

A Pathway from Job Autonomy to Citizenship Behaviour of Selected Banks in Kaduna State: The Role of Employee Hope as a Mediator

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the impact of job autonomy on organizational citizenship behavior of selected banks in Kaduna state and to analyze the mediating role of employee hope in this relationship. The study used a survey-based cross-sectional research approach. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to 120 respondents. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings indicate that job autonomy has a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior, while employee hope has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Also, employee hope was found to significantly mediate the link between job autonomy and organizational citizenship behavior. This study recommends that employees who demonstrate citizenship activities such as aiding or volunteering should be recognized and rewarded.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior; Job Autonomy; Hope; Self Determination Theory; Banks.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world where intense competition exists, businesses must be able to survive and grow by making the most use of their human resources (Seval & Caner, 2015). As a result, organisations must recognise the elements that motivate employees to perform beyond their job tasks and obligations (Mahadewi & Muchtadin, 2024). Recognizing people as a valued asset is critical for attaining corporate objectives, particularly in tackling organisational issues in today's competitive climate (Shuvro et al., 2020). Fostering employee motivation for organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is key for organisational performance, with job autonomy playing an important role (Culibrk et al., 2018). Organisational citizenship behaviour exceeds the organisation's minimal expectations by actively promoting the well-being of colleagues, work groups and the organisation (Gumapit & Schneider, 2024). Every organisation has both an individual and a social aspect, as it cannot exist or thrive unless its members participate responsibly and engage in numerous positive actions (Rafiq et al, 2024). Employees who exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour engage in a variety of positive work-related behaviours that fulfill their assigned responsibilities and exceed the employer's formal expectations, which is critical for the organisation's survival and highly valuable competitive advantage (Gumapit & Schneider, 2024).

Job autonomy enables employees to use contextual information to implement performance-enhancing work process innovations (Campbell 2023). This flexibility and autonomous working environment meet individuals' autonomy demands while also increasing their sense of self-determination and autonomy cognition (Chen et al, 2022). This sense of control over the work environment meets workers' needs for autonomy and perceived self-confidence while also increasing their awareness of these elements (Wan et al., 2024). Job autonomy gives employees more choice over their work tasks and more resources to execute activities under more flexible settings (Xu et al, 2023). Workers benefit from job autonomy because it allows them to make their own decisions about how to carry out their work (Wan et al, 2024). As a result, job autonomy can enrich work experience, improve problem-solving ability and innovation (Hu & Mao, 2019), and boost workers' sense of autonomy and competence, thus enhancing workplace well-being.

Individuals with higher psychological capital are more likely to be optimistic and positive, have stronger motivation, exhibit more positive behaviour and outcomes, and are more likely to endorse and assimilate external regulations (Liu et al, 2024). Psychological capital has four dimensions: hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy (Luthans 2012). Hope, which is one of the dimensions of psychological capital is defined as a fundamental human cognition with accompanying emotions that helps individuals cope with challenges, setbacks and uncertainty (Einav et al, 2024). Hopeful employees are more likely to treat coworkers well, which includes assisting, speaking nicely and enhancing workplace and business effectiveness (Rafiq et al, 2023). Despite this much that is known about the positive impacts of hope, only a few researches have looked into its implications for prosocial conduct in the workplace, as reflected in OCB (Reppold et al., 2015). In this study, we address this gap by presenting a model that connects work autonomy, hope and organisational citizenship behaviour.

In the shifting landscape of the banking sector, the interplay between job autonomy, employee hope and organisational citizenship behaviour is critical to organisational success. Understanding how these factors interact is critical for private commercial banks in Kaduna to succeed in a competitive market. This study attempts to fill crucial knowledge gaps by investigating how these elements interact and influence one another. Also, the mechanism by which job autonomy influences organisational citizenship behaviour has not been thoroughly studied (Rhokeyun, 2016). Furthermore, the mechanism and process by which job autonomy translates into organizational citizenship behavior have not been investigated. Baron and Kenny (1986) propose using a mediator to explain this procedure. Lastly, following the methodological approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) for testing mediation, this study posits that hope acts as a crucial mediating variable.

