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HIRING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES FROM AN EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVE
AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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the requirements for the degree of
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by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Terri Kershner (1957-2021). This work reflects her love for me and my two sisters, Tammy and Terri. Her story of raising two children with developmental and intellectual disabilities will endure. Ultimately, she lived a life of sacrifice. Although her grandchildren cannot learn from her directly, they will be wiser and more tenderhearted to all people.

I also extend my dedication to my wife, Amanda Kershner. She has been supportive and encouraging throughout this doctoral journey. Amanda is my wisest counselor and best friend. Loving and serving her is my greatest joy. With Amanda by my side, mountains are movable (Proverbs 31:11-12).

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
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When employers hire people with disabilities, collective behavioral change occurs within organizations. Specifically, attitudes towards people with disabilities improve through professional interventions and encourage organizational citizenship behavior. Previous studies have demonstrated the economic and client-focused impact of hiring people with disabilities — resulting in a tested model of competitive integrated employment. This study indicates that — when organizations employ best practices when integrating people with disabilities into the workplace — there is a performance-based behavioral change in non-disabled employees.

This study uses intergroup contact theory and social exchange theory to develop a model and a corresponding survey instrument that measures how several factors impact co-worker attitudes toward people with disabilities. Most importantly, this allows the assessment of behavioral changes from those attitudes. This quantitative research study incorporates eight constructs with the non-disabled employee as the unit of analysis: employee knowledge, workplace contact, supported employment, employer openness, attitude towards an employee with a disability, job satisfaction, personality, and

organizational citizenship behavior. To develop the survey instrument and refine the model, three pilot studies - with 187 participants - were conducted. The main study included 211 participants spread across many different organizations, covering at least 17 industries. To test the effects of two independent variables, four moderators, and a mediator on a behavioral outcome variable - hierarchical linear regressions were performed. The results show that employee knowledge and workplace contact positively affect attitudes towards people with disabilities. In addition, employer openness moderated knowledge and workplace contact regarding attitudes; the effect was positive and significant. Correspondingly, attitudes have a positive direct effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Finally, job satisfaction and personality (for two of the five factors considered) moderated attitudes positively and significantly.

Overall, this study demonstrates that employers benefit from hiring people with disabilities. As a result, employers must realize the importance of employee attitudes in shaping structured interventions. This study's findings justify additional resource allocation for training non-disabled employees by utilizing existing opportunities — such as supportive employment.

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I: INTRODUCTION

For most people, disability profoundly impacts their lives. Indeed, Goodley (2016) contends that the nature of disability affects every person regardless of age or awareness. Although many people enter this world with an able body and sound mind, one's physical and intellectual capabilities deteriorate over time. As a result, time and circumstance force many to confront the gripping reality of disability. Encountering disability in one form or another is so pervasive that the World Health Organization (WHO) dispatched a team of social scientists to examine the issue. After completing this examination, they published the "*World report on disability*" — the first-ever report designed to spotlight the prevalence of disability (WHO, 2011). Specifically, the report demonstrated the need to raise awareness about individuals who live with disabilities.

In 2021, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 24.5 million non-institutionalized American adults with a disability are not part of the labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2022). This suggests that these non-institutionalized individuals manage their disability at home; this population comprises approximately 80% of disabled American adults (the alternative involves residing in a healthcare facility). In other words, tens of millions of Americans with disabilities make up a sizeable part of society. Additionally, across all age groups, people with disabilities are considerably less likely to be employed than those without a disability; the jobless rate for the disabled is twice as high (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2022). Taken together, this indicated that about 26 million adults with disabilities are not working outside the home. Although some disabilities are debilitating, making it impossible to work, millions of Americans living with disabilities are able and eager to work.

Unfortunately, due to misconceptions, little experience and lack of knowledge, few employers are prepared to hire them (Wehman et al., 1997). This study leverages empirical research to demonstrate the benefits employers enjoy who embrace the opportunity to hire and retain workers with disabilities.

