Empathetic Leadership: Motivating Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Strengthen Leader-Member Exchange Relationships

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Abstract

Empathetic leadership can motivate employees to become more productive and improve job satisfaction. Motivation is a self-initiated behavior that influences organizational citizenship behavior. However, empathy remains a vague psychological construct that requires research into different forms of empathy. This study applied illocutionary (empathetic) speech to determine the ability to predict organizational citizenship behavior in the leader-member exchange relationship. Additionally, locutionary (meaning-making) and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech was introduced to establish factors that may strengthen that relationship. The study consisted of three hundred nine full-time employees and revealed that illocutionary (empathetic) speech significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior. Locutionary (meaning-making) and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech strengthened that relationship and are consistent with felicity conditions. Therefore, leaders, managers, and supervisors should attend workshops or executive coaching to develop communication strategies based on empathetic, direction-giving, and meaning-making speech to motivate employee organizational citizenship in leader-member exchange relationships.

Keywords: empathetic leadership, motivating language, organizational citizenship behavior

1. Introduction

Intrinsic motivation is a necessary developmental process that links employee performance to behavioral outcomes. The organizational support theory suggests that motivation is a self-regulating behavior driven by supportive leaders (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Self-regulating behaviors are in alignment with organizational citizenship behavior studies. Organizational citizenship behavior is self-initiated employee actions that go above normal duties and responsibilities (King et al., 2016; Sferrazzo, 2021). Empathy is a supportive technique that may activate organizational citizenship behavior. However, empathy remains a vague psychological construct, and more research into different types of empathy can advance the literature on employee motivation (Załuski, 2017; Shin et al., 2019).

Organizational leadership studies primarily focus on affective and cognitive empathy. Leaders who apply affective empathy will match employee emotions. Załuski (2017) gives credit to Hatfield et al. (2014) for coining the term "emotional contagion." Emotional contagion is attunement to employee temperaments. However, affective empathy is not sustainable over time which can be problematic for leadership well-being. Comparatively, cognitive empathy is a leader's ability to consider their employees' points of view. Consequently, affective and cognitive empathy are less effective without leadership communication that compels employees into action (Wibowo & Paramita, 2022).

This study fill gaps in the literature by identifying forms of empathy (Załuski, 2017) by applying the motivational language theory. Motivational language theory consists of illocutionary (empathetic), locutionary (meaning-making), and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech. Illocutionary or empathetic speech creates supportive environments (House, 1972) and psychological bonds between employees and the organization (Hassan et al., 2013). Additionally, organizational citizenship behavior is a self-initiated behavior that will advance the literature on factors that motivate employee actions (Shin et al., 2019). Therefore, illocutionary (empathetic) speech should motivate organizational citizenship behavior. If this theory is true, illocutionary speech is a type of empathetic leadership communication (Załuski, 2017; Shin et al., 2019).

Motivating language theory's perlocutionary (direction giving) speech persuades and conveniences a person to do something. Comparatively, locutionary (meaning-making) speech relays meaningful utterances or promises. Wibowo and Paramita (2022) suggest that empathetic leadership must compel action. Direction-giving and meaning-making may compel employee action by strengthening the correlation between illocutionary speech and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, if perlocutionary (direction-giving) and locutionary (meaning-making) speech compel employees into action; then action will strengthen the effect between illocutionary (empathy) and organizational citizenship behavior.

The findings from this research have two purposes. First, this research will fill gaps in the literature by exploring different types of empathy (Załuski, 2017). Second, this research will introduce organizational citizenship behavior as self-initiated to measure employee motivation (Shin et al., 2019). The goal is to operationalize empathetic communication that motivates employees toward achieving organizational goals by answering the following questions.

RQ1: Does illocutionary (empathetic) speech positively affect organizational citizenship behavior?

RQ2: Does perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech strengthen the relationship between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior?

RQ3: Does locutionary (meaning-making) speech strengthen the relationship between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior?

2. Literature Review

The trait activation theory explains that leadership cues positively influence employees' intrinsic reward, work behavior and attitudes, and job performance. Comparatively, the self-regulation theory is a decision-making process salient for motivating employee behaviors. Trait activation theory and self-regulation theory describe how leadership cues can regulate and alter the self-regulating behaviors of employees (Good et al., 2016). However, the social exchange theory explains that employees view leadership as a social relationship (Ashkansay & Humphrey, 2011) that may better explain empathetic leadership's correlation with organizational citizenship behavior.