The current study investigates the mediating function of employee hope using self *determination theory* to gain a better understanding of the mechanisms driving the relationship between job autonomy and organisational citizenship behaviour.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) was originally defined as voluntary individual activity that does not receive immediate acknowledgment from the formal reward system but

contributes to the achievement of an effective organisation (Organ, 1988). Mustapha et al,(2025) defined organisational citizenship behaviour as individuals' voluntary efforts to assist the well-being and success of their coworkers and organisations outside of their regular work tasks. It refers to discretionary acts made by an employee that are not required under their job obligations and are initiated by the employee (Gumapit & Schneider, 2024). Saad et al. (2024) recognised it as a vital part of workplace dynamics, characterized by voluntary behaviours that transcend beyond formal job obligations, therefore increasing organisational performance and cohesion. organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) occurs when employees go above and above to improve the workplace, such as volunteering, making workplace changes, and demonstrating true dedication to the organisation and its goals on par with other employees. (Rafiq et al. 2023). Kang (2023) defined organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) as an employee's civic participation in the workplace that goes beyond the constraints of their job description. It depicts employee actions that, while not essential for their current task or role, benefit the organisation's operations and growth (Al-Ahmadi & Mahran, 2021). As a result, this study defines organisational citizenship behaviour as voluntary efforts taken by employees outside of their formal job tasks to benefit the banks, colleagues, or consumers.

2.2 Concept of Employee Hope

The phrase 'Psychological Capital' refers to an employee's desired psychological condition of development, which includes high levels of hope, self-efficacy, resilience and optimism (Lorenz et al. 2016). It is based on the basics of positive psychology, which emphasize employee strengths and advantages over dysfunctions and defects (Peterson & Park, 2003). Hope is defined as a cognitive process that assists people in achieving their intended goals, produces a positive state of motivation, and provides them with the will and path planning required to attain their goals (Luthans, 2007). Hope, a characteristic of psychological capital, refers to a desirable emotional state that is based on determination and paths to achieving goals (Snyder, 2000). Hope is a favorable estimate of the chances of accomplishing personal goals (Chernyak-Hai et al, 2024). Even in difficult circumstances, a hopeful individual has the strength to seek and implement alternative solutions (Satici et al, 2023). Setting meaningful goals, future orientation, deliberative method, self-focused controllable approach, and generalized beliefs are characteristics that distinguish it from optimism, self-efficacy, well-being, and resilience in the workplace (Rand, 2018). Rand (2018) defines hope as the belief in one's ability and commitment

to achieve goals through pathways and agency. According to the aforementioned definitions, employee hope is a positive and optimistic mindset that allows employees to believe in their potential to overcome obstacles, achieve goals, and build a better future for themselves and their organisation.

2.3 Concept of Job Autonomy

As asserted by Liu et al. (2024), job autonomy refers to the level of flexibility and independent decision-making that individual employees have in their work activities. According to Pan et al. (2024), job autonomy is defined as the degree to which the job allows for freedom and discretion in scheduling work and is considered a critical job resource investment. Job autonomy refers to individuals' freedom and independence in carrying out their work tasks (Soegiarto et al, 2024). Job autonomy refers to how much control and choice employees have over the activities they accomplish and how they do them (Sharifah et al, 2024). According to Nathaniel and Dewi (2024), job autonomy can be defined as the ability for individuals to operate with the authority and freedom given. Autonomy at work is a condition in which employees select how and when to complete their tasks (Juyumaya et al, 2024). Job autonomy is defined as the degree of control an individual has over the content and schedule of his work (Li & Tuckey, 2023). Ting et al. (2023) opined that job autonomy is employees' degree of self-determination over their work path, advancement and performance evaluation criteria. Job autonomy in the workplace entails allowing employees to work in the manner that best suits them (Juyumaya & Torres, 2022). Job autonomy refers to employees' feelings of freedom, independence, and discretion (also known as autonomous resources), which influence their psychological condition and motivation (Kao et al., 2022). Clausen et al. (2022) defined job autonomy as an employee's independence and discretion at work. Based on the definitions mentioned above, this study defines job autonomy as the degree of freedom and independence that employees have in making decisions, taking actions, and managing their work without excessive supervision or control.

