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Abstract

Career and Employability Skills (C&ES) training programs are developing as a method to train students to be effective workplace citizens. Despite the increasing popularity of C&ES training programs, there has been little academic research on their effectiveness, particularly at teaching organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The purpose of this study was to examine whether a C&ES training program had an impact on the OCB intentions of participants. The study consisted of a sample of 135 recent high school graduates of a rural high school who completed a 24-item survey measuring a five-dimension model of OCB: conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, altruism, and courtesy. Participants also completed a 10-item trait level conscientiousness measure and a 13-item social desirability measure. Results indicated that participants in a C&ES training program reported significantly higher intentions to engage in many OCBs, including conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship and altruism. However, when controlling for trait level conscientiousness, only courtesy intentions were significantly higher for those participating in C&ES programs. These results form a first step towards demonstrating the efficacy of C&ES training programs to influence participants’ OCBs in the workplace. This research has implications for the effectiveness of C&ES training programs, particularly the training of participants to exhibit higher levels of overall OCB.
Chapter I

Review of the Literature

College has become a common next step for graduates after receiving a high school education in America. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 68% of 2011 high school graduates were enrolled in college and 91% of these college students were enrolled as full time students (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). In the 2013 book, *Is College Worth It?*, authors Jay Bennet (former US Secretary of Education) and David Wilezol (graduate student and writer) outlined many problems with graduates automatically going to college after graduation. Among these were the high debt and unemployment rates of college graduates. Bennet and Wilezol are not alone in this notion. For example, Pete Thiel, co-founder of Paypal, agreed that college has become the default pursuit for high school graduates, who often may be neglecting options better suited to their needs (Riley, 2001). Though Thiel’s statements were mainly based on personal observations of the professional and collegiate landscape, Bennet and Wilezol cited both respected sources and US government statistics to demonstrate the high debt rates and unemployment rates of college graduates.

Going to college does not guarantee gainful employment and may lead to students going into excessive debt. Only 55% of the 2,142 adults polled said that college prepared them for the workplace (Taylor et al., 2011). The U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Labor found that 54% of recent college graduates were unemployed or underemployed (Bruni, 2012). These numbers suggest that college no longer guarantees students gainful employment. In fact, the total US college loan debt passed 1 trillion dollars in 2010 exceeding the total amount of credit card
THE IMPACT OF C&ES TRAINING PROGRAMS ON OCB INTENTION

Debt for the first time in history (Mitchel & Jackson-Randall, 2012; Vise, 2012). Moreover, the cost of college has risen dramatically in recent years. Between 1990 and 2012, the average price of tuition increased at four times the rate of inflation (Liang, 2012). These statistics are causing economists to fear that students will collapse under the weight of their student loan debts.

The emphasis on college has also generated unanticipated effects on industrial and manufacturing businesses. Companies have encountered a need to fill mid-level management positions for which college graduates are over-qualified and high school graduates are under-qualified. In his quest to build a curriculum that would produce students ready to be good citizens of an organization, Chertavian (2012) found that most businesses were looking for employees with soft skills that were not included in the typical four-year degree process. For instance, employers were interested in finding young employees who valued promptness and had the social skills to handle beneficial supervisor feedback. Such feedback has made soft skills a hallmark career readiness programs, such as Chertavian’s Year Up Program. Called various names in the literature, a career readiness program is an additional year or two of technical and soft skills training to equip high school students and graduates with the skills necessary to be effective members of a modern workforce. These programs typically involve internships and course work customized to build skills vital to the workplace (Foroohar, 2014). The trend of career readiness programs is supported by Bennet and Wisezol (2013), who describe that the apprenticeship and trade programs must be developed to supplement overpriced and generic university programs.

Yet, few large-scale programs are successfully addressing the gap between college success and career readiness. One such program is the Year Up program in Atlanta, GA (Chertavian, 2012). This program assists underprivileged young adults through a combination of
technical and professional skills development, as well as offering GED and college classes. Although there is circumstantial evidence that this combination of technical and professional trainings benefits participants, these programs have yet to be examined in an academic setting. In fact, Year Up and similar programs feature training in citizenship behaviors, such as working in teams and compliance with workplace prosocial norms (Chertavian, 2012). These OCBs have been linked to individual and organizational success (Chertavian, 2012; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). Consequently, the present study was designed to examine whether participating in career readiness programs is associated with an intention for exhibiting OCBs in the workplace.

**Organizational Citizenship Behaviors**

Employee behaviors that go beyond clearly specified expectations have been of interest to many researchers and business practitioners over the last few decades (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). The idea began with a concept of willingness to cooperate, which denoted a disposition of certain employees to surpass workplace expectations to assist the company (Barnard, 1968). As theory developed around these behaviors and their roles in the workplace, their relative importance to the day-to-day operation of successful companies became more apparent (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Many researchers speculated that the most desirable workplace outcomes are in some way linked back to these unspecified acts of teamwork (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith, Organ, & Near 1983). Researchers began contributing evidence for a specific construct regarding employee’s willingness and aptitude to make workplace contributions that were not formally outlined by management (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith et al. 1983). The researchers called these desirable actions “organizational citizenship behaviors,” also referred to as OCBs.
In one of his foundational works on OCB, Organ (1988) defined OCB as, “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (p. 4). OCBs would be later re-defined as behaviors that, despite not being rewarded, actually predict overall task performance of a workplace (Organ, 1997a). Organ (1997a) tweaked the definition of OCBs to more broadly incorporate all behaviors that support the social and psychological environment of a workplace. This revised definition has several advantages such as reinforcing the distinction between OCB and task behavior, consistent with Borman and Motowidlo’s (1997) conceptualization of contextual performance. The revised definition also clarifies that OCBs are not explicitly linked to formal rewards, yet often play a role in supervisors’ decisions during the process of reward distribution (Podsakoff et al., 2009). OCBs are not formally documented requirements of a job within an organization, but they collectively add to a more effective and healthy workplace, offering intangible benefits, such as team cohesion and healthy interoffice dynamics (Organ, 1997a).

**OCBs, prosocial behaviors, and contextual performance.** The concept of extra-role employee contributions is not exclusively represented by OCB in the literature. There are two other constructs worth noting that attempt to describe employee behavior in a way that allows researchers and practitioners to better understand what makes an effective work environment. The first construct is prosocial organizational behavior (POB), and the second is contextual performance. These two constructs will be described briefly below and differentiated from OCB.

Prosocial organizational behavior is defined by Brief and Motowidlo (1986) as being (a) performed by a member of an organization; (b) directed towards an individual, group, or organization with whom he or she interacts while carrying out his or her organizational role; and
(c) performed with the intention of promoting the welfare of the individual, group, or organization toward which it is directed. POB is mediated by individual and situational factors which create a variety of outcomes (McNeely & Meglino, 1994). However, POB is not always beneficial for the company; in fact, it can be dysfunctional behavior done with prosocial intentions (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986). For example, if an employee punches the time card of a sick co-worker allowing them to arrive at work late, the employee is trying to promote the welfare of the co-worker. Regardless of good intentions, the company could consider this example of POB counter productive to the overall interests of the organization. POB’s variability of positive and negative outcomes at the individual, group, or organization level is a major differentiating factor from OCB, which is behavior that focuses on being a good organizational citizen. Given that OCBs benefit the organization whereas some POBs may benefit individuals at the determent of the organization, OCBs, and not POBs, will be examined in the present study.

Borman and Motowidlo (1997) differentiated between contextual and task performance in order to demonstrate that work performance consisted of more than just task performance as well as indicate that citizenship behaviors are a part of job performance. Borman and Motowidlo defined task performance as “the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organizations technical core either directly by implementing a part of its technological process, or indirectly by providing it with needed materials or services” (p. 99). Likewise, Borman and Motowidlo defined contextual activities as those that “shape the organizational, social, and psychological context that serves as the catalyst for task activities and processes” (p. 100). Later, they devised a taxonomy for the construct of contextual performance that combined key elements of three previously validated concepts: OCB, POB and the model of soldier effectiveness (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).
The taxonomy Borman and Motowidlo (1997) created demonstrated three key differences between contextual and task performance. The first was that task activities vary considerably between jobs, but contextual activities are essentially the same regardless of a specific job. Second, task behaviors tend to be directly linked to the job description, thus they are more often directly tied to formal performance appraisals. Lastly, task performance is often tied to cognitive ability; conversely, contextual performance is more likely tied to personality variables.

