

Organizational Commitment and Citizenship Behaviors in Moroccan Organizations: Examining the Mediating Influence of Leadership and Perceived Organizational Justice

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationships between the three dimensions of organizational commitment—affection, normative, and continuance commitment—and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) among Moroccan middle managers and technical employees. Drawing on Meyer and Allen's three-component framework, the research investigates how leadership and perceived organizational justice contribute to explaining the behavioral expression of commitment within organizations.

Based on data collected from 514 managers, the findings reveal the predominance of continuance commitment, reflecting the importance of employment stability and perceived costs associated with leaving the organization. The analyses further demonstrate that leadership and organizational justice significantly mediate the relationship between commitment and citizenship behaviors. More specifically, fair organizational practices and supportive managerial relationships appear to reinforce employees' willingness to engage in discretionary behaviors beneficial to the organization.

The results underline the importance of considering contextual and institutional characteristics when analyzing organizational commitment in non-Western environments. In organizational settings marked by hierarchical regulation and relational obligations, citizenship behaviors may emerge not only from emotional attachment but also from pragmatic forms of organizational involvement. The study contributes to the literature by offering a contextualized interpretation of commitment dynamics within Moroccan organizations and by highlighting the strategic role of organizational justice and leadership in sustaining extra-role behaviors.

Keywords: Organizational commitment; Organizational citizenship behaviors; Burnout; Leadership; Social justice.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment remains one of the most widely studied concepts in organizational behavior and human resource management because of its association with employee retention, work performance, and discretionary organizational behaviors. Traditionally understood as the psychological bond connecting employees to their organization, commitment influences both employees' involvement in their work and their willingness to contribute beyond formal job requirements. Nevertheless, contemporary organizational transformations—including digitalization, intensified work demands, and changing career expectations—have renewed interest in understanding the diverse forms and consequences of organizational commitment rather than treating it as a uniformly positive phenomenon.

The multidimensional model developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) distinguishes between three forms of commitment: affective commitment, which reflects emotional attachment to the organization; normative commitment, based on feelings of obligation and loyalty; and continuance commitment, associated with the perceived costs of leaving the organization. While affective and normative commitment are generally linked to

voluntary involvement, continuance commitment is more strongly rooted in pragmatic and calculative considerations. Subsequent studies have shown that these dimensions do not produce identical behavioral outcomes and may rely on different motivational mechanisms (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009). As a result, analyzing organizational commitment as a single homogeneous construct may conceal important variations in employee attitudes and behaviors.

This distinction becomes particularly significant in organizational environments where employment stability and hierarchical structures strongly influence professional relationships. In such contexts, employees may remain committed to their organizations not necessarily because of emotional identification, but because of limited alternatives, perceived security, or social expectations attached to organizational membership. Understanding how these different forms of commitment influence workplace behaviors therefore represents an important research issue.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB), introduced by Organ (1988), constitute a relevant framework for examining these behavioral expressions. OCB refer to voluntary and discretionary actions that contribute to organizational effectiveness without being formally prescribed or directly rewarded. These behaviors include helping colleagues, demonstrating conscientiousness, supporting organizational initiatives, and maintaining cooperative relationships within the workplace. However, the meaning and expression of OCB are not universal and may vary according to cultural and organizational environments (Paillé, 2007). In strongly hierarchical contexts, behaviors associated with conformity, loyalty, and respect for authority may also be interpreted as forms of citizenship behavior.

Within Moroccan organizations, professional interactions are often influenced by hierarchical norms, interpersonal obligations, and relational forms of authority. These characteristics may shape both employees' commitment profiles and the ways citizenship behaviors are expressed in everyday organizational life. Despite growing interest in organizational behavior within emerging economies, limited research has simultaneously examined the different dimensions of organizational commitment and their association with OCB in the Moroccan context. A contextualized approach is therefore needed to better understand the specific dynamics underlying commitment and extra-role behaviors in local organizations.

