

Employee Participation in the Decision-Making Process and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Mediating Role of Affective Commitment

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Purpose: The purpose of this article is to examine the relationship between employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) while considering the mediating role of affective commitment (AC).

Methods: The article is based on primary cross-sectional data collected using questionnaires and applying a convenience sampling method among employees in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H). The sample consists of 302 employees from 127 companies across multiple industries.

Results: First, there is a positive relationship between EPDMP and two dimensions of OCB – organizational citizenship behavior directed at individuals (OCBI) and organizational citizenship behavior directed at the organization (OCBO). Second, the findings suggest that AC mediates the relationship between EPDMP and OCBI and OCBO. Furthermore, OCBI is found to mediate the relationship between AC and OCBO.

Conclusion: This article extends the literature by introducing the mediating role of AC in the relationship between EPDM and two dimensions of OCB and the mediating role of OCBI in the relationship between AC and OCBO.

Keywords: *Employee participation in the decision-making process, Affective commitment, Organizational citizenship behavior, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

1 Introduction

The nature of the business has drastically changed over the last few decades, where we have witnessed the emergence of a new management approach concentrated on human resources, empowerment, involvement, delegation, and teamwork (Ghani & Memon, 2020). For countries in transition, a shift to capitalism, among other changes in the business environment, brought many threats and opportunities to organizations adjusting their structures to make the best out of the changes. This led to a dilemma between a centralized structure characterized by the strict hierarchy that aims for efficiency and decentralization, which brings flexibility that allows for adaptation and learning.

Since decentralization enables lower organizational levels to exercise more autonomy, responsibility, and control over resources (Daft, 2009), it is expected that employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) follows it. In that case, employees generate better knowledge and contribute to organizational growth and sustainability (Christie et al., 2003). Further, the importance and contribution of EPDMP to overall organizational performance is indisputable, but the relationship is not straightforward. The effect of EPDMP initially happens at lower and later translates to higher organizational levels. In line with this, employee participation relates to employee morale (Steel & Mento, 1987), organizational commitment (OC) (Park, 2015), and organizational citizenship behavior

(OCB), which further benefits the company's performance (Tsui-Hsu Tsai & Jing Lin, 2014). Since decentralization enables lower organizational levels to exercise more autonomy, responsibility, and control over resources (Daft, 2009), it is expected that employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) follows it. In that case, employees generate better knowledge and contribute to organizational growth and sustainability (Christie et al., 2003). Further, the importance and contribution of EPDMP to overall organizational performance is indisputable, but the relationship is not straightforward. The effect of EPDMP initially happens at lower and later translates to higher organizational levels. In line with this, employee participation relates to employee morale (Steel & Mento, 1987), organizational commitment (OC) (Park, 2015), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which further benefits the company's performance (Tsui-Hsu Tsai & Jing Lin, 2014).

A vast amount of research on EPDMP has been focused on developed countries and Western samples (Parnell et al., 2012). Furthermore, Parnell et al. (2012) argue that the degree of participation is contingent on the stage of economic development. Therefore, the current state of knowledge can rely on previously mentioned samples and has to be extended with more studies from emerging, developing, and transitional economies. As such, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) provides an interesting context as a country that is still in the transition process from socialism to capitalism (Knezović & Greda, 2021). Furthermore, the country is characterized by labor-intensive industries and a high number of employed people in the government and public sector, which does not create a "fertile environment" for higher employee participation. When it comes to the private sector, employees are relatively underpaid, and their opportunities within the companies are limited. In particular, even small companies, by a larger degree, emphasize a strong top to bottom approach in terms of authority and decision making. Therefore, the role of EPDMP in different employee-related outcomes is worth studying.

The relationship between EPDMP and OCB is especially interesting as OCB can be exhibited on both individual and organizational levels (Williams & Anderson, 1991). In particular, at the individual level, organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals (OCBI) refers to behaviors that contribute directly to individuals and indirectly to the organization, such as having a good relationship with colleagues and helping them (Williams & Anderson, 1991). OCBI is also known under the term altruism (Smith et al., 1983). As it concerns the organizational level, organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization (OCBO) refers to the individuals' actions that directly contribute to the organization (Williams & Anderson, 1991). These actions involve punctuality, attending to the work above the norm (Smith et al., 1983), efficient

and effective use of resources, and working time (Organ, 1997).