Though POB and contextual performance address organizational behaviors that go beyond the formal expectations of an organizational employee, they are not the emphasis of this study for the reasons mentioned above. In order to implement OCB in real world settings, a better understanding of the sub-dimensions that comprise OCB is needed.

**Dimensions of OCB.** In the early writings of OCBs, two dimensions of OCB were introduced: *altruism* and *general compliance* (Smith et al., 1983). Later, Organ (1988) deconstructed *general compliance* into several dimensions creating a five-dimension model of OCB: *altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship*. This five-dimensional model (Organ, 1988) is the most common model used in OCB research (Podsakoff et al., 2009). In Organ’s (1988) 5-factor model, *altruism* was defined as discretionary employee behaviors that have the effect of helping a specific colleague with an organizationally relevant task. *Courtesy* was defined by employee behaviors that aim to prevent workplace conflict. *Conscientiousness* was employee behavior indicating that employees accept and adhere to the rules, regulations, and procedures of the organization. *Civic Virtue* was employee behavior referring to employees taking an interest in the life of their organization. Finally, *sportsmanship* was defined as a willingness of employees to tolerate less than ideal circumstances without complaining and amplifying problems.
As the construct gained momentum and garnered additional research, there was little consistency in the labeling of the dimensions making up OCB. For instance, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach (2000) identified seven dimensions in an attempt to encapsulate the wide array of terminology being used, which are: helping behavior, sportsmanship, organizational loyalty, organizational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue, and self-development. Even after Podsakoff et al. attempted to clarify the construct research has continued to utilize many variations of OCB models.

To demonstrate the comprehensive labeling revised by Podsakoff et al. (2000), the dimensions will now be defined, and seminal research will be reviewed. Helping behaviors encompass actions such as altruism (Smith, et al., 1983), direct assistance to a peer (Organ, 1997a), and actions taken to help resolve and mitigate problems between coworkers. Sportsmanship is defined as tolerating the unavoidable inconveniences of work without complaining (Organ, 1997a). Organizational loyalty is defined as behaviors that defend the organization against threats while contributing to the organization’s overall reputation and team relationships (Graham, 1991). Organizational compliance is comprised of several sub-definitions such as spreading good will (George & Jones, 1997) and following organizational rules and procedures (Borman & Motowildo, 1997). Individual initiative is characterized as the willingness to surpass required levels of performance and completing tasks at a higher level of thoroughness than necessary (Graham, 1991; Organ, 1997a). Civic virtue spans being a part of the political interworking of an organization (Organ, 1997a) and workplace enthusiasm (Borman & Motowildo, 1997). Finally, self-development is a worker’s initiative to learn outside of required materials to become the most skilled practitioner possible, which improves the organization in its entirety (George & Jones, 1997). However, though seven-dimension models
can be more inclusive than Organ’s (1988) five-factor model, they can become impractical because the constructs become harder to separate in real world application and research. Because of the cohesion and clarity of Organ’s (1988) model, it is still the standard that is commonly used in work dealing with OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

**Correlates of OCB.** Through his writing, Organ (1997b) asserted that most research skims over the intangible elements of job performance, but he believes that those elements are just as important as traditional performance metrics. Walz and Niehoff (1996) set out to test Organ’s (1988) early OCB model that suggested organizational effectiveness was contingent on the presence of OCBs within the workforce and management. After testing the staff at several restaurants, Walz and Niehoff found a significantly positive relationship between the presence of OCBs and the overall functionality of the organization. An examination of unit-level citizenship behaviors revealed similar results (Walz & Niehoff, 1996). Later, Koy’s (2001) study found that OCBs and job satisfaction were positively related to one another and that OCBs were positively related to overall organizational effectiveness.

There is evidence that OCBs relate to the overall performance of individuals, work groups, and organizations by creating beneficial social interactions and actions within an organization (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997; Smith et al., 1983). In a study of public accountants, it was found that moral reasoning was linked to the accountants’ likelihood to exhibit citizenship behaviors that economically benefitted the employer (Ryan, 2001).

Much research has been done on the effects of OCB on a dimensional level (Podsakoff, et al., 1997). In a study of the performance of 40 paper mill factory work groups, sportsmanship
and helping behaviors were shown to predict performance quantity (Podsakoff et al., 1997).
Likewise, helping behaviors predicted performance quality (Podsakoff et al., 1997).

In a seminal meta-analysis, Podsakoff et al. (2009) found a variety of correlates of OCBs and relationships to desired organizational outcomes. On the individual level, OCBs were positively related to ratings of employee performance and to reward allocation decisions (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Individual level OCBs were negatively related to undesirable organizational outcomes such as turnover intentions, actual turnover, and absenteeism (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Many of these relations were significant at the unit level as well. A positive relationship between individual-level OCBs and a wide variety of organizational effectiveness measures such as productivity, efficiency, and profitability demonstrate that OCBs can lead to the overall effectiveness of organizations and have an impact on the bottom line (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Podsakoff et al. also noted a positive relationship between OCB and customer satisfaction in service related industries, likewise having implications for organizational success. OCB was also negatively related to costs and unit-level turnover (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Overall, this meta-analysis showed strong support for Organ’s (1988) original claims that OCBs are highly predictive of organizational performance.

**Relationship between OCBs and performance ratings.** It can be difficult for raters to fully separate contextual and task performance during performance appraisals. Despite the best intentions for objectivity in performance reviews, raters do not judge performance on task performance alone (Borman, White, & Dorsey, 1995; MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Fetter, 1993). In fact, contextual performance has been shown to influence task performance measurement (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). This area of research lends credence to the concept that contextual factors, such as OCBs, may have an impact on the overall performance exhibited by
individuals within an organization. Furthermore, OCBs are a vital part of an employee’s overall performance appraisal (Podsakoff et al., 1997).

Research has shown that exhibiting OCBs factor more into the overall performance review ratings for management level positions compared to subordinate positions (Podsakoff et al., 2009). For example, in a recent meta-analysis conducted by MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Paine (1999), the effects of both the presence OCB and task performance indicators for insurance agents and agency managers were compared to their performance reviews. For agency managers, the presence of OCBs behaviors played as much of a factor in their performance evaluations as did task performance metrics. Whereas the organizational citizenship behaviors still had an influence on the insurance agents performance, OCBs did not predict overall success on performance reviews (MacKenzie et al., 1999).

There is evidence that training managers on OCBs predicts the presence of OCB among their subordinates. In a study of Canadian labor union workers, those who had managers who received citizenship skills and promotion training were found to exhibit higher levels of the OCBs themselves compared to workers who did not have similarly trained managers (Skarliki & Latham, 1996). Organ (1988) also proposed that organizations that can elicit higher levels of OCBs from their employees could effectively save on expensive systems designed to generate those extra-role behaviors by mitigating the need for some efficiency programs.

Career readiness and OCB. Numerous educational publications have published studies in the past decade highlighting the importance of career readiness training to address a gap between students’ education and workplace employability (Andrews & Higson, 2008; Conley & McGaughy, 2012; Gammie, Gammie, & Cargill, 2002; Hershenson, 1996; Schulz, 2008; Zinser, 2003). The focus of the majority of career readiness programs is to create a well-rounded
employee who is capable of success within an organization (Andrews & Higson, 2008; Chertavian, 2012). A common thread that connects most career readiness programs is an organizationally-focused section of curriculum (Chertavian, 2012).

A popular form of career readiness programs is Career and Employability Skills (C&ES) training programs. C&ES training programs received attention through a series of reports commissioned by the Secretary of Education entitled, The Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). These training programs focus on broad abilities that may help students prepare for the workplace, but they do not focus on a particular career path. The goal of the SCANS commission was to provide the educational sector a framework that would lead to better prepared students for the 21st century workplace (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991).

