

# Workplace Flexibility Dimensions as Enablers of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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**Abstract** *The paper proposes workplace flexibility as enabler of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) with the help of six workplace flexibility dimensions. The study is based upon interaction with 25 HR experts in two phases and uses Total interpretive Structural Modelling to develop workplace flexibility framework. Further, the driver-dependence matrix is used to classify the enablers into four categories: autonomous, drivers, linkages and dependents to establish enablers' influence on OCB. The proposed workplace flexibility framework will give insight to both management and employees into ways of advancing the OCB behaviors. Other Implications and future directions are also discussed.*

**Keywords** Flexi time · Learning flexibility · Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) · Total interpretive structural modelling (TISM) · Workplace flexibility

## Introduction

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), is an extensively researched phenomenon, and can be best viewed as the sum total of the activities the employee perform for betterment of the organization, without the notion of gaining any monetary or non-monetary incentive in return from the organization. Organ and colleagues (Bateman and

Organ 1983; Smith et al. 1983; Organ et al. 2006) introduced this term nearly 30 years ago, more than 700 studies have been done on citizenship behavior related constructs and OCB's antecedents (Ball et al. 1994; Konovsky and Pugh 1994; Campbell 2000; LePine et al. 2002; Bolino and Turnley 2003; Bolino et al. 2004; Yadav and Rangnekar 2015c). Also, the scope and expectations of OCB-like behavior has expanded from organizational behavior to a range of domains like health administration, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) human resource management, marketing, military psychology, industrial relations, economics and leadership (Podsakoff et al. 2000). The value OCB activities creates for the organization is immense, that is why employee's voluntary behavior has been analyzed even at times of recruitment and selection by organization (Shen et al. 2010). Generally, OCB is linked to variables like job satisfaction (Williams and Anderson 1991; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005); organizational commitment (Williams and Anderson 1991; Schappe 1998); work-family (Chiu and Ng 2001; Bragger et al. 2005); and individual performance (Motowidlo 2000).

Reilly (1998) exhibits this optimistic view that “despite all the polemics, there can be mutuality in the relationship between the employer and employees in what can be achieved” (pg. 8). By referring this, the study aims to understand how workplace flexibility can foster OCB behavior in employees.

Workplace flexibility has become an important aspect of contemporary workplaces now a days (Halpern 2004). It has been considered as a robust variable by scholars from various disciplines, which influence individual, work, family and organizational outcomes (Jacob et al. 2008). Various studies (Barnett et al. 1999; Stavrou 2005; Allen and Shockley 2009) have used workplace flexibility in the capacity of moderator, mediator, independent or dependent

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variables, showing flexibility's links to various antecedents as well as consequences. Its importance has been acknowledged by the fact that it has been promoted by various foundations in western countries. The Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility (2007) funded various projects to promote adoption of flexibility. National Institutes of Health- a US govt. Institution, placed flexibility at top priority by funding the project named Work, Family and Health Network (2007). Workplace flexibility was given a global push by testimony given by US Senate "workplace flexibility will become one of the hallmarks of good management practice, in part because it can produce positive outcomes for employees as well as for workplaces" (The Center on Aging and Work, 28 February 2007, p. 6). Though, so much has been done to promote flexibility at workplace in western countries in dimensions like time flexibility (Baltes et al. 1999); pay and benefits flexibility (Hill et al. 2001); place of work flexibility (Hill et al. 2001); learning flexibility (Australian National Training Authority 1996); performance appraisal and career planning flexibility (Benko and Weisberg 2007); little progress has been made in Indian economy, which is rapidly becoming a world's knowledge hub. Workplace Flexibility's implications are tremendous, if used prudently in Indian context.

The present study is an attempt to establish workplace flexibility as an antecedent of OCB. Our study tries to give a new prospective on OCB by using Total interpretive Structural Modelling (TISM) to understand the link between various flexibility elements and the degree to which they are associated by using causal thinking backing the association. TISM was found to be suitable to our needs of doing a critical analysis of relationship between workplace flexibility and OCB because TISM helped in identifying the hierarchy within the flexibility dimensions to enable OCB.

Therefore, the objective of the present study is to:

1. Identify the workplace flexibility enablers for OCB.
2. Develop TISM model for the workplace flexibility enablers for OCB.

## Literature Review

### Workplace Flexibility

Hill et al. (2008) defines workplace flexibility as "the ability of workers to make choices influencing when, where, and for how long they engage in work-related tasks" (p. 152). This definition focuses upon the ability of workers to design the work according to his/her need and situation. Workplace flexibility can be looked from two

perspectives, i.e. organizational perspective and worker's perspective. Dastmalchian and Blyton (2001) mentioned organizational perspective as the "degree to which organizational features incorporate a level of flexibility that allows them [organizations] to adapt to changes in their environment" (p. 1). Although, organizational perspective, considers workers as secondary and also trade unions take them as against the interest of workers (Ng and Dastmalchian 1998); there are many practices which benefit workers, e.g. peer review of employee performance, job rotation, compressed work schedules, and telework programs. These practices, though, are based upon benefiting organization primarily, they also give workers more freedom, control and insight into their work.

Second perspective, i.e. worker perspective implicitly as well as explicitly focuses upon considering workplace flexibility as the degree of control exercised by workers on the choices of arranging the work according to their choice, particularly when, where and for how long to engage in work (The Center on Aging and Work at Boston College 2007). The theme on which this perspective is based is that workers as human resources and social beings are their most of the needs are based outside the work. Hill et al. (2008) observed that workers will be in a better situation and control of their lives by exercising flexibility and eventually be more motivated, engaged and loyal. Galinsky et al. (2004) stated that by using workplace flexibility, workers can better meet the demands outside the work as well as inside the work, which ultimately benefit the organization.