However, the current literature is limited in several ways. First, although its presence in the literature is relatively high, employee participation in the decision-making process has been observed mainly as a part of a set of high-involvement work practices or other human resource management practices (Boselie, 2010; Knezović et al., 2020). Besides, regarding the relationship between EPDMP and two-dimensional OCB, the existing research on this topic is scarce, with a few works suggesting that the relationship is positive (Boselie, 2010). Therefore, by observing EPDMP independently, the first objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between EPDMP and two dimensions of OCB.

Second, the research has neglected the mechanisms through which EPDMP contributes to the employee and organizational outcomes. When it comes to both OCB dimensions, it is evident that the relationship is rather complex, as some studies reported indirect relationships (Bogler & Somech, 2005; Muhammad, 2004; Park, 2016). As OCB refers to positive voluntary actions toward the organization, it takes more than simple empowerment to trigger such behavior. In fact, employee participation is related to both organizational commitment (OC) and OCB, while they are also interconnected (Cohen & Liu, 2011; Hasani et al., 2013). EPDMP replenishes the emotional bond between employees and the organization as employees tend to feel more involved within the company's processes and future direction. Therefore, employees' commitment can be observed as an underlying factor in the relationship between EPDMP and OCB. As commitment is also a multidimensional construct, not all commitment forms are equally important. In particular, Mercurio (2015) demonstrates that affective commitment (AC) predicts work behaviors, including OCB, better than other forms of commitment. It is expected that employees with strong AC actually want to stay within the organization, identify with it, are involved in it, and enjoy being a member of the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Thus, in search of possible mechanisms, we investigate the mediating role of AC in the relationship between EPDMP and OCB dimensions.

Third, although existing literature offers valuable insights into the EPDMP-OCB relationship (Boselie, 2010), there are not enough substantial studies that encompass its unquestionable complexity. The research lacks a closer, in-depth approach to provide new information by focusing on factors mediating this relationship. As OCBI is a more direct result of employee-related practice, there is a question of whether OCBI is a valid mediator in the relationship between OCBO and its antecedents. Therefore, this study's third objective is to demonstrate a more precise understanding of the relationship between EPDMP, AC, and the two dimensions of OCB.

2 Literature review and hypotheses

2.1 Employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP)

Employee participation is related to empowering lower-level employees to engage and take responsibility for making organizational decisions. The idea behind the establishment of participative decision-making is that the satisfaction of employees' higher needs will improve their job performance and benefit the whole organization (Noah, 2008). Further, employee involvement or direct participation can be defined as employees' ability to influence decisions related to their job (Duncan & Zhou, 2013). Employee participation is a process that involves interaction, communication to and from management, influence on management, and decisions by employees (Dickson, 1983). This enables employees to align their and organizational interests, which is the main goal of employee participation.

The influence of EPDMP is multidimensional as it is positively associated with perceived organizational support (Park, 2015), which leads to organizational commitment (Aube et al., 2007), employee engagement, and satisfaction (Ahmed & Nawaz, 2015). Zhu et al. (2014), who studied the participation of new generation employees, found that it is positively related to their job satisfaction. Similarly, Guinot et al. (2021) argue that participative decisions are positively related to job satisfaction, which is consistent with Firth et al. (2004), who reported that job dissatisfaction and insufficient organizational commitment significantly influence the intention to quit. If accompanied by the perception of fairness and/or learning needs satisfaction, employee participation in decision-making reduces turnover intention (Kumar & Jauhari, 2016). Although EPDMP has been investigated in different studies, its relationship with OCB is yet to be examined.

2.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCB is described as a voluntary behavior of an individual that is not identified formally by the organizational reward system but contributes to overall organizational effectiveness (Dominic et al., 2021). OCB is of immense importance for organizations as it is positively related to several outcomes across the organizations (Tsui-Hsu Tsai & Jing Lin, 2014).