Organizational citizenship behavior is an employee self-initiated behavior without seeking formal rewards or recognition while promoting organizational functioning. Organ (1988) suggested that organizational citizenship behavior's dimensions include altruism, courtesy, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. Podsakoff et al. (2003) added peacekeeping and cheerleading as personality traits that align with transformational, transactional, and servant leader leadership (Chiaburu et al., 2011; Taylor, 2013; Cho & Song, 2021). The leadership-member exchange theory can explain empathetic leadership's ability to motivate employee behavior. Table 1 describes the three stages of the leader-member exchange theory that may better explain employee motivating behaviors.

	Meaning
Role-taking	Leaders assess employee skills and abilities.
Role-making	Leaders separate employees into in-groups and out-groups based on trustworthy performance. Trustworthy employees are categorized as in-groups, and unmotivated/low-performing employees are put into out-groups and receive less responsibility.
Routinization	Motivated employees are perceived as in leadership in-group by out-group employees. Out-group employees are more likely to distrust and resist change management because of the perceived difficulty of acceptance into the in-group.

Table 1. Leader-member Exchange Stages

Description: Social exchange relationship process creating "us" versus "them" motivating groups

Research on leadership-member exchange theory concludes that leaders should employ several styles to reduce employee perceptions that may erode organizational effectiveness (Fein & Tziner, 2021). Therefore, the leadership-member exchange relationship may be a social exchange process to identify "us" versus "them" power dynamics that may erode organizational citizenship behavior.

The social exchange theory proposes that employees accept social exchange relationships as leadership. The fundamental premise of social exchange theory is that one size does not fit all (Fuller, 2022). Social exchange theory can advance our understanding of high-quality leader-subordinate social relationships that lead to self-initiated behaviors such as motivation. Moreover, high-quality leader-subordinate social exchanges may influence organizational citizenship behavior.

Organizational citizenship behavior is an informal psychological agreement between the employee and the organization based on altruism, sportsmanship, and civic virtue (Ahmad et al., 2020; Jehanzeb, 2020). Altruism is responsible for employee behaviors that help co-workers. Sportsmanship describes an employee's ability to accept conditions without complaining. Civic virtue explains the set of behaviors that impact productivity and strategic objectives. Potipiroon and Faerman's (2016) findings confirmed that motivation engages organizational citizenship behavior. Self-motivated employees care about work and positively impact co-workers (Belle, 2013; Potipiroon & Faerman, 2020). Therefore, Mayfield and Mayfield (2015) motivating language theory's illocutionary (empathetic) speech that may influence organizational citizenship behavior.

Mayfield et al. (2017) advanced Sullivan's (1988) motivation language theory by proposing it as a strategic leadership and managerial process. Motivating language theory is a leader-subordinate verbal communication model, which has a significant positive relationship with employee decision-making (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2015) and job satisfaction (Mayfield et al., 2017; Kock et al., 2018). However, the findings from this research suggest that leaders who apply motivating language speech categories can account for the felicity conditions in Table 2.

Terms	Definitions
Essential Conditions	Employees perceive leadership communication as a form of promise. Leaders
	who quote others, though identical in locutionary properties, fail to promise
	because it is representative (Kock et al., 2018).
Sincerity Conditions	Employees perceive leadership communication as an "in good faith" expression.
	For example, employees must believe in fulfilling their leader's statements
	(Kock et al., 2018).
Preparatory Conditions	Employees perceive that the leader can do what they claim can be done. Leaders
	should only do what they can do (Kock et al., 2018).

Language is essential to leadership effectiveness as a communicator. Influential leaders can inspire, motivate, and create a shared purpose among organizational employees. Motivating language is a framework that guides leadership communication toward a highly relational process that develops an emotional or psychological tie with employees (Mayfield et al., 2015). Motivating language theory believes leadership is relational, reflective, and authentic and creates a shared meaning (Monnot, 2016; Jian & Fairhurst, 2017). Figure 1 represents locutionary (meaning-making) and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech that may strengthen illocutionary (empathetic) speech on organizational citizenship behavior.



Figure 1. Graphic representation of motivating language under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) licensed by Milton and Jacqueline Mayfield at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

Motivating language is a leadership strategy employees perceive as supportive and may produce desirable behaviors such as job performance, satisfaction, and organizational commitment, which have organizational citizenship behavior attributes. Organizational citizenship behavior measures individual behavior not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system (Organ, 1988). Additionally, organizational citizenship behavior meets basic employee needs through inspirational supportive work environments, which positively influence productivity, general initiative, proactive behavior, and job/life satisfaction (Meynhardt et al., 2020). Empathetic leadership is a relational and supportive employee strategy (Bani-Melhem et al., 2021). It is beneficial to explore illocutionary (empathetic) speech as a psychological concept to meet Załuski's (2017)

suggestion that organizational leaders require further research into types of empathy.

