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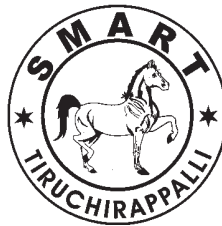
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**EMPLOYER BRANDING ON ORGANISATIONAL CITIZENSHIP
BEHAVIOUR : A MODERATED MODERATION MODEL
OF ORGANISATIONAL POLITICS AND ORGANISATIONAL
DISSENT BEHAVIOUR**

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Abstract

By synthesising theories of social exchange, psychological contract, conservation of resources and independent-mindedness, the present study aims at establishing the relationship between employer branding and organisational citizenship behaviour, with a moderated moderation of organisational politics and organisational dissent behaviour. Results revealed that employer branding was significantly positively related to organisational citizenship behaviour and the true benefits of employer branding were encumbered by a high level of organisational politics. The study further revealed that employer branding strengthened organisational citizenship behaviour in the presence of high organisational dissent behaviour, with low organisational politics. The present study pushed back the frontiers of human resource management literature and proffered many useful practical implications for HRM. At the end of the paper, potentially fruitful research avenues have been pointed out.

Keywords: *Employer branding, Organisational citizenship behaviour, Organisational dissent behaviour and Organisational politics*

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1. Introduction

The knowledge-based theory of the firm maintains that intellectual capital, a knowledge based resource, is a subset of strategic resources giving true competitive advantages (**Grant, 1996; Subramaniam and Youndt, 2005; Zhang, et al., 2018**). In the knowledge economies, recruiting and retaining talented employees have become a major challenge, described as ‘War for Talent’. (**Michaels, et al., 2001**) and **Direno and Greenhaus (2011)** emphasise that workforce has developed a higher propensity to switch employers. Consequently, there is a pressing need for the firm to build its brand called ‘employer branding’, that strengthens the firm’s position in the labour market and motivates employees, feeling of loyalty to the firm (**Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019**). Many research studies have focused on various outcomes and antecedents of employer branding owing to the strategic importance of employer branding (**Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019; Rana, et al., 2019; Tumasjan, et al., 2020**). But the role of employer branding in fostering organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has received less attention (**Özçelik and Fýndýklý, 2014**). The true benefits of employer branding might be hampered by organisational politics, which could mar the relationship between employer branding and OCB. The culture of an organisation in which organisations encourage employees to speak out frankly and maintain that there is no place for yes-men around here, could produce the intended benefits of the employer branding (**Kassing, 1998**). The study assumed that the effect of employer branding on OCB should be positive but there could be difference in its effect in the context of low level of organisational politic but with strong dissent behaviour. The present study proposes to fill the lacunae, by establishing the relationship between employer branding,

organisational politics, OCB and organisational dissent behaviour (ODB), thereby contributing to the extant HRM literature.

2. Review of Literature

Many research scholars maintain that the success of selection of human resources depends upon high level of competence and willingness to demonstrate productive behaviour in organisations (**Wright, et al., 1994**). In the labour market, there is constant struggle over obtaining talents and therefore, organisations build their own ‘employer branding’, to emerge as the ‘employers of choice’ by providing better image through healthy work atmosphere, training and development, work-life balance, ethics and corporate social responsibility and compensation (**Tanwar and Prasad, 2017**). Hence the importance of the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits that are provided by the employing company (**Ambler and Barrow, 1996**). Employer branding paints a vivid picture of the company’s effort, to make prospective employees feel that the workplace is a desirable place to work (**Ewing, et al., 2002**). By and large, employer branding is used to describe what job seekers emphasize while applying for a job. Employer branding has been linked to many organisational outcomes such as employee retention, job engagement, organisational commitment, and firm performance (**Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019; Rana et al., 2019; Tumasjan et al., 2020**), but the extent to which employer branding promotes OCB has been largely neglected (**Özçelik and Fýndýklý, 2014**). OCB is an individual’s extra-role behaviour that is discretionary (**Organ, 1988**), explaining the employee contribution in the workplace, that goes beyond the job description and legal requirements (**Organ and Ryan, 1995**). OCB has five dimensions: altruism (e.g. helping others who have work-related problems); conscientiousness

(e.g. regular to the work); sportsmanship (e.g. not complaining about trivial matters); courtesy (e.g. not abusing the rights of others); and civic virtue (e.g. attends meetings and functions that are not mandatory) (**Podsakoff, et al., 1990**). OCB has been favourably contributed to many organisational outcomes such as service quality, employee performance, job involvement, and efficiency of an organisation and relations (**Bell and Menguc, 2002; Dimitriades, 2007** and **Supriyanto, et al., 2020**).