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1 Job Autonomy and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Employees are motivated to engage in organisational citizenship behaviour when their independent needs are addressed. Employees see autonomy as an indication that they are valued and supported by their organisation, team, and/or supervisor. As a result, in accordance with the

concept of reciprocity, they are more willing to repay the favor, which frequently manifests as prosocial activities such as organisational citizenship behaviour (Park, 2018). The more autonomy people have in their positions, the more opportunities they have to engage in extra-role behaviour such as OCB; as a result, autonomy increases employees' motivation to put in extra effort at work and demonstrate organisational citizenship behavior (Runhaar, 2013). According to Magdaleno et al. (2023), job autonomy has a beneficial impact on organisational citizenship behaviour, also Pattnaik and Sajoo, (2021) discovered that job autonomy has a direct and positive influence on organisational citizenship behaviour. Similarly, Dhankar et al. (2021) demonstrated that job characteristics have a positive impact on organisational citizenship behaviour. The above submissions clearly demonstrate that job autonomy influences organisational citizenship behaviour. Hence, this study hypothesized that:

H_{01a}: Job autonomy has no significant effect on organisational citizenship behaviour of selected banks in Kaduna state.

2.4.2 Employee Hope and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Gumapit and Schneider (2024) reported that hope has a favorable and positive effect on organisational citizenship behaviour. According to Lape (2024), as teachers' hope increases, so does their organisational citizenship behaviour. Similarly, Rafiq et al. (2023) revealed that significant optimism (hope) drives employees to engage in voluntary behaviours, communicate effectively, and contribute to the organisation's growth. Chamisa et al. (2020) discovered a positive and substantial influence of hope on organisational citizenship behaviour, stating that nurses with high levels of hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism demonstrated reciprocity through the display of organisational citizenship behaviours. Thaker et al. (2016) revealed that hope had a positive and significant effect on organisational citizenship behaviour. According to Floman (2012), results indicate(s) that both hope and pride considerably increased OCBs when compared to the control condition, with hope producing more OCBs than pride. Likewise, Liaquat and Mehmood (2017) argued that an employee's resiliency, hope, self-efficacy, and feeling of optimism all play a vital role in bringing forth the 'good soldier' syndrome. The preceding submissions clearly demonstrate that job autonomy influences organisational citizenship behaviour. Hence, this study hypothesized that:

H_{01b}: Hope has no significant effect on organisational citizenship behaviour of selected banks in Kaduna state.

2.4.3 Employee Hope as a Mediator

According to the findings of Akyil (2025), hope and loneliness have a simultaneous mediation function in the relationship between social support and psychological resilience. Furthermore, Jiang et al. (2025) indicated that worry indirectly predicted fatigue through hope. Hope served as a mediator variable between anxiety and fatigue. Elcin et al. (2025) explored the mediating effect of hope in the relationships between newcomers' psychosocial resources and their adaptation and acculturation orientations in Canada. The findings showed that hope plays a substantial moderating effect.

However, Setiawan and Setiyawati (2025) demonstrated that hope partially mediates the association between family functioning and post-traumatic growth in survivors of the Mount Semeru eruption tragedy. Moreover, hope significantly mediated the link between authoritative parenting and grit. In Wahidah et al.'s (2025) study, complete mediation was seen, demonstrating that authoritative parenting influences grit predominantly through hope. Tran et al. (2024) found that hope acted as a mediator between self-compassion and psychological well-being, as well as between self-compassion and life satisfaction. Parviniannasab et al.'s (2024) mediational model research revealed that hope fully mediated the influence of social support on self-management. Also, hope fully mediated the effect of uncertainty on self-management. As reported by Putra et al. (2024) findings showed that hope had a strong beneficial influence on optimism and grit, with total mediation. Tung et al. (2024) illustrated that the perception of AI opportunities was negatively associated with job insecurity, with hope serving as a mediator. Finally, Ning et al. (2024) discovered that hope fully mediates the association between internet addiction and work burnout. The foregoing comments clearly demonstrate that employee hope can alter the link between work autonomy and corporate citizenship behaviour. Hence, this study hypothesized that:

H₀₂: Hope does not mediate the relationship between job autonomy and organisational citizenship behaviour of selected banks in Kaduna state.

2.5 Self Determination Theory

Self-determination theory was propounded by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in the year 1985. It is concerned with the fulfillment of three key psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It proposes that autonomy is one of the three basic psychological demands. Fulfilling this need is associated with the development of stronger intrinsic motivation (psychological capital) in individuals, leading them to perceive their work as interesting and meaningful (Yang et al. 2023). Such individuals, imbued with robust intrinsic motivation, tend to exhibit a more positive disposition (Wu et al. 2022). Individuals that are highly motivated are more likely to actively participate in their work and accomplish positive results. Furthermore, they frequently choose their sort of work based on personal preferences, desiring autonomy (job autonomy) in order to exert control over their activities and decision-making processes.