Williams and Anderson (1991) differentiate between three types of organizational behavior: OCB-Organization (OCBO), OCB-Individual (OCBI), and In-Role Behavior (IRB). While the three-dimensional construct was operationalized earlier, most of the research is related to two dimensions: OCBI and OCBO. Therefore, OCBI involves

helping new colleagues who have heavy workloads or were absent; listening to, taking an interest in, and sharing information with other employees; assisting supervisors when not asked (Williams & Anderson, 1991); and making innovative suggestions (Smith et al., 1983). OCBO involves attending the work above the norm, giving advanced notice when unable to come, not taking undeserved breaks, not spending much time on personal phone conversations, not complaining about insignificant things, conserving and protecting organizational property, respecting informal rules (Williams & Anderson, 1991), being punctual, not taking unnecessary time off work, not spending time in idle conversations (Smith et al., 1983), and conserving organizational resources (Organ, 1997). It is possible to conclude that OCBI is generally concerned with helping and having good relationships with colleagues. At the same time, OCBO refers to contributions to efficiency, productivity, effectiveness, and order by performing voluntary actions.

Although OCB's role within the organization is undisputable, the factors that enhance such behavior are still being researched (Al-Madadha et al., 2021). One recent study suggests that a psychological identification with the job could be a major force behind OCB (Dartey-Baah & Addo, 2019). In particular, companies have to consider practices such as job autonomy and participation in the decision-making process (Boselie, 2010). A systemic review of the literature on employee participation and OCB shows a positive relationship between the two concepts (Kasekende et al., 2016). Additionally, Ma et al. (2021) assert that certain aspects of empowerment have positive indirect relationships with OCB dimensions. Further, the authors indicate that job satisfaction has a mediating-moderating effect on the relationship between structural empowerment and OCB (Narzari & Palo, 2020). However, studies that observe EPDMP independently and relationship with two dimensions of OCB are non-existent.

In particular, when employees participate in the decision-making process, they are better informed about the companies' objectives and novelties, which lead to more positive actions. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1a: There is a positive relationship between employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) and organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals (OCBI).

H1b: There is a positive relationship between employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) and organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization (OCBO).

2.3 Affective commitment (AC)

The AC refers to the emotional bond employees develop toward their organization and keeps them within it

(Allen & Meyer, 1990). A plethora of literature suggests that AC can result from different human resource practices such as perceived organizational support (El Akremi et al., 2014), career development (Knezović & Greda, 2021), and empowerment practices (Raineri, 2017). Empowerment practices have been observed from different perspectives. As such, Rogiest et al. (2015) suggest that an involvement-oriented organizational climate increases employees' AC. The social-exchange theory supports this since employees are willing to tie themselves to the organization if they perceive certain benefits for themselves. In this case, employee involvement allows employees to exhibit psychological ownership, which increases overall effectiveness. Further, it improves partnership and teamwork that creates favorable culture. Additionally, learning culture, accompanied by dialogue and structures facilitating knowledge sharing, is significantly related to the AC to change (Malik & Garg, 2017).

Existing literature indicates that EPDMP positively impacts AC. This relationship is either direct or mediated by factors such as perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, organizational culture, etc. Similarly, as in the EPDMP-OCB relationship, previous research has some shortcomings. Again, employee participation is approached partially (e.g., direct participation quality or employee voice) or as part of decentralization, involvement, empowerment, or other HRM practices (Rogiest et al., 2015; Raineri, 2017). However, the argument behind EPDMP lies in the fact that employees' involvement creates a conducive environment for different employee benefits, which leads to a stronger bond with the organization. In principle, as employees are more involved in deciding the organization's direction, they will be more attached to the organization. When it comes to the context of B&H, it is essential to emphasize that EPDMP is relatively new on the market and that many employees are facing it for the first time. As EPDMP is something more common in developed economies, it represents an excellent option for motivating people and committing them to the organizational cause as it is not something they are used to but brings different sets of benefits. Therefore, we argue that:

H2: There is a positive relationship between employee participation in decision-making (EPDMP) and affective commitment (AC).

2.4 Affective commitment (AC) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)

Regarding OCB, Bateman and Organ (1983) argued that social exchange theory—a person's willingness to reciprocate the good done to her/him—is a major force behind it. Since then, many authors have examined the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB.

Although the multidimensional effect of committed employees was suggested repetitively, the AC is found to be the main source of commitment theories and the core element of organizational commitment. According to Mercurio (2015), AC may have a stronger impact on work behaviors than other commitment components. This is in line with the work by Cohen and Liu (2011), who suggested that AC is more valid than normative and continuance commitment. In line with this, Hasani et al. (2013) reported a positive relationship between organizational commitment and OCB, with AC as the strongest OC component. They further argued that high commitment brings more sacrifice, prudence, and loyalty among the staff. Earlier, Cohen and Liu (2011) suggested that a positive relationship between organizational commitment and OCB exists only because of AC.