Because of the disability population's size, many corporations and government institutions understand a disparity in employment exists (Golden, 2006). Relying on evidence-based approaches that help harness society's collective intellectual and economic power, institutional programs exist to support people with disabilities in the workplace (Rusch & Hughes, 1989). In other words, organizations can tailor employment designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities; this is accomplished through supported and customized employment. More specifically, supported and customized employment serve as vocational rehabilitation practices that integrate as well as compensate an employee with a disability for work — in a manner that meets the needs of both the disabled person and their employer (Bond et al., 2001). Both approaches are data driven. In addition to the societal benefit associated with improving the lives of millions of people, supported employment is empirically validated in that it reduces the need for public assistance, lowers the unemployment rate, and increases gross domestic product (Wehman et al., 1997). Moreover, the practice of supported employment is the result of business leaders, politicians, educators, and researchers driving multifaceted change initiatives — by promoting disability awareness training as well as encouraging job specialization to meet an organization's needs that previously catered primarily to the able bodied.

By emphasizing inclusion and dispelling negative perceptions of people with disabilities, corporations willing to incorporate people with disabilities into the workforce have contributed economically and morally to society. These companies promote workplace inclusion and address cognitive dissonance by mitigating the negative perceptions around disability. Supported employment and customized employment are both worthy vocational rehabilitation outcomes (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988); researchers have extensively explored these approaches and developed success-process models (Callahan, Griffin & Hammis, 2011). The development of process models enhanced disability studies — emphasizing the many benefits for society and contributing to the development of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, these types of change interventions produce organizational cultural shifts and influence organizational behavior. Specifically, they affect organizational citizenship behavior (Organ et al., 2005). Simply defined, organizational citizenship behavior refers to an employee’s constructive behaviors — choices that benefit the organization. Picking up trash in the parking lot on one’s own initiative is an example of organizational citizenship behavior. This study examines these behaviors that result from companies employing a person who has a disability.

Despite considerable progress, the unemployment rate and compensation for employees with disabilities leaves substantial room for improvement (Campbell, Bond & Drake, 2011). Funding and encouraging supported employment efforts could help integrate people with disabilities into the workplace. Often, to motivate decision-makers and influencers to advocate for and hire people with disabilities, media outlets characterize supported employment as benefiting society. Understandably, then,

organizations that partner with supported employment agencies to hire candidates receive social plaudits (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2008). These plaudits could come in the form of a business spotlight video on social media, an article in the local church bulletin, or an opportunity to speak with other business owners about their benevolence. By receiving this type of social praise, consumers and internal employees subconsciously increase their positive attitudes about the organization that hired the disabled employee (Siperstein et al., 2006). The existing literature and marketing around supported employment capture this decency and presents a societal perspective that advocates for social inclusion and corporate social responsibility (Siperstein et al.).

Employees with a disability and companies collaborate out of self-interest as well as a desire to meaningfully contribute to society (Campbell et al., 2011). This study aims to contribute new knowledge and focus on how the corresponding staff (co-workers) and organizations benefit from some of the created organizational citizenship behaviors. More specifically, it examines the behavioral aspects and implications of working with individuals with disabilities. The existing literature suggests that the objective behavioral changes after employees work with individuals with disabilities are grossly underrepresented — mainly related to supported employment practices (Li & Wang, 2013).

Like Li and Wang (2013), this study concerns itself with the transformation that employees undergo when they work with colleagues who have disabilities. From this perspective, could hiring a person with a disability benefit all involved? In getting to know someone with a disability, co-workers often transform their attitudes; they also consider how they behave in the workplace. For those that reform their behavior, they

display organizational citizenship behaviors. Indeed, these behaviors foster a more innovative and collaborative culture through constructive changes in methods, processes, and policies (Choi, 2007). Ultimately, this study serves an employer-focused research approach that centers around these organizational-based outcomes (Li and Wang 2013, Leach 2002).