Individuals with a high level of job autonomy are less prone to feel controlled. They generally maintain a positive attitude, believing that the platform values and respects them. This group finds it simpler to identify with their work since they believe they can complete their tasks and that the organisation and its customers value their efforts (Liu et al,2022). As a result,such employees are more likely to devote more of their cognitive resources, emotional energy, and physical effort to their work, resulting in more job engagement.

The underlying reason is that employees do not engage in proactive behaviour such as OCB instantaneously, but require a feeling of autonomous motivation and regulation to engage in such efforts in a sustainable way that is consistent with organisational goals (Wortleret al.2020). According to the self determination theory, positive job characteristics (e.g., autonomy-based characteristics) should facilitate individuals' psychological states (employee hope) which in turn could support entrance into a resource gain spiral and consequently positive behavioural outcomes (organisational citizenship behaviour).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to explore the relationships among Job Autonomy, Hope, and organisational Citizenship behaviour (OCB) among employees in selected banks in Zaria, Nigeria. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, and the analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)

via SmartPLS 3.0. This design was chosen to capture and model latent constructs and test correlational relationships within a theoretical framework.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population for this study consisted of employees from two prominent first-generation banks in Zaria, Nigeria: First Bank of Nigeria and United Bank for Africa (UBA). Specifically, the study focused on two branches from each bank—First Bank and UBA Bank located in PZ, Zaria. These branches were strategically selected based on their size, customer volume, and representation of both academic and commercial banking contexts. First Bank and UBA, as first-generation banks, have long-established operations in the Nigerian banking industry and remain among the most patronized financial institutions in Zaria. Their large customer base and diverse clientele provide a balanced perspective that captures both commercial and academic banking environments. First Bank has 65 employees while UBA has 55 employees, totalling 120 employees. The figures were obtained from the Human Resource Departments of the respective branches during the preliminary stage of the research

3.3 Sampling Technique

The study adopted census sampling technique, which involves the inclusion of the entire accessible population. Given the manageable size of the target population i.e 120 employees across four selected branches of First Bank and UBA in Zaria—all available and consenting staff members were approached to participate in the study. This approach ensured comprehensive data coverage and minimized sampling error, as every relevant employee had an equal opportunity to be included in the research.

3.4 Instrument and Method of Data Collection

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured, self-administered questionnaire, developed to assess the constructs of Job Autonomy, Hope, and organisational Citizenship behaviour (OCB). The items for Job Autonomy were adapted from the scale developed by Breugh (1985), which measures employees' perceived control over their work tasks. The Hope scale was adapted from Snyder et al. (1991), focusing on agency and pathways thinking as components of psychological hope. The items measuring organisational Citizenship behaviour were adapted from Podsakoff et al. (1990), which assess discretionary workplace behaviours beneficial to the organisation. Each construct was measured using multiple items rated on a five-

point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The questionnaire was divided into sections by construct, along with a brief demographic section.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS version 3.0. PLS-SEM was chosen due to its strength in handling complex models with latent variables, its predictive orientation, and its tolerance for small to medium sample sizes (Hair et al., 2017). The choice of PLS-SEM is further justified by its suitability for research focused on theory development and prediction, especially in cases where data distribution assumptions may not be strictly met (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2014). Its ability to model complex causal relationships and simultaneously estimate both measurement and structural paths makes it ideal for this study examining how job autonomy and hope influence organisational citizenship behaviour.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The data show the distribution of participants by gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, years of service, and position in the bank. This summary provides an overview of the sample composition used in the study.