Existing findings indicate that AC is positively associated with OCB (Khaola & Rambe, 2021; Obedgiu et al., 2020; Khaskheli et al., 2020). Specifically, AC causes an increase in employee job satisfaction, which is positively related to both OCB dimensions. Regarding a two-dimensional approach to OCB, research also suggests AC is favorably related to both dimensions (Huang & You, 2011). However, the role of AC in its relationship with OCBI and OCBO is rather impartial as existing research did not clearly emphasize the importance of AC among other components of OC and the multidimensionality of OCB. Hence, a more complex relationship between these three concepts is assumed and presents an interesting examination topic as it creates significant value for the organization. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H3a: There is a positive relationship between affective commitment (AC) and organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals (OCBI).

H3b: There is a positive relationship between affective commitment (AC) and organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization (OCBO).

2.5 The mediating role of affective commitment (AC)

The inclusion of employees, which encompasses significant aspects of employee participation, positively impacts OCB (Cottrill et al., 2014). Although studies on the relationship between EPDMP and OCB exist, most of them report a distant one with several potential mediators such as autonomy, motivation, or job satisfaction. However, this "black-box" of the mechanism through which EPDMP results in OCB still remains unknown, and there is a need for more thorough research. This is especially true for understanding OCB as a two-dimensional construct.

One dominant role that AC occupies in the literature is the mediating one (Renkema et al., 2021). Several works found the mediation role of AC between certain variables

and OCB. For example, AC mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and OCB (Liu, 2009), transformational leadership and OCB (Khaola & Rambe, 2021), and corporate social responsibility and OCB (Khaskheli et al., 2020). Keeping in mind the explanatory value of mediators' involvement in the relationships and theoretical background, which undoubtedly shows the mediating nature of AC, there is a justified basis for examining the relationship between EPDMP and OCB with the AC as a mediator. In principle, Silverthorne (2004) argues that employee involvement creates a sense of psychological ownership. In line with this, Shukla (2019) found a positive relationship between psychological ownership and OCB. We argue that EPDMP creates an inclusive environment across the company. In that way, when employees contribute to the organization by being involved in decision-making, they tend to be more emotionally tied to the organization. Such employees are more likely to exhibit citizenship behavior toward their colleagues and the organization. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been proposed:

H4a: Affective commitment (AC) mediates a positive relationship between employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) and organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals (OCBI).

H4b: Affective commitment (AC) mediates a positive relationship between employee participation in the decision-making process (EPDMP) and organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization (OCBO).

When it comes to the two-dimensional approach to OCB, we can expect that organizational practices aimed at individuals first result in OCB at the individual level and then at the organizational. For example, employees' AC increases their OCBI (Huang & You, 2011), which is related to interpersonal relations within the organization. Employees who stay longer within the organization become more familiar with the organizational rules, policies, and procedures (OCBO) and willingly contribute beyond formal requirements (Mohammad et al., 2010). Even though existing literature lacks a more precise and in-depth approach to the topic, it indicates the possibility that even the relationship between AC and different dimensions of OCB is extremely complex. Recognizing that AC is a variable related to an individual's emotional attachment leads to a conclusion that it initially affects the individual (OCBI) and then translates to an organizational level (OCBO). Considering that AC increases OCB that further benefits the organization, we can assume that this interaction occurs at two different levels. Similar propositions are offered in the work by Nishi et al. (2008). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals (OCBI) mediates the positive relationship between affective commitment (AC) and organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization (OCBO).

All of the proposed relationships between EPDM, AC, OCBI, and OCBO are summarized in the conceptual framework in Figure 1.

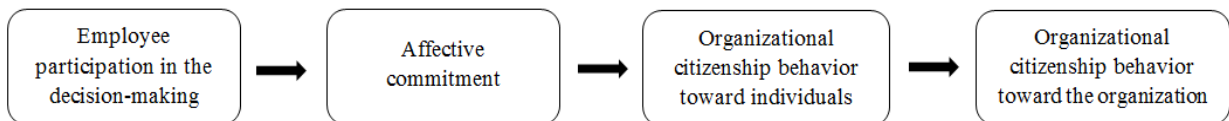


Figure 1: Conceptual model

3 Methods

Primary cross-sectional data were collected from employees working in different industries across B&H. Surveys were distributed using a convenience sampling method, which allowed for a larger and more divergent sample. As there is no available database from which participants could be selected, the only way is to conveniently select participants. Using our own network, we directly contacted employees and asked them to participate in the study. This is a common approach where a lack of databases may increase the risk of possible sample bias (Vandekerckhof et al., 2019).