Literature suggests that leaders willing to share expertise with employees are forms of illocutionary speech (Yukl, 1989). Leaders who insert illocutionary verbiage will promise, vow, or challenge employees. An illocutionary (empathetic) language is a communication tool that expresses ideas and feelings. Empathetic leaders institute the pronoun "I" in front of empathetic messages. Because leadership institutes the pronoun "I," employees perceive communication as a promise. This effect is consistent with leader-member exchanges and directly integrates with Essential Conditions presented by Kock et al. (2019) definition in Table 2.

The leader-member exchange focuses on relationships between managers and members. Routinization is a stage of leader-member exchange that reveals that employees work harder to maintain a trusting relationship. Reich and Zautra (1991) suggest that relationship quality can degrade over time, but the motivating language may reduce that erosion (Rowley et al., 1998; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016). Illocutionary (empathetic) speech has attributes consistent with affective and cognitive empathy (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Additionally, research confirms that empathetic leadership is a social exchange relationship (Kock et al., 2019). Nonetheless, it is unknown to what extent illocutionary (empathetic) speech influences this type of connection that motivate self-initiated behaviors. Thus, this study proposes the following hypotheses.

H1a: Illocutionary (empathetic speech) will not influence organizational citizenship behavior.

H1b: Illocutionary (empathetic speech) will positively correlate with organizational citizenship behavior.

Locutionary (meaning-making) is a form of referential communication. Leaders who integrate locutionary language are more likely to precisely articulate the organization's mission and vision (Sarros et al., 2014). Leaders who can leverage this force can give clear-cut directions and explanations. Additionally, referential communication is a skill necessary for practical discourse. Giving clear directions may persuade employees to into action.

Trust is a psychological state that builds employee faith that the leader can do the job (Rousseau, 1998). Locutionary (meaning-making) relates to sincerity conditions that employees must believe the leader can fulfill their claims (Kock et al., 2019). It is likely that locutionary (meaning-making) speech may help employees orient themselves to unique workplace environments (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2015) and increase obligation and motivation (Kock et al., 2019). These actions suggest that leaders will more likely consider the employee's point of view (Powell & Roberts, 2017) and may strengthen the relationship between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, this research proposes the following hypotheses.

H2a: Locutionary (meaning-making) will not moderate illocutionary (empathetic) organizational citizenship behavior.

H2b: Locutionary (meaning-making) will strengthen the effect on illocutionary (empathetic) and organizational citizenship behavior.

Employees who perceive leadership communication as persuasive or convincing are more likely to accomplish tasks given by their supervisor. Sullivan (1988) reveals that perlocutionary speech increases job satisfaction and performance. Perlocutionary speech is getting someone to do something by persuading or convincing. However, this research suggests that perlocutionary speech must apply the Preparatory condition in Table 2. The Preparatory condition states that employees perceive leaders can do what they claim can be done (Kock et al., 2019) and should strengthen the empathetic speech influence on organizational citizenship behavior relationship. Table 3 lists the motivating language theory's empathetic, meaning-making, and direction-giving speech.

Motivator		Definition			
Illocutionary	Empathetic	Communication that facilitates interpersonal relationships, such as praise for wor well done, reflection on point of view, consideration for personal problems (Sullivar 1988; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022).			
Locutionary	Meaning-Making	Communicate cultural norms and expectations to workers. Facilitates decision-making by expressing employees' cultural values, norms, and goals (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016).			
Perlocutionary	Direction Giving Uncertainty Reducing	Work objectives and rewards are transparent by clarifying duties and responsibilities (Sullivan, 1998; Yukl, 2013).			

Table 3. Motivating Language Speech

Perlocutionary speech relates to obtaining pathways to organizational goals (Yukl, 2013) which may motivate employees into action. Therefore, the research proposes the following hypotheses.

H3a: Perlocutionary or direction-giving/uncertainty reduction speech will not mediate empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

H3b: Perlocutionary direction-giving/uncertainty reduction speech will strengthen the effect on empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

Figure 2 contains the conceptual model for motivating language and organizational citizenship behavior.