In addition, previous research suggests that the relationship between organizational commitment and OCB may be influenced by contextual and relational variables. Organizational justice, referring to employees' perceptions of fairness in procedures, decisions, and interpersonal treatment (Moorman, 1991; Cropanzano et al., 2001), appears particularly important in shaping positive workplace behaviors. Likewise, leadership quality and supervisor-subordinate relationships may reinforce or weaken the behavioral consequences of commitment (Scandura & Graen, 1984). Leadership and organizational justice can therefore be viewed as mechanisms through which commitment is translated into concrete forms of organizational participation and cooperation.

Against this background, the present study examines the relationships between affective, normative, and continuance commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors among Moroccan middle managers and technical staff. More specifically, it investigates the mediating role of leadership and perceived organizational justice in these relationships. The objective is to identify the forms of commitment most strongly associated with citizenship behaviors and to analyze the organizational mechanisms through which these relationships operate.

The study seeks to answer the following research question:

To what extent do the different dimensions of organizational commitment influence Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, and how do leadership and perceived organizational justice mediate these relationships within Moroccan organizations?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research adopts an integrative perspective articulating three conceptual sets: (1) organizational commitment in its affective, normative, and continuance forms; (2) Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB) contextualized within Moroccan organizations; and (3) two central mediating mechanisms—leadership and

organizational justice. The framework is complemented by a reflection on the psychological dynamics potentially accompanying certain forms of commitment.

The objective is to move beyond a univocal interpretation of commitment as a systematically positive resource and instead examine its differentiated configurations and their effects on citizenship behaviors in an organizational context marked by strong hierarchical normativity.

Organizational Commitment: A Multidimensional Construct

Organizational commitment is classically defined as the psychological bond linking the individual to the organization (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1982). The three-component model of Meyer and Allen (1991) distinguishes three components.

Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment and identification with the organization. It is generally associated with positive attitudes, intrinsic motivation, and performance.

Normative commitment reflects a sense of moral obligation to remain a member of the organization, grounded in loyalty or gratitude.

Continuance commitment, in contrast, is based on the perception of costs associated with leaving.

Subsequent studies have clarified that continuance commitment includes two sub-dimensions: perceived sacrifice and perceived lack of alternatives (McGee & Ford, 1987; Bentein, Vandenberghe & Dulac, 2004). These distinctions are crucial, as they reveal that not all forms of attachment rely on identical motivational foundations.

Research consistently shows that affective commitment is associated with favorable outcomes (Meyer et al., 2002), whereas continuance commitment presents more ambivalent effects (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009). In contexts characterized by limited professional mobility, this form of commitment may reflect constrained organizational maintenance rather than genuine attachment.

In the Moroccan context, where job stability represents a central value and hierarchical relationships play a structuring role, commitment may be rooted in logics of loyalty and institutional dependence (Côme & Yassine, 2019). This configuration calls for empirical examination of how each form of commitment translates into observable organizational behaviors.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors in a Hierarchical Context

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB), conceptualized by Organ (1988), refer to discretionary behaviors contributing to organizational effectiveness without being explicitly prescribed by formal role requirements. Podsakoff et al. (2000) identify several dimensions, including altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, and civic virtue.

The literature nevertheless emphasizes the need for cultural contextualization of these behaviors (Paillé, 2007). In environments characterized by strong hierarchy and valorization of loyalty, behaviors such as strict adherence to norms or relational restraint may be interpreted as forms of citizenship.

In the present research, a contextualized adaptation of the Podsakoff et al. (2000) scale was retained (El Adraoui, 2025), integrating six attributes: professionalism, conformism, consideration, tolerance, altruism, and civic virtue. This conceptualization captures an organizational citizenship that is both performance-oriented and regulated, in which hierarchical conformity may constitute a valued expression of commitment.

OCB thus appear as a behavioral manifestation of the quality of the organizational bond, making it possible to observe concretely how different forms of commitment translate into collective action.

Leadership as a Mediating Mechanism

Leadership constitutes a central lever in transforming commitment into citizenship behaviors. James MacGregor Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership, further developed by Bernard M. Bass (1998), which is grounded in inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theory, developed by George B. Graen and Scandura (1984), emphasizes that the quality of hierarchical relationships—based on trust and recognition—conditions employees’ attitudes and behaviors.

Numerous empirical studies confirm that transformational leadership strengthens affective commitment (Bono & Judge, 2003) and promotes Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (Podsakoff et al., 2000). In a structured hierarchical context, the leader plays a decisive role in regulating potential tensions associated with continuance commitment.