Reilly (1998) suggests that workplace flexibility can be categorized in six different forms: (a) numerical, (b) functional; (c) locational; (d) financial (e) flexibility in working life; and (f) temporal (p. 9). In another study, flexibility has been divided into three sub dimensions such as, employee skill flexibility, behavior flexibility, and human resource practice flexibility (Wright and Snell 1998). While only functional and quantitative flexibility have been considered as part of workplace flexibility by Origo and Pagani (2008).

Most of the studies have taken worker perspective to undertake the research, but present study also focuses upon those dimensions of organizational perspective which directly influence workers.

### Workplace Flexibility and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as a concept is based upon suprarole behavior given by Katz and Kahn (1966). Organ and colleagues were the first to coin and explore this behavior. Organ (1988) defined OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward

system of an organization” (p. 4). In the last three decades, more than 700 studies have been conducted on OCB and allied subjects (Organ et al. 2006). OCB, though an organizational behavior concept, has reached to range of domains like health administration, human resource management, marketing, military psychology, industrial relations, economics and leadership (Podsakoff et al. 2000).

OCB has developed from a voluntary behavior to an unwritten job requirement (Turnipseed and Wilson 2009). Hall et al. (2009) said that “simply being a good citizen may not be enough, individual need to develop an audience to examine such behavior” (p. 384). OCB’s antecedents and consequences are not limited to individual, but group, task and organization as well. Social belief (Kwantes et al. 2008); social exchange (Elstad et al. 2013); level of psychological contract fulfilment (Turnley et al. 2003); and accountability (Hall et al. 2009) are a few of the antecedents, which are talked about frequently in the literature of OCB.

A general trend in all these studies is that overall, OCB has been considered as a constructive, self-initiated, voluntary or spontaneous behavior intended to enhance the efficiency of the workplace (Yadav and Rangnekar 2015a). Hence, it will not be an exaggeration to argue that to date most studies on OCB have stressed on its positive image, its beneficial propositions, its involvement with individuals and organizations at multiple levels, and its general corroboration of performance in the workplace (Yadav and Rangnekar 2015b).

Though, there has been an absence of previous research on the direct relation between workplace flexibility and OCB, flexibility has proved to have positive associations with various variables, which are linked to OCB. Workplace flexibility has been established as having positive associations with commitment (Grover and Crocker 1995; Thompson et al. 1999; Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne 2007; Maxwell et al. 2007); job satisfaction (Allen 2001; Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne 2007); work-family life (Brough et al. 2005; Halpern 2005; Costa et al. 2006); individual performance (McCampbell 1996; Kossek and Ozeki 1999; Glass and Finley 2002; Stavrou 2005). Further, Ferris et al. (1998) stated that “HRM systems influence organization effectiveness through system flexibility, employee behaviors and organization reputation” (p. 249), and also noted “attachment and citizenship are types of behaviors that also make contributions to organizations operating more effectively” (p. 250). Bolino and Turnley (2003) used social exchange for mentioning organizational actions which promote citizenship and gave hint of probable influence of flexible workplace in OCB by saying “workplace benefits that show appreciation for employees and make it easier for them to go beyond the call of duty” (p. 65). In the light of

the past studies, we are of the view that workplace flexibility promotes OCB.

## Method

### Demographic Sketch of the Respondents

Our study took help of two different set of experts from Indian industries. The study was divided into two phases, i.e. model development and model validation. For the first phase, 20 HR experts were contacted but only ten gave consent to be part of the study, giving a response rate of 50 %. Out of 10 experts, 6 (60 %) were from public organizations and rest 4 (40 %) were from public organizations. In terms of managerial level, 4 (40 %) experts were from higher managerial positions, similar number i.e. 4 (40 %) experts were middle level management and rest 2 (20 %) were from lower management. In respect of type of industry, 7 (70 %) experts were from service industry and rest 3 (30 %) were from manufacturing industry. 6 experts (60 %) were male and rest 4 (40 %) were female. Half of the experts i.e. 5 experts were having more than 10 years of experience. 3 experts (30 %) were having experience between 5 and 10 years and rest i.e. 2 experts (20 %) were having below 5 years of experience. In terms of age, all except one expert were above 30 years of age; with 3 experts each falling in 30–40, 40–50, 50 and above categories.

In second phase, 20 HR experts were contacted and 15 gave permission to participate in the study, giving a response rate of 75 %. Out of 15 experts, 9 (60 %) were from public organizations and rest 6 (40 %) were from private organizations. In terms of managerial level, 3 (20 %) experts were from higher managerial positions, 9 (60 %) experts were middle level management and rest 3 (20 %) were from lower management. In respect of type of industry, 9 (60 %) experts were from service industry and rest 6 (40 %) were from manufacturing industry. 8 experts (53.33 %) were male and rest 7 experts (46.67 %) were female. Out of total 15 experts, 5 were having experience of more than 10 years, 7 were having experience between 5 and 10 years and rest 3 were having less than 5 years of experience. In terms of age, 5 experts were above 50 years of age, 4 were between 40 and 50 years, 4 experts were between 30 and 40 years and rest 3 were between 20 and 30 years of age.