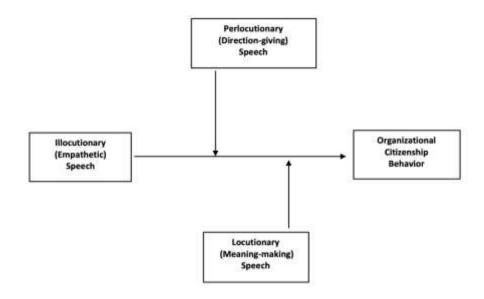


Figure 2. Perlocutionary (direction-giving/uncertainty reduction) and locutionary (meaning-making) speech moderating effects on illocutionary (empathetic) speech with organizational citizenship behavior conceptual model

2. Method

This study was a cross-sectional, correlational study to examine the moderation effects between empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The population consisted of full-time employees within the United States. Full-time employees were to determine the influence of motivating language within the leader-member social exchange relationship. Part-time employees were not considered in this study. Part-time employees are less likely to work consistently with a leader, which leads to erroneous survey responses by alternating between career positions and leaders. The US Bureau of Labor and Statistics calculated that approximately 132.3 million full-time employees were between the ages of 18-to->60. Cochran's (1977) sample size formula was used based on a 95% confidence interval (CI) and a 4-6% margin of error. The analysis suggested that >267 participants were appropriate for this study. Therefore, 330 participants were contacted via SurveyMonkey to validate the moderating effect of directive given-uncertainty reduction and meaning-making measurement scales on empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

This study applied motivating language's empathetic speech scale identified by Kock et al. (2018) and Mayfield and Mayfield (2012; 2016) to measure empathetic leadership. For example, "My supervisor gives me praise for my good work." Additionally, a 10-item direction given/uncertainty reduction and 8-item meaning-making scale by Mayfield and Mayfield (2012) is applied to observe moderation between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Organizational citizenship behavior relies on a 3-item scale developed by Linden and validated by Babalola et al. (2019) using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree).

Microsoft Excel and IBM Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) were used to calculate responses and test hypotheses. First, the methodology consisted of accounting for missing and outlier data. Next, Cronbach's alpha coefficient determined the reliability of the empathetic leadership, direction-giving/uncertainty reduction, meaning-making, and organizational citizenship behavior measurement scales were reliable. Second, the items were transformed into the proper variables. Third, Pearson's correlation established a significant positive

relationship between empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Fourth, a simple linear regression was applied to determine the potential predictability of empathetic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior. Fifth, a significant regression exists between empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior; a moderation test using direction-giving/uncertainty reduction and meaning-making shall be introduced into the model. Sixth, a mediation analysis will determine if the direction-giving/uncertainty reduction or meaning-making better explains how empathetic leadership may influence organizational citizenship behavior. Lastly, an ANOVA analysis of gender and age was done to evaluate any differences in participant responses to organizational citizenship behavior.

3. Results

Surveys were sent to 330 full-time employees via SurveyMonkeyTM. Participants were informed that no personally identifiable information (PII) would be collected or used in this study. Additionally, each respondent must be >18 years of age to participate. As a result, 317 surveys were returned, which is >267 according to Cochran's (1977) sample size formula based on a 95% confidence interval (CI) and a 6% margin of error. The data collection did not contain missing data. However, eight outliers were omitted from the data set. There were 309 total responses used to study correlation, regression, and moderating effects to accept or reject the null hypotheses in this study. The most frequently observed age category was 45-60 (n = 137, 44.34%) and gender was Female (n = 168, 54.37%) presented in Table 4.

Variable	n	%
Age		
18-29	49	15.86
30-44	88	28.48
45-60	137	44.34
>60	35	11.33
Missing	0	0.00
Gender		
Male	141	45.63
Female	168	54.37
Missing	0	0.00

Table 4. Participant Frequencies and Percentages

Note. Due to rounding errors, percentages may not equal 100%.

If skewness is greater than 2, the variable is considered asymmetrical about its mean. Comparatively, if kurtosis is greater than or equal to 3, the distribution is less likley normally distributed and produce outliers. The items ae within skewness and kurtosis acceptable levels and summary statistics can be found in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary Statistics Table for Interval and Ratio Variables

Variable	М	SD	n	SE_M	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
DG_Q1	3.73	1.02	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.97	0.60
DG_Q2	3.64	1.00	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.69	-0.05
DG_Q3	3.65	1.00	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.71	0.08
DG_Q4	3.61	1.01	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.73	0.19
DG_Q5	3.32	1.11	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.41	-0.54
DG_Q6	3.58	1.01	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.60	-0.09
DG_Q7	3.51	1.11	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.55	-0.42
DG_Q8	3.48	1.08	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.57	-0.27
DG_Q9	3.36	1.07	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.32	-0.55
DG_Q10	3.44	1.11	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.60	-0.24
EMP_Q1	3.77	1.09	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.89	0.28
EMP_Q2	3.72	1.12	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.76	-0.13
EMP_Q3	3.53	1.12	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.49	-0.40
EMP_Q4	3.58	1.13	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.66	-0.30
EMP_Q5	3.43	1.17	309	0.07	1.00	5.00	-0.44	-0.63
EMP_Q6	3.97	1.04	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-1.02	0.56
MM_Q1	3.31	1.15	309	0.07	1.00	5.00	-0.15	-0.90