Ongoing advocacy as well as the implementation of supported employment programs require a diversified set of resources. For example, agencies must: identify candidates, nurture prospective employer partnerships, and disabled employee retention programming. In addition, they are responsible for job matching, carving, and skill training. Altogether, these efforts benefit employers. Regarding the implementation of supported employment and ongoing job coaching, agencies also operate according to specific expectations to ensure job satisfaction for employees with disabilities (Burns et al., 2007). Supported employment practices are an investment; yet little is known about actual empirical outcomes for organizations (Gilbride et al., 2003). Earlier work suggests that small and mid-sized organizations are not as evolved as corporate counterparts with robust human resource practices that promote diversity & inclusion (Sels et al., 2006). An organization's heuristic attitude towards hiring a person with mental or physical disabilities may be stigmatized as there is a perception that they hinder productivity and profitability (Gilbride et al., 2000). According to McLaughlin et al. (2004), these practices inject fear and concerns about liability into the organization. Based on the existing literature, this is an outdated and inaccurate way of managing the organization's workforce. For one thing, supported employment programs actively coach organizations on best practices to reform systemic biases (Schur et al., 2005). As a result, supported

employment programs bolster an organization's position and immediately adds value through providing a new worker, training programs, and encouraging more positive attitudes among the workforce (Ohunakin et al., 2019). If done correctly, employers benefit from a government-funded program and enjoy a morally responsible culture-building transformation.

Considering some of the challenges a supported employment agency faces when cultivating employer partnerships, empirically sound creation measures that are specifically geared towards organizational performance must be developed and implemented (Schur et al., 2005). These measures must also be communicated to other business owners — on a peer-to-peer basis — to offer lessons from those who have successfully implemented supported employment initiatives (Ohunakin et al., 2019). Lessons learned are opportunities to break down barriers that may make employment difficult for people with disabilities and increase the number of organizational partners seeking qualified candidates from local agencies (Vornholt et al., 2013).

Additionally, supported employment agencies can shift their resource allocation to focus primarily on sourcing and employing job candidates with disabilities. That also allows for further work on job carving for employers, developing effective intervention programs, and implementing disability awareness training to ensure employee long-term retention. Although supported employment has already made a tremendous impact — decreasing the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities — there are 670,000 people with mental and physical disabilities who have employable skill sets still actively seeking employment (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2022). For this study, the main

research question is: *“What is the effect of supported employment on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)?”*

II: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Several variables and theories in the supported employment and organizational citizenship behavior literature formulate this research study. This literature review and ensuing analysis narrow them down to the most relevant context for attitude and behavior changes within the work environment for non-disabled employees. Below are the most important for this study. Each of these contributes to the research model and research question under investigation.

Supported Employment

For the first time, the Rehabilitation Act Amendments (RAA) of 1986 took an opportunity to recognize supported employment as a legitimate vocational rehabilitation outcome (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988). With the RAA initiative, the U.S. government created the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) with the mission to “develop and influence policies and practices that increase the number and quality of employment opportunities for people with disabilities” (U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2022). In addition, in 2001, the U.S. Congress and the Department of Labor created an initiative to help Americans with disabilities attain and keep employment through vocational rehabilitation programs in non-profit third-party organizations or partner agencies. A vocational rehabilitation program is a multi-disciplined, patient-centered, and evidence-based approach to help people who have

events leading to a disability, engage or re-engage with work (Escorpizo et al., 2011). The 2001 U.S. Congress initiative previously discussed provided the foundation for customized employment and other supportive services to be resourced, marketed, and administered within local business communities (Callahan, Griffin & Hammis, 2011). Customized employment is built on the unique gifts and requirements of the individual with a disability. The customization process is designed to meet both the unique gifts of the individual and the business needs (Bird et al., 2014).

