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# Change-oriented organizational citizenship behavior

Organizational  
citizenship  
behavior

## Analysis of antecedents centered on regulatory theory focus at the workplace

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### Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between a challenging dimension of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and self-regulatory focus in an academic work setting. Job performance indicators were included to assess the nomological validity of regulatory focus measures.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Data were collected using a questionnaire conducted with 251 Spanish academic workers. The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

**Findings** – Results reveal the existence of positive relationships between promotion focus and two of the outcomes: change-oriented OCB and research-oriented performance-enhancement intention. On the other hand, prevention focus had only a significant relationship with teacher-oriented performance-enhancement intention.

**Research limitations/implications** – The limitations of this research are twofold: on the one hand, further research should overcome the methodological limitations related with data gathering, looking for third-party measures of performance and favoring longitudinal data collection designs. On the other hand, more research is needed on the malleability of regulatory focus, defining models when prevention and promotion focus act as mediating variables.

**Practical implications** – Individuals with high levels of promotion focus will put their efforts on the tasks which are more valued in the processes of tenure, promotion and compensation. On the other hand, individuals with high levels of prevention focus will tend to meet the minimum of requirements and accomplish salient job duties. That can be taken into account when defining human resource policies, giving a high weight in the assessment of tenure and promotion programs to the tasks where the organization wants their promotion focus individuals to center their attention.

**Originality/value** – This paper is one of the first efforts of validating the Regulatory Focus at Work Scale in organizational and academic contexts different from the initial validation study. The study also contributes to research on the antecedents of change-oriented OCBs, and defines new measures of intentions to perform in specific working activities.

**Keywords** Organisational citizenship behaviours, Organisational change, Self-regulatory focus

**Paper type** Research paper



### Introduction

In today's competitive environment, the development of a flexible and innovative workforce is a critical condition for continued organizational effectiveness (Choi, 2007). Employees must regularly come up with ideas and express them to improve existing methods,

procedures and policies, particularly when they are misaligned with a changing task environment and rapidly become ineffective or even counterproductive (Bettencourt, 2004). That is the reason why challenging forms of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) have become fundamental to foster employee performance (Morrison and Phelps, 1999), creativity and innovation (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000, Choi, 2007).

After three decades of research, OCB has become a multidimensional construct, covering different facets of discretionary, not directly related with job content behaviors (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). Such dimensions can be classified in two broad groups: OCB affiliative dimensions, which include behaviors oriented toward maintaining existing working relationships or arrangements, and OCB challenging dimensions, which encompass “voluntary act[s] of creativity and innovation designed to improve one’s task or the organization’s performance” (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000, p. 524). Extant research on OCB has been focused mainly on the affiliative dimensions of the construct (Bettencourt, 2004). In spite of its potential as drivers of organizational change, the challenging dimensions of OCB have received little attention by researchers to date (Choi, 2007).

Previous studies have shown that the presence of change-oriented OCB in individuals can be predicted, on the one hand, by individual and situational variables (LePine and Van Dyne, 2001; Frese *et al.*, 1997; LePine and Van Dyne, 1998; Morrison and Phelps, 1999; Scott and Bruce, 1994), and on the other hand, by organizational context variables such as leadership or innovative climate (Choi, 2007; Bettencourt, 2004). The extant research has focused on OCB’s antecedents and consequences, as well as on the moderating and mediating factors of these relationships (Choi, 2007; Lim and Choi, 2009; George and Zhou, 2001; Sung and Choi, 2009; Seppälä *et al.*, 2010; Lipponen *et al.*, 2008; Morrison *et al.*, 2010; Parker *et al.*, 2006; Moon *et al.*, 2008). A number of authors have further centered their research endeavors upon exploring the reasons for which individuals engage in OCBs (Hui *et al.*, 2004; Van Dyne *et al.*, 1994), but as Dewett and Denisi (2007) indicate, there are still calls in literature for further theoretical and empirical development. In that sense, Dewett and Denisi (2007) developed a theoretical rationale and research propositions describing the relationship between employee self-regulation and the likelihood of performing OCBs. However, to our knowledge, these propositions have not been empirically tested to date. Therefore, the aim of this research is to empirically examine the relationships between the regulatory focus in the workplace and discretionary (change-oriented OCB) and non-discretionary (intentions related to performance at work) work outcomes. We believe that a deeper analysis of these relationships could guide human resource policies regarding employees’ performance-enhancement intentions. Although there is a growing interest on the regulatory focus theory (Higgins *et al.*, 2001), up to date there has been only one empirical piece of research that gave validity and support to a work-based regulatory focus measure (Wallace *et al.*, 2009), which can help to delineate the influence of regulatory foci in predicting work outcomes in the broader context of work motivation processes.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Next section reflects the theoretical framework, together with a set of hypotheses concerning the relationships between regulatory foci in the workplace and change-oriented OCB on one hand, and on the other, job performance outcomes. Third section deals with methodological issues, such as sample features and scale reliability. Subsequently, the results of the hypotheses testing through structural equation modeling techniques are presented. The paper ends with a final section including the discussion of the results, the conclusions of the study and suggestions for further research.

