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ASSESSING STRESS OUTCOMES OF INTERPERSONAL HELPING:
AN APPLICATION OF HINDRANCE STRESS APPRAISALS

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in Industrial and Organizational Psychology
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ABSTRACT

Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), including interpersonal helping, have traditionally been framed as explicitly positive behaviors with positive outcomes. The present study extended both theory on negative outcomes of OCB and the challenge-hindrance framework by applying the appraisal perspective of the challenge-hindrance framework to the study of helping events. The study employed an event sampling method that asked participants to report critical incidents of helping events that occurred at work. Results showed that perceived help difficulty predicted hindrance appraisals of help, but daily workload did not. This suggests that the content of helping event is more important than circumstantial factors surrounding the event in predicting stress appraisals.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is defined as discretionary behavior that is “not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization” (Organ, 1988). OCBs include a variety of positive discretionary activities. For example, they may involve taking on additional responsibilities, working extra hours, and helping co-workers. The construct was originally conceptualized as explicitly positive and has been studied as an activity that produced only positive outcomes (Organ, 1988). Even today, researchers have generally studied and identified positive outcomes of OCB. For example, researchers have generally found that OCB produces positive outcomes for the actors engaging in OCB (e.g., need satisfaction; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010), their work groups (e.g., increased quantity and quality of performance; Podsakoff et al., 1997), and the organization (e.g., labor cost; Yen & Niehoff, 2004). In sum, the preponderance of evidence suggests that OCB has positive outcomes for a variety of organizational stakeholders.

Though much research has been devoted to studying positive outcomes of OCB, there is growing interest in identifying and predicting negative outcomes as well (Boswell, Olson-Buchanan, & LePine, 2004; Spector, Bauer, & Fox, 2013; Spector, 2013). Although the outcomes of OCB may be generally positive, it is also the case that negative outcomes may occur simultaneously to the positive outcomes. For example, the employee helping a co-worker may experience stress while also supporting their co-worker’s ability complete tasks. That is, interpersonal helping in this case results in positive outcomes for the organization and employee’s work group, but negative outcomes for the employee providing help. This reflects a multiple-stakeholder lens, which helps researchers understand why negative outcomes may occur

from positive behavior (Reynolds, Shoss, & Jundt, 2015). From the perspective of the individual performing OCB, suggested negative outcomes include increased stress due to role ambiguity, less accurate performance appraisals, and interpersonal conflict (Boswell et al., 2004).

The present study focuses on the proposition that engaging in OCBs leads to increased stress for the employee performing it. Most frequently, this proposition has been studied through the lens of resource allocation (e.g., Bergeron, 2007). Through this lens, researchers have argued that engaging in OCBs consumes resources that could instead be directed toward job tasks or other work-related activities (Bolino, Valcea, & Harvey, 2010; Bolino & Turnley, 2005). Performing OCB may require substantial time and effort, and depending on the particular contextual factors, the employee helping their co-worker may be trading off their ability to complete their own job tasks. Theory and preliminary evidence suggest that helping others results in stress when helping obstructs an employee's ability to meet their job demands. However, this relationship has been investigated using criteria such as emotional exhaustion (Koopman, Lanaj, & Scott 2016) and subjective stress (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). These criteria are measured by asking participants about their general levels of stress or exhaustion, rather than information regarding the employee's reaction to performing OCB. In contrast, I propose that stress appraisals are a more appropriate criteria because they capture individualized information about reactions to a specific work event.

Despite calls for further research on contextual factors that lead individuals to experience stress as a result of performing OCB, researchers have not yet examined these factors using a stress appraisal approach. Appraisal refers to an individual's cognitive evaluation of their environment and is an integral tenet of the Transactional Theory of Stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The Transactional Theory states that environmental stressors do not have universal effects

on individuals; rather, individuals appraise situations and events differently. For example, an employee may find helping their co-worker enjoyable in one situation, but appraise a similar helping event as stressful when circumstances are different. That is, applying the stress appraisal approach to work stress research requires framing events and situations as a neutral event or situation that *may* be appraised as stressful depending on other situational factors. This approach contrasts with prior work stress research that assumes that stressors are interpreted similarly across individuals (e.g. LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004). Stress appraisals, by removing the assumption of invariable interpretations, allows researchers to identify and evaluate individualized reactions to events and situations. This enables researchers to investigate factors that produces changes in reactions to events and situations.

The present study aims to extend both the OCB literature and the work stress literature. I respond to calls by OCB scholars for further investigation into the individual-level negative outcomes of interpersonal helping. Specifically, I suggest that within-person contextual factors surrounding interpersonal helping events make individuals more likely to appraise their own help as a hindrance. I also extend the work stress literature by applying the stress appraisal approach to the act of helping. Work stress research has traditionally studied challenge and hindrance stress by categorizing stressors as challenges or hindrances *a priori* or by asking participants to appraise situations already understood to be stressful. Research has not yet investigated stress appraisals of work events that may or may not be stressful under varying circumstances. The current investigation represents the first attempt to leverage the concepts of challenge and hindrance appraisals to better understand negative individual-level outcomes of interpersonal helping, which cannot be clearly categorized as a challenge or hindrance. The present study addresses these gaps in the literature by utilizing an experience sampling approach to assess

within-person variance in stress appraisals. In what follows, I first review the current literature on the negative outcomes of OCB and interpersonal helping. Then I review the literature on challenge and hindrance stressors, followed by the integration of these two literatures and the proposed hypotheses.

CHAPTER 2: NEGATIVE OUTCOMES OF OCB

As mentioned previously, OCB scholars have begun to challenge the notion that OCBs are inherently positive. Researchers who are interested in the “dark side” of OCB have examined negative motives for performing OCB and negative outcomes of OCB (Bolino et al., 2004). The present study is concerned with the latter. Although studies have identified positive outcomes of OCB (e.g. Glomb et al., 2011), recent theory suggests that OCB has negative outcomes for specific stakeholders under specific circumstances (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). As mentioned previously, this multi-stakeholder perspective reconciles conflicting findings that OCB has positive outcomes and negative outcomes. In any given situation, engaging in OCBs may be positive for some stakeholders and negative for others. Below, I review theory that underpins negative outcomes of OCB and subsequently discuss the negative outcome most relevant to the present study: actor stress.

Bolino et al. (2004) categorized negative OCB outcomes into two broad areas: performance and personal costs. Negative performance-related outcomes may result for any of the stakeholders mentioned previously (e.g. OCBs may negatively impact the actor’s own performance or the organization’s overall performance). This may occur despite the fact that a positive relationship between citizenship behaviors and performance has been a prevailing finding in OCB literature (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Hui, 1993). Numerous factors have been proposed to influence this relationship and many of these factors have been empirically tested. Specifically, the OCB-performance relationship may depend on factors such as OCB motives (Bolino et al., 1999), time constraints (Bergeron, 2007) the interdependence of the actor’s and team members’ tasks (Bachrach et al., 2006), and type of OCB performed (Bolino et al., 2013). These factors, when present or absent, have been proposed to reverse or eliminate the expected

positive outcomes of OCB for one or more stakeholders. For example, Bergeron (2007) suggested that the relationship between OCB and performance outcomes will be positive when the actor works many hours and negative when the actor works fewer hours. She suggested that this outcome is the result of employees making fewer task performance trade-offs when working more hours and performing OCB. The notion of making trade-offs is also relevant to the other type of negative OCB outcome, personal costs.