The present study invokes two of the most influential theories, viz. social exchange theory and psychological contract theory, to explain the relationship between employer branding and OCB. Social exchange evolves when employers care about employees, based on mutual commitments and mutual benefits (**Blau, 1964; Khan, et al., 2019**). Similarly, the psychological contract is not legally bound but mutual obligation between an employee and an organisation (**Rousseau, 1989**). Based on these theories, it is expected that employer branding gives greater benefits to the employees and consequently, they are morally bound to demonstrate extra-role behaviours. Although a limited number of studies have been focused on employer branding and OCB, the findings produced mixed results (**Özçelik and Fýndýklý, 2014**). Therefore, the present study fills the void, by examining the relationship between employer branding and OCB.

Organisational politics refers to an individual's subjective judgment about the work environment, whether characterised as self-serving various individuals and groups at the cost of other individuals or groups (**Ferris, et al., 2000**). Based on the insights from job demands-resources (JD-R) theory, organisational politics may be understood as a job demand, that requires greater physical and psychological

efforts to manage, resulting in many negative behavioural outcomes (**Bakker and Demerouti, 2007**). In a highly politicised organisation, favouritism and self-serving behaviours are widespread (**Kacmar and Ferris, 1991**). Therefore, organisational politics is a destructive phenomenon, undermining employee motivation (**Shrestha and Mishra 2015**), commitment (**Maslyn and Fedor, 1998**), OCB (**Khan et al., 2019**), and job satisfaction (**Ferris et al., 1996**). The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory assumes that individuals strive to obtain, retain, and protect that which they value (**Hobfoll and Lilly, 1993**), suggesting that resource loss such as promotion, rewards and career development can create a painful emotional reaction and thus limit resource development (**Wright and Hobfoll, 2004**). By synthesizing JD-R theory and COR, the present study hypothesises that the true benefits of employer branding will not be attained at a high level of organisational politics. Notably, in a highly politicized organisation, employees are not fairly treated and therefore, financial and career prospectus that an employee expects from the organisation, is not genuinely met and consequently, employees show negative behaviour towards organisations and other employees. To date, the theoretical relationship between employer branding and OCB, in the face of organisational politics, has not been explored and therefore, the present study fills the hiatus, by analysing the moderating effect of organisational politics on the relationship between employer branding and OCB.

ODB, in relation to employer branding, has not been probed previously. Even though organisations employ various tactics to control employees, employees prefer the freedom of expression in their workplace (**Gorden and Infante, 1987**). Consequently, the dissent behaviour is always present to some extent and

cannot be completely muted. For instance, **Redding (1985)** pointed out that even in a tough organisation, employees express their dissent in the form of whistle-blowing and boat-rocking. Some studies found dissent as an instrument of participation (**Pacanowsky, 1988**). Similarly, studies highlighted that employee dissent is considered as an integral part of enacting organisational democracy (**Cheney, 1995**), achieved through the open dialogue of members in which employees can freely disagree with management, without fear of reprisal (**Eisenberg et al., 1994**). Strongly based on the theories of independent-mindedness and reasoned action, the present study covered the theoretical gap in the extant literature. The theory of independent-mindedness (**Gorden and Infante, 1987**) claims that employees should be free to engage in the give and take of criticism, involving disagreements and contradictory opinions. By and large, employees look for opportunities to express their contradictory or challenging opinions about organisational operations (**Kassing, 1997**). The theory of reasoned action lends credence to the contention that an individual's belief affects subsequent behaviours (**Madden, et al., 1992**). Therefore, at a high level of organisational politics, employees become frustrated, thereby expressing dissent behaviour. Consequently, the current study fills a lacuna by examining the moderation of organisational politics, in the relationship between employer branding and OCB (**Figure-1**).