The questionnaire contained four main constructs, and they were all adopted in original forms. EPDMP was measured by the five-item construct adopted from Steel and Mento (1987). It was based on a seven-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree).

AC was measured with six items adopted from Rhoades et al. (2001). OCBI and OCBO constructs were adopted from Saks's (2006) versions of Lee and Allen (2002), and each involved four items. AC, OCBI, and OCBO constructs were all based on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree). All scales are presented in Appendix.

As the constructs were originally in English, we used back-to-back translation methods by which we checked for content validity. The questionnaires were delivered in hard copies to 302 employees in different companies. To ensure participation, we developed a cover letter that explained the study's purpose, guaranteed anonymity, and required their consent to be valid and used in the research. Hence, after the collected data were checked, the total sample was 302 employees. Responses collected were analyzed, and the results were reported credibly without intentional misrepresentation.

In the sample, 55.8% of respondents were men compared and 44.2% women. Furthermore, 60.5% of respondents were highly educated. When it comes to work experience, 44.7% of employees worked for more than ten years. The number of employees in the surveyed companies ranged from 3 to 1700. However, 66.3% of them were small companies (less than 50 employees). Finally, when it comes to industries, employees came from service (53%), manufacturing (17%), trade (16%), and other (14%).

Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics and IBM Amos. Hypotheses are tested utilizing structural equation modelling (SEM). SEM is a group of statistical models that can estimate and explain various interrelated and dependent relationships and show unobserved occurrences in them (Hair Jr. et al., 2014). Com-

pared to regression analysis, SEM has several benefits when assessing mediation. Namely, SEM provides a better assessment of the causal relationships in the model and better observation of the simultaneous nature of direct and indirect effects and the dual role of the mediator (Gunzler, 2013).

4 Analyses and results

Data analysis in this research includes preliminary analysis and testing of hypotheses. The preliminary analysis encompasses the examination of reliability, validity, descriptive statistics, and correlations among variables. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics, reliability, validity, and correlations

		M	SD	α	AVE	CR	1	2	3	4
1	EPDMP	4.88	1.29	0.93	0.71	0.92	(0.84)			
2	AC	3.74	0.83	0.91	0.63	0.91	0.52**	(0.79)		
3	OCBI	3.73	0.84	0.91	0.73	0.91	0.33**	0.44**	(0.85)	
4	OCBO	3.74	0.83	0.89	0.67	0.89	0.37**	0.60**	0.74**	(0.82)

Note(s). N=302. **p<0.001. EPDMP – Employee participation in the decision-making process; AC – Affective commitment; OCBI – Organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals; OCBO – Organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization; CR – Composite Reliability; AVE – Average Variance Extracted; Square roots of AVE is in parentheses.