In contrast to performance costs, personal costs are understood as the work-nonwork conflict and stress resulting from performing OCB. The connection between OCB and stress has been identified in numerous studies. For instance, Bolino and Turnley (2005) found that individual initiative, a type of OCB characterized by behaviors such as coming to work early, was associated with job stress and work-family conflict. Bolino and Turnley suggested that engaging in “high levels” of OCB leads to these negative outcomes and supported this proposal by integrating the literature on role stressors (Bolino & Turnley, 2005; Eatough et al., 2011). Specifically, they found that individual initiative was positively associated with *role overload*. Role overload refers to the individual’s perception that they do not have sufficient resources to meet their demands (Kahn et al., 1964). According to role stress theory, stress is a direct outcome when employees’ roles are incompatible or when the employee does not have enough resources to meet the demands of their roles. The theory helps explain the underlying mechanism behind the OCB-stress relationship.

Applied to interpersonal helping specifically, role stress theory suggests that engaging in interpersonal helping represents a role that employees may feel obligated to manage. Bolino and Turnley (2005) suggested that employees have two major roles: the job-holder role and the organizational member role. The demands of the former role include job tasks formally

prescribed by the organization and the latter includes extra-role demands informally expected of employees (i.e. OCBs). Attempting to fulfill both of these roles may produce role overload (if the employee does not have the resources to meet the demands of the roles) or role conflict (if the roles are directly incompatible), which in turn results in stress. For example, individuals who help their co-workers in addition to their in-role job tasks experience role overload and consequently stress if the employee does not have the resources to meet the demands of both of these roles. Similarly, interpersonal helping may directly clash with assigned job tasks, resulting in role conflict and therefore stress. In both cases, the employee's ability to reconcile their roles is central to stress outcomes.

The integration of role theory to explain OCB-related job stress is corroborated by findings that stress results when employees performing OCB make trade-offs that hinder their ability to meet job demands. Koopman et al. (2016) tested this by measuring work goal progress, an individual's subjective evaluation of their own progress toward work-related goals. They suggested that the performance of OCBs necessarily reduces work goal progress by consuming resources that could instead be used to complete work-related demands and that hindering progress toward one's goals negatively affects an individual's well-being. They found that perceptions of work goal progress mediated the effect of OCB on emotional exhaustion in a sample of 82 employees. Although not synonymous, Koopman's and colleagues' concept of work goal progress is similar to an individual's ability to meet their demands of the "job-holder" role discussed by Bolino and Turnley. That is, an individual who struggles to meet the demands of their job-holder role also makes limited progress toward their work-related goals. In sum, there is research support for the Bolino and Turnley's original theory that OCB leads to stress

outcomes when the performance of OCB when the employee does not have the resources to complete their role as an organizational member in addition to their other role or roles.

The present study is concerned primarily with one “dark side” aspect of interpersonal helping: individual stress resulting from helping. Theory and preliminary evidence suggests that helping can result in stress when it obstructs an employee’s ability to meet their job demands prescribed by their “job-holder” role. I am interested in factors that make individuals more or less likely to appraise their own help as stressful. To investigate these factors, I frame helping as an inherently neutral work event that may or may not be appraised as stressful depending on a variety of situational factors. This approach differs from most prior OCB research, which has measured the quantity of OCBs performed and investigated the relationship between OCB and strain outcomes such as emotional exhaustion (e.g. Koopman et al., 2016). When OCB/helping is framed as a neutral work event, stress appraisals are more useful as a criterion than general levels of stress or strain, because the former captures reactions to specific events or situations. In the following section, I review modern perspectives in the stress literature that inform our understanding of different types of stress and how to effectively measure stress-related reactions of work events.

CHAPTER 3: CHALLENGE AND HINDRANCE STRESS APPRAISALS

The preponderance of evidence in the work stress literature suggests that occupational stress leads to negative health-related outcomes for employees (Jex & Yankelevich, 2008). However, some studies have cast doubt on this by reporting surprisingly weak or contradictory effects of stress on expected negative outcomes (e.g. Leong, Furnham, & Cooper, 1996; Bretz, Boudreau, & Judge, 1994). The challenge-hindrane occupational stress framework was proposed to reconcile these conflicting reports of the outcomes of stress (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). The framework purports that there are two types of stressors: challenge stressors and hindrance stressors. Challenge stressors have been defined as stressors that create opportunities for growth, and hindrance stressors have been defined as stressors that interfere with growth. These stressors were traditionally viewed as analogous to “good stress” and “bad stress.” However, recent research has adopted a more nuanced approach to understanding this framework.

Traditionally, the challenge-hindrane framework has been applied to work stress literature using two types of categorical approaches. The first approach utilizes measures of stressor constructs (e.g. high workload; time pressure) categorized *a priori* as a challenge or hindrance stressors. These studies make general inferences about challenge or hindrance stressors based on responses to the measures (e.g. LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005). The second approach involves administering measures professed to measure “challenge stress” or “hindrance stress” that include items that reflect a stressor construct assumed to underlie challenge or hindrance stress (e.g. Rodell & Judge, 2009). Researchers have criticized both of these approaches to investigating challenge and hindrance stress (Webster, Beehr, & Love, 2011; Searle & Auton, 2015) because of findings that so-called challenge stressors may be appraised

by individuals as hindrances and hindrance stressors may be similarly appraised as challenges (Webster et al., 2011). That is, individuals vary in their reactions to stressors and may even differently interpret whether a given work event is a hindrance or a challenge. Consequently, stress appraisals have been suggested to be most accurate way to apply the challenge-hindrance framework.

In addition to suggesting that the challenge-hindrance framework be investigated via stress appraisals, Webster et al. (2011) further conceptualized challenge appraisals and hindrance appraisals as two distinct processes. They define challenge appraisals as perceptions of a work event as “having the potential for rewards (e.g., recognition and praise), mastery, and growth” and hindrance appraisals as perceptions of a work event as “having the potential to threaten one's well-being by thwarting the attainment of goals” (Webster et al., 2011). These constructs do not exist on the same continuum. That is, individuals separately appraise situations by the degree to which they are challenging or hindering. Webster and colleagues found empirical support for this in their study, which found that the majority of stressor constructs measured were appraised by participants as both challenging and hindering.

Although challenge appraisals and hindrance appraisals were not defined until recently, the general notion of stress appraisals is not a new theoretical development. As mentioned previously, an emphasis on individual reactions to stressors is a key tenet of the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to the theory, an individual's cognitive appraisal of a stressor determines their reaction. Specifically, the theory states that individuals conduct two different appraisals when they encounter a potentially stressful situation. Primary appraisal of a stressor is the assessment of whether the stressor has meaning to oneself. Secondary appraisal, suggested to occur simultaneously, involves identifying

the appropriate coping response to the stressor. Challenge and hindrance appraisals of work events consequently fall under Lazarus and Folkman's understanding of primary appraisal. The transactional theory therefore serves as the theoretical foundation for the modern approach of researching work stress under the challenge-hindrance framework.