3. Statement of the Problem

Although organisation builds its employer branding as the image of an organisation as a 'great place to work', the expected benefits that are supposed to be received by employer branding, may be handicapped by organisational politics. Even though companies attract and keep

a talented labour pool in the organisations, employees' contribution towards discretionary behaviour could be blocked by organisational politics and dissent behaviour. Therefore, the study proposes to examine the deteriorating employees' OCB against organisational politics despite employer branding in the Insurance Sector. The problem statement is expressed in terms of following three questions: (a) the extent to which employer branding influences employees' OCB?, (b) does organisational politics moderate the relationship between employer branding and OCB?, and (c) does employee decent behaviour moderate the organisational politics in the relationship between employer branding and OCB? (**Figure-1**).

4. Need of the Study

With the growing competition in the labour market, companies attempt to attract, stimulate, promote and retain excellent employees, by means of employer branding. The firms stress the overriding importance of OCB, such as completing an assignment on time, helping others when they absent themselves and have work-related problem, assisting others with their duties, sharing personal property with others, and defending the organisations when other employees criticize it **Lee and Allen, 2002**. The role of employer branding in promoting OCB has not been studied. Similarly, the effect of organisational politics on ODB has not been previously explored. Therefore, the present study is vital for designing the best human resource management practices, to foster OCB in organisations.

5. Objectives of the Study

- i. To investigate the relationship between employer branding and OCB.
- ii. To establish the moderating role of organizational politics in the relationship between employer branding and OCB.

- iii. To find out moderated-moderation by examining the impact of ODB on organizational politics in the relationship between employer branding and OCB.

6. Hypotheses of the Study

- H-1: Employer branding has a positive impact on OCB.
- H-2: Organisational politics moderates the relationship between employer branding and OCB.
- H-3: The effect of employer branding on OCB is positive but the difference in its effect depends upon low level of organisational politics.

7. Research Methodology

7.1 Sample Selection

Using a convenience sampling, that is often used in management and business research (Bryman and Bell, 2007), participants were chosen. From the total of 500 issued questionnaires, 442 usable questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 88 per cent. Majority of respondents were males ($n=250$, 57%) and the remaining 43% were females ($n=192$). Only 37% of respondents were married and a few widowers were observed (3%). As to the age of the respondents, under 40 years, constituted 88 per cent of the sample and two per cent were over 60 years. Majority of respondents reported A/L qualification (SLQF-2; 53%) and only 18 per cent of respondents recorded at least one degree.

7.2 Sources of Data

Employer branding was measured with a 23-item scale developed by Tanwar and Prasad (2017). Sample items included statements like 'In general, the salary offered by my organisation is high'. The study enjoyed a strong internal consistency of the measure $\alpha=0.76$ (Table-1).

OCB was measured, with a 16-item scale, adapted from Lee and Allen (2002). The internal consistency of the scale was $\alpha=0.89$ (Table-1). Organisational politics was gauged by the scale developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997). The scale included 15 items, covering three dimensions. The scale enjoyed a strong internal consistency of the measure $\alpha=0.73$ (Table-1). ODB was assessed, with a 20-item scale, originally developed by Kassing (1998). The scale reported a strong internal consistency of the scale $\alpha=0.74$ (Table-1). All measures were gauged, by asking the respondents to indicate their agreeableness on each statement by using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

7.3 Period of the Study

The present study was initiated in 2018 and the data were marshalled during the period from February to May 2019.

7.4 Tools used in the Study

Garnered data were primarily analysed by using descriptive (e.g. Mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistical tools (e.g. multi-stage multiple regression analysis), with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences- IBM SPSS Statistics 24.