In July 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) was signed into law which further substantiated the need and mission for vocational opportunities and inclusion of people with disabilities (De Heer-Wunderink et al., 2012). WIOA, a landmark legislation that is designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system (Bird et al., 2014), also corroborated the construct of Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). CIE advocates for equal pay for people with disabilities as those without disabilities in the workforce. Supported employment is the byproduct of CIE and vocational rehabilitation services. Essentially, vocational rehabilitation processes and CIE laws provided the frameworks for supported employment (Hoffmann et al., 2012). According to the literature, supported employment programs need to be more readily available (De Heer-Wunderink et al., 2012). Current studies endorse customized and SE as a promising practice. However, there is limited evidence of its efficacy to benefit the employer as an evidence-based employment practice (Inge et al., 2018; Hoffmann et al., 2012).

Supported employment programs are focused on integrating a person with mental and physical disabilities into a competitive work environment. Supported employment

implementation consists of interagency coordination which involves multiple interventions with a partner employer motivated to adopt the program, followed by the ongoing support of vocational rehabilitation best practices (Rusch & Hughes, 1989). Agencies involved with supported employment programs regularly work with the US Department of Labor to provide CIE opportunities through a customized way of pooling candidates within a local community and matching them with employer partners. Table 1 displays some of the basic steps an employment specialist uses for job matching leading up to a job offer for an individual with a disability looking for employment.

Table 1

Employment Specialists Job Matching for Customized Employment

- 1 Physically meet at a location of the individual's choice
- 2 Build rapport and get to know the individual
- 3 Mindfully listen to the person
- 4 Identify the individual's interests, skills, and abilities
- 5 Conduct in-depth interviews with family and friends
- 6 Observe the person in daily activities
- 7 Arrange for the job seeker to observe local businesses
- 8 Conduct informational interviews with employers at local businesses
- 9 Observe the job seeker engaging in job-related tasks
- 10 Assist the job seeker in identifying a work experience(s)
- 11 Collaborate with the job seeker, family, and friends in confirming the job seeker's interests
- 12 Negotiate a customized job description

Note. The information in this table was created and formatted from Inge, K. J., Graham, C. W., Brooks-Lane, N., Wehman, P., & Griffin, C. (2018). Defining customized employment as an evidence-based practice: The results of a focus group study. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 48*(2), 155–166.

In addition, agencies will work with the government through partnerships for compliance assistance programs (PCAP) between the non-profit and private sectors. The partnerships are meant to better inform businesses and workers about supported employment. The partnerships also fill a void and bridge two significant relational gaps and ways of thinking between government and private business (Golden, 2006). First, since its inception, the available supported employment literature primarily focuses on individual client outcomes and vocational rehabilitation, emphasizing placement, inclusion, retention, national economic benefits, counseling, skill training, and mental health deficits (Drake et al., 2012). Implementing the supported employment model within the workforce has demonstrated its efficacy (Wehman et al., 1997). For example, in implementing the supported employment model within a partner organization, various stakeholders (i.e., employers, supervisors, coworkers, and community members) are directly or indirectly involved through conversations about the program, interviews, disabilities awareness training, and meeting a candidate or a job coach. Additionally, each stakeholder is considered the beneficiary of engaged management, which then enhances learning and understanding when interacting with someone with disabilities.

For supported employment initiatives to succeed, employment specialists need experience working with individuals with unique mental and physical needs (Burns et al., 2007). The role of the employment specialist post-hiring includes (1) conducting a task analysis of the vocational and social aspects of a job, (2) developing training strategies, (3) determining criteria for acceptable performance, (4) teaching the supported employee to perform the desired work behaviors, and (5) planning for the continuance of the performance. Lastly, the employment specialist provides follow-up services to help

individuals maintain their employment after acquiring the necessary job skills. Figure 1 depicts the employment specialist's process when engaging with employee participants.

Figure 1

Customized Employment Process



Note. The image was created to help separate the different aspect of customized employment and was replicated from Smith, T. J., Dillahunt-Aspillaga, C., & Kenney, C. (2015). Integrating customized employment practices within the vocational rehabilitation system. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 42(3), 201–208.