### Theoretical framework and hypotheses

Employees direct activities toward goals by devising strategies designed to attain them. Goal-directed activities can be regulated by focusing on their different aspects (Ouschan *et al.*, 2007). Regulatory focus theory suggests that self-regulation in relation with strong ideals (i.e. what one wants to be) versus strong oughts (i.e. what others think it should be) differs in regulatory focus (Higgins, 1998). As such, RTF distinguishes between two forms of goal pursuit that vary in self-regulation activities: promotion focus and prevention focus. In the context of individuals' motivations systems, Higgins *et al.* (1994) propose that the main difference between both foci lies in the motivation approach. Individuals with a *promotion focus* face processes that support the completion of tasks by strategically approaching means necessary to accomplish the task, trying to accomplish their hopes, wishes and aspirations. Individuals with a *prevention focus*, instead, face such processes by strategically avoiding those things that may deter successful task execution, fulfilling duties, obligations and responsibilities and acting safe to avoid injuries and mistakes. Both foci can be seen as strategies to reduce the discrepancy between the current state and the end state during a goal pursuit, but using different means to reduce this discrepancy (Higgins, 1998; Wallace *et al.*, 2009). Individuals adopting a *promotion focus strategy* try to achieve their goals by attaining a positive outcome, while the individuals adopting a *prevention focus strategy* will consist in avoiding behaviors that might prevent the attaining of the goal (Higgins, 1997).

Previous research has shown that regulatory foci can be a good predictor of attitudes and behaviors in the workplace (Crowe and Higgins, 1997; Brockner *et al.*, 2002; Friedman and Foster, 2001). This has determined researchers to develop specific measures of regulatory foci in this setting, such as the Wallace and Chen's (2006) Regulatory Focus at Work Scale (RWS). RWS has shown incremental validity beyond general and trait-like measures of regulatory focus in predicting relevant work outcomes such as task performance, citizenship performance, safety performance and productivity performance. According to Wallace *et al.* (2009), work-specific regulatory focus is crafted by a combination of both stable personality attributes, such as personality and basic needs and values, and malleable situational stimuli, such as leadership and work climate (see Forster *et al.*, 2003; Higgins, 1997, 2000; Wallace and Chen, 2006). Being a combination of individual features and organizational stimuli, regulatory foci at work are relatively stable in time. Changes in regulatory foci levels can be driven by changes in organizational context, and more unlikely, by changes in individual's personality. Nevertheless, in the absence of important changes in the environment, regulatory foci at work are unlikely to change (Brockner and Higgins, 2001). According to Dewet and Denisi (2009), the extant literature analyzed a number of outcomes related to regulatory focus including task strategies (Higgins *et al.*, 1994), emotional responses to performance (Higgins *et al.*, 1997), assessment of self-regulatory effectiveness (Roney *et al.*, 1995) and choices between stability and change (Lieberman *et al.*, 1999). However, to date, very few studies have examined promotion and prevention focus as predictors of attitudes and behaviors that foster creativity, innovation and organizational change. Thus, the aim of this research is to elucidate whether prevention and/or promotion focus can be predictors of the appearance of challenging forms of OCB, such as change-oriented OCB.