Whether they are called career readiness programs or C&ES training programs, much of this training consists of “soft skills” training, such as teamwork, etiquette, and sociability as primary differentiators for students in the workplace, particularly at the management level (Gammie et al., 2001; Hershenson, 1996; Schulz, 2008). Interestingly, a closer look at soft skills often incorporated in C&ES training programs reveals that they may simply be OCBs. Such “soft skills” often include self-management (organizational compliance and self development), work ethic (individual initiative), and teamwork (civic virtue and helping behaviors). Moreover, the SCANS report included a section on workplace competencies, which included many elements of OCBs, such as interpersonal skills (helping behaviors), working with others (sportsmanship), and working within company guidelines (organizational compliance; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). It is clear that common elements of C&ES training programs may not have the same
terminology used in the OCB literature, but they are primarily represented by the five-dimension model of OCB (Organ, 1997a).

Most C&ES programs or curricula attempt to train students to exhibit OCBs (Chertavian, 2012; Conley & McGaughy, 2012). These programs emphasize behaviors to help the students become more productive future employees of an organization. However, no published empirical evidence exists to support the assertion that these courses can create OCB intentions within the students of the programs. Individual career readiness programs often display their own anecdotal or case study examples of the effectiveness of the programs in preparing students to interact in the work force, but these data offer scant evidence as to the generalizability of their effectiveness (Chertavian, 2012). Most academic literature that advocates career readiness programs suggest more empirical studies be done to replicate these educational theories in a real-world samples (Andrews & Higson, 2008; Schulz, 2008) Despite there being little empirical evidence for the effectiveness of OCBs in the educational literature, OCBs are highly supported in the psychological literature (Podsakoff et al., 2009). These findings allow for a study that can demonstrate the effectiveness of incorporating the training of OCBs to increase a student’s chance of future career success in a C&ES training program. Consequently, the present study aims to examine the effectiveness of teaching students to exhibit OCBs in their future careers and their intentions to do so. However, student or recent graduate populations lack work experience, through which they can potentially exhibit OCBs. To increase accuracy, student’s intentions will be measured, but there is a body of research that shows intentions are accurate predictors of future behaviors.

**Intentions and the Theory of Planned Behavior.** This study focused on career readiness training in recent high school graduate populations. The intention to exhibit OCBs was
measured based on the participants lack of work force experience. The results of this study were based on participants’ intentions to exhibit OCBs in the workplace. There is an active body of research in the effectiveness of planned behaviors and intentions. The study of intentions originated with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991). A meta-analysis by Armitage and Conner (2001) found that TPB accounted for up to 39% of variance in actions over 185 studies. Furthermore, there is a distinction between behavioral intentions and self-predictions (Warshaw & Davis, 1985). When future behaviors are worded in a manner that elicits self-predictions, they are more strongly correlated with future actions; the phrasing helps participants envision occurrences or circumstances that may impede them in the future (Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988). In fact, Sheppard et al. (1988) found that questions phrased “How likely are you to…” cause participants to reply with more accurate self-predictions. These findings were implemented in the OCB measure and the hypotheses of the present study (Sheppard et al., 1988; Warshaw & Davis, 1985). Questions directed participants to respond to the likelihood of participating in certain behaviors as opposed to recalling past instances of engaging in such behavior.
Chapter II
Rationale and Hypotheses

The incorporation of “soft skills” is a common element of most Career and Employability Training (C&ES) programs, whether in the form of 13th year programs or career readiness programs (Andrews & Higson, 2008; Chertavian, 2012; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). However, constructs considered “soft skills” in educational programs might be more accurately represented by the construct of OCBs (Podsakoff et al., 2000). OCBs are positively related to an array of favorable workplace outcomes at the employee level (such as employee performance and organizational rewards) and unit-level outcomes (such as productivity, efficiency, and profitability; Podsakoff et al., 2009). Conversely, they are negatively related to undesirable outcomes such as turnover intentions, actual turnover, and absenteeism (Podsakoff et al., 2009). There is also evidence that managers can be trained to engage in OCBs, which supports their inclusion in C&ES training programs (Sharliki & Latham, 1996). Hence, the link between OCBs and positive workplace outcomes is well established by research (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

Moreover, C&ES training programs seek to prepare students to help companies achieve many of the same positive outcomes (Andrew & Higson, 2008; Chertavian, 2012; U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). With research supporting the concept that OCBs are linked to positive workplace outcomes and C&ES training programs seek to train students to exhibit them in the workplace, the following hypotheses were developed. The hypotheses are based on Organ’s (1988) five-
factor OCB model because it is the most commonly agreed upon OCB model and there is ample evidence for the dimensionality of the five subscales (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

H1: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit conscientiousness in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H2: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit sportsmanship in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H3: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit civic virtue in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H4: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit courtesy in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H5: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit altruism in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.
Chapter III

Method

Participants

The study involved the use of participants from two samples (see Table 1 for details). The first sample consisted of recent high school graduates from a rural high school who had completed one year of career readiness training and graduated in good standing (GPA $M = 3.1$, $SD = .51$; length of work experience $M = .88$, $SD = 1.16$). The second sample consisted of recent high school graduates from a rural high school who graduated in good academic standing (GPA $M = 3.5$, $SD = .51$; length of work experience $M = .88$, $SD = 1.16$) but did not receive any formal career readiness training. According to Cohen (1992), the present study needed at least 64 participants in each group to achieve a power of .80 with an alpha set at .05 and a medium effect size.

Measures

Organizational citizenship behaviors. Participants completed the 24-item Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990). The survey was labeled “Workplace Behavior Survey” (see Appendix A). The items on the measure aligned with the five OCB dimensions outlined by Organ (1988): altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. The scale used a 7-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). Internal consistency of the five OCB subscales was found to exceed .70 (Podsakoff et al., 1990). In order to assess future behavioral intentions, items were modified to
Table 1

*Demographics of Study Participants*

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<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-C&amp;ES Training</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
elicit intended future behavior. For instance, one item measuring conscientiousness originally read, “Employee does not take extra breaks” and was changed to “I am likely to not take extra breaks.” The total scores for the items of each sub-category were added for each participant to create an overall score for each of the five sub-categories. The present study found internal consistencies of .76 for altruism, .73 for contentiousness, .81 for sportsmanship, .78 for courtesy, .79 for civic virtue, and .78 overall for the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale.

**Personality traits.** The Big Five Personality Type Short Questionnaire (BFPTSQ) was administered along with the OCB Scale to examine whether respondents have a predisposition to trait level conscientiousness (TLC), which could augment the results of the Workplace Behavior Survey. This modified version of the Big Five Inventory was developed for adolescents and was found to be more reliable than the original version for a younger participant pool (Morizot, 2014). Participants completed the conscientiousness items from this measure to identify their trait level conscientiousness (see Appendix B). The BFPTSQ consists of 50 items, 10 for each trait. Only the 10 items measuring conscientiousness were used for the purpose of this study. The conscientiousness items of the BFPTSQ overall have been shown to have a reliability of .80 (Morizot, 2014). The present study found a coefficient alpha of .82 for the BFPTSQ. Participants responded using a 5-point response format, ranging from **totally disagree** (0) to **totally agree** (4). The scores from the 10 items were added together to create a Conscientiousness total score.

**Social desirability.** Participants also received a social desirability measure that had been adapted from the original 33-item Marlowe and Crown (1960) measure. Reynolds (1982) developed several valid short forms of the original 33-item measure and concluded that a 13-item version (see Appendix C) was a valid and reliable substitute for the long form. Participants responded using **True or False**, depending on whether they believed an item described how they
would act. A tendency to seek social desirability was indicated by a particular response on each item. For instance, one item was, “It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.” A false response to this item indicated a participant might be answering with social desirability in mind. The 13-item measure has been reported to have a reliability of .76 and a .93 correlation (concurrent validity) with the original 33-item long form (Reynolds, 1982).

Unfortunately, for this study, acceptable reliability was not found (maximum coefficient alpha of .46 after deleting 6 items). Consequently, this measure was not included in any of the analyses, and potential reasons for its lack of internal consistency are addressed later in the Discussion section.