Demographic Characteristics

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentages
Gender	Male	61	59.80%
	Female	41	40.20%
	Total	102	100%
Age	20–29	26	25.20%
	30–39	41	39.80%
	40–49	26	25.20%
	50+	10	9.70%
	Total	102	100%
Educational Qualification	Diploma	15	14.70%
	B.Sc.	56	54.90%
	M.Sc.	26	25.50%
	PhD	5	4.90%
	Total	102	100%

Marital Status	Single	36	35.30%
	Married	56	54.90%
	Divorced	5	4.90%
	Widowed	5	4.90%
	Total	102	100%
Years of Service	1–5 years	31	30.40%
	6–10 years	41	40.20%
	11–15 years	20	19.60%
	15+ years	10	9.80%
	Total	102	100%
Position in Bank	Junior Staff	46	45.10%
	Senior Staff	41	40.20%
	Management	15	14.70%
	Total	102	100%

The demographic characteristics of the respondents (n = 102) reveal a fairly balanced composition across key categories, offering insights into the workforce dynamics within the selected banks in Kaduna State. In terms of gender, male employees (59.8%) slightly outnumber females (40.2%), reflecting the continued dominance of men in Nigeria's banking sector, although female participation remains significant. The age distribution indicates that the largest segment of employees falls between 30–39 years (39.8%), followed by those in the 20–29 and 40–49 categories (25.2% each), with only 9.7% aged 50 and above. This suggests that the banks are staffed predominantly by young and middle-aged employees who represent an energetic, career-driven workforce likely to adapt to change and embrace innovative work practices.

Regarding educational qualifications, more than half of the respondents hold a bachelor's degree (54.9%), with additional representation from master's degree holders (25.5%) and diploma holders (14.7%), while a smaller percentage hold PhDs (4.9%). This reflects the high academic standards of employment in Nigeria's banking sector, where a university degree is typically a prerequisite. In terms of marital status, the majority of respondents are married (54.9%), while 35.3% are single and only a small percentage are divorced or widowed (4.9% each). The distribution of years of service shows that employees are fairly evenly spread across categories, with the largest group having 6–10 years of experience (40.2%). This balance indicates both stability and opportunities for growth within the sector. Finally, the distribution of roles shows

that junior staff constitute the largest category (45.1%), closely followed by senior staff (40.2%), with management positions representing 14.7%. This structure is consistent with hierarchical banking institutions, where a broader base of junior and senior staff supports a relatively small management team.

4.2 Assessment of PLS Path Model

Prior to the main analysis, normality and multicollinearity assumptions were met (Hair et al., 2017). After successfully satisfying all assumptions, the data collected were further analysed using SmartPLS software for Partial Least Squares modelling as a statistical process designed to estimate the causal network between two or more constructs and is defined in terms of a theoretical framework (Vinzi, Trinchera, & Amato, 2010, p. 47). To validate and evaluate the model adopted for this study, Hair et al. (2017) recommended a two-stage assessment. They are measurement models (also known as external models) and structural models (also known as internal models).

4.3 Measurement Model

In order to evaluate the measurement model of this study, the researchers evaluated the reliability of the individual items measuring each potential construct, the internal consistency reliability (i.e, composite reliability & Cronbach Alpha), discriminant validity, and the convergence validity of each construct (Henseler et al., 2009). Although, Hair, etc. (2017) proposed an indicator for the scale of development, an outer loading of 0.70, AVE of 0.50, Composite Reliability/Cronbach Alpha of 0.70 is reliable and acceptable. The validity and reliability results are presented in the table below:

Table 2: Measurement Model

Constructs	Indicators	Outer Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Hope	HP1	0.80	0.82	0.86	0.61
	HP2	0.76			
	HP3	0.77			
	HP4	0.79			

Job autonomy	JA1	0.81	0.86	0.90	0.70
	JA2	0.77			
	JA3	0.89			
	JA4	0.88			
organisational citizenship behaviour					
behaviour	OCB1	0.84	0.91	0.94	0.80
	OCB2	0.91			
	OCB4	0.93			
	OCB5	0.89			

Table 2 above shows that all of the constructs are reliable since their values are all above the minimum threshold. The measurement model results demonstrate that all constructs—Hope, Job Autonomy, and organisational Citizenship behaviour (OCB)—exhibit strong psychometric properties. The outer loadings for all indicators exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating good indicator reliability, with values ranging from 0.76 to 0.93. Hope showed solid internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.82, Composite Reliability (CR) of 0.86, and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.61, confirming adequate convergent validity. Job Autonomy also displayed excellent reliability ($\alpha = 0.86$, CR = 0.90, AVE = 0.70), with notably high loadings for JA3 (0.89) and JA4 (0.88). Organisational Citizenship behaviour (OCB) emerged as the most robust construct in the model, with $\alpha = 0.91$, CR = 0.94, and AVE = 0.80, indicating exceptional internal consistency and convergent validity. Overall, these results confirm that the measurement model is reliable and valid, supporting the use of these constructs in further structural analysis.