### Data Collection Instrument and Process

The study deployed a mix of quantitative and qualitative techniques. HR experts from various private and public

organization were considered as respondents. Since, HR experts at various levels are involved in employee policy development and implementation and they are also aware about applicability of practices and policies based on the past experiences, they were found to be the suitable respondents for the study. Brainstorming session with 10 experts were conducted to design the TISM model for determining the workplace flexibility enablers for OCB. A different set of experts consisting 15 experts were contacted to fill in the questionnaire used for validating the TISM model (Table 1), comprising of 8 statements ranked on 5-point scale with answers ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. The sample item of questionnaire is “Time Flexibility will enhance/influence Pay and Benefits Flexibility”.

### TISM Methodology

TISM (Sushil 2012) is the extension of interpretive structural modelling (ISM) given by Warfield (1974) and Sage (1977). Although steps of TISM are similar to ISM, interpretations of the links involved in hierarchical structure makes it unique. These interpretations help in giving direction to otherwise complex model. TISM is not only valuable in constructing more interpretive structural model, it provides interpretive logic for all the

relations by creating a knowledge base. TISM can be considered as “a stepping-stone in enhancing the interpretive-ness in the structural modeling, thereby making the logic of the model more transparent rather than leaving it open to multiple interpretations by various users” (Wasuja and Sagar 2012, p. 318). Though new, TISM is a budding technique well used by many researchers (Nasim 2011; Jayalakshmi and Pramod 2015; Yadav and Sushil 2014). There are in total nine steps involved in TISM.

#### Step 1: Identify and Define Elements

The first step involved in TISM is identifying and defining the elements whose relationships need to be modelled. Our study covers those elements in the form of workplace flexibility practices, which were identified through personal interviews with HR experts from the Indian Industries.

#### Step 2: Define Contextual Relationship

The Contextual relationships between the elements are used to develop the structure of the model. These contextual relationships between elements are “enabler A will influence or enhance enabler B”. This needs to be performed for all the elements.

**Table 1** Demographic properties of experts

Particulars	Phase 1 (10 experts)	Phase 2 (15 experts)
<i>Organization type</i>		
Public	6	9
Private	4	6
<i>Managerial level</i>		
Higher	4	3
Middle	4	9
Lower	2	3
<i>Industry</i>		
Service	7	9
Manufacturing	3	6
<i>Age</i>		
20–30 years	1	2
30–40 years	3	4
40–50 years	3	4
Above 50	3	5
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	6	8
Female	4	7
<i>Work experience</i>		
Below 5 years	2	3
5–10 years	3	7
Above 10 years	5	5

### Step 3: Relationship Interpretation

TISM overcomes ISM's limitation of how various relationships work. TISM provides the explanations of the link between two elements. This step helps in attaining in-depth knowledge.

### Step 4: Pairwise Comparison

The pairwise comparison between elements is used to create an "Interpretive logic-knowledge base". All the elements are compared starting with the first element. Each comparison need to be coded with Yes (Y), if there is a positive link and its interpretations is also needed to be provided; otherwise, it need to be coded No (N).

### Step 5: Reachability Matrix and Transitive Check

The Y and N codes in "Interpretive logic-knowledge base" are renamed with entries 1 and 0 respectively in the Reachability matrix. The transitivity rule, i.e. "if A-B and B-C, then A-C" is also checked for, and every link which is found transitive is coded as Y in the knowledge base and 'transitive' is written in interpretation.

### Step 6: Level Partition in Reachability Matrix

As in ISM, TISM also uses level partition to determine the place of elements in the hierarchy. For this, reachability, antecedent and intersection sets of every element are found and arranged in tables. The elements with the same reachability set as well as intersection sets are placed on top of the hierarchy and then removed from the further element sets to not to influence the left elements. The process is repeated until the hierarchy level of every element is determined.

### Step 7: Developing Diagram

Graphical presentation of the hierarchy of elements along with the links is drawn according to the relationships between the elements established in the reach ability matrix. Arrows are used to direct the relationship between the elements. A simpler digraph can be obtained by retaining only those transitive relationships which are accompanied by significant interpretation.

### Step 8: Interaction Matrix

Translation of the final digraph is performed by making a binary interaction matrix with "1" signifying the interactions and all other cells are marked "0". The interpretation

mentioned in the knowledge base is thus used to interpret the cells with an entry of "1".

### Step 9: Total Interpretive Structural Model

TISM is derived from the interaction matrix and the digraph. The nodes mentioned in digraph are replaced with elements in the boxes. The links in the model are marked with interpretation by their side, leading to formation of the TISM model.

Apart from the TISM methodology, driver-dependence matrix was also made. The driver-dependence matrix is a dynamic tool to linkup the elements. It empowers the researcher to design the matrix which link all elements in the model. The method also allows identification of essential elements in the evolution of the system. Matrix helps in identifying the elements which are crucial to the model but at the same time notices the elements which have potential to be counterproductive. The system under study comes in the form of a group of interrelated elements (variables/factors). These elements' interrelations web, i.e. the system's configuration (structure), constitutes the key of its dynamics and remains quite permanent.

In present study, driver-dependence matrix helped in understanding the role, various elements of workplace flexibility play in determining level of OCB in employees.

## Data Analysis

### Identification of Workplace Flexibility Enablers for OCB

Considering the approaches in the Literature section, ten HR experts with deep knowledge of employee relations were asked to list down the workplace flexibility practices which may have influence on OCB.