**Demographics.** Participants completed several demographic items consisting of the participant’s age, gender, approximate graduating GPA, length of work experience in years (if applicable), and if they attended a career readiness class in high school. Gender was the only item with an “other” option available. Responses to age, gender, career readiness, and class participation were selected from a list of provided options, whereas participants wrote in their approximate graduating GPA and length of work experience (see Appendix D).

**Procedure**

For the present study, approval for exempt status was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Xavier University (see Appendix E). All participants’ responses were separated from identifiable information, allowing for anonymity. Upon IRB approval, data collection began. Data collection took place over one day, during a post high school graduation event. The two test groups were samples from a high school graduate population. Both samples consisted of graduates from the same rural high school. Both samples were comprised of graduates who graduated in good academic standing, meaning they maintained a grade point
average of at least 2.0. One sample completed career readiness training, whereas the other did not attend career readiness courses. The graduates were given a set of six forms, consisting of the Cover Page (see Appendix F); Informed Consent (see Appendix G); Demographics; the Conscientiousness Measure; the Social Desirability Measure; the Workplace Behaviors Survey; and Debriefing Form (see Appendix H).

The Cover Page instructed the participants to provide their school email to be entered for a gift card drawing. The gift card drawing consisted of three $50 gift cards to the location of the winner’s choosing. The prize drawing was used to incentivize students to participate in the study. Each participant’s email was entered into a drawing for one of the three gift cards. Each participant was only eligible to win once. The gift card recipients were notified via email after all responses were gathered. The recipients were mailed a $50 gift card to the location of their choosing. The email was provided on the Cover Page only so it could be separated from the rest of the responses when the participant turned in their packet. The packet was checked for completion before the researcher separated the Cover Page into one ballet box and put the rest of the packet in another ballet box to ensure participant anonymity.

After the Cover Page, the participant packet had the Informed Consent document (see Appendix F). The Informed Consent did not require a signature. Next, the participant completed several surveys. The first was a Demographics Survey, as described above. The next page did not have a title, but had the instructions and items for the conscientiousness section of the BFPTSQ (Appendix B). The page following the Conscientiousness Measure was the Social Desirability Measure (Appendix C), but, again, the participants’ copy did not have a title. Both the Conscientiousness and Social Desirability measures were single construct measures and the titles were omitted to reduce participant priming effects. The final measure in the Participant Packet
was the Workplace Behaviors Survey. The Participant Packet took about 10 minutes to complete, and the participants returned the completed packets to the researcher’s booth upon completion.

After data collection, demographic information was referenced to ensure that all participants were at least 18 years old and graduated in good academic standing (at least a 2.0 GPA). The data of any participants under 18 were destroyed and not used for analytic purposes. After the three gift cards were drawn, the recipients were contacted, and the Cover Pages were destroyed. The Participant Packets are stored in a locked filing at the researchers home. The Informed Consent Document from the Participant Packet was also discarded. Only the principal researcher and faculty advisor have access to the data. The final dataset was examined and double-checked for accuracy of input after being entered into Excel. Once the data was entered into Excel and checked for accuracy, it was transferred into SPSS for analysis. The Excel file is password-protected and stored on the researcher’s password-protected computer. Only the researcher and the faculty advisor know the password for the Excel document.
Chapter IV

Results

The first hypothesis, proposing that students who were involved with a C&ES training programs would be more likely to exhibit conscientiousness in the workplace compared to students who had not received C&ES training, was analyzed using an independent samples t-test. Results showed that those in the C&ES training program did, indeed, have significantly higher conscientiousness intentions ($M = 5.80$, $SD = .71$) than non-participants ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.02$), $t(135) = -2.28$, $p = .02$, Cohen’s $d = .42$, which according to Cohen (1992), is considered a small effect size. Hence, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

The second hypothesis predicted that students who participated in a C&ES training program would be more likely to exhibit sportsmanship in the workplace compared to their peers who had not received C&ES training. This hypothesis was also tested using an independent samples t-test, which showed that those who had completed a C&ES training program reported significantly higher intended sportsmanship behaviors ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.24$) than those who had not completed C&ES training ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 1.24$), $t(135) = -2.77$, $p = .01$, Cohen’s $d = .48$, which, according to Cohen (1992), is considered to be a small effect size. Consequently, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

The third hypothesis asserted that students who completed a C&ES training program would be more likely than their peers who had not completed a C&ES training to exhibit civic virtue in the workplace. This hypothesis was also tested using an independent samples t-test.
Results indicated that participants who had completed a C&ES training program reported an intention to engage in significantly more civic virtue behaviors ($M = 5.24$, $SD = .72$) than participants who had not completed a C&ES training program ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 1.31$), $t(135) = -2.21$, $p = .03$, Cohen’s $d = .38$, which is considered to be a small effect size (Cohen, 1992). These results indicate that Hypothesis 3 was supported.

The fourth hypothesis stated that students who participated in a C&ES training program would be more likely than students who had not participated in similar training to exhibit courtesy in the workplace. This hypothesis was tested using an independent samples $t$-test. Results indicated no significant differences between those who had participated in a C&ES training program ($M = 5.54$, $SD = .75$) and those who had not participated in a C&ES training program ($M = 5.30$, $SD = 1.07$), $t(135) = -1.52$, $p = .13$, Cohen’s $d = .32$, which is thought to be a small effect size (Cohen, 1992). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

The fifth hypothesis proposed that students who had taken part in a C&ES training program would be more likely to exhibit altruism in the workplace compared to students who had not taken part in C&ES training programs. Hypothesis 5 was tested using an independent samples $t$-test, and results indicated that participants who had attended C&ES training reported significantly higher altruistic intentions ($M = 5.65$, $SD = .72$) than those who had not attended the C&ES training ($M = 5.11$, $SD = 1.04$), $t(135) = -3.54$, $p = .001$, Cohen’s $d = .61$, which is considered to be a medium effect size (Cohen, 1992). Hence, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

**Supplemental Analyses**

Additional analyses were conducted to investigate the effects of trait level conscientiousness on the five OCB constructs measured in the Workplace Behavior Survey. A correlation analysis found a significant relationship between trait conscientiousness and
conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism (see Table 2). Based on those significant relationships, an ANCOVA, controlling for trait conscientiousness was conducted comparing differences between the two participant groups regarding conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism individually. Upon controlling for trait level conscientiousness, there were no longer significant differences in conscientiousness between participants who had completed a C&ES training program and participants who had not completed a C&ES training program $F(1, 134) = .44, p = .51$. Similarly, when controlling for trait level conscientiousness, there was no longer significant differences in sportsmanship between participants who had participated in a C&ES training program and those who had not completed the training $F(1, 134) = 2.66, p = .11$. Also, there was no longer a significant difference between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups in likelihood to exhibit civic virtue behaviors when controlling for trait level conscientiousness $F(1, 134) = 1.10, p = .30$. Likewise, there was no longer a significant difference between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups in their intentions to exhibit altruism, $F(1, 134) = 5.98, p = .02$. However, even after controlling for trait level conscientiousness, there was a significant difference between participants who completed a C&ES training program and those who did not in their intention to engage in courtesy, $F(1, 134) = 7.61, p = .01$. 
### Table 2

Summary of Correlations between OCBs and Trait Conscientiousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Consc</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>CV</th>
<th>Courtesy</th>
<th>Altruism</th>
<th>TLC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consc</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>(.73)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>(.81)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>(.79)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>(.76)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.87**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
<td>(.82)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05 (2-tailed), **p < .01 (2-tailed)

Note: Consc = Conscientiousness, Sport = Sportsmanship, CV = Civic Virtue, TLC = Trait Level conscientiousness. Coefficient alphas marked in italics.
Chapter V

Discussion

OCBs have positive workplace outcomes (Podsakoff et al., 2009), and both employers and educational institutions are beginning to design programs to transfer OCBs via training (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Yet, no academic research has been published regarding the effectiveness of training high school students to exhibit OCBs in their future workplaces. The purpose of the present study was to examine the effects Career and Employability Skills (C&ES) training programs have on the OCB intentions of high school students.