MM_Q2	3.49	1.08	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.53	-0.36
MM_Q3	3.19	1.08	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.17	-0.62
MM_Q4	3.19	1.12	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.21	-0.73
MM_Q5	2.96	1.18	309	0.07	1.00	5.00	-0.03	-0.82
MM_Q6	2.97	1.11	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.07	-0.66
MM_Q7	3.10	1.12	309	0.06	1.00	5.00	-0.17	-0.62
MM_Q8	3.15	1.15	309	0.07	1.00	5.00	-0.31	-0.82
OCB_Q1	4.81	1.86	309	0.11	1.00	7.00	-0.70	-0.77
OCB_Q2	5.61	1.45	309	0.08	1.00	7.00	-1.36	1.24
OCB_Q3	5.16	1.70	309	0.10	1.00	7.00	-1.10	0.08
OCB_Q4	5.68	1.39	309	0.08	1.00	7.00	-1.59	2.19
OCB_Q5	5.37	1.49	309	0.08	1.00	7.00	-1.23	0.98

Note. '-' indicates the statistic is undefined due to constant data or insufficient sample size. DG = Direction-giving; EMP = Empathetic; MM = Meaning-making; OCB= Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was evaluated using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2018), where > .9 excellent, > .8 good, > .7 acceptable, > .6 questionable, > .5 poor, and \leq .5 unacceptable. Rowley et al. (1998) Cronbach's alpha scale reliability for direction-giving at .95, empathetic speech at .97, meaning-making speech at .93, and organizational citizenship behavior at .86 (Meynhardt et al., 2020). Table 6 presents the reliability analysis results; all measurements were >.7, indicating good to excellent reliability.

Table 6. Reliability Table

Scale	No. of Items	α	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
DG	10	.93	.92	.94
EMP	6	.91	.90	.92
MM	8	.92	.91	.93
OCB	5	.78	.75	.81

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval.

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Cohen's standard (1988) evaluated the strength of the relationship, where coefficients .10-to-.29 represent a small effect size, .30-to-.49 is a moderate effect size, and coefficients .50 or greater indicate a large effect size.

The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 with a significant positive relationship between empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship having a moderate effective size of .45 (p < .001, 95.00% CI = [.35, .53]). This analysis suggested that organizational citizenship behavior increased with increases in empathetic leadership. Table 7 presents the results of the correlation.

Table 7. Pearson Correlation Results on Empathetic Speech and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	р
EMP-OCB	.45	[.35, .53]	309	< .001

A linear regression analysis was next to assess if empathetic leadership significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior. The linear regression results were significant, indicating that approximately 20.09% of the variance in organizational citizenship behavior was explained by illocutionary (empathetic) speech (F(1,307) = 77.18, p < .001, R2 = .20). Illocutionary (empathetic) speech significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior, B = 0.47, t(307) = 8.79, p < .001. These findings indicated that, on average, a one-unit increase in illocutionary (empathetic) speech would increase the value of organizational citizenship behavior by 0.47 units. Table 8 summarizes the results of the regression model.

Table 8.	Results	for Line	ar Regression	n with EMPTH	T predicting OCB

Variable	В	SE	95.00% CI	β	t	р
(Intercept)	16.31	1.21	[13.93, 18.70]	0.00	13.48	< .001
EMP-OCB	0.47	0.05	[0.36, 0.57]	0.45	8.79	< .001
1	77.10	001 D2	20 I I 1	1 5		OCD

Note. Results: F(1,307) = 77.18, p < .001, R2 = .20 Unstandardized Regression Equation: OCB = 16.31+ 0.47*EMP

Illocutionary (empathetic) must significantly predict organizational citizenship behavior in the simple effects model and the interaction must explain significantly more variance than the non-interaction model on

organizational citizenship behavior (Netemeyer et al., 2001). Illocutionary (empathetic) significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior, B = 0.47, t(307) = 8.79, p < .001. The partial F-test (F(1,305) = 4.37, p = .037) indicated that the interaction model explained significantly more variance than the non-interaction model based on an alpha of .05. Since EMP significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior and the interaction model explained significantly more variance of organizational citizenship behavior than the non-interaction model. Direction-giving moderation alpha of .05, B = 0.01, t(305) = 2.09, p = .037. The results indicated that a one-unit increase in perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech is a 0.01 increase in the slope of organizational citizenship behavior. Perlocutionary (direction-giving) was dichotomized into High and Low categories to visualize the moderation analysis using a median split. The High category indicated all observations of Perlocutionary (direction-giving) above the median, and the low category specified all perlocutionary (direction-giving) observations below the median (see Table 10).