The present study frames challenge appraisals and hindrance appraisals as meaningful outcomes that are worth investigating by their own merit. Even in contemporary organizational research, stress appraisals are rarely invoked when making predictions about employee behavior. This is surprising given that appraisals are an important component of the Affective Events Theory (AET; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), which states that work events cause emotional reactions and those reactions predict subsequent behavior. Weiss and Cropanzano wrote that affective reactions are a result of the cognitive appraisals of work events. However, researchers who apply the theory often measure only affect and ignore cognitive appraisals of work events. For example, Rodell and Judge (2009) found evidence that emotions mediate the relationship between challenge and hindrance stressors and discretionary behavior. The role of emotions in the workplace is important, but there is little research investigating the cognitive reactions to work events that precede emotions. The present study, by contrast, places stress appraisals into the spotlight and seeks to investigate antecedents of stress appraisals.

The appraisal approach to the challenge-hindrance framework implies that work events should be considered neutral situations that may be appraised by individuals separately on the degree to which they are challenging and hindering. This approach is appropriate because similar work events may be appraised differently depending on the contextual (within-person) circumstances surrounding the event. In addition, there is evidence that there are individual differences in the way people appraise, react to, and manage stressful situations (Semmer &

Meier, 2009). It is therefore equally important to examine between-person factors that influence stress appraisals. Because stress appraisals are rarely measured in organizational research, we understand little about factors that predict differential appraisals. In the following section, I address how the study of stress appraisals can shed light on our understanding of the negative outcomes of interpersonal helping.

CHAPTER 4: HELPING AND STRESS APPRAISALS

In the OCB literature, there is some work exploring stress outcomes of performing OCB, but little research that frames OCB/helping as a work event. In the work stress literature, there is a lack of research exploring the use of stress appraisals to assess reactions to work events. Challenge appraisals and hindrance appraisals should be leveraged to extend our knowledge of stress resulting from helping. There is evidence that performing OCB can be stressful when it results in role conflict or role overload (Bolino & Turnley, 2005), but we only understand a little about factors that cause individuals to appraise their own help as stressful because no research has framed helping as a work event that may be appraised. Studies that have previously measured reactions to OCB have employed OCB measures that capture the quantity of OCB performed and selected criteria such as subjective stress and or strains (e.g. Koopman et al., 2016). The limitation of these studies is that they cannot effectively investigate contextual factors that influence whether an individual appraises their helping as stressful. Stress appraisals, on the other hand, are particularly useful for investigating reactions to an individual's own helping because appraisals capture specific, unique information regarding an individual's reaction to an event. Consequently, the present study asks participants to report on specific helping events at work and utilizes hindrance appraisals as an outcome variable. This approach is grounded in transactional theory, AET, and the contemporary understanding of the challenge-hindrance framework approach.

The present study is concerned with identifying within-person and between-person predictors of hindrance appraisals of interpersonal helping. I focus on a specific type of OCB, interpersonal helping, because it represents a type of OCB that employees are likely to engage in on a daily basis and has been successfully measured in experience sampling studies (e.g. Lanaj et

al., 2016). I focus on hindrance appraisals of helping (rather than challenge appraisals) because the prior theoretical development for the OCB-stress relationship rests primarily on the concepts of goal obstruction and insufficiency of resources needed to complete duties associated with an employee's various roles. These concepts relate directly to Webster et al.'s (2011) interpretation of hindrance stress as stress resulting from interference with growth. Workload and help difficulty were chosen as within-person predictors of hindrance appraisals because these two constructs serve as indicators of resource trade-offs that individuals make when helping their co-workers. In addition, I discuss the rationale for two including potential between-person predictors of hindrance appraisals: prosocial motivation and neuroticism. These dispositional constructs have been extensively investigated in the OCB and stress literatures and are expected to predict hindrance appraisals of helping across different types of helping events. To address this research question as comprehensively as possible, the present study uses an experience sampling method that allows for the investigation of both these within-person and between-person predictor.

Within Person Predictors of Hindrance Appraisals of Helping

Evidence suggests that resources used for interpersonal helping may obstruct an individual's ability to devote resources toward task-related duties (Bolino and Turnley, 2005; Koopman et al., 2016), but each helping event differs in a variety of ways. For example, an employee may be busy or not busy when a co-worker asks for help, and the help itself may be simple or difficult to carry out. Depending on the contextual factors surrounding the helping event, the actor invests a varying amount of resources to help their co-worker. For instance, helping behavior may involve giving their co-worker information or feedback, teaching co-workers how to complete tasks more efficiently, or solving problems for their co-worker. Thus,

the complexity and consequently the difficulty of problems that actors address to help a co-worker varies. The present study uses a construct called *help difficulty* to refer to the time and resources that an employee must consume to help their co-worker. I predict that higher help difficulty will indicate that helping consumes more of the employee's resources and is therefore associated with fewer resources available to complete tasks and consequently higher hindrance appraisals.

A second factor that varies from event to event is the employee's current workload at the time of help given. Employee workload refers to the quantity or difficulty of job demands that an employee has at a given time (Spector & Jex, 1998). According to the stressor-strain framework, workload represents one of many stressors that instigates a physiological stress process that leads to strain. Meta analyses have found that workload is associated with role stressors and strains (Alarcon, 2011; Bowling et al., 2015). These studies suggest that employees perceive incompatibility among their roles and experience negative stress-related outcomes when their workload is high. Although these studies have not measured hindrance appraisals specifically, the Affective Events Theory suggests that stress appraisals and emotional reactions are the mediating mechanism between events and strains and behavioral outcomes (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Specifically, high workload is expected to incite uncertainty regarding an employee's ability to complete their tasks. Under this circumstance, helping co-workers is likely to be seen as a barrier that obstructs work goal progress. Therefore, I expect employee workload at the time of help given to predict hindrance appraisals. My two within-person hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: An employee's workload at the time of performed help will be directly related to hindrance appraisals of helping, such that individuals will be more likely to appraise helping as a hindrance when their current workload is high.

Hypothesis 2: The difficulty of the help provided to a co-worker will be directly related to hindrance appraisals of helping, such that individuals will be more likely to appraise helping as a hindrance when help difficulty is high.

In addition to main effects, I expect an interaction effect between help difficulty and current workload. Workload captures the general level of job demands of expected of the employee at a given time, while help difficulty captures the level of resources that the employee expends when helping a co-worker. When measured together, these constructs provide information regarding the resource trade-offs that employees make when helping a co-worker. For example, an employee may experience some stress when the help they provide is difficult and resource consuming. However, the employee is likely to perceive it as hindrance stress to a much greater extent when the help is difficult to carry out *and* the employee has numerous job tasks to complete at the same time. That is, high workload combined with high help difficulty signals a greater likelihood that employee is making substantial resource trade-offs by helping a co-worker. Because theory and evidence suggest that hindrance stress is the result of the actor making trade-offs, hindrance appraisals are expected to be particularly high when both employee workload and help difficulty are high. Therefore, the following interaction is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 3: Current workload will moderate the positive relationship between help difficulty and hindrance appraisals, such that the relationship will be stronger when current workload is high (vs. low).