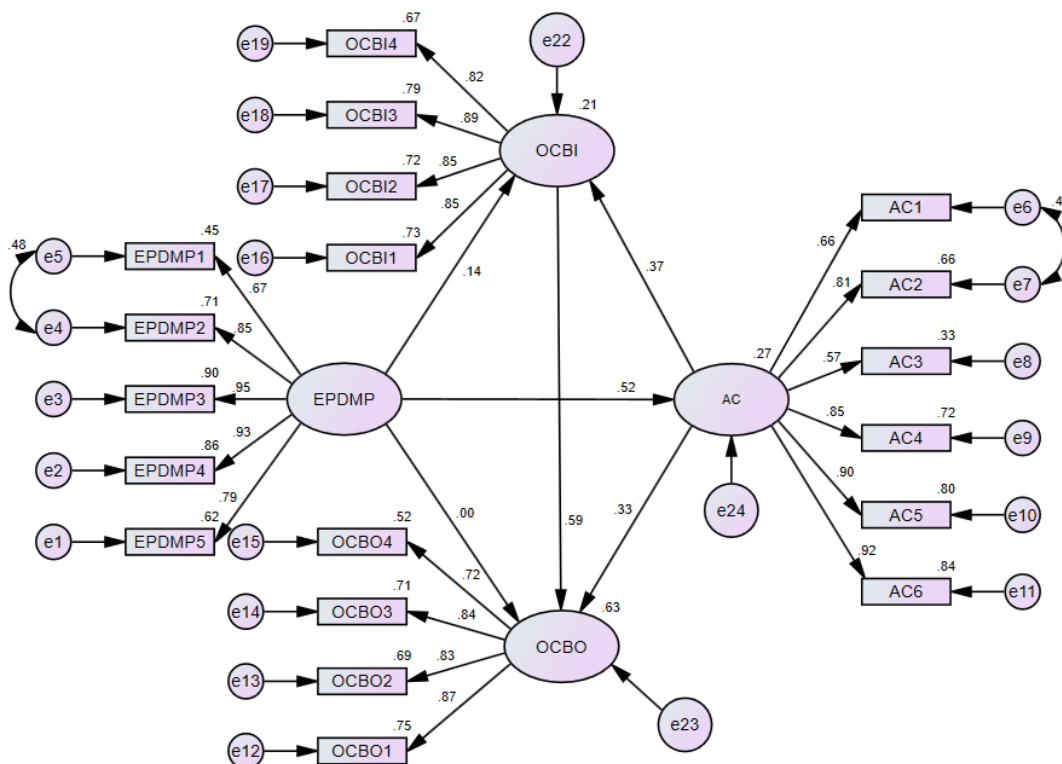


Figure 2: Final model

The constructs used in the questionnaire initially need to be checked for reliability and validity. Both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values suggest that the scales used are highly reliable as they are well above the common threshold of 0.70 (Bekele et al., 2014). Regarding the validity, we checked for convergent and discriminant by using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). First, all 19 items were statistically significant ($t > 1.96$; $p < 0.001$) with their factor loadings above .50. Second, we calculated the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct, and the results showed that all values were above the common threshold of 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Finally, we calculated the square roots of AVE. The values calculated were higher compared to the correlation of paired coefficients. Therefore, we can state that all constructs' convergent and discriminant validities were reached.

Finally, we performed Harman's single-factor test to check for common method bias. The results showed that a

single factor in extracting was less than 50% (41.8%). This shows that there is no evidence for common method bias.

4.1 Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses testing were done through SEM. The values of the model fit were good after two modifications ($\chi^2 = 323.73$, $df = 144$, $\chi^2/df = 2.25$, Goodness of Fit Index = 0.903, Tucker Lewis Index = 0.954, Comparative Fit Index = 0.961, and Root-Mean-Square Error of Approximation = 0.064). The final model is presented in Figure 2.

The values of the standardized estimates of initial paths in Table 2 suggest that the basic conditions for mediation were reached since EPDMP, AC, OCBI, and OCBO were positively related. Besides, these results provided support for H1a, H1b, H2, H3a, and H3b.

Table 2: Standardized weights for structural model

Individual pathways	Std. est.	SE	t	p	Note
EPDMP → OCBI	0.354	0.035	5.908	0.000	H1a
EPDMP → OCBO	0.393	0.034	6.554	0.000	H1b
EPDMP → AC	0.535	0.034	9.739	0.000	H2
AC → OCBI	0.469	0.056	7.916	0.000	H3a
AC → OCBO	0.611	0.053	10.683	0.000	H3b
OCBI → OCBO	0.737	0.056	12.693	0.000	-
<i>Full model</i>					
EPDMP → AC	0.520	0.034	9.425	0.000	-
EPDMP → OCBI	0.139	0.040	2.083	0.037	-
EPDMP → OCBO	0.00	0.030	0.003	0.998	-
AC → OCBI	0.371	0.066	5.385	0.000	-
AC → OCBO	0.333	0.053	5.920	0.000	-
OCBI → OCBO	0.591	0.055	10.52	0.000	-

Note(s). EPDMP – Employee participation in the decision-making process; AC – Affective commitment; OCBI – Organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals; OCBO – Organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization. AC - $R^2 = 0.271$, OCBI - $R^2 = 0.211$, OCBO - $R^2 = 0.635$.

The full model analysis showed that the relationship between EPDMP and AC is similar to the one outside the model ($\gamma = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the relationship between EPDMP and OCBI remained positive and significant ($\gamma = 0.139$, $p < 0.05$), indicating a partial mediator between these two variables. Finally, the direct relationship between EPDMP and OCBO did not exist at all within the model. This occurrence signals that another factor fully mediates the relationship between the two variables. Therefore, we performed additional analysis to check for the indirect effects of EPDMP and OCBO and OCBI

through AC. The results are presented in Table 3.