The present study found support for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 5, which stated that recent high school graduates who completed a C&ES training program would be more likely than their peers who did not complete C&ES training to demonstrate conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, and altruism. The results indicated that C&ES training could be an effective approach to encourage students to exhibit these important behaviors in their future workplaces. It is important to note that although there were differences between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups in terms of OCB intentions, there were also many similarities. For example, both groups had statistically similar mean GPAs ($t(135) = .46, p > .05$). The lack of a significant difference between means indicated that academic performance was not the cause of the disparity between the test groups. Furthermore, both samples were from the same high school and rural community. The demographics collected, such as age and prior work experience, were also similar between the samples. These factors indicate that the participants in both test groups shared several
similarities, which suggests that the difference in OCB intentions could be associated with the presence of the C&ES training experience.

The study did not find support for Hypothesis 4, which stated that students who completed a C&ES training program would be more likely than their peers who did not complete a C&ES training program to demonstrate courtesy. Organ (1988) defined courtesy as “employee behaviors that aim to prevent workplace conflicts.” (p. 45) This dimension is emphasized as a fundamental principle in most school communities starting very early in the educational process. In order for school communities to operate effectively, students and teachers must act in ways that prevent conflict. Behaviors that prevent conflict are often rewarded, whereas actions that create conflict are regularly disciplined. Considering the importance of this behavior, it is reasonable that the two groups showed similar propensity for courtesy. Though the behaviors of civic virtue, sportsmanship, altruism, and conscientiousness may be taught in school, they may not be as routinely referenced as courtesy. Despite the non-significant findings for courtesy, C&ES training that promoted the other citizenship behaviors was strongly associated with OCB intentions.

As previously stated, a social desirability scale was administered in the participant packet. This measure was included as a possible covariate to control for potentially socially desirable responses. The results from the social desirability measure, however, were not used in the present study because an acceptable level of coefficient alpha was not achieved. It should be noted that the social desirability measure was the only scale in this study to exhibit a low coefficient alpha. Several factors may have contributed to the low level of internal consistency. First, the response means for the 13 items ranged from .10 -.50, which indicate the majority of responses were not socially desirable. In fact, for some items fewer than two out of every 10
participants offered a socially desirable response. These results are indicative of a sample that has little concern for social desirability. These low means were not themselves the cause of low internal consistency, but indicate interesting response patterns which could have been a cause for lower internal consistency results. Additionally, Marlowe and Crowne’s (1960) social desirability scale was validated using adult samples (Reynolds, 1982). This scale may not be as valid for a recent high school graduate sample. In fact, Beretvas, Meyers, and Leite (2002) found that Marlowe and Crowne’s (1960) social desirability scale, was considerably less reliable for adolescent participants. Beretvas et al. found a reliability of .53 for the 33-item version of the scale which, when applying the Spearman Brown Prophesy Formula to a 13 item measure would predict a reliability of .17, which is nearly what was found in the present study (.18). Although the participants of this study were legal adults, they had only recently graduated from high school. Most of the participants could still be cognitively functioned as adolescents. Though it is disappointing the social desirability measure could not be used in analysis of the present study, the age of the participants in this study suggests there is plausible cause for the lack of internal consistency.

Additionally, supplementary analyses were conducted testing the five hypotheses controlling participants’ scores on the trait conscientiousness measure. Controlling for trait conscientiousness altered the findings of all of the original hypothesis results. When controlling for trait level conscientiousness, participants who had completed a C&ES training program showed no significant difference in future intention to demonstrate conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, or altruism than participants who had not completed the training. Conversely, a significant difference emerged between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups’ intentions to demonstrate courtesy in their future workplaces. Further examination of the
relationship between OCB conscientiousness and trait conscientiousness revealed the constructs were highly correlated, \( r(132) = 0.87, p < 0.01 \). According to Nunnally (1978), any constructs correlated above 0.80 are essentially measuring the same construct; thus, trait level conscientiousness and OCB conscientiousness are commensurate. Because OCB conscientiousness was correlated with all OCB dimensions, controlling for trait conscientiousness essentially accounted for a large amount of variance in the other OCB dimensions under scrutiny, resulting in relatively little remaining variance to be accounted for. Indeed, when controlling for trait level conscientiousness, none of the original hypotheses remained significant except for courtesy. Interestingly, the hypothesis pertaining to courtesy was the only original hypothesis that was not significant. Another possibility for the observed changes may be controlling for trait conscientiousness altered the OCB constructs sufficiently to the point that the remaining variance was not significant. In fact, trait conscientiousness may be a suppressor variable, because its presence seems to amplify the relationship between C&ES training and OCB intentions. However, courtesy may have contributed enough unique variance to render a significant finding without the variance from trait level conscientiousness.

There are many possibilities for why trait conscientiousness had such an effect on the OCB intentions in the present study. Trait conscientiousness plays a significant role in OCB intention and warrants more research specifically tailored to isolating the interaction. However, the obvious importance of trait conscientiousness indicates that it should be considered a crucial variable to student’s future workplace behaviors.

**Contributions and Implications**

The findings of the present study indicate that C&ES training programs that incorporate OCBs can be an effective way to influence the future workplace behavior of students. However,
few programs actively teach OCBs, despite their link to beneficial workplace outcomes (Chertavian, 2012). The present study adds evidence that C&ES training programs are related to future intentions to engage in OCBs. Though other factors may modify the relationship between C&ES training programs and OCB intentions, the present study acts a foundation for further insights into the relationship. The present findings suggest that C&ES training programs may improve many OCB intentions of students, which could eventually benefit the companies for which they work.

The present study also illustrated a relationship between trait level conscientiousness and the ability of C&ES training programs to influence participants’ OCB intentions. However, the current research conditions did not investigate the relationship between trait level conscientiousness, C&ES training programs, and OCB intentions sufficiently to offer causal insights. As mentioned above, trait level conscientiousness could have acted as a suppressor variable in participant’s Courtesy intentions. Another possibility may be that trait conscientiousness is a dominant feature of C&ES programs. However, further research is required to gain more perspective on the nuances of the relationship trait level conscientiousness plays in C&ES training programs' ability to encourage OCB intentions.

As more educational institutions adopt the C&ES model, better programs can be developed and more data can be collected on their effectiveness. The gap between students graduating from college and finding gainful employment is far too wide (Bruni, 2012). There appears to be a disconnect between graduating from a secondary school and workplace success, but training students to be effective in the workplace could be part of the solution. OCBs are immensely valuable to company and employee performance (Podsakoff et al., 2009). The present study suggests that C&ES training programs may be a useful way for educational institutions to
impact positive future workplace behaviors in students, and that future C&ES training programs may want to consider placing a greater emphasis on OCB concepts into their training programs. However, to create wide scale change many more studies are necessary to better pinpoint where the best C&ES training outcomes are generated. One potential recommendation from the present study indicates that focusing time and resource towards training students in conscientiousness may generate the most effective impact on students’ OCB intentions. A focus on training students to act like workers naturally high in conscientiousness may help participants to exhibit greater overall OCB in their future workplaces. The stakes are too high to continue under preparing students for the workplace. Training for OCB, particularly conscientiousness, could be a major source of improved student outcomes once they reach the workforce. Future research has many opportunities to narrow down the variables that lead better preparing students for workplace success.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

The present study was designed as an initial inquiry into the effectiveness of instilling OCB intentions through C&ES training programs. With no past studies to build from, the present study faced many possible limitations. A potential limitation is that the participants had minimal or no work experience. However, use of the phrase “I am likely to…” at the beginning of each items on the Workplace Behavior Survey allowed more accurate intentions to be measured (Ajzen, 1991; Sheppard et al., 1988; Warshaw & Davis, 1985). Furthermore, Steel and Ovalle (1984) found a correlation of .50 between intentions and turnover. Though turnover is not an OCB, Steel and Ovalle (1984) demonstrated that intentions can be reliably predictive of workplace behaviors. Regardless, intentions to demonstrate OCBs cannot completely represent participants’ future workplace behaviors.
Another potential limitation is common method bias, which is the likelihood that the relationship between variables is augmented by variance attributed to the measurement method rather than the construct it represents (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). This is primarily a limitation of studies that utilize self-report measures and is considered by some researchers a common source of measurement error (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). However, there is not agreement on the significance of common method variance (Spector, 1987). Spector (2006) suggests that common method bias is more of an urban legend than a real problem. Spector (2006) asserted that researchers should try to identify and minimize variance based on the constructs being measured and the research design being utilized. Unfortunately, the design utilized in the current study could not allow the collection of some of the variables by using different methods. Future research should utilize multiple method types, such as workplace performance metrics, employee performance reviews, and multi-source feedback.