Between Person Predictors of Hindrance Appraisals of Helping

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) argued that both situational and personal factors are important in the stress appraisal process. In addition, AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) notes the importance of between-person dispositions in the interpretation of work events. Therefore, the present study considers two dispositional factors: neuroticism and prosocial motivation. Neuroticism is characterized by a predisposition toward experiencing negative emotions and psychological stress. There are two different mechanisms by which neuroticism is thought to influence stress appraisals. First, Hemenover & Dienstbier (1996) argued that neuroticism influences salience of stressful environmental cues. That is, individuals with high neuroticism are more likely to attend to negative factors of work events. On the other hand, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) suggested that high neuroticism makes individuals predisposed to react more strongly to negative events than individuals with low neuroticism. Both of these theoretical approaches suggest that individuals high in neuroticism will be more likely to make hindrance appraisals than individuals low in neuroticism. Negative, resource-consuming aspects of helping events may simply be more salient to individuals with high neuroticism, or individuals with high neuroticism may react more negatively to events that force them to make trade-offs. Preliminary empirical evidence supports this hypothesis as neuroticism has been found to predict stress appraisals of specific situations (Hemenover & Dienstbier, 1996). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 4: Helper neuroticism will be positively related to hindrance appraisals of helping, such that individuals will be more likely to appraise helping as a hindrance when they are high in neuroticism.

In addition to personality, the research literature on OCB has also placed a heavy emphasis on the influence of motivational dispositions. Prosocial motivation is the most directly related to helping behavior and refers to a disposition toward engaging in behaviors to benefit the needs and interests of others (Beersma & De Dreu, 2005; Batson, 1987). According to Rioux and Penner (2001), prosocial motivation is considered one of the three major motives underlying organizational citizenship behavior. Prosocial motivation been conceptualized as a dispositional trait related to Agreeableness that is influenced by situational factors (Graziano et al., 2007). Individuals with high prosocial motivation are thought to place greater value on helping their organization and their peers (Grant, 2008). Graziano and colleagues (2007) suggested that prosocial motivation is the underlying mechanism that mediates the relationship between Agreeableness and helping behavior. Researchers have found that prosocial motives and similar constructs (prosocial values, prosocial personality) predict engagement in organizational citizenship behavior (Grant, 2008; Ilies et al., 2006).

Although much research has investigated the dispositional nature of prosocial motivation and its relationship with interpersonal helping, less research directly has investigated how prosocial motivation affects appraisals of one's own help. Conceptually, individuals with high prosocial personality likely have an alignment of motives and behavior when they are helping others. These individuals, for example, are likely to enjoy helping others even when the problem they are helping with is difficult. I argue that individuals with high prosocial motivation are less likely to appraise helping as a hindrance across situations because they experience resource depletion to a lesser extent when helping their co-workers. Therefore, my final hypothesis states that individuals with high trait prosocial motivation will be *less* likely to appraise their own helping as a hindrance. The conceptual model and hypotheses are summarized in Figure 1.

Hypothesis 5: Trait prosocial motivation will be negatively related to hindrance appraisals of helping, such that individuals will be less likely to appraise helping as a hindrance when they are high in prosocial motivation.

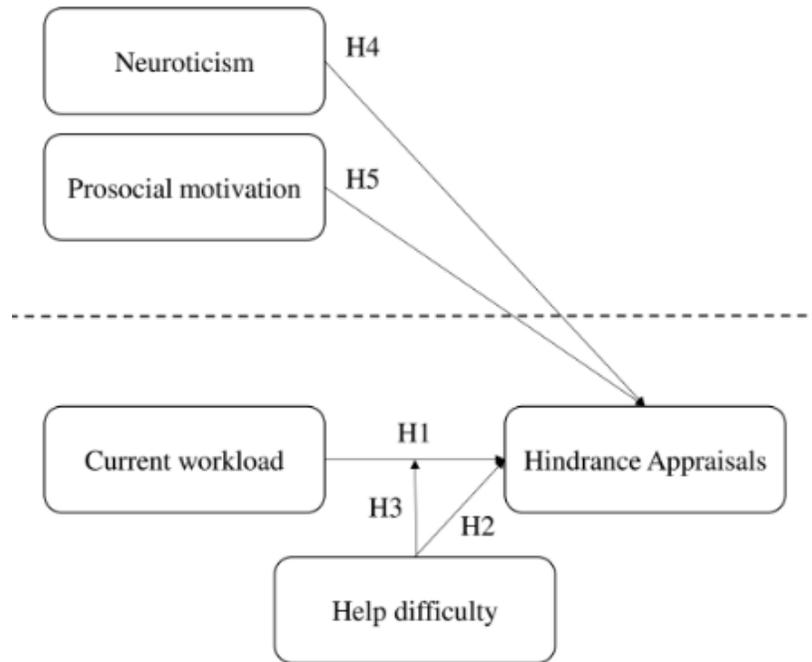


Figure 1: Conceptual model and hypotheses

CHAPTER 5: METHOD

The present study employed an experience sampling design. This design is appropriate because it allows participants to describe recent helping events, provide details of the circumstances surrounding helping events, and reflect on those events close to the time that they occurred. This allows me to investigate within-person contextual factors surrounding helping events at work. Prior studies have used experience sampling methods to investigate interpersonal helping (e.g. Lanaj et al., 2016; Sonnentag & Grant, 2012).

Power Analysis

Scherbaum and Ferrerter (2009) suggested that increasing the sample size of the higher level (in this case, the number of participants) has a greater impact on statistical power than increasing the sample of the lower level (in this case, observations within individuals). Similar recent experience sampling studies in high-ranking journals sampled between 60 and 120 participants to test multilevel hypotheses. Lanaj et al., (2016) sampled 68 participants to test cross-level moderation hypotheses, Ilies et al (2006) sampled 66 participants to test cross-level moderators of the affect-OCB relationship, and Gabriel et al. (2018) sampled 107 employees to test predictors, between-person moderators, and within-person mediators of political and helping behavior.

To ensure I had sufficient useable data to test my hypotheses, I used Monte Carlo simulation techniques in Mplus 7.11 to estimate the sample size required to test my five hypotheses given estimated relationships between variables in a population. When the number of participants was set to 100 and the number of observations per participant was set to 10, null alternatives to Hypotheses 1, 2, 4, and 5 were rejected in 100% of the replication and the null alternative to Hypothesis 3 was rejected in 79% of the replications. This power analysis suggests

that targeting a sample of 100 employees with 10 observations each would be sufficient for testing my hypotheses.