The results in Table 3 indicate that, EPDMP has an indirect effect on OCBI through AC ($\gamma = 0.100$, $p < 0.05$) and OCBO ($\gamma = 0.114$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to support both H4a and H4b. Furthermore, we present the full model by using both AC and OCBI as mediators in the relationship between EPDMP and OCBO. The results show that the pathway is statistically significant ($\gamma = 0.066$, $p < 0.01$), which provides evidence to support H5.

Table 3: Mediation effects

Model pathways	Estimate	Lower	Upper	p	Note
EPDMP → AC → OCBI	0.100	0.081	0.123	0.014	H4a
EPDMP → AC → OCBO	0.114	0.086	0.144	0.009	H4b
EPDMP → AC → OCBI → OCBO	0.066	0.051	0.089	0.005	H5

Note(s). EPDMP – Employee participation in the decision-making process; AC – Affective commitment; OCBI – Organizational citizenship behavior toward individuals; OCBO – Organizational citizenship behavior toward the organization.

5 Discussion and conclusions

Even though EPDMP and OCB are highly present concepts in the literature, their relationship complexity is fairly unobserved. Therefore, this research aimed to offer information that will increase its understanding with evidence-based employee perceptions. Results reached through this research provide new information on the overall EPDMP-OCB relationship and explain a wide range of complex sub-relationships between employee participation, AC, OCBI, and OCBO. In response to a growing interest in this particular relationship, this study made four important contributions to the literature, with a specific focus on the B&H context.

First, it enriched the scarce business research in B&H and the region generally, which is now improved by examining EPDMP, AC, OCB, and mutual relationships. In transitional economies, it is not just the case of organizational change but also of employees' mindset. B&H is one of the countries that are still going through the process of transition. The country's economy is among the last in Europe and the world generally. Local companies have low performance, lack institutional support, and face serious international competition (Arnaut & Jerković, 2017). The economy of B&H is highly uncompetitive, characterized by unsatisfactory labor-employer cooperation and a low willingness to delegate authority (Schwab, 2019). This contextual contribution is important due to the never-ending privatization process and embracement of contemporary management approaches.

Second, we investigated the relationship between EPDMP and a two-dimensional construct of OCB. The findings show that a positive relationship exists in both cases. This means that if the organization creates an inductive environment where employees are encouraged to state opinions, propose ideas, and make decisions, they are more likely to exhibit OCB. These findings are in line with the results reported by Boselie (2010) and Dartey-Baah and Addo (2019), who state that employee involvement enhances practices, empowerment, and job involvement, and respectively, positively affects OCB.

Third, we investigated whether AC plays a mediator

in the relationship between EPDMP and OCB. Since the mediation question drags several sub-questions, several objectives were developed to answer it. At first, there was a need to test the relationship between EPDMP and AC. The results suggest a positive relationship between EPDMP and affective organizational commitment. This finding is congruent with those presented by Rogiest et al. (2015) and Raineri (2017), which state that employee participation, involvement-oriented organizational climate, empowerment practices, and employee empowerment are positively related to affective organizational commitment. Second, there was a need to test the relationship between AC and OCB. Accordingly, AC is found to be positively related to both dimensions of OCB. The findings were consistent with Hasani et al. (2013) and Obedgiu et al. (2020). Besides, our findings support the assertion of Cohen and Liu (2009), which emphasized the relevance of AC in the OC-OCB relationship. Finally, we tested the mediation effect of AC on the relationship between EPDMP and OCB, where AC was found as a valid mediator within.

Finally, we tested for the role of OCBI as the mediator. In particular, we argued that citizenship behavior would be first exhibited at the individual level and subsequently at the organization. Our results suggested that there is partial mediation in the case of EPDMP and OCBI, while the full mediation is in the case of EPDMP and OCBO, which supports the argument about the complexity of the relationship (Muhammad, 2004; Bogler & Somech, 2005). This is why we performed the additional test to check whether OCBI plays a mediator as well. The results suggested that EPDMP influences AC, which positively affects OCBO through the mediation of OCBI. There is no previous comprehensive work that is consistent with the findings on the mediation role of OCBI between AC and OCBO. However, critical analysis of the literature presented has laid the theoretical assumption of this relationship that is now supported by the evidence.