The identified Enablers are as follows:

1. Time Flexibility- It is also stated as flexi time or schedule flexibility. It grants workers the flexibility to adjust the working hours within the predefined hour ranges (Baltes et al. 1999). Workers can now also choose how much he wants to spend at work by working as full time or part time or even freelancer. Another example of time flexibility is compressed work weeks, which allow employees to compress their weekly hours in less number of days in a week (Baltes et al. 1999). This flexibility allows workers to give more and quality to self and family, and to attend unexpected incidences.
2. Pay and Benefits Flexibility-workers can now choose and design their salary components. It allows workers the flexibility to focus upon those components which



- are important for him or family like insurance, gratuity, provident funds, etc.
3. Place of work Flexibility- it is also termed as location flexibility or flexplace. It allows worker the flexibility to choose from where they want to complete the work. It is usually done through telecommuting from home (Hill et al. 2001). Another example of a place of work flexibility is virtual office, which allows worker to be a part of any organization from any part of the world, without physical limitation. It opens more vistas for workers. Virtual organizations do not need to own offices, so it saves a lot of costs for the organization as well.
  4. Learning Flexibility- learning flexibility has widespread acceptance, especially in workplaces where normal classroom trainings can be possible because of a time crunch and money involved in setup. As per Australian National Training Authority (1996) “Flexible delivery is an approach rather than a system or technique; it is based on the skill needs and delivery requirements of clients, not the interests of trainers or providers; it gives clients as much control as possible over what and when and where and how they learn; it commonly uses the delivery methods of distance education and the facilities of technology; it changes the role of trainer from a source of knowledge to a manager of learning and a facilitator” (p. 11). The most well preached flexible learning tools are resource based learning, Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), self-directed learning and job rotation.
  5. Performance appraisal Flexibility- performance appraisal flexibility considers the reviews and ratings of the work by not only the supervisor/manager but peers as well. This is also known as 360 degree feedback. It increases the fairness and accuracy of the appraisal. The worker gets the flexibility to perform his work by keeping in mind the actual value it is creating and not only what his/her supervisor wants. Workers are also given more flexibility in setting up their targets according to their caliber, which reduces pressure of overburdened work schedules on them.
  6. Career planning Flexibility- Career planning flexibility or career flexibility keeps in mind that careers are no longer linear but variable. The worker may want to change the career he/she is in due to personal or family choice. Life stage a worker is, also determines his/her career choice of taking more responsibilities at younger ages and taking a career as a mentor and a guide to impart his learning. Deloitte understood these aspirations of workers and started with Mass Career Customization (MCC) program in 2005 (Benko and Weisberg 2007). It gave every employee flexibility to design his/her career pace, workload, location and role in future. It gives organizations the transparency and flexibility to design future plans.

### Total Interpretive Structural Model (TISM) Development

First and foremost, a general level of awareness was created in the experts by discussing the study and variable under study. Later, brainstorming session was conducted to collect the data. Various workplace flexibility practices were discussed, which can be crucial for promoting OCB in employees. The talked about practices led us to create an initial draft of dimensions to be considered in the study. The interrelationships were established between the dimensions with the help of TISM (Table 2).

All the elements with direction to contextual relationships and interpretations are mentioned in Table 2. Knowledge base was created with the help of contextual relationship “Enabler A will influence/enhance enabler B”. Since, there were 6 enablers to be studied in total, the total number of relationships to be listed in the knowledge base were  $6 \times 5 = 30$ .

The relationships in the knowledge base were designed with the help of expert help. Reachability matrix was

**Table 2** Elements along with element codes for enablers of QWL in power sector

Element codes	Elements	Contextual relation	Interpretation
E1	Time flexibility	Enabler A will influence/enhance enabler B	How will enabler A influence/enhance enabler B?
E2	Pay and benefits flexibility		
E3	Place of work flexibility		
E4	Learning flexibility		
E5	Performance appraisal flexibility		
E6	Career planning flexibility		

charted out with responses of experts. From the 10 experts, if 6 gave a response in Y, then it was taken as Y; otherwise N was marked in pairwise comparison. All those responses getting Y were given an interpretation in consultation with experts and statements summing-up all responses were developed. The interpretations given are an important part of interpretive logic-knowledge base and TISM as a whole. The interpretations given are mentioned in Table 3 and later, interpretive logic-knowledge base was created.

Following second step in TISM, reachability matrix was checked for transitive links. While elaborating transitivity, Pramod and Banwet (2009) mentioned that if variable A leads to B, B leads to C; then A leads to C is transitivity. The only difference between reachability matrix (Table 4) and the final reachability matrix (Table 5) is transitive links in the final reachability matrix. For conceptual consistency, transitivity is kept in basic assumptions in ISM (Sushil 2005a, b).

To determine the hierarchical level of the elements, reachability matrix was used to find reachability sets and antecedent sets.

The enabler itself and enablers which it helps in realizing them comes under reachability set, whereas the enabler itself, along with other enablers which help in achieving it come under antecedent set. The elements present in both antecedent set and also reachability set are placed as interaction set. The elements having same reachability sets and interaction sets are given top spot. To identify other levels, those elements which already secured positions in levels are removed and the process is repeated until all elements are placed in hierarchical levels. In present study, five hierarchical levels were created for six elements. The iterations are mentioned in “Appendix 2”. Final levels secured by elements are listed in Table 6.