Hypotheses:

H1: Leadership mediates the relationship between affective commitment and OCB.

H2: Leadership mediates the relationship between normative commitment and OCB.

H3: Leadership mediates the relationship between continuance commitment and OCB.

Organizational Justice as a Relational Regulator

Organizational justice refers to perceptions of fairness in decisions and interactions (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel & Rupp, 2001). It encompasses three dimensions: distributive (Adams, 1965), procedural, and interactional (Moorman, 1991).

Grounded in social exchange theory (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964), this approach posits that perceived fairness fosters cooperation and organizational loyalty. Organ (1988) demonstrated that perceived justice constitutes a direct antecedent of citizenship behaviors.

Empirical work by Colquitt et al. (2001) confirms the links between justice, commitment, and behavioral performance. In organizational environments characterized by verticality, perceived justice plays a stabilizing role by transforming potentially constrained commitment into cooperative engagement.

Hypotheses:

H4: Organizational justice mediates the relationship between affective commitment and OCB.

H5: Organizational justice mediates the relationship between normative commitment and OCB.

H6: Organizational justice mediates the relationship between continuance commitment and OCB.

Organizational Commitment and Psychological Dynamics

Although organizational commitment is often considered a resource, recent research invites differentiation of its effects according to its nature. The Job Demands–Resources model developed by Arnold B. Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (2007) shows that the balance between job demands and resources conditions available psychological energy.

Evangelia Demerouti et al. (2001) define burnout as resulting from a sustained imbalance between demands and resources. From this perspective, commitment dominated by continuance—based on constraint or lack of alternatives—may represent defensive mobilization rather than positive attachment.

Panaccio and Vandenberghe (2009) demonstrate that the sub-dimensions of continuance commitment display differentiated associations with well-being and psychological distress. Meyer and Maltin (2010) further emphasize that only the positive affectivity associated with affective commitment appears clearly protective.

Without incorporating a direct measure of burnout into the empirical model, this theoretical articulation sheds light on the notion of “commitment under tension”: a configuration in which organizational loyalty coexists with potential psychological vulnerability when relational resources (leadership, justice) are insufficient.

The Empirical Study

After establishing the theoretical foundations, this section confronts the hypotheses with Moroccan organizational realities. The empirical objective is to examine the relationships between the three forms of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance), perceived organizational justice, leadership, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB), considered as the dependent variable.

The study involves 514 middle managers working in large Moroccan companies. Positioned at the interface between strategic leadership and operational teams, these actors occupy a pivotal role in implementing organizational policies. Their hierarchical position exposes them to multiple demands: performance, loyalty, compliance with norms, and maintenance of team cohesion. As such, they constitute a particularly relevant population for analyzing how different forms of commitment translate into citizenship behaviors within a context characterized by strong organizational normativity.

Unlike a strictly instrumental approach to commitment, our perspective aims to examine its quality and modes of expression. Without incorporating a direct measure of burnout, the analysis is grounded in a framework inspired by research on job demands and resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), in order to identify configurations in which commitment may reflect either mobilizing adherence or more constrained organizational retention. Particular attention is paid to continuance commitment, which, although associated with employee retention and organizational stability, may also generate forms of compliance motivated more by perceived costs of leaving than by genuine emotional attachment. Such configurations may reduce intrinsic motivation and encourage more conformist or strategically adaptive citizenship behaviors.

The objective is therefore to understand whether observed citizenship behaviors reflect voluntary investment, relational reciprocity, or normative adaptation to the organizational environment. In addition, the study recognizes that the use of self-reported survey data may introduce social desirability bias. To minimize this limitation, respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality throughout the data collection process.

Research Objectives and Conceptual Articulation

This research pursues three complementary objectives.

First, it seeks to recontextualize the Organizational Citizenship Behavior model (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 2000) within a Moroccan environment characterized by strong hierarchy and a valorization of institutional loyalty. Exploratory interviews conducted with Human Resources directors made it possible to adapt certain dimensions of the model to incorporate locally relevant expressions of organizational citizenship, such as normative conformism, relational solidarity, and hierarchical deference.

