-benefit calculus. For managers and theorists, this means recognizing that OCB is not a monolithic behavior with a single cause. The need for OCB is universal in modern, interdependent organizations, but the strategies to elicit it must be context-aware. In a collectivistic culture like Indonesia, our findings reveal a surprising undercurrent of calculative motivation beneath the surface of group-oriented behavior. Organizations must therefore diagnose their own cultural and economic context to understand which levers — affective, normative, or continuance-based — are most effective and sustainable for fostering the OCB they need, while remaining vigilant against the potential for burnout and exploitation that can transform a virtuous organizational asset into a source of individual strain.

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Побуждает ли финансовая привязанность сотрудников преодолевать лишние мили? От распределительной справедливости к организационному гражданскому поведению

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Аннотация. *Цель.* Данное исследование направлено на разрешение спорной взаимосвязи между распределительной справедливостью (*distributive justice*) и организационным гражданским поведением (*organizational citizenship behavior*) путём предложения и проверки модели последовательного опосредования (*sequential mediation model*). В нём исследуется роль удовлетворённости оплатой труда и продолженной приверженности (*continuance commitment*) как опосредующих переменных, объясняющих, как восприятие справедливости трансформируется в произвольное поведение на рабочем месте. *Исследование.* Было проведено поперечное исследование с выборкой из 224 сотрудников государственного и частного секторов Индонезии. Предложенная модель последовательного опосредования была проанализирована с использованием структурного моделирования для проверки прямых и косвенных связей между переменными. *Результаты.* Результаты подтвердили наличие опосредующих путей. Распределительная справедливость прямо связана с удовлетворённостью оплатой труда, которая, в свою очередь, связана с приверженностью работе, что впоследствии предсказывало организационное гражданское поведение. Важно отметить, что прямой связи между распределительной справедливостью и организационным гражданским поведением обнаружено не было. Вместо этого удовлетворённость оплатой труда и приверженность работе полностью и последовательно опосредовали эту взаимосвязь, выявив расчётливый путь «финансовой привязанности» к организационному гражданскому поведению. *Последствия для исследования.* Поперечный дизайн исследования не позволяет сделать окончательные причинно-следственные выводы. В будущих исследованиях следует использовать лонгитюдные исследования для подтверждения причинно-следственной связи. Результаты показывают, что руководители не могут полагаться только на восприятие справедливости для формирования организационного гражданского поведения. Организации должны разрабатывать целостные стратегии, обеспечивающие распределительную справедливость и активно управляющие удовлетворённостью оплатой труда, а также понимать расчётные обязательства, которые финансово связывают

сотрудников с организацией, тем самым поощряя вклад, выходящий за рамки должностных обязанностей. *Оригинальность.* Данное исследование представляет собой оригинальную ценность, выявляя новую последовательную модель опосредования, которая проясняет противоречивые результаты в литературе. Оно представляет малоизученный путь «финансовой привязанности», где удовлетворённость оплатой труда и продолженная приверженность выступают в качестве важных связующих механизмов, предлагая более тонкое понимание того, как распределительная справедливость, посредством расчётных, а не чисто аффективных средств, предсказывает организационное гражданское поведение.

Ключевые слова: распределительная справедливость; удовлетворённость оплатой труда; продолженная приверженность; организационное гражданское поведение; последовательное опосредование; финансовая привязанность; индонезийский контекст.