Thus, prevention and promotion focus allow aggregating into two constructs multiple variables that can predict attitudes and behaviors that foster creativity,

innovation and organizational change. Following this reasoning, the aim of this research is to elucidate whether prevention and/or promotion focus can be predictors of the appearance of challenging forms of OCB, such as change-oriented OCB.

Scholars have used different labels to refer to this change-oriented behavior. These constructs have slight differences in connotation (e.g. personal initiative, task revision, innovative behavior, taking charge), but they all represent a kind of employee behavior that is intended to make constructive changes in the work and task environment (Frese *et al.*, 1997; Morrison and Phelps, 1999). Considering the definitions of affiliative behaviors and voice of LePine and Van Dyne (2001), and Morrison and Phelps's (1999) definition of taking charge, Choi re-elaborates the change-oriented OCB definition offered by Bettencourt (2004). According to him, change-oriented OCB refers to the "constructive efforts by individuals to identify and implement changes with respect to work methods, policies, and procedures to improve the situation and performance" (Choi, 2007, p. 469). Thus change-oriented OCB can be understood as a promotive type of OCB (Moon *et al.*, 2005) focused on organizational change. Given the relative recent introduction of change-oriented OCB in the literature, there is little research on its predictors. Bettencourt (2004) observed a positive relationship between change-oriented OCB and the transformational and transactional dimensions of leadership. Moreover, according to the results of Choi (2007), other predictors of change-oriented OCB are workplace characteristics such as the presence of strong corporate vision and innovative climate. These relationships are mediated by intervening processes, such as psychological empowerment and felt responsibility for change.

Previous research has examined two categories of antecedents of change-oriented OCB. The first category includes environmental stimuli, e.g. leadership and workplace climate. The second group encompasses constructs which are correlates rather than antecedents, e.g. felt responsibility for change. To our knowledge, the influence of stable personal attributes on this facet of OCB has not been empirically examined yet. Examining the relationships between regulatory foci and change-oriented OCB in the workplace should allow us to examine the aggregated effects of the workplace environment and personal attributes. In turn, OCB has been divided into two categories, depending of the target of the behavior: OCB centered in the individual (OCB-I) and centered in the organization (OCB-O) (Organ and Konovsky, 1989; Smith *et al.*, 1983; Williams and Anderson, 1991).

OCB-Os are citizenship behaviors that benefit the organization. They include such citizenship behaviors as following informal organizational rules and exerting extra effort to help the company reach organizational goals. The recipients of the benefits of OCB-Is are the individuals within the organization, not the organization itself. Examples of OCB-I are covering for coworkers during an absence or listening to coworkers' concerns (Williams and Anderson, 1991). Following this classification, change-oriented can be clearly seen as a facet of OCB-O. According to Bolino (1999), OCB-Os can be not totally altruistic, because some individuals might engage in extra-role behaviors to manage and boost impressions and, in so doing, stand to get a leg up on their fellow employees.

The attitude toward innovation and organizational change, represented by change-oriented OCB, may be predicted by the presence of prevention or promotion regulatory focus. As explained before, an individual with high levels of promotion focus will seek to attain his/her goals through trying to achieve high levels of achievement,



while individuals with high promotion focus will try to achieve their goals accomplishing job duties and minimizing the possibility of committing mistakes.

According to regulatory focus theory, a promotion focus lends itself to high achievement levels, while a prevention focus lends itself to high levels of duty and resources can be allocated toward attaining achievements (i.e. promotion focus) and or to accomplish job duties (i.e. prevention focus; Wallace and Chen, 2006). Therefore, it is likely that a promotion focus will lead to higher engagement of change-oriented OCB as the successful engagement in organizational change will likely lead to more accomplishments and gains. However, it is unlikely that a prevention focus will positively lead to engagement in change-oriented OCB, but rather will deter it, because implication on organizational change is not a prescribed job duty, and such engagement can be perceived as risky. Individuals with a prevention focus may prefer deploy resources toward their prescribed job duties, rather than engage in processes of organizational change. Furthermore, a proactive attitude toward organizational change will conflict with a prevention focus when the role of the incumbent in the organization is not directly related to organizational change. Therefore, we expect that a promotion focus will positively relate to change-oriented OCB.