8. Analysis of Relationship between Employer Branding and OCB

Before testing the hypotheses, the fundamental statistical assumptions for conducting parametric tests were investigated: normality, homoskedasticity, linearity, and multicollinearity. Normality was confirmed with skewness and kurtosis, identified by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and Shapiro-Wilk test. For further robustness, a plot of *ZRESID against *ZPRED, a histogram and normal probability plot of the residuals, were examined and the results had met the assumptions of

linearity, homoskedasticity and normality. Multicollinearity was assessed, with the help of two most widely used diagnostic measures: VIF (Variance inflation factor) and tolerance. VIF values were well below 5 (maximum VIF value was 3.62) and corresponding tolerance statistics were well above 0.2 (minimum value of tolerance was 0.276), indicating no multicollinearity between predictors, suggesting that the model was capable of assessing the individual importance of each predictor. High degree of correlations was not found between variables (**Table-1**) and it further confirmed no multicollinearity ($r < 0.70$). The value of the Durbin–Watson test was 1.928, indicating that errors in regression were independent. Since the response rate was over 80%, the examination of non response bias was not required (e.g. **Dooley and Lindner, 2003**). Since the data were garnered from a single-sourced, self-administered questionnaire, there may be common method variance (CMV). As advised by **Podsakoff, et al., (2003)**, procedural remedies were followed, during the data collection process. Further, the most commonly used Harman one-factor test was also employed, to see whether a single factor constitutes the majority of covariance (**Podsakoff et al., 2003**). The un rotated factor analysis, produced a four-factor solution and the first factor accounted for 22.13 % of variance. Then all items were loaded onto a single factor and the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) produced a poor model fit: $\chi^2=2347.14, p=0.00; CFI=0.33; GFI=0.42; RMR=0.20; RMSEA=0.31; SRMR=0.22$), confirming concern over CMV. As can be seen in **Table-1**, number of average respondents agreed with the existence of employer branding ($M=3.70, SD=1.00$) and ODB ($M=3.54, SD=0.51$). Respondents reported a high level of OCB ($M=4.28, SD=.28$) but a low level of organisational politics was

observed. ($M=3.00, SD=.79$). Referring to the same **Table-1**, OCB was significantly positively associated with employer branding ($r=0.34, p<0.05$) and ODB ($r=0.18, p<0.05$) but it was negatively significant with organisational politics ($r=-0.49, p<0.05$). The summary results of the models are presented in **Table-2**. In Model-1, personal variables, viz., gender, marital status, age and experience, were controlled to negate the effect of those variables on OCB. The variables inputted onto the remaining three models were as follows: (a) Model-2 included Model-1 and employer branding; (b) Model-3 included Model-2 and organizational politics and ODB; and Model-4 included Model-3 and interactions (EB x OP, and EB x OP x ODB). As inferred from Model-4, **H-1: employer branding has a significant positive impact on OCB**, was not rejected (**Table-2** $\beta=0.34, P<0.01$). and **H-2: organisational politics moderates the relationship between employer branding and OCB**, was accepted ($\beta=-0.16, P<0.01$). The **Figure-2** shows that at a low level of organisational politics, there was stronger positive relationship between employer branding and OCB. Consequently, **H-3: effect of employer branding on OCB is positive but the difference in its effect depended upon a low level of organisational politic**, was also supported ($\beta=0.03, P<0.01$). The **Figure-2** depicts that at a low level of organisational politics, together with a high level of ODB, the positive relationship between employer branding and OCB was stronger. Our model explained 46 per cent of variance and produced a large-sized effect, at Cohen's $f^2=0.85$.

9. Findings of the Study

First, the present study found a strong positive relationship between employer branding and OCB. It implied that employer branding increased OCB. The findings were in line with

the study of **Özcelik and Fýndýklý (2014)**. But, this is the first study in the context of Asia with the insurance companies. The study contributes to the theories of social exchange and psychological contract. Second, the study revealed that the relationship between employer branding and OCB was encumbered by organisational politics thereby contributing to the extant literature. The study found that the positive relationship between employer branding and organisational citizenship turned negative at increasing levels of organisational politics. The findings were in line with the theories of the job demands-resources (JD-R) theory and the conservation of resources (COR) theory. Third, the present study found a moderated moderation of organisational politics and ODB on the relationship between employer branding and OCB. The high level of ODB, at a low level of organisational politics, strengthened the positive relationship between employer branding and OCB. The study stresses the overriding importance of organisational democracy, to bring about the benefits of employer branding. The findings were consistent with theories of independent-mindedness and reasoned action.