Second, the study analyzes the nature of the relationships between the different forms of commitment and OCB. In line with Meyer and Allen (1991) and Meyer and Maltin (2010), we distinguish the potentially differentiated effects of affective, normative, and continuance commitment. We posit that affective and normative commitment foster durable and cooperative citizenship behaviors, whereas continuance commitment may be associated with behaviors more oriented toward conformity, organizational dependence, and status preservation. This distinction is particularly important in contexts where institutional expectations and job security considerations may reinforce calculative forms of attachment.

Third, the research evaluates the mediating role of leadership and organizational justice. These two variables are conceptualized as regulatory mechanisms capable of transforming organizational commitment into positive

citizenship behaviors by strengthening perceptions of recognition, fairness, procedural equity, and relational support.

The study thus adopts an integrative perspective aimed at understanding how managerial practices and perceived justice condition the quality of the relationship between commitment and behavioral performance. Beyond the direct effects examined, the analysis seeks to identify whether leadership and organizational justice contribute to transforming constrained organizational attachment into more constructive and voluntarily enacted forms of citizenship behavior.

Research Strategy and Sample

The survey was conducted among 514 middle managers employed in large Moroccan companies operating in various sectors: energy (28%), mining (19%), finance and insurance (24%), industry and logistics (18%), and public services (11%). These organizations, structured according to formalized managerial models, provide a relevant framework for analyzing institutionalized engagement dynamics.

The study relied on a convenience sampling strategy targeting organizations willing to participate in the research. Access to respondents was facilitated through professional networks and collaboration with Human Resources departments. Although this approach allowed the collection of substantial empirical material, the findings should be interpreted with caution regarding their generalizability to other organizational or cultural contexts.

Respondent characteristics include:

63% men and 37% women

Mean age of 39.6 years (SD = 7.8)

Average organizational tenure of 11.4 years (SD = 5.2)

Supervision of teams averaging between 8 and 15 employees

Data collection was conducted between September and November 2024 using a self-administered questionnaire distributed in both paper and electronic formats. Particular attention was given to the translation and linguistic adaptation of items into Arabic and French to ensure cultural validity and semantic equivalence. Follow-up reminders improved the response rate and minimized missing data.

The questionnaire combined previously validated scales measuring organizational commitment, leadership, organizational justice, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Reliability analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .79 to .88 across the different dimensions.

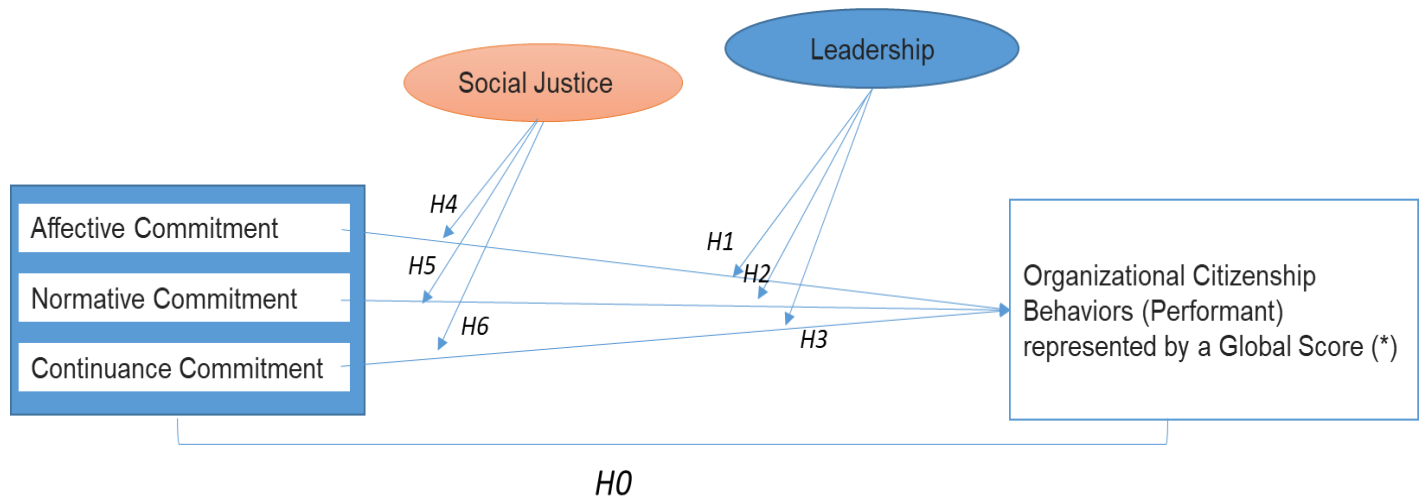
Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software. Correlation analyses and multiple regression models were first performed to examine direct relationships between variables. Mediation effects were then tested using hierarchical regression procedures in order to evaluate the indirect effects between organizational commitment, leadership, organizational justice, and citizenship behaviors.