An additional limitation is the possibility of self-selection bias in those who participated in the C&ES training program. Not all students were aware of the program, so students who actively enrolled may have had a predisposition for other variables not measured in the present study. Similarly, this sample was limited to graduates of a single rural high school. These sample limitations prevent a truly representative sample from being used. Future research should gather data from several C&ES programs to create a more diverse sample.

The present study provides a foundation for future research. In general, more research needs to be done on the effectiveness of C&ES training programs and their ability to train OCBs. To better measure this effect, future studies could gather pre- and post-test data on students participating in programs. Also, tracking participants beyond the C&ES program and into the workforce would allow workplace actions to be measured, along with intentions. Measuring
baseline OCB intentions before the training and then later after participants had interacted in the
workplace would yield much more definitive results on C&ES training programs’ effectiveness.
Future research should also include several programs utilizing various training strategies. There
are many ways to demonstrate to students OCBs in an academic setting and being able to
compare the effectiveness of these tactics would generate deeper insights. Likewise, future
research should find programs in more diverse locations and with more diverse populations.
There is still much work to be done to investigate the effectiveness of C&ES training programs
in the realm of teaching OCBs, but the present study has laid the groundwork for research to
move forward with increased direction.

Furthermore, future research should focus on outcomes beyond OCB. Though OCBs are
trainable and have positive workplace outcomes, there are many variables that could also be
utilized by C&ES training programs. For instance, based on the findings of this study, examining
the role of trait conscientiousness and participant’s workplace success may be beneficial for the
C&ES training and educational communities. Gleaning the trainable elements that increase trait
conscientiousness could be effective for helping educational institutions better prepare students
for the workplace.

Conclusion

The present study found that C&ES training programs may be an effective strategy for
increasing the likelihood that students exhibit OCBs in their future workplaces. The results of
this research indicate C&ES training programs may impact students’ likelihood to exhibit
conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, and altruism. However, these findings are initial
indications of the possible effects C&ES training programs potentially have on students. Trait
level conscientiousness may act as a suppressor variable, increasing the impact of C&ES training
programs on OCB intentions. The relationship between trait conscientiousness and the success of C&Es training should be examined in future research. Future longitudinal research must be conducted on educational and workplace samples to account for additional limitations. Though the present study was limited by its scope, it was a first step towards learning more about the potential relationships between C&ES and OCBs training programs.
Chapter VI

Summary

In America, most high school graduates immediately enroll in college. In the 2013 book, *Is College Worth It?*, Bennet and Wilezol outlined common problems that face college graduates, such as high debt and unemployment rates. Likewise, this emphasis on college generated unanticipated effects on industrial and manufacturing businesses. Companies attempt to fill mid-level management positions for which college graduates are over-qualified and yet high school graduates are under-qualified. In his quest to build a curriculum that would bridge this gap, Chertavian (2012) found that most businesses were looking for employees with soft skills that were not included in the typical four-year degree process. Such feedback has made soft skills a hallmark of career readiness programs. A career readiness program is an additional year or two of technical and soft skills training to equip high school students and graduates with the skills necessary to be effective members of a modern workforce. These programs typically involve internships and course work customized to build skills vital to the workplace (Foroohar, 2014). There is evidence that this technical and professional training benefits participants, although these programs have not been examined in an academic setting. A common emphasis of career readiness programs is soft skills training and employee behaviors.

Employee behaviors that go beyond clearly specified expectations have been of interest to researchers and business practitioners for decades (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). Researchers began contributing evidence for a specific construct regarding an employee’s
willingness and aptitude to make workplace contributions not formally outlined by management (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith et al., 1983). The researchers called these desirable actions “organizational citizenship behaviors” (OCB).

Organ (1988) defined OCB as an “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (p. 4). Later OCB would be re-defined as behaviors that, despite not being rewarded, actually predict overall task performance of a workplace (Organ, 1997a). OCBs are not formally documented requirements of a job within an organization, but they collectively add to a more effective and healthy workplace, offering intangible benefits, such as team cohesion and healthy interoffice dynamics (Organ, 1997a).

In early writings, two dimensions of OCB were introduced, altruism and general compliance (Smith et al., 1983). Later, Organ (1988) deconstructed general compliance into several dimensions creating a five-dimension model of OCB: altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. This is the most commonly used model in OCB research (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Organ (1988) defined altruism as discretionary employee behaviors that help a colleague with an organizationally relevant task. Courtesy was defined as employee behaviors that aim to prevent workplace conflict. Conscientiousness was employee behavior indicating that they accept and adhere to the rules, regulations and procedures of the organization. Civic Virtue was employee behavior referring to employees taking an interest in the life of their organization. Finally, sportsmanship was defined as a willingness of employees to tolerate less than ideal circumstances without complaining and amplifying problems.

Organ (1997b) asserted that most research skims over the intangible elements of job performance, but he believes that those elements are just as important as traditional performance
metrics. There is evidence that OCBs have an influence on the overall performance of individuals, work groups, and organizations by creating beneficial social interactions and actions within an organization (Podsakoff et al., 1997).

In a seminal meta-analysis, Podsakoff et al. (2009) found a variety of correlates of OCBs and relationships to desired organizational outcomes. On the individual level, OCBs were positively related to ratings of employee performance and to reward allocation decisions (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Individual level OCBs were negatively related to undesirable organizational outcomes such as turnover intentions, actual turnover, and absenteeism (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Many of these relations were significant at the unit level as well. A positive relationship between individual-level OCBs and a wide variety of organizational effectiveness measures such as productivity, efficiency, and profitability demonstrates that OCBs can lead to the overall effectiveness of organizations and have an impact on the bottom line (Podsakoff et al., 2009). The Podsakoff et al. study also noted a positive relationship between OCB and customer satisfaction in service related industries, likewise having implications for organizational success. OCB was negatively related to costs and unit-level turnover (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Overall, this meta-analysis showed strong support for Organ’s (1988) claims that OCBs are highly indicative of organizational performance.

Numerous published studies in the past decade highlighted the importance of career readiness training to address gaps between students’ education and workplace employability (Andrew & Higson, 2008; Schulz, 2008; Zinser, 2003). A popular form of career readiness programs is Career and Employability Skills (C&ES) training programs. These training programs focus on broad abilities that may help students prepare for the workplace, but do not focus on a particular career path.
Whether they are called career readiness programs or C&ES training programs, much of this training consists of “soft skills” training, such as working in teams, etiquette, and sociability as primary differentiators for students in the workplace, particularly at the management level (Gammie et al., 2001; Hershenson, 1996). Interestingly, a closer look at the soft skills often incorporated in C&ES training programs reveals that they may simply be OCBs. Common elements of C&ES training programs may not have the same terminology used in OCB literature, but are primarily represented by the five-dimension model of OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Most C&ES programs or curricula attempt to train students to exhibit OCBs (Conley & McGaughy, 2012). These programs emphasize behaviors to help the students become more productive future employees of an organization. However, no published empirical evidence exists to support the assertion that these courses can create OCB intentions within the students of the programs. Most academic literature that advocates career readiness programs suggest more empirical studies be done to replicate these educational theories in a real-world samples (Andrew & Higson, 2008; Schulz, 2008) Despite there being little empirical evidence for the effectiveness of OCBs in the educational literature, OCBs are highly supported in psychological literature (Podsakoff et al., 2009). These findings allow for a study that can demonstrate the effectiveness of incorporating the training of OCBs to increase a student’s chance of future career success in a C&ES training program. Consequently, the present study aims to examine the effectiveness of teaching students to exhibit OCBs in their future careers and their intentions to do so.