The levels allotted are used to draw digraph (Fig. 1), which shows links between various workplace flexibility

**Table 3** Interpretive logic-knowledge base

S. no.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
E1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
E2	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
E3	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
E4	N	N	N	Y	N	Y
E5	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
E6	N	N	N	N	N	Y

**Table 4** Reachability matrix

S. no.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
E1	1	1	1	1	1	0
E2	0	1	1	1	1	1
E3	0	1	1	0	1	1
E4	0	0	0	1	0	1
E5	0	0	0	1	1	1
E6	0	0	0	0	0	1

**Table 5** Final reachability matrix with transitivity

S. no.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	Driver power
E1	1	1	1	1	1	1 <sup>a</sup>	6
E2	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
E3	0	1	1	1 <sup>a</sup>	1	1	5
E4	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
E5	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
E6	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Dep	1	3	3	5	4	6	22

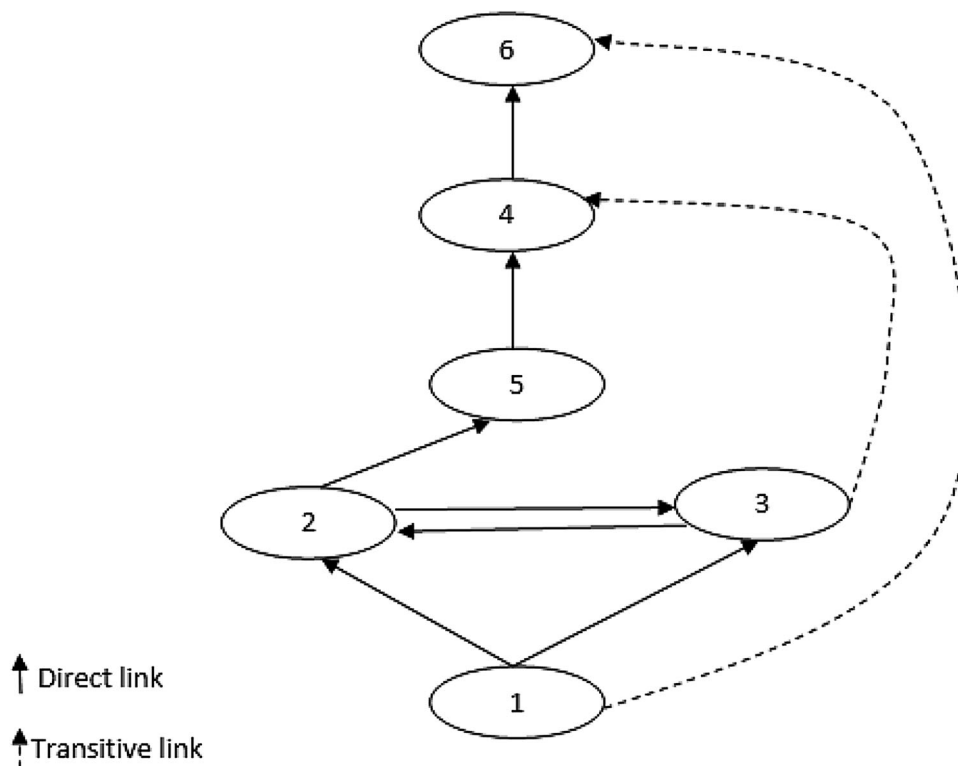
Dep dependence

<sup>a</sup> Transitive relation



**Table 6** Level matrix

Codes of enablers	Enablers	Levels
E1	Time flexibility	V
E2	Pay and benefits flexibility	IV
E3	Place of work flexibility	IV
E4	Learning flexibility	II
E5	Performance appraisal flexibility	III
E6	Career planning flexibility	I

**Fig. 1** Diagraph with significant transitive links

elements. Dotted lines are used to mark transitive links. The digraph thus made is used to make binary interaction matrix (Table 10). The combined information drawn from interpretive logic- knowledge base, digraph and binary interaction matrix is used to complete TISM model (Fig. 2).

### Validating TISM Model

TISM involves experts at every level of model development. While validating the model also, expert help is taken. The TISM model of workplace flexibility for OCB is validated by experts. a 5-point scale is used with responses ranging from 1-“strongly disagree” to 5-“strongly agree” to evaluate the 8 links mentioned in the TISM model.

For all the 8 links in the Model, hypotheses were developed. A sample hypothesis on first link is portrayed here:

- H0(1) there is no significant difference between the observed mean and specified mean in relation to opinion of experts on Time Flexibility’s influence on Pay and Benefits Flexibility
- H1(1) there is a positive significant difference between the observed mean and specified mean in relation to opinion of experts on Time Flexibility’s influence on Pay and Benefits Flexibility

Similar hypotheses are drawn for rest 8 links. To test the hypotheses, a one-tailed one sample *t* test is used (Yadav 2014). Value of 3 is taken as test value. SPSS is used to run the *t*-test. Table 7 shows the results drawn from *t*-test along with significance levels and accept/reject decision.