While the Moroccan organizational context constitutes a major contribution of the study, the socio-cultural specificity of managerial relations and institutional norms may limit the transferability of the findings to other environments. Future research could therefore benefit from comparative and longitudinal designs capable of examining the evolution of organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors over time and across different cultural settings.

Research Model

The tested model examines the effect of the three forms of organizational commitment—affectional, normative, and continuance—on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Leadership and organizational justice are integrated as mediating variables.

The central hypothesis posits that the transformation of commitment into citizenship behaviors depends on the quality of the relational and managerial context. Supportive leadership and high perceived organizational justice are expected to strengthen the positive effects of commitment.



(*) The six attributes retained for this study are: Professionalism, Conformity, Consideration, Tolerance, Altruism, and Civic Spirit

Figure 1: Research Model

The instruments used were drawn from internationally validated scales and adapted to the Moroccan context.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment was measured using the three-component scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1991), including 12 items distributed across three sub-dimensions:

Affective commitment ($\alpha = .84$)

Normative commitment ($\alpha = .79$)

Continuance commitment ($\alpha = .81$)

Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

OCB were measured using the model developed by Podsakoff et al. (2000), adapted to the Moroccan context (El Adraoui, 2015; 2025). The scale includes 28 items distributed across six dimensions:

- Professionalism
- Conformism
- Consideration
- Tolerance
- Altruism
- Civic virtue

The overall internal consistency coefficient is $\alpha = .88$.

Organizational Justice

Organizational justice was measured using Moorman's (1991) scale, covering distributive and procedural dimensions (10 items, $\alpha = .85$). Respondents rated their fairness perceptions on a five-point Likert scale.

Leadership

Leadership was assessed using a scale inspired by Leader–Member Exchange research (Scandura & Graen, 1984), including six items related to support, trust, and recognition ($\alpha = .82$).

Conceptual Articulation with Occupational Health

Although burnout was not measured in this study, the analysis is grounded in a perspective inspired by the Job Demands–Resources model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This framework emphasizes that the quality of organizational resources—such as leadership and perceived justice—conditions psychological balance at work.

Within this perspective, high affective commitment supported by quality leadership and positive perceptions of organizational justice may be interpreted as a protective resource. Conversely, commitment dominated by continuance, in the absence of sufficient relational resources, may reflect organizational retention driven more by normative pressure than voluntary adherence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The literature highlights a strong link between professional commitment and high-performing behaviors. Our study confirms this relationship in the Moroccan context while clarifying its specific nature.

Analysis of Commitment–Performance Links and Mediation Effects

Initial analyses confirm the capacity of organizational commitment to predict high-performing citizenship behaviors in the Moroccan context. Observed correlations are significant, particularly for affective commitment ($r = .240$, $p < .001$) and continuance commitment ($r = .549$, $p < .001$), with coefficients exceeding those reported in Organ's (1988) initial model. These results underscore the relevance of a contextualized construct of organizational citizenship better suited to explaining workplace behaviors within Morocco's socio-economic environment (see correlation matrix below).

Contrary to Allen and Meyer's (1990) findings, continuance commitment emerges here as the strongest predictor of OCB, followed by affective commitment. This hierarchy may be explained by the precarious nature of the Moroccan labor market, particularly for operational personnel largely composed of technicians, for whom job stability remains a priority.

Respondents report high levels of citizenship behaviors—professionalism, conformism, tolerance, altruism, and civic virtue—often motivated by personal convictions. These results confirm the findings of Organ (1997) and Podsakoff et al. (1996), which highlight the link between affective commitment and organizational citizenship.