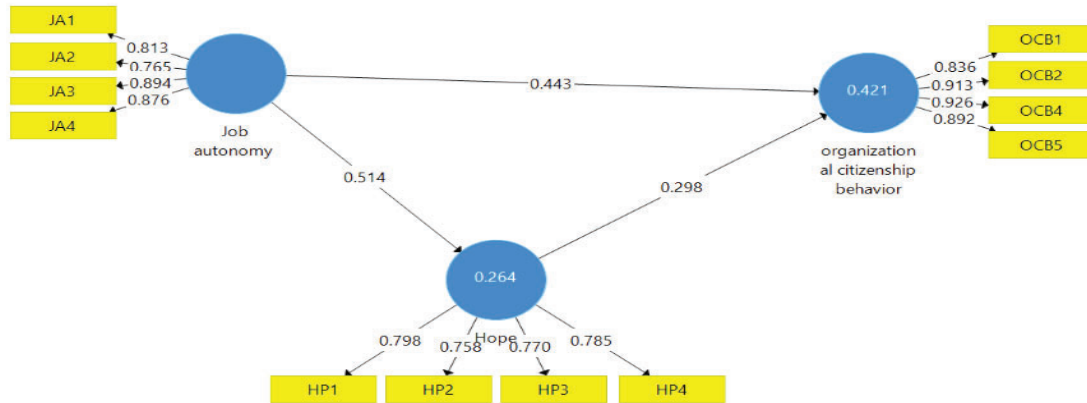


Figure 1: Measurement Model

Furthermore, Duarte and Amaro (2018) advocated the usage of Heterotrait-multimethod (HTMT) matrix as an alternate way to determining discriminant validity as presented in table 3 below:

Table 3: Discriminant validity (Heterotrait-multimethod (HTMT))

Constructs	Hope	Job autonomy	organisational citizenship behavior
Hope			
Job autonomy	0.51		
organisational citizenship behaviour	0.50	0.64	

The HTMT result in Table 3 results of the discriminant validity assessment using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) confirm that the constructs—Hope, Job Autonomy, and organisational Citizenship behaviour (OCB)—are empirically distinct from one another. All HTMT values are well below the conservative threshold of 0.85, as recommended by Hair et al. (2017), with Hope–Job Autonomy at 0.51, Hope–OCB at 0.50, and Job Autonomy–OCB at 0.64. The HTMT result shows that the discriminant validity is achieved since the values are less than 0.85 as recommended by (Hair et al., 2017).

4.4 Structural Model

The structural model is evaluated after all the measurement model requirements are satisfied. In particular, bootstrapping was used on a sampled instance of 50 using 5,000 bootstrap samples to examine the relevance of constructs (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 4: Hypotheses test

Hypothesis	Beta Values	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Job autonomy -> organisational citizenship behaviour	0.44	0.04	10.25	0.00
Hope -> organisational citizenship behaviour	0.30	0.04	7.08	0.00
Job Autonomy → Hope → OCB	0.15	0.04	4.22	0.00

The results of the hypotheses testing reveal that job autonomy has a strong and positive effect on organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = 0.44$, $t = 10.25$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that employees who experience higher levels of autonomy are more likely to demonstrate discretionary behaviors that benefit the organization. Similarly, hope also shows a significant positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = 0.30$, $t = 7.08$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that employees with greater optimism and goal-directed energy are more inclined to engage in such behaviors. Importantly, the mediation analysis confirms that hope significantly mediates the relationship between job autonomy and organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 4.22$, $p < 0.001$). This finding implies that while job autonomy directly fosters citizenship behavior, it also indirectly enhances it by increasing employees' sense of hope. Overall, the results support a model of partial mediation, demonstrating that job autonomy influences organizational citizenship both directly and indirectly through hope.