Sample

Participants were recruited from UCF psychology courses through the SONA platform. Participants were required to be at least 18 years old and hold a part-time job in order to participate in the study. A total of 213 participants completed the baseline survey. Of these, 88 participants completed at least one daily diary survey. Participants were included in analyses if they reported providing help in at least one daily diary survey. Of the 88 participants that completed at least one daily diary survey, ten did not report an incident of providing help, resulting in a final sample of 78 participants.

The 78 employees in the final sample had a mean age of 20.76 years ($SD = 4.17$) and were mostly female (56.4%). In terms of race, the participants mostly self-identified as White (44.9%) Black (24.4%), or Hispanic/Latino (24.4%). Most participants in the sample worked part-time. On average, participants worked part-time; they reported working an average of 21.79 hours per week ($SD = 8.76$).

Procedure

Participants first completed an in-person baseline survey that contained between-person items about personality, job characteristics, and motivational dispositions. After completing the measures, the researcher explained the experience sampling portion of the study. The participant shared the dates and times during the following three-week period that corresponded with the end of a work shift. Participants complete the helping diary surveys only at the end of a workday. The surveys were made available for the participant to complete for twelve hours after the agreed administration time, and participants received an automated reminder email if they didn't

complete the survey within the first four hours. This ensured that reported events occur reasonably close to the time they originally occur.

The online experience sampling surveys began on the Monday after the baseline survey was completed. The researchers emailed participants at the end of their workday according to participants' previously indicated preferences. The online daily diary survey asked participants to describe a specific helping event that occurred during work that day. Participants completed an open response describing the event and subsequently complete descriptive items about the event. The remaining items measured appraisals of the helping event, the difficulty of the helping event, and the employee's daily workload.

If the participant indicated that they provided no help during their workday, the observation was not included in analyses. The final total number of observations was 252 from 78 participants, and thus the average number of help provided surveys completed by participants was $M = 3.22$ ($SD = 2.11$). Figure 2 displays the distribution of helping surveys completed per participant. As shown in the figure, approximately half of the sample only completed either one or two of the daily surveys.

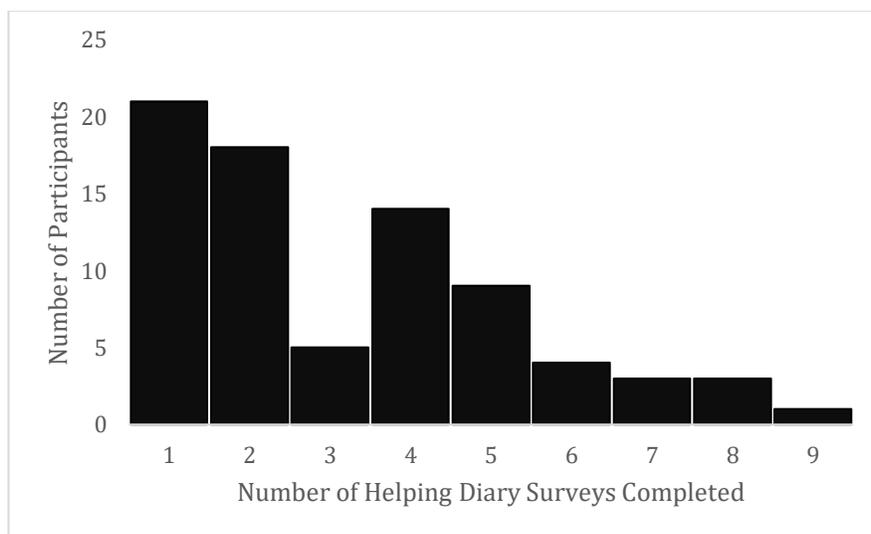


Figure 2: Histogram displaying number of valid helping surveys completed per participant.

Between-Person Measures

Neuroticism was measured using ten items from the Goldberg Big Five IPIP (Goldberg, 1999). Participants were asked to rate the degree to which each item described them in general. An example item is “Get stressed out easily.” Responses were scored on a response scale ranging from 1 (Very inaccurate) to 5 (Very accurate). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .83$.

Prosocial motivation was measured using four items adapted by Lanaj et al (2016) and originally written by Grant (2008). The items ask participants why they are motivated to do their work in general. An example item is “Because I want to help others through my work.” Responses will be scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .93$.

Organizational constraints were measured using the Organizational Constraints Scale (OCS; Spector & Jex, 1998). The eleven items ask participants to rate how often their job activities are hindered by certain characteristics of their job. The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .83$.

Negative affectivity (trait negative affect) was measured using six items from the Scale of Positive and Negative Experiences (SPANE; Diener, et al., 2010). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .76$.

Agreeableness was measured using ten items from the Goldberg Big Five IPIP (Goldberg, 1999). Participants were asked to rate the degree to which each item described them in general. An example item is “Make people feel at ease.” Responses were scored on a response scale ranging from 1 (Very inaccurate) to 5 (Very accurate). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .79$.

Participants provided their gender, age, and race.

Within-Person Measures

If they indicated that they provided help during the workday, participants provided an open response to the following item: “Think of one specific situation at work today when you helped a co-worker. You will be asked to refer to this example many times when responding to questions throughout this part of the survey. Please provide a short summary (minimum of 1-2 sentences) of the situation and the nature of the help you gave.” Participants subsequently indicated whom they helped, the degree to which they believe that the help they gave is part of their job, and whether the help they gave related to a personal problem or job-related problem. The help difficulty, hindrance appraisal, and challenge appraisal measures referred to this helping event.

Help difficulty was measured using three items that referred to the helping event. An example item is “The help I gave required a lot of effort.” Responses were scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .80$.

Workload was measured using five items from Spector & Jex (1998). The items were adapted to ask participants about their workload that day. An example item is “I had more work to do than I could do well.” Responses will be scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .77$.

Hindrance appraisal of helping was measured using five items from Searle & Auton (2015) and adapted to refer to a helping event. The items used to measure hindrance appraisal appear in Table 1. Responses will be scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .93$.

Challenge appraisal of helping was measured in this study for exploratory supplementary analyses that examine the challenge side of the challenge-hindrane framework. This construct was measured using three items from Searle & Auton (2015) and adapted to refer to a helping event. The items used to measure challenge appraisal appear in Table 1. Responses will be scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). The internal consistency reliability was $\alpha = .85$.

Table 1: Challenge and Hindrance Appraisal Items

Item Number	Hindrane Appraisal	Challenge Appraisal
1	“Helping this person hindered any achievements I might have had.”	“Helping this person helped me learn a lot.”
2	“Helping this person restricted my capabilities at work.”	“Helping this person showed me I can do something new.”
3	“Helping this person limited how well I could do my job.”	“Helping this person was an educational experience.”
4	“Helping this person prevented me from performing my job at the highest level.”	
5	“Helping this person hindered my task accomplishment.”	

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS

Analytical Strategy

The data include observations nested within participants. Given the nested structure of the data, I use multilevel modeling techniques in Mplus 7.11 to test my hypotheses (Snijders & Bosker, 1999; Muthén & Muthén, 2012). The within-level model testing Hypotheses 1-3 included the within-level variables (workload and help difficulty) and their interaction term as predictors of within-level variance of hindrance appraisal. The full multilevel model testing Hypotheses 4-5 included neuroticism and prosocial motivation as predictors of the between-level variance in hindrance appraisal. This full model was tested with and without control variables as predictors of hindrance appraisal.