H1: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit conscientiousness in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.
H2: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit *sportsmanship* in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H3: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit *civic virtue* in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H4: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit *courtesy* in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

H5: Participants in C&ES training programs will be more likely to express the tendency to exhibit *altruism* in the workplace, compared to students who have not received C&ES training.

**Method**

**Participants**

The study involved the use of participants from two samples. The first sample consisted of recent high school graduates from a rural high school who had completed one year of career readiness training and graduated in good standing (2.0 GPA or higher). The second sample consisted of recent college graduates from a rural high school who graduated in good academic standing (2.0 GPA or higher), but did not receive any formal career readiness training. According to Cohen (1992), the present study needed at least 64 participants in each group to achieve a power of .80 with an alpha set at .05 and a medium effect size.
Measures

Organizational citizenship behaviors. Participants completed the 24-item Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale developed by Podsakoff et al. (1990). The survey was labeled “Workplace Behavior Survey” (see Appendix A). The items on the measure aligned with the five OCB dimensions outlined by Organ (1988): altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. The scale used a 7-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). Internal consistency of the five OCB subscales has been found to exceed .70 (Podsakoff et al., 1990).

In order to assess future behavioral intentions, items were modified to elicit intended future behavior. For instance, one item measuring conscientiousness was, “Employee does not take extra breaks” was changed to “I would be likely to not take extra breaks.” The total scores for the items of each sub-category were added for each participant to create an overall score for each of the five sub-categories. The present study found internal consistencies of .76 for altruism, .73 for contentiousness, .81 for sportsmanship, .78 for courtesy, .79 for civic virtue, and .78 overall for the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale.

Personality traits. The Big Five Personality Trait Short Questionnaire (BFPTSQ) was administered along with the OCB Scale to examine whether respondents have a predisposition to conscientiousness, which could augment the results of the Workplace Behavior Survey. Participants completed the conscientiousness items from this measure to identify their trait level conscientiousness (see Appendix B). The conscientiousness items of the BFPTSQ overall have been shown to have a reliability of .80 (Morizot, 2014). The present study found a coefficient alpha of .82 for the BFPTSQ. Participants responded using a 5-point response format, ranging
from totally disagree (0) to totally agree (4). The scores from the 10 items were added together to create a Conscientiousness Measure total score.

Social Desirability Measure. Unfortunately, for this study, acceptable reliability was not found in the Social Desirability Measure (maximum coefficient alpha of .46 after deleting 6 items). Consequently, this measure was not included in any of the analyses.

Demographics. Participants completed several demographics items consisting of the participant’s age, gender, approximate graduating GPA, length of work experience in years (if applicable), and if they attended a career readiness class in high school. Gender was the only item with an “other” option available. Responses to age, gender, career readiness, and class participation were selected from a list of provided options, whereas participants wrote in their approximate graduating GPA and length of work experience (see Appendix D).

Procedure

For the present study, approval for exempt status was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Xavier University (see Appendix E). Materials were distributed to the two samples at a post graduation event. Participants from each group were given a set of six forms, consisting of the Cover Page (see Appendix F); Informed Consent (see Appendix G); Demographics; the Conscientiousness Measure; the Social Desirability Measure; the Workplace Behaviors Survey; and Debriefing Form (see Appendix H).

Results

The results of the first hypothesis demonstrated that participants in the C&ES training program (C&ES group) showed significantly higher conscientiousness intentions ($M = 5.80$, $SD = .71$) compared to those who did not participate in a C&ES training program (non-C&ES group; $M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.02$), $t(135) = -2.28$, $p = .02$. Hence, Hypothesis 1 was supported. In regard to
Hypothesis 2, results the C&ES group reported significantly higher sportsmanship behaviors ($M = 4.87, SD = 1.24$) than the non-C&ES group ($M = 4.38, SD = 1.24$), $t(135) = -2.77, p = .01$.

Hypothesis 2 was supported. The results of Hypothesis 3 Results indicated that the C&ES group reported engaging in significantly more civic virtue behaviors ($M = 5.24, SD = .72$) than the non-C&ES group ($M = 4.85, SD = 1.31$), $t(135)= -2.21, p = .03$. These results indicate that Hypothesis 3 was supported. Hypothesis 4 was not supported, such as there was no significant differences between the C&ES group ($M = 5.54, SD = .75$) and the non-C&ES group ($M = 5.30, SD = 1.07$), $t(135) = -1.52, p = .13$. Finally, the results supported Hypothesis 5 indicating the C&ES group reported significantly higher altruistic behaviors ($M = 5.65, SD = .72$) than the non-C&ES group ($M = 5.11, SD = 1.04$), $t(135) = -3.54, p = .001$.

Supplemental Analyses

Additional analyses were conducted to investigate the effects of trait level conscientiousness on the five OCB constructs measured in the Workplace Behavior Survey. A correlation analysis found a significant relationship between trait contentiousness and conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism (see Table 2).

An ANCOVA, controlling for trait conscientiousness was conducted comparing differences between the two participant groups regarding conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism individually. There were no longer significant differences between participants who had completed a C&ES training program and participants who had not completed a C&ES training program in conscientiousness $F(1, 134) = .44, p = .51$. Similarly, when controlling for trait level conscientiousness, there were no longer significant differences in sportsmanship between participants who had participated in a C&ES training program and those who had not completed the training $F(1, 134) = 2.656, p = .11$. Also, there was no longer a
significant difference between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups in likelihood to exhibit civic virtue behaviors when controlling for trait level conscientiousness $F(1, 134) = 1.097, p = .3$.

However, even after controlling for trait level conscientiousness, there was still a significant difference between participants who completed a C&ES training program and those who did not in their likelihood to engage in altruism, $F(1, 134) = 5.98, p = .02$.

**Discussion**

OCBs have positive workplace outcomes (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 2009), and both employers and educational institutions are beginning to design programs to transfer OCBs via training (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Yet, no academic research has been published regarding the effectiveness of training high school students to exhibit OCBs in their future workplaces. The purpose of the present study was to examine the effects Career and Employability Skills (C&ES) training programs have on the OCB intentions of high school students.

The present study found support for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 5, which stated that recent high school graduates who completed a C&ES training program would be more likely than their peers who did not complete C&ES training to demonstrate conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, and altruism. The results indicated that C&ES training could be an effective approach to encourage students to exhibit these important behaviors in their future workplaces. It is important to note that although there were differences between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups in terms of OCB intentions, there were also many similarities. For example, both groups had statistically similar mean GPAs. The lack of a significant difference between means indicated that academic performance was not the cause of the disparity between the test groups. Furthermore, both samples were from the same high school and rural community. The demographics collected, such as age and prior work experience, were also similar between the
samples. These factors indicate that the participants in both test groups shared several similarities, which suggests that the difference in OCB intentions could be associated with the presence of the C&ES training experience.

The study did not find support for Hypothesis 4, which stated that students who completed a C&ES training program would be more likely than their peers who did not complete a C&ES training program to demonstrate courtesy. Organ (1988) defined courtesy as “employee behaviors that aim to prevent workplace conflicts.” This dimension is emphasized as a fundamental principle in most school communities starting very early in the educational process. In order for school communities to operate effectively, students and teachers must act in ways that prevent conflict. Behaviors that prevent conflict are often rewarded, whereas actions that create conflict are regularly disciplined. Considering the importance of this behavior, it is reasonable that the two groups showed similar propensity for courtesy. Though the behaviors of civic virtue, sportsmanship, altruism, and conscientiousness may be taught in school, they may not be as routinely stressed as courtesy. Despite the non-significant findings for courtesy, C&ES training that promoted the other citizenship behaviors was strongly associated with OCB intentions.