Predictor	В	SE	β	t	р
Step 1: Simple Effects Model					
(Intercept)	16.31	1.21		13.48	< .001
EMP	0.47	0.05	0.45	8.79	< .001
Step 2: Non-Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	14.13	1.30		10.89	< .001
EMP	0.18	0.09	0.18	2.13	.034
DG	0.24	0.06	0.34	4.07	< .001
Step 3: Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	26.26	0.34		78.23	< .001
EMP	0.22	0.09	0.21	2.47	.014
DG	0.25	0.06	0.35	4.25	< .001
EMP: DG	0.01	0.005	0.11	2.09	.037

Table 10. Moderation Analysis of Perlocutionary (direction-giving) on OCB Predicted Illocutionary (empathetic)

Note: EMP = Illocutionary (empathetic); DG = Perlocutionary (direction-giving).

The simple, non-interaction, and interaction model results are in Table 11.

Table 11. Linear Model Comparison Table between the Non-Interaction and Interaction Model

Model	\mathbb{R}^2	F	df	р
Non-Interaction	0.24			
Interaction	0.25	4.37	1	.037

Moderation analysis assessed whether locutionary (meaning-making) speech moderated the relationship between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior. Illocutionary (empathetic) speech predicted organizational citizenship behavior. Thus a partial F-test explained more variance in organizational citizenship behavior than the non-interaction model (F(1,305) = 5.28, p = .022) indicating that the interaction model explained significantly more variance compared to the non-interaction model and moderation is supported (see Table 12).

Table 12. Moderation Analysis of Locutionary Speech on OCB Predicted by Illocutionary Speech

Predictor	В	SE	β	t	р
Step 1: Simple Effects Model					
(Intercept)	16.31	1.21		13.48	< .001
EMP	0.47	0.05	0.45	8.79	< .001
Step 2: Non-Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	14.44	1.22		11.84	< .001
EMP	0.25	0.07	0.24	3.85	< .001
MML	0.26	0.05	0.32	5.13	< .001
Step 3: Interaction Model					
(Intercept)	26.28	0.32		82.32	< .001
EMP	0.30	0.07	0.29	4.39	< .001
MML	0.25	0.05	0.31	4.85	< .001
EMPTH:MML	0.01	0.006	0.12	2.30	.022

Note EMP = Illocutionary (empathetic); MML = Locutionary (meaning-making).

Locutionary (meaning-making) speech significantly moderated empathetic speech on organizational citizenship behavior based on an alpha of .05, B = 0.01, t(305) = 2.30, p = .022. The results indicated that a one-unit increase in locutionary (meaning-making) speech caused a 0.01 increase in the slope of organizational citizenship behavior. Locutionary (meaning-making) speech was dichotomized into high and low categories to visualize the moderation analysis using a median split. Locutionary (meaning-making) speech is one standard deviation below the mean (18.15), at the mean (25.37) and at one standard deviation above the mean (32.59). Locutionary (meaning-making) speech is 18.15, and the slope of EMP on organizational citizenship behavior was significant with a value of 0.20, p = .004. Locutionary (meaning-making) speech fixed at 25.37, the slope of illocutionary (empathetic) speech on organizational citizenship behavior was significant with a value of 0.30, p < .001. With locutionary (meaning-making) fixed at 32.59, the slope of illocutionary (empathetic) speech on organizational citizenship behavior was significant with a value of 0.30, p < .001. With locutionary (meaning-making) fixed at 32.59, the slope of illocutionary (empathetic) speech on organizational citizenship behavior was significant with a value of 0.30, p < .001. With locutionary (meaning-making) fixed at 32.59, the slope of illocutionary (empathetic) speech on organizational citizenship behavior was significant with a value of 0.40, p < .001. The analysis suggests that as locutionary (meaning-making) speech increases in value, the slope of illocutionary (empathetic) speech on organizational citizenship behavior also increases (see Table 13).

Table 13. Linear Model O	Comparison Table be	tween the Non-Interaction	and Interaction Model
Tuble 15. Emeta Model C	comparison rable be	tween the room interaction	and interaction bloact

Model	\mathbb{R}^2	F		df	р
Non-Interaction	0.26				
Interaction	0.28	5.28	1	.022	

Figure 3 contains the regression and moderation diagram.