The relationship between prevention focus and change-oriented OCB is expected to be negative, as none of the targets of change-oriented OCB are prescribed as a job duty. In sum, as regulatory focus concerns the enactment of behaviors in pursuit of a goal, we propose that an individual goal of maximizing achievement leads promotion-focused individuals to spend effort on change-oriented OCB, in an attempt to be successful without regard to the commitment of errors. On the other hand, prevention-focused individuals, in their efforts to be vigilant and accurate in their task performance, focus on the duty and responsibility of the work tasks. This focus on avoiding errors of commission in task performance leaves little time and few resources available for extra-role behaviors:

*H1.* Employee promotion focus will be positively related to change-oriented OCB.

*H2.* Employee prevention focus will be negatively related to change-oriented OCB.

The RWS scale was first time tested by Wallace *et al.* (2009), who obtained good values of consistency and validity. The scale is relatively new, and after scanning the ISI Web of Knowledge and Scopus databases, we have not found any research paper reporting the use of the RWS scale. As Wallace and colleagues indicate in their paper, it is convenient to test the scale with different outcomes, to assess its nomological validity. That is the reason why we have added in the model variables representing job performance. In addition to change-oriented OCB, prevention and promotion focus can act as predictors of in-role performance indicators. Given that the sample is composed of academics working in a Spanish university, we define two variables which act as a proxy of job performance in two academic activities: teaching and research. The performance indicators on these two tasks are the main factors considered by Spanish quality assurance agencies in the processes of tenure, promotion and compensation of academics. These proxy variables are research and teaching performance-enhancement intention, defined as the intensity of individual's efforts to maintain and improve his/her performance in research and teaching, respectively.

Although both research and teaching efforts are taken into account to evaluate the work of Spanish academics, they are not considered in the same way. The present human-resource

policies of the government, implemented by universities and quality assurance agencies, bind the possibilities of tenure and amelioration of compensation mainly to research performance. A minimum of teaching performance is considered as a requirement to be evaluated favorably and to be well considered in the college and university. However, Spanish academics who seek to climb the organizational ladder have to put their efforts mainly on research, to the detriment of teaching. On the other hand, academics who only seek to maintain their status will put their effort in achieving a good level of teaching performance, paying less attention, if any, to research. A fact that reinforces this behavior is that teaching is seen by academics as a well-defined job duty, while a high level of research performance implies the performance of risky, entrepreneurial activities, such as the definition and implementation of a research plan and the deployment of resources to raise funds for research activities. Thus, we can posit that focusing on research and teaching can be seen as alternative strategies to achieve work goals, related to different regulatory focus. Following [Higgins \(1998\)](#), individuals with a promotion focus see themselves as working toward the attainment of their ideals, thus experiencing eagerness to attain advances and gains. On the contrary, individuals with a prevention focus are attempting to fulfill their obligations, and consequently they experience a state of vigilance to assure safety and non-losses. It can be asserted that individuals with a strong prevention focus seek to satisfy minimum requirements for fulfillment, whereas those with a promotion focus seek to achieve the maximum level of accomplishment. Both foci approach work task in a manner that reduces the discrepancy between the current state and the end state ([Higgins, 1997, 2000](#); [Wallace and Chen, 2006](#)).

In the Spanish academic setting, both promotion and prevention focus should be positively related to performance-enhancement intentions, but with different targets. Academics with a prevention focus strategy should put their main efforts in teaching to fulfill their minimum job duties and requirements. Thus, we can predict a positive relationship between prevention focus and performance-enhancement intentions related to teaching. On the contrary, a follower of a promotion focus strategy will seek chances of promotion by putting his/her efforts onto research activities. Hence, we can expect a positive relationship between the adoption of promotion focus strategies and intentions of performance-enhancement in research. Individuals with a promotion focus strategy should not go beyond the minimum requirements in teaching, for similar reasons that adopters of a prevention focus strategy will put little effort in research. This behavior is expected to be reproduced in all positions: lecturers and professors have to undertake research efforts to promote, and the teaching performance is understood as a duty, and a minimum requirement to maintain the position. Therefore, we should expect a negative relationship between promotion focus and teaching-orientation performance-enhancement intention, and between prevention focus and research-orientation performance-enhancement intention:

- H3.* Employee promotion focus will be positively related to research-orientation performance-enhancement intention.
- H4.* Employee prevention focus will be positively related to teaching-orientation performance-enhancement intention.
- H5.* Employee prevention focus will be negatively related to research-orientation performance-enhancement intention.