The intraclass correlation or ICC(1) for hindrance appraisals was .29, indicating that 29% of the variance in hindrance appraisals of helping is at the between-person level. For the remaining within-person variables (i.e., challenge appraisals, workload, and help difficulty), ICC(1) values ranged from .41 to .47. Thus, multilevel modelling techniques were appropriate for data analysis.

In line with suggestions by Ohly et al. (2010) and Enders and Tofighi (2007), I person mean-centered the within-person variables (workload and help difficulty) to control for variance that could be attributed as between-person variance. The between-person variables (neuroticism, prosocial motivation, agreeableness, organizational constraints, and negative affectivity) were grand mean-centered.

Pre-Hypothesis Testing

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Correlations and descriptive statistics of study variables at the within level ($n = 248$) are depicted in Table 2. Workload ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.86$), help difficulty ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.06$), hindrance appraisal ($M = 1.86$, $SD = 1.01$), and challenge appraisal ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.13$) were all positively correlated with one another at the $p < .05$ level. Correlations among these variables ranged from $r = .23$ to $r = .41$. The between-level correlations and descriptive statistics ($N = 78$) are depicted in Table 3.

Table 2: Day-level means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations among study variables.

Variable	Mean	SD	ICC1	1	2	3	4
1 Workload	3.09	0.86	0.47	(.77)			
2 Help Difficulty	2.47	1.06	0.41	.41*	(.80)		
3 Hindrance Appraisals	1.86	1.01	0.29	.34*	.38*	(.93)	
4 Challenge Appraisals	2.85	1.13	0.47	.31*	.41*	.23*	(.85)

Note: $n = 248$. All correlations marked with an asterisk (*) are significant at $p < .001$. Internal consistency reliabilities are provided on the diagonal.

Control Variables

Organizational constraints had no effect on hindrance appraisals of help ($B = -.02$, $p = .91$). Negative affectivity also had no effect on hindrance appraisals ($B = .14$, $p = .38$). Demographic variables (race, gender, age) also had no effect on hindrance appraisals (respectively, $F(4, 73) = 2.59$, $p = .054$; $t = -.32$, $p = .74$; $r = -.18$, $p = .16$).

Table 3: Person-level means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations among study variables.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Workload	3.15	0.72						
2 Help Difficulty	2.41	0.96	.38*					
3 Neuroticism	2.68	0.75	-.01	-.05	(.83)			
4 Prosocial Motivation	4.21	0.94	.18	-.07	-.05	(.93)		
5 Agreeableness	4.11	0.55	.30*	.20	-.19	.32*	(.79)	
6 Hindrance Appraisals	1.83	0.80	.38*	.37*	.04	-.05	-.07	
7 Challenge Appraisals	2.93	0.93	.37*	.42*	.05	.06	.03	.28*

Note: $N = 78$. All correlations marked with an asterisk (*) are significant at $p < .05$. Internal consistency reliabilities are provided for the two between-person variables on the diagonal.

Hypothesis Testing

Level 1 Hypotheses

Finally, Hypothesis 3 hypothesized an interaction between help difficulty and workload. This hypothesis was not supported ($B = .09, p = .55$), suggesting that the effect of help difficulty on hindrance appraisal does not vary as a function of daily workload. The pattern of results in the multilevel model remained the same with and without the interaction term; therefore, the reported model includes the interaction term.

Level 2 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 4 predicted a positive effect of neuroticism on hindrance appraisal and Hypothesis 5 predicted a negative effect of prosocial motivation on hindrance appraisal. Hypothesis 4 was not supported ($B = .01, p = .85$), indicating that trait neuroticism had no effect

on hindrance appraisals of helping Hypothesis 5 was not supported ($B = .06, p = .46$), suggesting that prosocial motivation also had no effect on hindrance appraisals.

Table 4: Multilevel Model Results Predicting Hindrance Appraisals of Help

Predictor	B	SE	p
Intercept	1.85	0.08	< .001
<i>Level 1 Predictors</i>			
Event Help Difficulty	.29	.11	.007
Daily Workload	.19	.13	.13
Daily Workload x Help Difficulty	.09	.14	.55
<i>Level 2 Predictors</i>			
General Help Difficulty	.27	.11	.02
General Workload	.37	.10	< .001
Neuroticism	-.11	.13	.38
Prosocial Motivation	.00	.08	.98
Agreeableness	-.30	.15	.04
Organizational Constraints	.02	.12	.88
Negative Affectivity	.15	.16	.34

Supplementary Analyses

Daily workload had no main effect on hindrance appraisals and no statistically significant interaction with help difficulty to predict hindrance appraisals. However, workload did have a main effect on hindrance appraisals at the between-person level ($B = .33, p = .001$). In other words, participants with a high typical workload at their job tended to appraise specific helping events as a hindrance in general. Therefore, I next tested whether an individual's average workload (between-person) would moderate the effect of help difficulty on hindrance appraisals. Based on prior theory that workload represents available resources to devote to helping others, I hypothesized that typical workload may be a better proxy for available resources than daily workload. However, the cross-level interaction between average workload and help difficulty was not statistically significant ($B = -.11, p = .51$). Thus, workload did not influence the help difficulty–hindrance appraisal slope at the within-level nor the between-level.

A second analysis was conducted to examine whether agreeableness would have a negative between-level effect on hindrance appraisals. The rationale for this supplementary hypothesis is similar to the theoretical rationale for the main effect of prosocial motivation: trait agreeableness may indicate an alignment of motives and behavior when helping others. Individuals high in agreeableness are more likely to help, and therefore may be more likely to overlook factors that make helping stressful across various helping events. The full model regressing hindrance appraisal onto the study variables was tested with agreeableness included as a between-level predictor. Agreeableness was found to have a statistically significant negative effect on hindrance appraisals of helping ($B = -.30, p < .05$), indicating that those high in agreeableness were less likely to appraise any reported helping event as a hindrance.