Based on the final reachability matrix, driver power and dependence of all the variables were drawn. By marking dependence on x-axis and driver power on y-axis, a Driver-dependence matrix with four quadrants was drawn. Each



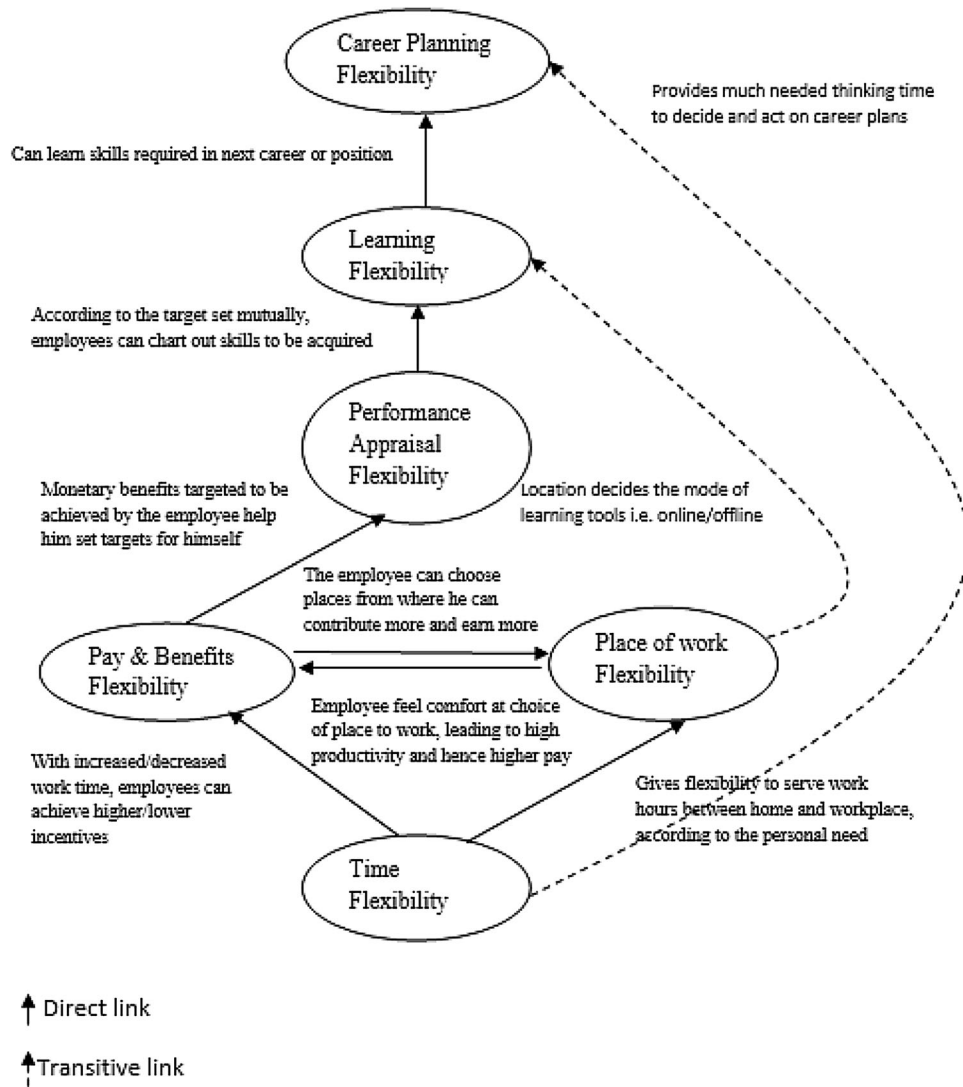


Fig. 2 TISM model

Table 7 Validation of TISM model

S. no.	Linkages	t-value	Sig.	Accept/reject
1	Time flexibility will enhance/influence pay and benefits flexibility	4.52	0.000	Accept
2	Time flexibility will enhance/influence place of work flexibility	2.18	0.023	Accept
3	Time flexibility will enhance/influence career planning flexibility	2.47	0.013	Accept
4	Pay and benefits flexibility will enhance/influence place of work flexibility	3.28	0.002	Accept
5	Place of work flexibility will enhance/influence pay and benefits flexibility	3.94	0.000	Accept
6	Pay and benefits flexibility will enhance/influence performance appraisal flexibility	2.44	0.014	Accept
7	Place of work flexibility will enhance/influence Learning flexibility	2.11	0.026	Accept
8	Performance appraisal flexibility will enhance/influence learning Flexibility	1.96	0.035	Accept
9	Learning flexibility will enhance/influence career planning flexibility	3.66	0.001	Accept

S. no. 3 and 7 are significant transitive links



quadrant represent different power and helps in identifying the roles various workplace flexibility dimensions in enabling OCB. The first quadrant termed as ‘autonomous quadrant’ covers variables with weak driving and dependence force. The second quadrant termed as ‘driver quadrant’ (E1, E2, E3) covers variables with weak dependence and strong driving power. The third quadrant termed as ‘linkage quadrant’ (E5) covers variables with strong dependence and strong driving power. The fourth quadrant termed as ‘dependent quadrant’ (E4, E6) with strong dependence but low driving power.

## Discussion

Our study is the first in understanding role of workplace flexibility in promoting OCB in employees. With the help of TISM, we were able to find the six important flexibility dimensions which do have the ability to induce OCB at the workplace.

The relationship between workplace flexibility and OCB can be explained with the help of social sciences theories like social exchange theory and theory of reciprocity. According to these theories if someone does something good for you, then there becomes an unwritten obligation to repay the deed. In work setting, if management provides employees with the freedom to work and time to attend to other important matters like family care, recreational

activities etc., employees feel to repay for the good gesture of the organization by doing something extra then expected work in the form of OCB behaviors without demanding more gains from organization.

Time flexibility is one of the most demanded workplace characteristic in present lifestyles. Time flexibility provides employees with time to attend to his/her family demands and created healthier work-family life. It increases motivation in employees and repay the organization in form of OCB as goodwill gesture.

Pay and benefits flexibility helps employees to attend to family’s physiological needs, which is the most important and basic need of individual. Once, employee is free from stress of providing for his/her family, he can contribute more to organization in form of OCB.