H6. Employee promotion focus will be negatively related to teaching-orientation performance-enhancement intention.

### Sample and measures

Data were collected via an online survey from an initial sample of 1,500 lecturers and professors at a Spanish public university at the beginning of the academic year 2009–2010. They were assured that their individual responses would remain confidential and that only a summary drawn from their answers would be used by the authors. A total of 255 questionnaires were submitted by the respondents representing a response rate of 17 per cent. Subsequently, we eliminated all those responses in which the questionnaires were not correctly completed, discarding answers obtained from four lecturers and professors. The final sample consisted of 251 lecturers and professors (40.39 per cent women and 59.61 per cent men) with an average age of 44.00 years ( $SD = 12.56$ ) and an average experience in their jobs of 19.39 years ( $SD = 11.95$ ).

#### *Promotion and prevention focus*

We have used the RWS scale proposed by [Wallace and Chen \(2006\)](#), which measures the intensity of prevention and promotion focus within work settings. The scale contains two factors, each with six items:

- (1) promotion focus (sample items: “accomplishing a lot at work”, “getting my work done no matter what”); and
- (2) prevention focus (sample items: “following the rules and regulations”, “completing work tasks correctly”).

The response format was a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (“I never focus on these thoughts and activities when I am working”) to 5 (“I constantly focus on these thoughts and activities when I am working”). Thus, according to the regulatory focus theory, promotion focus items capture employees’ behavioral manifestations likely to promote positive outcomes at work, whereas prevention focus items capture behavioral manifestations likely to prevent negative outcomes at work. The internal consistencies were acceptable for both promotion ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ) and prevention ( $\alpha = 0.80$ ) scales. To test the dimensionality of the constructs, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed. The observed variables were the 12 items measuring regulatory focus. The model included two latent variables, one for promotion focus and the other for prevention focus. The model fitted relatively well to the data ( $TLI = 0.842$ ,  $CFI = 0.873$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.094$ ), proving the dimensionality of the scale.

#### *Change-Oriented OCB*

Based on prior scales of change-oriented behavior, [Choi \(2007\)](#) suggests a four-item scale (“I frequently come up with new ideas or new work methods to perform my task”, “I often suggest work improvement ideas to others”) adapted from [Scott and Bruce \(1994\)](#) (“I often change the way I work to improve efficiency”) and from [Morrison and Phelps \(1999\)](#) (“I often suggest changes to unproductive rules or policies”) for measuring participants’ change-oriented OCB. The scale uses a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree), with an acceptable internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.80$ ).

Because the main language of the target population was different from the one in the RWS and OCB scales, the items from the RWS and change-oriented OCB scales had to be



translated into Spanish. To assure a correct translation of the items, we followed a backward translation procedure (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). In addition, three cognitive interviews were undertaken with the aim of assuring a correct and faithful interpretation of the questionnaire items, as this technique allows understanding how the respondents perceive and interpret the questions, and identifying potential problems that could arise from their use (Drennan, 2003).

*Research- and teaching-orientation performance-enhancement intentions*

A specific scale was developed to assess the intensity of the academics' orientation to enhance their performance toward teaching and research. The scale consisted of six items, three assessing research orientation (translation of sample item: "The main aim of my work is to research and to publish results"), and three evaluating teaching orientation (translation of sample item: "The biggest efforts in my work are oriented towards improving my teaching"). Both scales showed an acceptable internal reliability ( $\alpha = 0.75$  for research-orientation and  $\alpha = 0.72$  for teaching-orientation). A confirmatory factor analysis of a model including the items of both scales and two latent variables was performed. The model fit well to the data (TLI = 0.988, CFI = 0.994, RMSEA = 0.047), thus confirming the dimensionality of the construct. A confirmatory model including the three outcomes (both performance-enhancement intentions and change-oriented OCB) showed also a good fit to the data (TLI = 0.935, CFI = 0.954, RMSEA = 0.078).