Subsequently, separate mediation analyses were conducted for each of the three forms of commitment (affective, continuance, and normative), focusing on the mediating roles of social justice and leadership. Non-significant relationships are not reported here.

Overall, the findings confirm that organizational commitment remains a central predictor of citizenship behaviors, although the strength of this relationship varies across its dimensions. Continuance commitment stands out as the most influential factor, followed by affective commitment, whereas normative commitment appears relatively weak and less significant. This pattern aligns with Meyer and Allen (1991) and Allen and Meyer (1990), who emphasize the contextual specificity of continuance commitment, often reflecting pragmatic presence at work rather than emotional or moral attachment.

This configuration is particularly relevant in the Moroccan context, marked by employment insecurity, limited professional mobility, and structural constraints affecting technicians and middle managers (El Adraoui, 2015). Under such conditions, continuance commitment acts as a stabilizing mechanism enabling employees to preserve their employment while meeting organizational expectations.

Affective commitment, although less dominant, also contributes to organizational citizenship, particularly when employees develop a strong sense of belonging and emotional attachment to their organization. These findings corroborate Organ (1997) and Podsakoff et al. (2000), who show that intrinsic motivation fosters voluntary investment beyond formal obligations. Finally, the relatively weak intensity of normative commitment suggests that moral obligation alone is insufficient to generate citizenship behaviors in the absence of favorable organizational conditions.

Corrélations					
		Indice Engagement de Continuité	Indice Engagement Affectif	Indice Engagement Normatif	Score Global Contextualisé
Indice Engagement de Continuité	Corrélation de Pearson	1	,219**	,275**	,549**
	Sig. (bilatérale)		0,000	0,000	0,000
	N	514	514	514	514
Indice Engagement Affectif	Corrélation de Pearson	,219**	1	-,204**	,240**
	Sig. (bilatérale)	0,000		0,000	0,000
	N	514	514	514	514
Indice Engagement Normatif	Corrélation de Pearson	,275**	-,204**	1	0,072
	Sig. (bilatérale)	0,000	0,000		0,101
	N	514	514	514	514
Score Global Contextualisé	Corrélation de Pearson	,549**	,240**	0,072	1
	Sig. (bilatérale)	0,000	0,000	0,101	
	N	514	514	514	514

** . La corrélation est significative au niveau 0.01 (bilatéral).

Table 1: Correlation Matrix (SPSS Output)

Dans la suite, une analyse distincte de la médiation exercée par chacun des deux facteurs (justice organisationnelle et leadership) sera menée pour chaque forme d'engagement: affectif, calculé et normatif (liens insignifiants donc non présentés).

Mediating Effects of Social Justice and Leadership

The integration of social justice and leadership variables into the overall correlation matrix reveals significant relationships among several model dimensions, justifying examination of their mediating effects.

Conceptually, mediation refers to the mechanism through which an intermediate variable transmits part or all of the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable. As noted by Baron and Kenny (1986) and Shrout and Bolger (2002), mediation is confirmed when the total effect (c) decreases after introducing the mediator, with the direct effect (c') becoming smaller than the initial effect. The strength of mediation is estimated by the product of coefficients a and b .