Agreeableness was therefore retained in the full multilevel model and appears as a between-person predictor in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 5: Multilevel Model Results Predicting Challenge Appraisals of Help

Predictor	B	SE	p
Intercept	2.88	.09	< .001
<i>Level 1 Predictors</i>			
Event Help Difficulty	.25	.10	.02
Daily Workload	.01	.12	.93
Daily Workload x Help Difficulty	.10	.16	.55
<i>Level 2 Predictors</i>			
General Help Difficulty	.41	.10	< .001
General Workload	.41	.13	.002
Neuroticism	-.19	.20	.15
Prosocial Motivation	.06	.10	.55
Agreeableness	-.08	.21	.69
Organizational Constraints	.47	.13	.001
Negative Affectivity	.33	.16	.04

Finally, I tested same full model with challenge appraisals as the criterion. No hypotheses were formed *a priori* regarding challenge appraisals of helping. The results of the multilevel model are summarized in Table 5. At the observation-level, help difficulty had a statistically significant positive effect on challenge appraisals ($B = .25, p < .05$) but workload did not ($B = .01, p < .93$), indicating that more difficult helping events were perceived to be challenges. This

pattern was different at the between-person level. Average help difficulty ($B = .41, p < .001$), but not typical workload ($B = .41, p < .01$) predicted challenge appraisals. Finally, organizational constraints ($B = .47, p < .01$) and negative affectivity ($B = .33, p < .05$) predicted challenge appraisals, indicating that those with high organizational constraints and high negative affectivity tended to appraise helping events as a challenge. Neuroticism, agreeableness, and prosocial motivation had no effect on challenge appraisal of helping.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of the present study was to highlight factors that make individuals more likely to perceive helping others as stressful experience. To the end, I examined interpersonal helping using a work stress approach and specifically drew from the increasingly popular challenge-hindrance distinction (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). The traditional approach to studying challenge and hindrance stress involves categorizing stressors as challenge or hindrance. Helping, however, is not easily categorized as a challenge stressor or a hindrance stressor. Therefore, I utilized the appraisal approach to studying the challenge and hindrance distinction (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Webster et al., 2011; Searle & Auton, 2015). The approach involved framing helping as an inherently neutral event that may be appraised as a challenge or a hindrance. This approach allowed me to study the extent to which helping is stressful by examining event-level and trait-level predictors of hindrance appraisals.

Theoretical Implications

Hindrance appraisal is defined as a perception that an event will thwart one's goals or personal development. Applied to helping events, high hindrance appraisal would suggest that helping others is perceived as stressful due to interference with goals. Help difficulty, a subjective evaluation made based on the characteristics of the help provided, was associated with hindrance appraisals of helping. Presumably, more difficult help would be more time or resource intensive, and thus more likely to interfere with one's work goals. In contrast, daily workload did not predict hindrance appraisals at the day level, nor did workload interact with help difficulty to predict hindrance appraisals. This result suggests that the characteristics of the help event that contribute to help difficulty are an important determinant of hindrance appraisals, particularly

when compared to the context surrounding the helping event. Simply put, when help is difficult to provide, people appraise it as a hindrance regardless of that day's level of workload.

I theorized that workload represents a contextual factor that represents availability of resources that could be used to help others because of prior research indicating that high workload is associated with perceived conflict among one's job roles (Alacron, 2011; Bowling et al., 2015). One possibility for the absence of an effect of workload on hindrance appraisals is that workload is a poor proxy for available resources. Although having a low workload could certainly free up resources that could be used to help other, numerous other constructs may be better proxies for resource availability. For instance, one's level of knowledge or skill could be framed as a resources that can be expended to help others. Another explanation for this result is that daily contextual circumstances, in general, are weaker predictors of hindrance appraisals than the content of the help itself. That is, resources required to provide help (e.g., the difficulty of the help) may simply be more important determinant of stress than resources available to help others (e.g., whether workload is high when giving help).

Other considerations relate to contextual factors proximal to the demand of help provided. OCB research typically focuses on the amount of help provided rather than the characteristics of specific helping events, which are the focus of the present study. Amount of help provided may be important to consider in future research. It is similar to workload in that it can represent current demands, but it differs from workload in that the amount of help provided represents the demands of an employee's organizational member role rather than their job holder role. It is possible that the amount of helping provided during a given time period directly contributes to hindrance appraisals made of a particular helping event. Future studies should examine other indicators of demands and available resources to shed light on this result.

Interestingly, workload did have an effect on hindrance appraisals at the between-person level. This suggests that those who have busy jobs in general will appraise helping others as a hindrance, but that workload during a specific event will not. In other words, those occupying high workload jobs will appraise helping as a hindrance regardless of their workload on a particular day and those with low workload jobs will generally not appraise helping as a hindrance regardless of their workload on a particular day. One explanation for this finding is that people view their level of busyness in general terms. Employees that generally are very busy may find it stressful to help others even when they are experiencing a less busy day than usual because they recognize their bandwidth in general terms rather than specific terms. Future studies that examine perceptions of resource availability on a daily basis and general basis are required to clarify this result.

This finding contributes to current theory on negative outcomes of OCB. Aforementioned theory (Bolino & Turnley, 2005) applied role stress theory (Kahn et al., 1964) to make propositions regarding possible negative outcomes for the individual providing help. Specifically, Bolino and Turnley (2005) suggested that stress results from trade-offs made between an employee's role as an organizational member and their role as a job-holder. If daily workload and help difficulty are acceptable indicators of requirements for one's organizational member role and job holder role, respectively, a trade-off would be represented in an interaction effect between the two variables. The results of the present study, if replicated in future studies, would suggest that this is not the case. It is plausible that performing obligations as an organizational member can be stressful even if no trade-offs are made regarding one's job-holder role. Adjustments to theory may be necessary if results continue to trend in this direction.

Finally, supplemental analyses examined interpersonal helping from the challenge side of the challenge-hindrane framework. Challenge appraisal of helping can be understood as a subjective evaluation that providing help in a specific situation has potential for developmental gains. At the within-level, help difficulty had a positive relationship with challenge appraisal, indicating that providing more difficult help was perceived to have developmental benefits. In the present study, help difficulty was positively related to both challenge and hindrance appraisals. This result is consistent with several findings and theories related to work stress and interpersonal helping. Webster et al.'s (2011) proposition about challenge and hindrance appraisals stated that stressors may be appraised simultaneously as a challenge and a hindrance and the present study finds that this proposition holds true for helping behavior. The result is also consistent with findings in Perlow and Weeks (2002), who found that helping can be framed as an opportunity to learn or develop new skills or as an undesirable inconvenience for the helper.

This finding also extends the multi-stakeholder perspective on OCB (Reynolds et al., 2015), which states that positive and negative outcomes may occur simultaneously for different stakeholders (e.g. the helper, help recipient, other team members, and organization). The present study contributes by providing evidence that positive and negative outcomes can occur simultaneously even within stakeholders (in this case, the helper). Future studies could extend this multi-stakeholder framework even further. Researchers may investigate the underlying mechanisms behind simultaneous appraisals. One mechanism could be the short-term versus the long-term expectancies of providing help. Both types of appraisals may be formed because helpers view helping as an inconvenience in the short-term (hindrance appraisal) while also recognizing that providing help is beneficial in the long-term (challenge appraisal).

The findings must be interpreted in light of the study design. The present study examined helping events that had already taken place, and did not look at factors that contributed to one's decision to provide or not provide help. The between-person predictors of challenge appraisal, in particular, are likely influenced by study design. Typical workload, general help difficulty, organizational constraints, and negative affectivity had positive main effects on challenge appraisals of help. Interpreted in light of the study design, this could suggest that participants with high organizational constraints, workload, and negative affectivity were more selective regarding when they provided help. These individuals may have provided help specifically when they perceived that there would be developmental benefits from providing help. This interpretation has implications for the research on helping motives (Takeuchi et al., 2015; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010). It is possible that factors thought to impede whether someone provides help, such as workload, merely makes providing help conditional on whether there is personal gain in providing help. Future studies may examine the interaction between challenge and hindrance appraisals of help requests and helping motives to predict whether individuals provide help and the effort that helpers are willing to invest in helping.