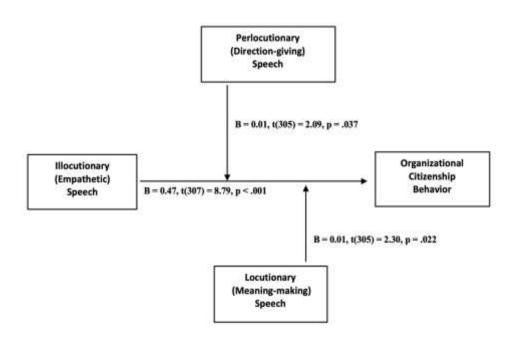


Figure 3. Perlocutionary (direction-giving/uncertainty reduction) and locutionary (meaning-making) speech moderating effects on illocutionary (empathetic) speech with organizational citizenship behavior finalized model.

The study used analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to observe potential differences in participant responses to organizational citizenship behavior by Age and Gender. Using the alpha value of .05, ANOVA results based on employee age and gender were not significant (F(4, 304) = 1.56, p = .186). The main effect, Age, was insignificant at F(3, 304) = 1.59, p = .191, and Gender, was insignificant at F(1, 304) = 1.31, p = .253.

4. Discussion

Previous research revealed that affective, cognitive, and compassionate empathy are supportive leadership attributes (Hatfield, Rapson, & Le, 2009; Powell & Roberts, 2017; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). Employees perceive they are valuable assets when leadership utilizes supportive communication in the leader-member exchange relationship. These conclusions are supported by trait activation theory research confirming that empathetic leadership is a supportive communication tactic influencing self-regulate behaviors (Melhem et al., 2021). The purpose of this research is to determine the influence of illocutionary (empathetic) speech on

organizational citizenship behavior and the moderating effect of perlocutionary (direction-giving) and locutionary (meaning-making) speech on that relationship.

4.1 Theoretical Implication

Previous studies suggested empathetic speech creates supportive environments (House, 1971) and psychological bonds (Yukl, 2013). Motivating language theory's illocutionary (empathetic), locutionary (meaning-making), and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech fills a gap in the literature that additional forms of empathy should be researched to advance organizational leadership (Załuski, 2017). A significant positive correlation between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior was consistent with studies on self-regulating behavior, such as motivation, and influenced employee organizational citizenship behavior (Higgins, 1998; Higgins et al., 2001; Good et al., 2016).

The correlation and regression testing revealed that illocutionary (empathetic) speech advances the leader-member social exchange relationships and motivates employees. The findings are consistent with previous research that suggested that positive exchange relationships are a sign of leadership strength in the workplace (Kock et al., 2019). Additionally, empathetic leadership is supportive and confirms organizational support theoretical research that leader-member support is a motivation tactic that influences self-initiated behavior (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Powell & Roberts, 2017; Wibowo & Paramita, 2022). As a result, illocutionary (empathetic) speech significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior.

Direction-giving and meaning-making significantly strengthen the illocutionary organizational citizenship behavior effect. Therefore, the findings reject the null hypotheses and accept that H2b and H3b strengthens the exchange relationship between illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior. The significant positive relationship confirmed that illocutionary speech as a form of empathy and other motivating communication strengthens exchange relationships (Rowley et al., 1998; Mayfield et al., 2017).

The illocutionary (empathetic) speech had a .93 Cronbach's alpha score to measure supportive characteristics. Comparatively, organizational citizenship behavior had a Cronbach's alpha score of .78, which measured employee self-initiated behavior. As a result, empathetic speech significantly predicted organizational citizenship behavior (B = 0.47, t(307) = 8.79, p < .001.), affirming that supportive communication can motivate employee self-initiated behavior (Melhem et al., 2021). Illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior correlate at .45, indicating a moderate effect size (p < .001, 95.00% CI = [.35, .53]). This correlation concluded that illocutionary (empathetic) speech is another form of empathetic leadership. Therefore, illocutionary (empathetic) speech motivates employees in the leader-member exchange relationship (Kurtessis et al., 2017) based on the positive relationship with organizational citizenship behavior.

4.2 Practical Implications

Empathetic leadership communication motivates employees to go above and beyond regular duties and responsibilities by improving the leader-member exchange relationship. Leaders, managers, and supervisors who communicate illocutionary (empathetic) speech are more likely to motivate employees to meet or exceed organizational goals without seeking rewards or recognition. Rousseau et al. (1998) confirmed that employees perceive trust as a psychological state of faith that the leader can do the job. Comparatively, employees who perceive leaders can also do what they claim is likely to exceed organizational standards (Kock et al., 2018). This is consistent with the moderating effect perlocutionary (direction-giving), and locutionary (meaning-making) had on illocutionary (empathetic) speech and organizational citizenship behavior. Giving directions and providing meaning compel employees to have faith in leadership communication. This outcome is consistent with the felicity conditions and confirms faith as a decisional attribute (Lichtenfeld et al.'s., (2019).