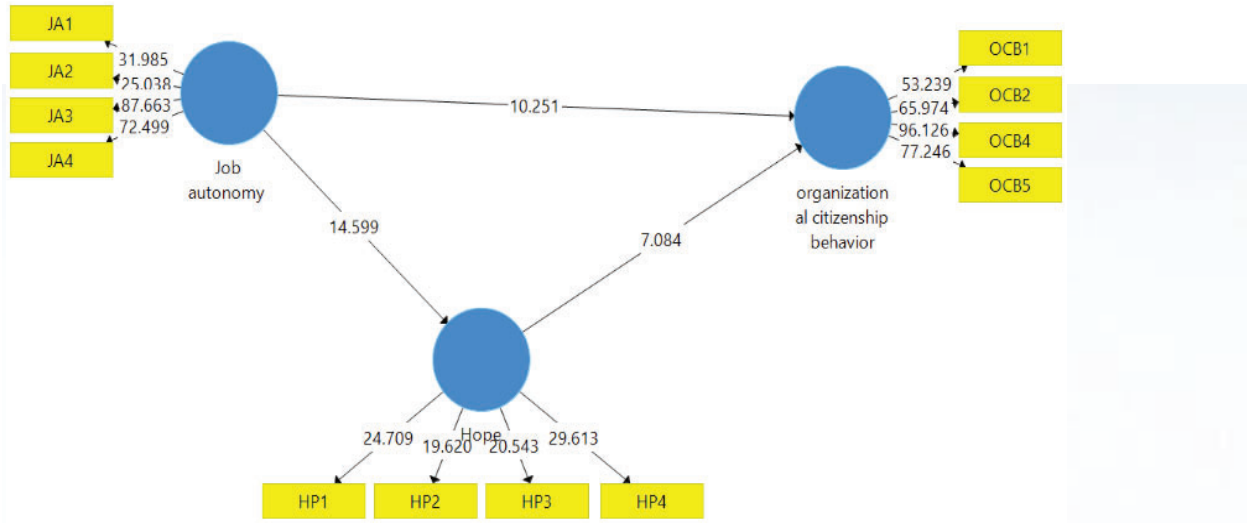


Figure 2: Structural Model

4.5 Coefficient of Determination (R²), Effect size (f²) and Predictive Relevance (Q²)

The coefficient of determination, sometimes referred to as the R-square level, was determined to quantify the amount of variation explained by external latent factors on endogenous latent variables. According to Chin (2010), R² values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 are deemed substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. The f² values summarize the influence or impact that a certain exogenous variable may have on the endogenous variable. 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 are the typical criteria for assessing values of small, medium, and large sizes, respectively (Cohen, 1988). However, the predictive correlation (Q²) of external latent factors was examined in this work using cross-validated redundancy criteria that represent endogenous latent variables, as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5: R-Square, F-Square

Constructs	R	
	Square	R Square Adjusted
Hope	0.26	0.26
organisational citizenship behaviour	0.42	0.42
Constructs	Hope	organisational citizenship behavior
Hope		0.11
Job autonomy	0.36	0.25

The results presented in Table 5 provide insights into the predictive power and effect sizes within the structural model. The R-Square value for Hope is 0.26, indicating that 26% of the variance in Hope is explained by Job Autonomy, reflecting a moderate level of explanatory power. Similarly, the R-Square for organisational Citizenship behaviour (OCB) is 0.42, meaning that 42% of the variation in OCB is jointly explained by both Hope and Job Autonomy, suggesting a substantial level of prediction accuracy in the model.

The F-Square values, which indicate the effect size of each predictor on the endogenous variables, show that Job Autonomy has a large effect on Hope ($f^2 = 0.36$) and a medium effect on OCB ($f^2 = 0.25$). Meanwhile, Hope has a small but meaningful effect on OCB ($f^2 = 0.11$). According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, F-square values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively. Therefore, the model demonstrates both strong explanatory relevance and meaningful practical impact, especially regarding the influence of Job Autonomy on both psychological and behavioural outcomes in the workplace.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study provide strong empirical support for the interconnected influence of job autonomy, hope, and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among employees in selected banks in Zaria, Nigeria. Job autonomy was found to directly and significantly influence OCB ($\beta = 0.44$, $t = 10.25$, $p = 0.00$), confirming that when employees are granted greater freedom and discretion in their roles—such as interacting with customers, managing accounts, or resolving service issues—they are more inclined to demonstrate discretionary behaviours that support team functioning and organisational

performance. This outcome reinforces the Self-Determination Theory, which argues that autonomy enhances intrinsic motivation and strengthens commitment to organisational goals. In the banking context, this translates into employees voluntarily assisting colleagues during peak service hours, volunteering for additional assignments, and maintaining customer-focused attitudes beyond formal requirements.