Practical Implications

The broad practical implication of the study addresses the tension between the positive and negative aspects of helping others. The present study addresses one of many aspects of helping that can potentially result in helper stress. Interpersonal helping is an aspect of workplace behavior that is, in aggregate, positive and should be encouraged. By identifying an aspect of helping that results in hindrance appraisals, practitioners can gear interventions toward minimizing help difficulty. In the present study, help difficulty was the most notable predictor of hindrance appraisals and therefore the most practical recommendations involve managing help

difficulty. One route to addressing help difficulty is to better equip employees to deal with difficult problems on their own. This can be done by providing informational resources employees can resort to when they encounter difficult problems, such as job aids. These job aids may reduce the number of difficult requests that are made to other employees in the organization.

When job aids are available, the next step relates to utilization of the resources that are available and reliance on colleagues for difficult tasks. If resources are available but not utilized, managers may need take steps to alter norms related to interpersonal helping and the use of job aids. For example, if employees rely on more knowledgeable coworkers for very difficult tasks, managers may need to intervene by warning employees against using too much of their time solving difficult problems on others' behalf. Similarly, managers should monitor the accessibility and utility of job aids so that employees that encounter difficult task-related problems may use those resources when needed.

Unfortunately, managers cannot predict and preemptively address all possible problems that employees encounter in the workplace by providing job aids. However, they can better equip helpers to deal with colleagues' requests. One method of accomplishing this is to develop employees' job-related knowledge and skills related to others' roles. Employees with high levels of job knowledge acquired via cross-training may find it easier to provide help to colleagues. Cross-trained employees may not perceive providing help to be difficult, even if the nature of their colleague's problem is complex. This perception may, in turn, result in reduced hindrance appraisals.

Limitations and Future Directions

The primary limitation of the study was that the sample was smaller than expected both in terms of number of participants ($N = 78$) and in terms of number of observations per

participant ($n = 248$). Figure 2 depicts the number of observations per participant. Due to the sample size, it is possible that some effects were missed in the present study (i.e. type I error). The within-person effects may be particularly impacted because 21 participants only completed one diary survey throughout the study. This, in addition to the overall low number of observations per participant ($M = 3.18$), limits the within-person variability in the sample. Consequently, some of the estimates identified in the multilevel model may be underestimated.

A limitation of this study is the lack of clarity regarding how well the study's findings would generalize to other age groups and full-time workers because the sample comes from students that worked mostly part-time. The present study investigated helping events from a sample of students who mostly worked part-time. The theoretical rationale for the study hypotheses does not give any indication that the findings would differ between student samples and non-student samples. However, future research should replicate these findings using a different sample.

It is possible that range restriction on the dependent variable, hindrance appraisals, limited conclusions that could be drawn from analyses. The observation-level mean of hindrance appraisal in this sample was $M = 1.86$ ($SD = 1.01$). Because this construct was measured on a five-point scale, this indicates that the vast majority of helping events provided were not appraised as a hindrance. One explanation for this range restriction could be explained by generally positive nature of providing help to others. The hindrance side of the challenge-hindrance framework has typically been reserved for events and experience that are inherently stressful (e.g., interpersonal mistreatment; organizational constraints). Base rates of hindrance appraisals of these stressors are likely high compared to events that may or may not be stressful. Helping is theorized to cause stress only specific situations and circumstances (Bolino &

Turnley, 2005). Therefore, hindrance appraisals of helping are likely to have low base rates even in moderate-size samples such as the one in the present study. Future studies may address this by collecting an even greater number of helping observations.

As mentioned previously, the procedure of the study necessitates that conclusions be qualified to some extent. First, it is possible that the examples provided in the critical incident prompt influenced the type of events that were reported. The prompt read: “Did you help a coworker today? These behaviors can include but are not limited to: performing a coworker's tasks when they have been absent, giving your time to help a coworker with a work-related problem, sharing information with a coworker, or showing genuine concern or courtesy for a coworker during trying times.” This prompt could have influenced the type of events that participants were willing to report. Participants may have been less likely to report types of help that fall outside of the provided examples.

Second, the present study examined hindrance appraisals after help had already taken place. It is possible that hindrance appraisals are formed before a decision is made to help others. For example, if an employee asks a colleague for help with a complex problem, the colleague may anticipate that providing help will be stressful based on the nature of the request and therefore choose not to provide help. This is an alternative explanation for the reason hindrance appraisals had a low mean in this sample; when hindrance appraisals were made at the initial help request, the help may not have taken place. Similarly, as discussed above, employees may be more likely to help others when they anticipate that they may learn something from providing help. This could explain the relatively normal distribution of challenge appraisals of help compared to hindrance appraisals. Said another way, employees may be more likely to provide help when they expect that helping is worth their while. Appraisals that are formed before

decisions to help fall outside the scope of the present study, but should certainly be addressed in future research. Future studies could address this issue by employing an event-contingent experience sampling method. In this type of experience sampling design, researchers ask participants to report on a short survey each time they observe a helping opportunity and make a decision about whether to help their colleague in the situation. This issue could also be explored in laboratory studies where researchers experimentally manipulate helping requests and assess participants' perceptions of the request and their decisions to provide help.

The findings suggest that hindrance appraisals of helping are linked to the *characteristics* of the helping event. This raises the question: what characteristics of help influence perceptions of help difficulty? One potential area to consider is the content of the resources that are requested. Help can be instrumental, emotional, or informational (House, 1981). Even within these categories, the content of specific requests varies considerably. Some help involves letting others borrow easily accessible physical materials; other times, help instrumental help is more laborious because it is harder to supply requested materials or information. Helper characteristics may also influence the extent to which help is perceived to be difficult. For example, providing instrumental resources of any kind may be difficult if the helper has low levels of technical skill or job knowledge. Similarly, supplying emotional support may be easier for those with strong social skills. Future researchers should closely examine predictors of subjective help difficulty, as this will provide further insight into help characteristics that make help stressful to carry out.

A final extension of this study would be to examine the reciprocal nature of helping events. The theory of social exchange (Blau, 1964) suggests that individuals reciprocate help they receive to comply with social norms and to maintain positive relationships. The present study does not address how these dynamics influence whether helpers form hindrance appraisals

of the help they provide. Future research could investigate this by asking employees whether the help they provided was in response to help that they received previously or by collecting a series of helping events from dyads.

Concluding Remarks

In this diary study, I examined factors that make helping others stressful. The present study furthers both theory on negative outcomes of OCB (Bolino et al., 2004) and the challenge-hindrane framework (Cavanaugh et al., 2000) by applying the appraisal perspective of the challenge-hindrane framework to the study of helping events. Results showed that perceived help difficulty predicted hindrance appraisals of help but daily workload did not, suggesting that the content of helping event is more important than circumstantial factors surrounding the event in predicting stress.

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