10. Suggestions

Although earlier studies confirmed that employer branding is an unalloyed good for the firm, proving many positive outcomes (e.g. **Rana et al., 2019; Tumasjan et al., 2020**), the present study revealed a strong relationship between employer branding and OCB, which is a crucial factor for the organisational success (**Borman and Motowildo, 1993**) and it is the prime cause for many favourable outcomes in the organisation (**Supriyanto et al., 2020**), Hence HRM managers and practitioners must devise the best HRM strategies, to promote employer branding. Our study observed the negative effect of organisational politics on the relationship between employer branding and

OCB. Taken together with previous studies, organisational politics was identified as the fertile ground for organisational disharmony (**Ferris et al., 1996; Shrestha and Mishra 2015**). Therefore, the present study strongly advises that manager and policy makers should be aware of organisational politics and should initiate efforts to abjure organisational politics. By reducing political interference, organisations can build a positive relationship that would contribute to OCB. This study suggests that organisations should allow dissent behaviour in their workplace. Few studies maintain that organisational democracy is the corollary of volition and freedom of expression in their workplace (**Cheney, 1995**). In line with earlier studies, that have found that ODB promotes creativity and innovation, better decision, and good rapport, the current study also reveals that ODB dilutes the negative effect of organisational politics. Therefore, organisations should permit the employees to freely disagree with management, without fear of reprisal (**Eisenberg et al., 1994**).

11. Conclusion

The present study has established a strong relationship between employer branding and OCB, with the moderated moderation of organisational politics and ODB with a sample of 442 employees taken from insurance companies in Sri Lanka. The novel findings were consistent with the dominant theories of social exchange, psychological contract, job demands-resources (JD-R) and conservation of resources (COR). As discussed earlier, the present study could push the frontiers of HRM literature in many ways, through its useful practical implications.

12. Limitations of the Study

Although the current study was strongly anchored in robust theoretical and methodological

bases, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The prime limitation of the present study was the cross-sectional design in which making causal relationship was debatable. The present study had only considered only one sector in depth.

13. Scope for Further Research

Factors, contributing to employer branding, are dependent on country-culture specific nature and therefore, scholars should look into those factors that help organisations to develop appropriate HRM policies. Future studies should also focus on antecedents and outcomes of organisational politics and ODB. Further, the multi-sourced and multi-level analysis is warranted across other occupations and countries.