**Results**

Prior to testing the model defined by the hypotheses, a confirmatory factor analysis model including the five scales was performed (TLI = 0.856, CFI = 0.876, RMSEA = 0.072). That model allowed us to assess the correlations of the latent variables, which are shown in Table I, together with the measures of reliability (Cronbach's alphas) of the scales.

A model including all the six hypothesized relationships was tested using structural equation modeling, using the AMOS software (Arbuckle, 1999). Each of the constructs appearing in the hypotheses was considered as a latent variable, measured through the responses to the items, that acted as observed variables. As usual, exogenous variables (the latent variables representing promotion and prevention focus) were allowed to correlate. This approach allows the simultaneous examination of all hypothesized relationships, taking into account the measurement error (Byrne, 2001). In the proposed model, promotion and prevention focus were hypothesized to be antecedents of the three behavioral outcomes: change-oriented OCB, and research- and teaching-orientation

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Prevention focus	(0.80)				
2. Promotion focus	0.35***	(0.79)			
3. Change-oriented OCB	0.17*	0.27***	(0.80)		
4. Research-orientation	0.63	0.20**	0.10	(0.75)	
5. Teaching-orientation	0.17*	0.12	0.28***	-0.32***	(0.72)

**Table I.**

Correlations among latent variables

**Notes:** \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$ ; values in brackets are reliability estimates (Cronbach's alpha coefficient)

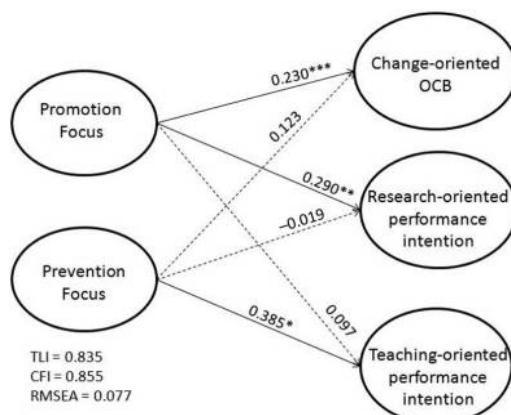
performance-enhancement intentions. The structural model, with a summary of the results, can be seen in Figure 1.

The test of the overall model indicated a good fit with the data (TLI = 0.835, CFI = 0.855, RMSEA = 0.077). Results from this model provided support for the hypotheses concerning the relationship between promotion focus and change-oriented OCB (0.230,  $p < 0.001$ ) and promotion focus and research-oriented performance-enhancement intention (0.290,  $p < 0.01$ ). The only significant relationship of the prevention focus was the one with teaching-oriented performance-enhancement intention (0.385,  $p < 0.05$ ), the other relationships being non-significant. These results provide support for *H1*, *H3* and *H4*. *H2*, *H5* and *H6* were rejected in this model. We have made the overall variance of the latent dependent variables equal to one, to assess the variance of each variable explained by the exogenous variables. This equals to 72.2 per cent for change-oriented OCB, 55.77 per cent for research-orientation and 0.459 per cent for teaching-orientation.

In addition, as all measures were grouped in the same measurement instrument, we checked the possibility of a common method bias using Harman's one-factor test. Factor analysis did not identify any single factor that explained variance across all items, suggesting that common method variance is unlikely. Due to the fact that no single factor is found to explain more than 50 per cent of the variance, the data of the study can be accepted as valid (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986).