Place of work flexibility saves lots of time for employees which they usually use to spend on travelling to and fro office. It serves multiple purposes like saving time for employees, reducing costs of keeping office space and other contingencies plus employees get to spend more time with family and feel comfortable at home. These kinds of families have proven to add value to organizations by making employees more attached and they stick to organization and overlook small dis-comforts in endeavor to provide services to the organization.

Learning flexibility increases the knowledge and skills of employees in the direction of their self-development. The knowledge and expertise gained because of infrastructure

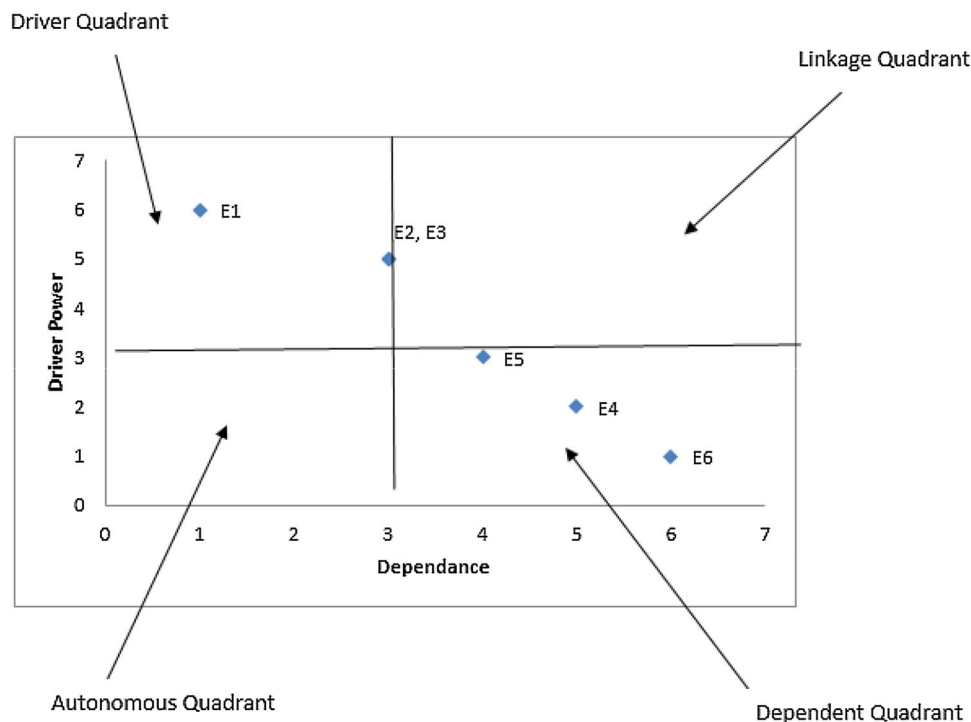


Fig. 3 Driver-dependence matrix

provided by organization is repaid by employees by using their knowledge in giving expert suggestions and observations, ideas and help provided to co-workers.

Performance appraisal flexibility shows the value of co-workers in shaping the employee's career and job. By letting employees decide the level of output, management is putting its faith in employee's honesty and commitment, which employees get chance to prove by not only performing his/her work effectively but also, to do it in a way so that other dependent stakeholders like co-workers can finish their work effectively also.

Career planning flexibility makes employees committed to the organization. They perform desired diverse roles in their long association with the organization. The different roles performed gives employees holistic view which help him/her to give expert insight to management for better performance.

With the help of final reachability matrix with transitivity (Table 5), we were also able to draw a driver-dependence matrix on workplace flexibility dimensions of OCB. The present study tried to give a holistic view of the framework on which flexibility dimensions to prioritize upon to get desired OCB outcome.

Today's competitive environment requires that organizations keep their employees close to them as they serve as the blood in the organization. The present study sheds light on how to take care of employees by giving them flexible work environment, so as to show their true potential which go far ahead of defined roles.

All the six workplace flexibility dimensions were divided in four quadrants i.e. autonomous, dependent, drivers and linkages, based on the Driver-dependence matrix (Fig. 3). The following insights were drawn from the Driver-dependence matrix:

1. The first quadrant i.e. autonomous, deals with those dimensions which standalone from all the other dimensions. They do not have any influence or effect on other dimensions. In our study, none of the dimensions fall into the autonomous category. It states that the organization has to give value to all 6 dimensions and cannot leave any single dimensions unattended to.
2. The second quadrant categorized as driver, contains those elements which act as the base of the entire program. These elements are crucial to not only the entire framework, but for all other elements as well. In absence of them, other elements will be in imbalance. In our study, E1 (Time Flexibility) clearly falls into the second quadrant, but E2 (Pay and benefits Flexibility) and E3 (Place of work Flexibility) are also on the margin and can be considered into the second quadrant. These other flexibility will not contribute as expected if these workplace flexibility dimensions are

not present. These are the bases for other dimensions to flourish and promote OCB. Management should make sure that these dimensions exist at workplace before moving to high flexibility approaches.