Hope also emerged as a significant predictor of OCB ($\beta = 0.30$, $t = 7.08$, $p = 0.00$), suggesting that employees with a hopeful disposition—characterised by goal-directed thinking and proactive problem-solving—are more likely to engage in behaviours that go beyond their contractual duties. Within the high-pressure environment of banking halls, where employees must manage demanding customers and strict performance benchmarks, hope serves as a vital psychological resource. It empowers staff to remain resilient, cooperative, and engaged, thereby contributing to a more supportive and high-performing workforce.

Most importantly, the study highlights the mediating role of hope in the job autonomy–OCB relationship. The indirect effect ($\beta = 0.153$, $t = 4.22$, $p = 0.00$) demonstrates that job autonomy not only directly influences OCB but also enhances it by fostering hope. This finding fills a critical gap in the literature, as prior studies had acknowledged autonomy and psychological capital as drivers of positive workplace outcomes but had not fully explored how hope acts as a psychological pathway, particularly within the Nigerian banking sector. By empirically confirming hope's mediating role, this study advances theoretical understanding of how structural job resources translate into pro-social behaviours in the workplace.

From a practical perspective, these results suggest that granting employee's autonomy achieves more than improved task efficiency—it cultivates a hopeful mindset that drives voluntary, citizenship-oriented behaviours essential for organisational sustainability and competitiveness. Thus, the findings offer both theoretical and managerial evidence that sustaining positive discretionary behaviour in the banking sector can be achieved by adopting autonomy-supportive practices while simultaneously nurturing employee hope.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the relationships between job autonomy, hope, and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among employees in selected banks in Zaria, Nigeria, providing robust empirical evidence for a model that integrates structural job characteristics with psychological capital. The findings established that job autonomy significantly enhances OCB while also fostering hope, and that hope in turn positively influences OCB. This demonstrates that when bank employees are granted greater

decision-making freedom, they not only experience increased psychological optimism but are also more motivated to engage in discretionary behaviours that go beyond formal job expectations.

The explanatory power of the model, indicated by R^2 values of 0.26 for hope and 0.42 for OCB, underscores the importance of these constructs in shaping positive workplace outcomes. Moreover, the effect size results—particularly the strong influence of job autonomy on hope—highlight the practical significance of autonomy-supportive practices in service-driven contexts like banking. These findings validate the view that structural job resources and psychological strengths work hand in hand to cultivate a workforce that is resilient, collaborative, and committed to organisational success.

In conclusion, this study affirms that in the context of the Nigerian banking sector—specifically in Zaria—enhancing employee autonomy and building psychological resources like hope are not just beneficial for individual staff satisfaction but are also strategic tools for improving organisational performance. These insights should guide bank leaders, HR professionals, and policy makers in designing employee engagement strategies that prioritize empowerment, motivation and a culture of voluntary commitment to organisational goals.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, which examined the influence of job autonomy and hope on organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among employees of selected banks in Zaria, the following practical recommendations are proposed to strengthen staff motivation, engagement and discretionary performance:

1. Branch managers and supervisors should provide frontline employees with more discretion in how they serve customers, handle transactions, and resolve minor service issues. Reducing excessive supervision and allowing staff to exercise professional judgment will foster a stronger sense of responsibility and initiative.
2. Bank management should design targeted training modules that build psychological resources such as hope and optimism. This may include goal-setting workshops, career progression planning, and resilience coaching to help employees remain motivated in the face of workplace challenges.
3. Banking institutions should consider restructuring roles to include a broader range of tasks, increased decision-making authority, and opportunities for leadership at all levels. This will enhance job satisfaction and encourage proactive behaviours beyond formal role descriptions.
4. Banks should create reward systems to recognise employees who go beyond their job requirements—such as those who support team members, volunteer for additional tasks, or

promote customer satisfaction. Recognition can be both formal (e.g., employee of the month) and informal (e.g., verbal appreciation).

5. Human Resource departments in Zaria-based banks should regularly assess levels of perceived autonomy, hope and citizenship behaviour using employee feedback tools. These insights can help tailor HR policies and management practices that enhance overall organisational effectiveness.

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