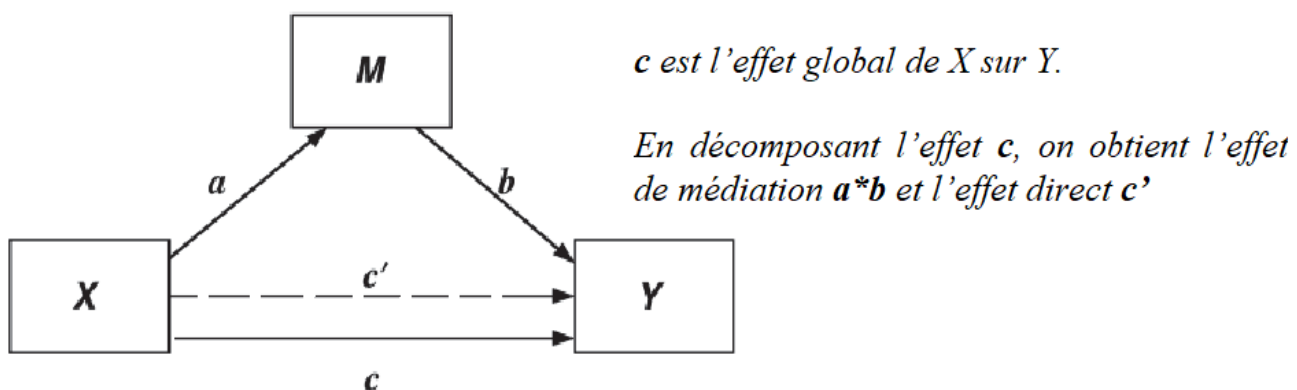


Figure 2: Definition of Mediation Effect According to Preacher and Hayes (2004)

In line with our theoretical model, the analysis decomposed the overall effect of organizational commitment on citizenship behaviors into a direct effect and an indirect effect through social justice and leadership.

Results for affective commitment confirm the central mediating role of social justice (Table 2). The total effect is significant ($c = .256, p < .001$), but decreases after introducing social justice ($c' = .092, p = .041$), indicating partial mediation. Intermediate coefficients show strong relationships between affective commitment and social justice ($a = .291, p < .001$), and between social justice and citizenship behaviors ($b = .567, p < .001$).

Leadership also plays a mediating role (Table 3), though more indirectly. The direct effect remains significant after introducing leadership ($c' = .237, p < .001$), indicating partial mediation.

Mediating Effects of Social Justice on the Relationship Between Affective Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Effect	Path of variation	Value	Sign	Interpretation
Total Effect	$X \rightarrow Y$	$c = .256$	.000	$c \neq c'$ Mediation effect confirmed. $c > c'$ The mediation strengthens the existing relationship.
Direct Effect	$X \rightarrow Y (M)$	$c' = .092$	.041	
a effect	$X \rightarrow M$	$a = .291$	.000	
b effect	$M \rightarrow Y$	$b = .567$	.000	
$a*b$	$X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	$a*b = .165$	.000	

Table 2 : Summary based on SPSS output

Mediating Effects of leadership on the Relationship Between Affective Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Effect	Path of variation	Valeur	Sign	Interprétation
Total Effect	$X \rightarrow Y$	$c = .256$	.000	$c \neq c'$ Mediation effect confirmed. $c > c'$ The mediation strengthens the existing relationship.
Direct Effect	$X \rightarrow Y (M)$	$c' = .237$	.000	
a effect	$X \rightarrow M$	$a = .043$	.248	
b effect	$M \rightarrow Y$	$b = .445$	.000	
$a*b$	$X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	$a*b = .019$	.000	

Table 3 : Summary based on SPSS output

Similar patterns are observed for continuance commitment (Tables 4 and 5). The total effect ($c = .570, p < .001$) decreases after introducing social justice ($c' = .442, p < .001$) and leadership ($c' = .515, p < .001$), confirming partial mediation.

These findings are particularly meaningful in a context characterized by employment insecurity and structural constraints. Even constrained forms of commitment may generate beneficial citizenship behaviors when managerial practices are perceived as fair and leadership is supportive.

Mediating Effects of Social Justice on the Relationship Between Continuance Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Effect	Path of variation	Value	Sign	Interpretation
Total Effect	$X \rightarrow Y$	$c = .570$	.000	$c \neq c'$ Mediation effect confirmed. $c > c'$ The mediation strengthens the existing relationship.
Direct Effect	$X \rightarrow Y (M)$	$c' = .442$	.000	
a effect	$X \rightarrow M$	$a = .366$	.000	
b effect	$M \rightarrow Y$	$b = .347$	.000	
$a*b$	$X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	$a*b = .127$		

Table 4 : Summary based on SPSS output

Mediating Effects of Leadership on the Relationship Between Continuance Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Effect	Path of variation	Value	Sign	Interpretation
Total Effect	$X \rightarrow Y$	$c = .570$	.000	$c \neq c'$ Mediation effect confirmed. $c > c'$ The mediation strengthens the existing relationship.
Direct Effect	$X \rightarrow Y (M)$	$c' = .515$	.000	
a effect	$X \rightarrow M$	$a = .162$	.000	
b effect	$M \rightarrow Y$	$b = .336$	.000	
$a*b$	$X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$	$a*b = .054$		

Table 5 : Summary based on SPSS output

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study confirm that organizational commitment constitutes an important explanatory factor of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors within Moroccan organizations. However, the relative importance of the different dimensions of commitment highlights the complexity of the relationship between employees and their organizations.