Leaders, managers, and supervisors can integrate felicity conditions to guide empathetic, direction-giving, and meaning-making speech. First, the Essential stage explains that employees will perceive leadership communication as a promise (Kock et al., 2019). Illocutionary (empathetic) speech relates to the essential stage by motivating organizational citizenship behavior. Sincerity is the second stage and describes leadership speech as a 'good faith" expression (Kock et al., 2018). Leaders, managers, and supervisors who apply meaning-making speech will provide employees with the "why" and strengthen the empathetic speech on employee organizational citizenship behavior. Finally, the Preparatory stage states that persons in leadership positions should be able to do what they claim (Kock et al., 2018). Therefore, leaders, managers, and supervisors who give clear and direct instructions strengthen the effect of empathetic communication on organizational citizenship behavior.

Leadership-member exchange requires role-taking, role-making, and routinization. Leaders, managers, and supervisors use role-taking to evaluate employee skills and abilities. Role-taking transitions into the role-making

stage. After evaluating employee performance, leaders, managers, and supervisors will begin to separate employees by dependable/motivated (in-group) and less dependable/unmotivated (out-group) performance. Consequently, this creates an in-group (us) versus an out-group (them) power dynamic, which may degrade empathetic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior in the routinization stage.

Routinization is the employees' perception of leadership favoritism for the leader's in-group members. Consequently, out-group employees are more likely to perceive it as too challenging to be accepted by the leader's in-group. Therefore, leaders, managers, and supervisors should be mindful that out-group employees are likely to develop distrust which can be identified by their resistance to organizational change.

Illocutionary (empathetic), locutionary (meaning-making), and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech motivate employees into action regardless of employee age or gender (Age = F(3, 304) = 1.59, p = .191; Gender = F(1, 304) = 1.31, p = .253). Additionally, leaders, managers, and supervisors can reduce resistance to change identified in the routinization stage. The findings from this study reveal that organizational leaders who communicate using illocutionary (empathetic) speech motivate organizational citizenship behavior and can strengthen that relationship by giving meaning and clear directions to employees.

4.3 Limitations and Future Research

This study uses a cross-sectional, correlational method which introduces limitations. First, the positive relationship between empathetic leadership speech and organizational citizenship behavior can change over time. Future studies should replicate the study to verify the effectiveness of empathetic leadership speech on organizational citizenship behavior over time. Demographics may yield different results. This study addressed age groups and gender. However, additional studies should study the effectiveness of motivating language on racial and cultural demographics.

Three hundred nine participants responded to a Likert-type scale. Surveys that have too many questions can introduce biases or erroneous responses. The survey contained 29 one-sentence questions to address all measurables and demographic to mitigate these factors. Additionally, each question is derivative from previously validated and accepted studies to decrease survey item bias. Finally, Cronbach's alpha confirms that each item measured the variables examined in this study.

Further research is needed to determine whether empathetic leadership communication can reduce destructive behaviors such as knowledge-hiding perceived tolerance deviance. Additionally, other studies should investigate motivating language theory's mediating and moderating effect on transformational leadership. Researchers who investigate these conditions can fill gaps in the literature on factors that reduce destructive behaviors in the workplace. Studies on illocutionary speech may influence forgiveness (Hook et al., 2012) and mitigate workplace crises (Schoofs et al., 2019). Finally, additional research is needed to determine the locutionary (meaning-making) and perlocutionary (direction-giving) speech ability to strengthen employee organizational performance (Kock et al., 2018; Kock et al., 2019).

5. Conclusion

Empathy intrinsically motivates employees and is a necessary developmental process that improves employee performance and positive behavioral outcomes. Nonetheless, empathy is a vague psychological construct, and there is a need to study other forms of empathy on employee motivation (Załuski, 2017). This study applied motiving language theory to empathetic leadership studies. Supportive leadership is an empathetic communication style that motivates employees (Shin et al., 2019) through leader-subordinate verbal communication. Additionally, empathetic leadership communication has a significant positive relationship with employee performance, productivity, job satisfaction (Mayfield et al., 2016; Kock et al., 2018), and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, leaders, managers, and supervisors should attend workshops or executive coaching to learn how to develop communication strategies that include empathetic, direction-giving, and meaning-making languages to motivate organizational citizenship behavior amongst employees.

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