Managerial Implications

Based on the results discussed, we provide relevant insights into organizational practice for companies in B&H. The first is related to allowing employees to participate in a decision-making process. The effect of such an approach

is multidimensional as it increases the extent to which they identify, enjoy being a part of the organization, and eventually stay with the company. To achieve that, managers should allow employees whose work-group or job is affected by the company's decisions to participate in their making. Also, managers should clearly point out that they are interested to hear and consider employees' opinions about company-related matters. Additionally, it is important to establish a system that allows EPDMP and makes sure that they understand, use, and know it. Implementing such an EPDMP system will show employees that their organization really cares for their wellbeing and increases their affection. Affectively committed employees will tend to reciprocate the amount of care received by showing high intention to stay, considering organizational problems as their own, and being proud members of the organization. Affectionately committed employees will help, care for, and dedicate a significant portion of time to their colleagues. This behavior will further lead them to exercise citizenship behaviors that benefit the whole organization, such as performing voluntary actions that benefit the organizational image or preventing possible problems.

The second implication of the research is that managers have to systematically understand the process of increasing employees' OCB. For example, they should initially motivate the employees to perform small altruistic acts and show empathy toward their colleagues. Therefore, managers should strive to increase individual-level OCB, which will naturally lead to performing those actions at the organizational level, as is shown in this research. To summarize, to achieve all the benefits of OCB, managers need to allow employees to impact decision-making processes that involve their jobs. This will further lead to their AC and, finally, to altruism at the individual level and general compliance at the organizational level.

Limitations

Although this study offers valuable insights into the complexity of EPDMP-OCB relationships, it has certain limitations. First, it is based on cross-sectional data, which reduces the chance to establish completely credible evidence of causation between the variables as it would be possible with longitudinal research. Further, the research used convenience sampling, which does not provide all population members with an equal chance of participation. Additionally, the data was collected among companies from multiple industries, leaving the possibility that the data was affected by the extremes that characterize only the companies from a certain industry. There is the possibility that employees were biased while giving responses about EPDMP, AC, and, especially, OCBI and OCBO. Results could be more accurate if managers' views were considered, at least in terms of OCBI and OCBO perceptions, as employees might be subjective about their altruism and general compliance. Finally, the examined relationship

could involve several variables other than the AC that could play a significant role between EPDMP and OCB (e.g., POS or organizational culture).

Future Research

Apart from the above-mentioned limitations, we propose several recommendations for future studies. Initially, to overcome some limitations faced by this work, future research should consider managers' perceptions and examine employees among companies from the same industry to make more specific recommendations to managers. Further, the use of probability sampling techniques would also increase the chances of generalizing the results. Moreover, longitudinal research would offer much more reliable data on the causation effects of EPDMP on AC and OCB. Additionally, authors should explore different factors affecting EPDMP-AC and AC-OCB relationships by introducing other related variables. Furthermore, studies should involve potential mediators other than AC between EPDMP and OCB. However, the AC-OCBI-OCBO relationship requires most of the attention in future works as it has been unfairly neglected up to date.

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Appendix

Employee participation in the decision-making process	
EPDMP1	Within my work-group the people most affected by decisions frequently participate in making the decisions.
EPDMP2	In my workgroup there is a great deal of opportunity to be involved in resolving problems which affect the group.
EPDMP3	I am allowed to participate in decisions regarding my job.
EPDMP4	I am allowed a significant degree of influence in decisions regarding my work.
EPDMP5	My supervisor usually asks for my opinions and thoughts in decisions affecting my work.
Affective commitment	
AC1	I would be happy to work at my organization until I retire.
AC2	Working at my organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me.
AC3	I really feel that problems faced by my organization are also my problems.
AC4	I feel personally attached to my work organization.
AC5	I am proud to tell others I work at my organization.
AC6	I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.
Organizational citizenship behavior (individual)	
OCBI1	Willingly give your time to help others who have work-related problems.
OCBI2	Adjust your work schedule to accommodate other employees' requests for time off.
OCBI3	Give up time to help others who have work or non-work problems.
OCBI4	Assist others with their duties.
Organizational citizenship behavior (organizational)	
OCBO1	Attend functions that are not required but that help the organizational image.
OCBO2	Offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organization.
OCBO3	Take action to protect the organization from potential problems.
OCBO4	Defend the organization when other employees criticize it.