One of the main findings concerns the predominance of continuance commitment in explaining citizenship behaviors. Unlike many studies conducted in Western organizational contexts, where affective commitment is generally identified as the strongest predictor of extra-role behaviors, the present results suggest that pragmatic attachment linked to employment stability and perceived costs of leaving plays a central role in shaping employee behaviors. This observation supports the idea that commitment dynamics are influenced by contextual and institutional conditions. In environments characterized by hierarchical regulation and relatively constrained mobility opportunities, continuance commitment may become a significant source of behavioral stability.

These results do not necessarily imply that employees are emotionally disengaged from their organizations. Rather, they suggest the coexistence of pragmatic attachment and organizational involvement. As highlighted by Meyer and Maltin (2010), continuance commitment should not systematically be interpreted negatively, since it may contribute to maintaining organizational participation and behavioral consistency even in demanding professional environments.

Nevertheless, excessive reliance on continuance commitment may also present organizational risks. When employees remain primarily because of perceived economic or professional constraints, citizenship behaviors may become more compliance-oriented than intrinsically motivated. Such configurations can potentially generate emotional distancing, reduced psychological well-being, or lower levels of authentic organizational identification over time. These findings therefore invite organizations to distinguish between sustainable engagement and more constrained forms of organizational attachment.

The study also demonstrates the important mediating role of organizational justice. Perceptions of fairness regarding managerial decisions, procedures, and interpersonal treatment appear to strengthen the translation of organizational commitment into citizenship behaviors. This finding is consistent with previous research emphasizing the role of justice perceptions in encouraging cooperation, trust, and discretionary contributions within organizations (Colquitt et al., 2001). Employees who perceive organizational processes as fair are more likely to reciprocate through behaviors that support collective functioning.

Leadership likewise contributes to reinforcing citizenship behaviors, although its effect appears less pronounced than that of organizational justice. This result supports the idea that leadership effectiveness is partly dependent on the broader organizational environment in which managerial relationships are embedded. Symbolic recognition, interpersonal support, and leader-member relationships remain important mechanisms for encouraging employee involvement, but their impact seems more sustainable when supported by coherent and equitable organizational practices.

The findings therefore underline the complementarity between leadership and organizational justice. Rather than relying exclusively on individual managerial styles, organizations should develop transparent evaluation systems, equitable recognition practices, and consistent decision-making processes capable of reinforcing employees' perceptions of fairness and organizational credibility.

From a managerial perspective, the results suggest that organizations should pay greater attention to the nature of employee commitment rather than simply seeking high overall levels of commitment. Strong continuance commitment may ensure behavioral stability and organizational participation, yet it does not necessarily reflect long-term well-being or emotional identification with organizational values. Human resource policies should consequently integrate broader indicators related to employee experience, recognition, and quality of work life in order to prevent latent tensions and reinforce more sustainable forms of organizational attachment.

The interpretation of these findings should nevertheless take into account certain methodological limitations. Since the study relies on self-reported perceptions collected through a cross-sectional survey design, the observed relationships may partly reflect subjective evaluation processes or social desirability tendencies. Consequently, causal interpretations should remain cautious and could be strengthened through longitudinal and multi-source research designs.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature by providing a contextualized analysis of organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors in Moroccan organizations. It highlights the importance of considering cultural, relational, and institutional determinants when examining organizational commitment and citizenship behaviors outside dominant Western managerial frameworks. The Moroccan context illustrates how organizational norms, hierarchical relations, and employment stability may reshape the meaning and expression of employee commitment.

Future research could further explore how organizational transformations, generational changes, and evolving managerial practices reshape commitment configurations over time. Longitudinal and comparative studies would also help clarify the dynamic interactions between organizational commitment, leadership, organizational justice, and citizenship behaviors across different organizational and cultural settings.

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