Additionally, supplementary analyses were conducted testing the five hypotheses controlling participants’ scores on the trait conscientiousness measure. Controlling for trait conscientiousness altered the findings of all of the original hypothesis results. When controlling for trait level conscientiousness, participants who had completed a C&ES training program showed no significant difference in future intention to demonstrate conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, or altruism than participants who had not completed the training. Conversely, a significant difference emerged between the C&ES and non-C&ES groups’
intentions to demonstrate courtesy in their future workplaces. Further examination of the relationship between OCB conscientiousness and trait conscientiousness revealed the constructs were highly correlated, \( r(132) = .87, p < .01 \). According to Nunnally (1978) any constructs correlated above .80 are essentially measuring the same construct; thus trait level conscientiousness and OCB conscientiousness are commensurate. Because OCB conscientiousness was correlated to all OCB dimensions, controlling for trait conscientiousness essentially accounted for a large amount of variance in the other OCB dimensions under scrutiny, which resulting in relatively little remaining variance to be accounted for. Indeed, when controlling for trait level conscientiousness, none of the original hypotheses remained significant except for courtesy. Interestingly, the hypothesis pertaining to courtesy was the only original hypothesis that was not significant. One possibility for the observed changes may be controlling for trait conscientiousness altered the OCB constructs sufficiently that the remaining variance was not significant. However, courtesy may have contributed enough unique variance to render a significant finding. Courtesy is the only OCB construct that involves actively avoiding conflict, which may produce enough differentiation from trait conscientiousness to allow for ample unique variance.

**Contributions and Implications**

The findings of the present study indicate that C&ES training programs that incorporate OCBs can be an effective way to influence the future workplace behavior of students. The present study may act as a foundation for further insights into OCB development through C&ES training programs. The present findings suggest that C&ES training programs improve many OCB intentions of students, which could eventually benefit the companies they work for. As more educational institutions adopt the C&ES model, better programs can be developed and
more data can be collected on their effectiveness. The present study suggests that C&ES training programs may be a useful way for educational institutions to impact positive future workplace behaviors in students, and that future C&ES training programs may want to consider emphasizing OCB concepts into their training programs.

Limitations and Future Directions

The present study was designed as an initial inquiry into the effectiveness of instilling OCB intentions through C&ES training programs. With no past studies to build from, the present study faced many possible limitations. A potential limitation is that the participants had minimal or no work experience. However, use of the phrase “I am likely to…” at the beginning of each items on the Workplace Behavior Survey allowed more accurate intentions to be measured (Ajzen, 1991; Sheppard et al., 1988; Warshaw & Davis, 1985). Furthermore, Steele and Ovalle (1984) found a correlation of .50 between intentions and turnover. Though turnover is not an OCB, Steele and Ovalle (1984) demonstrated that intentions can be reliably predictive of workplace behaviors. Regardless, intentions to demonstrate OCBs cannot completely represent participants’ future workplace behaviors.

Another potential limitation is common method bias, which is the likelihood that the relationship between variables is augmented by variance attributed to the measurement method rather than the construct it represents (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). This is primarily a limitation of studies that utilize self-report measures and is considered by some researchers a common source of measurement error (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, Podsakoff, 2003). However, there is not agreement on the significance or validity of common method variance (Spector, 1987). Spector (2006) suggests that common method bias is more of an urban legend than real problem. Spector (2006) asserted that researchers should try to identify and minimize variance based on the
constructs being measured and the design being utilized. Unfortunately, the design utilized in the current study could not allow the collection of some of the variables by using different methods. Future research should utilize multiple report types, such as workplace performance metrics, employee performance reviews, and multi-source feedback.

An additional limitation is the possibility of self-selection bias in those who participated in the C&ES training program. Not all students were aware of the program, so students who actively enrolled may have had a predisposition for other variables not measured in the present study. Similarly, this sample was limited to graduates of a single rural high school. This sample limitation prevents a truly representative sample from being measured. Future research should gather data from several C&ES programs to create a more diverse sample. The present study serves as a basis for future research to further examine the nuances of the relationship between C&ES training programs and teaching OCBs.
References


Walz, S. M., & Niehoff, B. P. (1996). Organizational citizenship behaviors and their effect on


Appendix A

The Workplace Behavior Survey

The Workplace Behavior Survey can be found at:

Citizenship Behavior Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi:
10.1037/t11702-000
Appendix B

The Conscientiousness Measure

The Conscientiousness Measure can be found at:

Appendix C

The Social Desirability Measure

The Social Desirability Measure can be found at:

Appendix D

Demographics Survey

Please circle or fill in the answers below as accurately as possible. Information provided on this document will not be used to personally identify you.

1. **Age:** 17  18  19  20

2. **Gender:**  Male   Female   other

3. **Estimated graduating GPA:** ________________

4. **Length of past work experience in years (if applicable):** ________________

5. **Did you complete a career readiness class while in high school?**  Yes   No
Appendix E

IRB Approval Letter

July 16, 2015

Ethan Martin
2955 Hickorywood Dr.
Troy, OH 45373

Re: Protocol #15-005, Will Attending a Career and Employability Readiness Program Affect High School Graduates’ Citizenship Behaviors?

Dear Mr. Martin:

The IRB has reviewed the materials regarding your study, referenced above, and has determined that it meets the criteria for the Exempt from Review category under Federal Regulation 45CFR46. Your protocol is approved as exempt research, and therefore requires no further oversight by the IRB. We appreciate your thorough treatment of the issues raised and your timely response.

If you wish to modify your study, including the addition of data collection sites, it will be necessary to obtain IRB approval prior to implementing the modification. If any adverse events occur, please notify the IRB immediately.

Please contact our office if you have any questions. We wish you success with your project!

Sincerely,

Morell E. Mullins, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Xavier University

MEM/sb
Please write your school email in the space provided below. This email will not be linked to your answers on the following surveys, but will be used to enter you into a drawing for 1 of 3 $50 gift cards to the business of the winners’ choosing. Upon completion of the full packet this page will be removed and put into a drawing box and your answers will be separated into a closed data collection box. You must answer All Survey Questions to be eligible to win a gift card.

School email: ____________________________________________________________

***Please write legibly, any emails that cannot be read will be discarded.
Appendix G

Informed Consent

My name is Ethan Martin and you are being given the opportunity to volunteer to participate in a project conducted through Xavier University, as part of my master’s thesis. Please read the following form carefully before agreeing to participate in the survey.

The purpose of this study is to measure how likely participants are to exhibit certain workplace behaviors, based on their high school training. You were selected to participate in the following survey because you are a high school graduate and meet the qualifications to participate in the study.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to fill out three brief participant information surveys and a Workplace Behavior Survey. This should take you about fifteen minutes. You will be given four forms. The first is a basic demographics form. Please answer as honestly as possible. None of your information will be used to identify you. The only people looking at the surveys will be the researcher, Ethan Martin, and the faculty advisor, Mark Nagy. The information provided by the participant will only be used to ensure that all participants meet the study qualifications. Next, are two short surveys that contribute to a fuller understanding of your personality. Please fill them out completely, your answers will be compared against each other, but will not be attached to personally identifying information. Finally, fill out the Workplace Behaviors Survey. Again, please be as honest as possible. There is no right or wrong answer. Your honest answers will help the researcher achieve accurate results and only group level results will be reported.

Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on your high school grades. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty; you may only take this study one time.

I will take the following steps to keep information about you confidential, and to protect it from unauthorized disclosure, tampering or damage. First, only the principle researcher and faculty advisor will see the demographic information paired with the Workplace Behavior Survey. Also, no one at your school will see results on an individual level. All reported results will be group level findings. Furthermore, you will in no way be identified with your answers. Lastly, all forms will be stored in a secure, locked location and not publicly shared.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right not to participate at all or to leave the study at any time. Deciding not to participate or choosing to leave the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled, and it will not harm your relationship with your school, staff, or any future relationship you may have with Xavier University.

If you wish to stop taking the survey, please raise your hand and the researcher will take it from you.
If you have any questions at any time during or after the study, you may contact Ethan Martin (principal researcher) at martine10@xavier.edu or Dr. Mark Nagy (faculty advisor) at nagyms@xavier.edu. Questions about your rights as a research subject should be directed to Xavier University’s Institutional Review Board at IRB@xavier.edu.
Appendix H

Debriefing Form

Thanks you for participating in this study!

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, would like to receive a summary of findings, or would like to learn more about this study or the future experiment, please feel free to contact Ethan Martin (principal researcher) at Martine10@xavier.edu or Dr. Mark Nagy (faculty advisor) at nagyms@xavier.edu.