### Discussion, conclusions and future directions of research

This study reveals interesting findings related with the role of regulatory focus as antecedents of change-oriented OCB, which can guide Human Resource policies concerning the employee's performance-enhancement intention. To our notice, this is the second study to assess the consistency and nomological validity of the scales proposed by Wallace *et al.* (2009), in a different working and cultural context. The main focus of our study was to assess the relationships between the self-regulatory focus of the individual, and their willingness to engage in organizational change through OCBs. The empirical research has shown a positive, significant relationship between promotion focus and change-oriented OCB. The data have not confirmed the predicted



Note: \*\*\* $p < 0.0001$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \* $p < 0.05$

Figure 1.  
Model fit statistics  
and significance level  
of relationships

negative relationship between prevention focus and OCB. This relationship was non-significant. Although perhaps a weak, positive relationship between these two constructs might emerge with a bigger sample, previous research has also not found the same negative relationship between prevention focus and other forms of OCB related to the change-oriented one, like OCB-O (Wallace *et al.*, 2009).

Second, an interesting finding of this study is that employees select their performance-enhancement activity (teaching or research) depending on their regulatory focus. In the context of our study, individuals with high levels of promotion focus will choose to center their efforts in research activities, which can determine their tenure, and ameliorate their position and compensation. On the other hand, individuals with high levels of prevention focus will choose to center their efforts on teaching. Because teaching duties are more explicit and salient than research obligations, focusing on teaching will be a preferred strategy of prevention focus individuals. Interestingly, the reverse phenomenon has not been detected in the data: the level of promotion focus does not seem to affect the predisposition to perform high in teaching, and the level of prevention focus does not influence the tendency of academics to engage in research activities. This is an interesting result for policymakers in academia: binding promotion and tenure with research fosters the selection of individuals with a high promotion focus, which engage themselves more frequently on processes of organizational change.

In the third place, a limitation of Bettencourt (2004) and Choi (2007)'s studies was the lack of inclusion of individual features that might interact with contextual variables to influence employees' inclination to suggest constructive change. In this research, the use of RWS allows us to measure a construct encompassing personal attributes and situational stimuli (Forster *et al.*, 2003; Higgins, 1997, 2000; Wallace and Chen, 2006). Then this study considers, even indirectly, personal features bound to prevention and promotion focus. Recent research provides evidence of the positive effects of charismatic leadership on levels of team innovation (Paulsen *et al.*, 2009), but our results show that only individuals experiencing a promotion focus involve willingly in activities related with change, innovation and creativity in the workplace. Individuals with high levels of promotion focus will have also high levels not only of affiliative facets of OCB (Wallace *et al.*, 2009), but also of challenging facets of it, like OCB-change.

The results of this research should be interpreted with some caution, due to several limitations. In the first place, both the predictors and the outcome of this study were based on self-reports, which can lead respondents to some biases, as the social desirability effect. Future research efforts should consider including third-party measures of research and teaching, although the assessment of the latter can be problematic (Paulsen, 2002). Another limitation related with data collection is that data of predictors and outcomes were collected simultaneously. Regulatory foci have proved to be stable over time (Brockner and Higgins, 2001), but a data collection process design including surveys in different moments of time could enhance the validity of the results, and help us to better understand the evolution of self-regulation in individuals. An interesting avenue for future research is the issue of the malleability of regulatory focus in individuals (Wallace *et al.*, 2009). Finally, future research on self-regulation should consider the antecedents of promotion and prevention focus, defining models where self-regulation acts as a mediating variable.

The present study highlights the importance of change-oriented OCB and Regulatory Focus at Work Place and extends the OCB and RWF literature. The results of the

empirical research provide support to the hypotheses related to the importance of self-regulatory focus as predictors of attitudes that favor the processes of organizational change and innovation in organizations. Additionally, the study has detected targets of performance in academic work related with each regulatory focus. In the context of the academic Spanish system, individuals with a promotion focus will tend to attain their goals through setting high standards of performance in their research activities, while individuals with a prevention focus will tend to fulfill minimum requirements and accomplish salient job duties through performance efforts on teaching. Although these facts can guide policymakers and human resource managers when defining tenure and compensation programs, they should take into account that self-regulation can depend not only on personal features, but also on contextual factors. If they want to encourage organizational change, managers should not only persist on human resource policies aligning the objectives of the organization with the ones of the promotion focus individuals, but also provide the contextual stimuli where change and innovation can take place. The increase of promotion focus individuals in organizations should be followed by the conditions that might favor the appearance of charismatic and transformational leaders who can pilot the future of the organization.

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