3. Linkages are covered in third quadrant. Linkage cover those dimensions which depends upon lower level dimensions and on the same time higher level dimensions depends upon them. They are the linking point between lower level and higher level. They act as the mediator in the whole framework. Without them whole framework will collapse. Although no dimensions clear-cut falls in this quadrant, E5 (Performance Appraisal Flexibility) is on margin and will be considered in third quadrant only. Performance appraisal flexibility is for what lower dimensions aspire for and also it becomes bases for adoption and promotion of other higher level flexibility dimensions. Management should encourage performance appraisal systems like Management by Objectives (MBO) and 360 degree appraisal system, which gives holistic prospective on what he is supposed to do and why.
4. Forth and last quadrant covers dependent dimensions. They are the product of all the lower and same level dimensions. They have power to define entire framework's worth. In our study, E4 (Learning Flexibility) and E6 (Career Planning Flexibility) comes under dependent dimensions of workplace flexibility. These are the end workplace flexibility needs, representing all the lower level dimensions which influenced them. Employees, when feel content on these workplace flexibility approaches, will show maximum citizenship behavior. These flexibility approaches have the power upon which organization's brand can be developed, so as to attract right talent and customers. Many of the organizations promote their brand by showcasing similar workplace characteristics. Management should promote these workplace approaches and use it to define what they stands for.

We are of the view that by creating and implementing these workplace flexibility approaches, organization can promote OCB behavior in employees. The phenomenon can be understood by using Social exchange theory. The freedom on how to work, where to work, how much to work, what to work for; creates positive image in minds of employees about the organization. They feel obliged and wants to return the good deed by way of OCB behavior. Management can utilize this relation to create win-win situation for both employees and the organization. By using this TISM framework, management can analyze its workplace flexibility approaches and can take corrective actions by utilizing driver and linkage dimensions to correct any imbalance.



## Conclusion

The present study has become a major step in promotion of research related to OCB, by using a blend of both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. Our study becomes the first one to study the role of workplace flexibility on promoting OCB behavior. TISM helped in categorizing and determining the level of importance of individual flexibility dimensions. TISM framework provides an insight on how a model workplace flexibility program to enhance the human performance should function.

In an environment, where attracting and retaining right talents is quite difficult for organization, this study has provided a thought on how to keep and attract employees as well as to show extra-role behavior.

Keeping in mind the fruitful outcomes of the present study, we suggest researchers to pursue area of interest using the TISM methodology. The use of semi-structured

interviews to identify the flexibility dimensions which promote OCB and later TISM modelling to interpret the hierarchical structure satisfied the need of the study and thus to be continued in future organizational behavior studies.

The limitation of the study was the lack of empirical validation of the results. The validation was done on a small respondent size of experts. Hence, future scope of the study covers the empirical validation of TISM model by way of collection of responses. The study can be done on cross-sectional respondent data as well as on specific industries like power, banking, Information technology etc. the model can be tested in different economies and comparative analysis can be conducted.

## Appendix 1

See Table 8.

**Table 8** Interpretive Logic-knowledge base with interpretations

S. no	Element codes	Pairwise comparison	Y/N	Interpretation
1	E1–E2	Time flexibility will enhance/influence pay and benefits flexibility	Y	With increased/decreased work time, employees can achieve higher/lower incentives
2	E1–E3	Time flexibility will enhance/influence place of work flexibility	Y	Gives flexibility to serve work hours between home and workplace, according to the personal need
3	E1–E6	Time flexibility will enhance/influence career planning flexibility	Y	Transitive
4	E2–E3	Pay and benefits flexibility will enhance/influence place of work flexibility	Y	The employee can choose places from where he can contribute more and earn more
5	E3–E2	Place of work flexibility will enhance/influence pay and benefits flexibility	Y	Employee feel comfort at choice of place to work, leading to high productivity and hence higher pay
6	E2–E5	Pay and benefits flexibility will enhance/influence performance appraisal flexibility	Y	Monetary benefits targeted to be achieved by the employee help him set targets for himself
7	E3–E4	Place of work flexibility will enhance/influence learning flexibility	Y	Transitive
8	E5–E4	Performance appraisal flexibility will enhance/influence learning flexibility	Y	According to the target set mutually, employees can chart out skills to be acquired
9	E4–E6	Learning flexibility will enhance/influence career planning flexibility	Y	Can learn skills required in next career or position

Only accepted and transitive links are mentioned to reduce the size of table

## Appendix 2

See Tables 9, 10 and 11.

**Table 9** Level I

Variables	Reachability set	Antecedent set	Intersection set	Level
E1	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6	E1	E1	V
E2	E2, E3, E4, E5, E6	E1, E2, E3	E2, E3	IV
E3	E2, E3, E4, E5, E6	E1, E2, E3	E2, E3	IV
E4	E4, E6	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5	E4	II
E5	E4, E5, E6	E1, E2, E3, E5	E5	III
E6	E6	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6	E6	I

**Table 10** Interaction matrix

S. no.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
E1	0	1	1	0	0	1
E2	0	0	1	0	1	0
E3	0	1	0	1	0	0
E4	0	0	0	0	0	1
E5	0	0	0	1	0	0
E6	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Table 11** Interpretive matrix

S. no.	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
E1	With increased/decreased work time, employees can achieve higher/lower incentives		Gives flexibility to serve work hours between home and workplace, according to the personal need			Provides much needed thinking time to decide and act on career plans
E2			The employee can choose places from where he can contribute more and earn more		Monetary benefits targeted to be achieved by the employee help him set targets for himself	
E3	Employee feel comfort at choice of place to work, leading to high productivity and hence higher pay			Location decides the mode of learning tools i.e. online/offline		
E4						Can learn skills required in next career or position
E5				According to the target set mutually, employees can chart out skills to be acquired		
E6						

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### Key Questions

- Q1. Why is workplace Flexibility important in today's business environment?
- Q2. In what ways can flexible workplace foster OCB in employees?
- Q3. What are the added advantage of utilizing TISM over traditional ISM methodology?



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