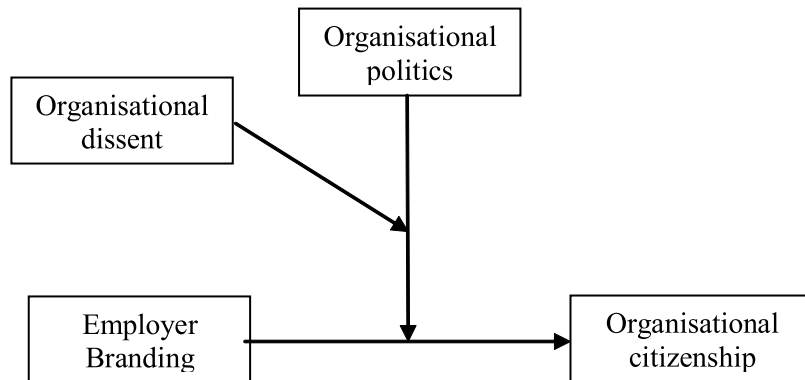
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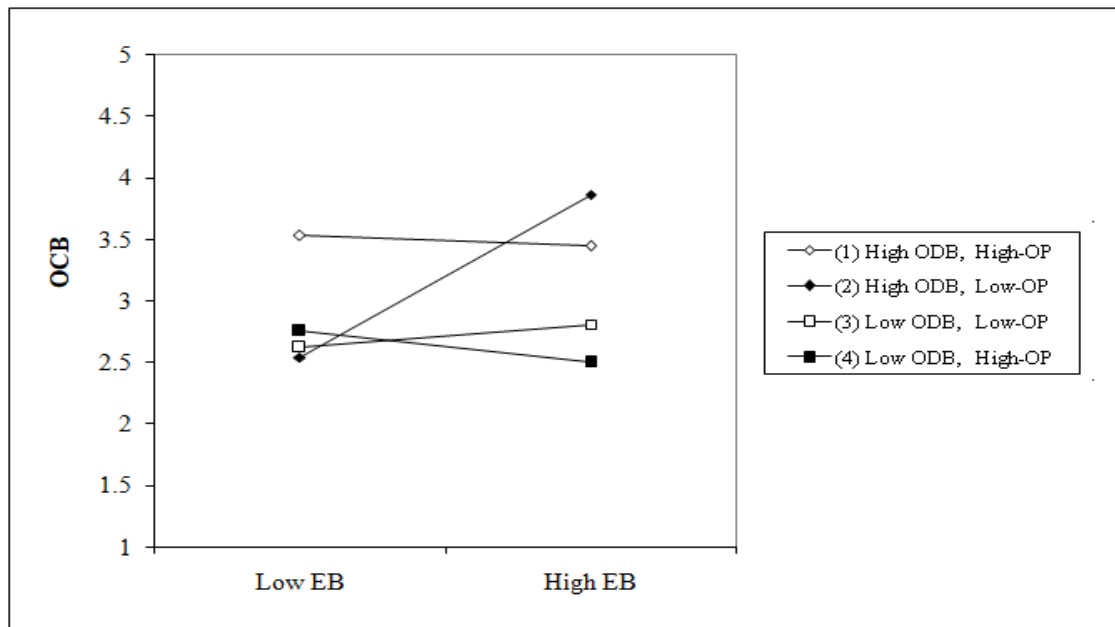
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Figure-1: Proposed Theoretical Model



Source: Developed by Authors

Figure-2: Results of Three-Way Interaction of Employer Branding, Organisational Politics, ODB on OCB



Source : Drawn by Authors using SPSS

Table 1: Results of Means, Standard Deviations, Bivariate Correlations and Cronbach's Alphas

	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Gender	1.43	0.49	---							
2	Marital status	1.35	0.48	-0.89	---						
3	Age	37.07	2.87	-0.52	0.15**	---					
4	Work experience	6.3	3.20	0.05	0.29**	0.41**	---				
5	EB	3.70	1.00	0.08	-0.04	0.05	0.02	(0.76)			
6	OP	3.00	0.79	-0.08	0.02	0.02	-0.02	-0.16**	(0.73)		
7	ODB	3.54	0.51	0.03	0.08	0.02	0.04	0.06	-0.20**	(0.74)	
8	OCB	4.28	0.28	0.13**	-0.03	0.01	0.01	0.34**	-0.49**	0.18**	(0.89)

Note: n=442; *p<.05; **p<.01; The values within parenthesis- Cronbach's α ; Gender: 1-Female, 2-Male, Marital status: 1-Single, 2-Married
 EB-Employer Branding; OP-Organisational Politics; ODB-Organisational Dissent Behaviour; OCB-Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Source: Primary data computed using SPSS

Table-2: Results of Summary of the Models

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Controls				
Gender	-0.08**	-0.06*	-0.04	-0.03
Marital Status	-0.02	-0.02	-0.01	-0.01
Age	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Experience	0.02	0.001	0.02	0.02
Independent variables				
EB		0.47**	0.39**	0.31**
OP			-0.18**	-0.15
ODB			0.15**	0.12
Interaction -1 (EB x OP)				-0.16**
Three-way Interaction -2 (EB x OP x ODB)				0.03**
R^2	0.02	0.13	0.39	0.46
ΔR^2	0.02	0.11	0.26	0.07
F	2.02	12.55	39.40	40.62
ΔF	2.02**	53.70**	93.27**	27.84**

Note: n= 442; *p<.05; **p<.01; Gender-1=Female; 2=Male; Marital status-1=Single; 2=Married;
 EB-Employer Branding; OP-Organisational Politics; ODB-Organisational Dissent Behaviour; OCB-Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Source: Primary data computed using SPSS