The employment specialist has a unique opportunity to focus on the individual, work with the team and supervisor, and be viewed as a catalyst for value-driven leadership (Anderson, 2019). If done successfully, the amount of required employee support lessens over time. Additionally, employment specialists identify and enlist available resources in the workplace, including environment variables (e.g., docks, whistles, pictures), and enlist other coworkers to help new supported employees remain employed (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988). Supported employment's most significant value-

added economy is the specialized support for employee retention (Burns et al., 2007). Employee retention is an important selling point of supported employment services to organizations and contributes to service programs' uniqueness.

Employee Knowledge

Enhancing knowledge about individuals with disabilities is fostered by an employment specialist who helps teach co-workers to increase their learning about working with individuals with disabilities. Unfortunately, the study of employee knowledge about individuals with disabilities is not well conceptualized in the literature. However, stereotypes that individuals with disabilities face in the workplace are well documented (Allport et al., 1954), including being poor performers, absent often, and inducing the work environment with unease (Nelissen et al., 2016). In addition, some studies focus specifically on how to help individuals with disabilities (Wang et al., 2019), while other studies focus on the diagnosis of physical limitations (Shamshiri-Petersen & Krogh, 2020). Yet, due to the lack of knowledge transfer from experienced mental health professionals to the general public, misconceptions have developed that scrutinize disability (Schalk, 2017).

Education plays a critical part in attitudinal change by increasing a person's knowledge of disability (Li & Wang, 2013). In an organization, this knowledge transfer can happen formally or informally. However, the goal of knowledge transfer is to develop a formal education process and offer educational courses on studying individuals with disabilities that can positively change the attitudes towards those with whom they work (Adrian, 1997). For sustained attitude change, combining coursework with positive

interactions with people who have disabilities would produce optimal results. (Cook et al., 1999).

Workplace Contact

When supported employment programs initiate within organizations, workplace contact and exposure to a person with a disability in the workplace becomes an objective reality for co-workers without disabilities. At times, this is a notable change for non-disabled co-workers. For example, a person with a disability, a job coach, and the head of Human Resources can start lingering around their workspace during orientation and training. These attitude changes that take place are complex depending on the conditions of the contact (Amir, 1969). However, exposure is and should be a requirement to change one's attitude. As a part of supported employment, co-workers will increase their workplace contact through mandated training or ad-hoc conversations. Fechner's (1876) theory of the Mere Exposure Effect states that repeated exposure is sufficient to change an individual's attitudes (Zajonc, 2001).

Similarly, Yuker & Harley (1987) suggest integrating disabled individuals into all aspects of society, including work. In addition, Cummins and Laury (2003) studied community exposure and assert that people repeatedly exposed to disability tend to release their fear and unwarranted bias towards those with disabilities (Cummins & Laury). Since the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the social inclusion of people with mental and physical disabilities has increased. The ADA extends into classrooms where students are being exposed more often to people with psychological and physical disabilities (Lund & Seekins, 2014) and workplaces where employees might collaborate with individuals with disabilities (Ohunakin et al., 2019). Increasing the

amount of engagement between individuals with disabilities and individuals without disabilities is one of many ways to maximize attitude change.

Employer Openness

Another element for supported employment success is how the employer is open to hiring people with disabilities. This study used questions measuring employees' perception of employer openness – employer openness to hiring individuals with disabilities. Notably, just because a person with a disability is currently in the work environment, this does not exactly mean the employer is open to hiring people with disabilities.

Ronald Fry's (1997) report highlighted the need for employers to be open to hiring people with disabilities to strengthen relationships between state-funded supported employment programs and the private sector. Gilbride et al. (2003) conceptualized and measured the term employer openness, an organization's willingness to hire, make accommodations, actively work with, and promote people with disabilities (Gilbride et al., 2006). Lengnik-Hall, Gaunt, and Kulkarni (2008) further support this claim and suggest that employers have very little reason not to hire a person with disabilities and that research disconfirms justifications not to hire (Lengnik-Hall et al., 2008). Essentially, there are positive aspects found among organizations that are open to hiring and accommodating individuals with disabilities (Gilbride et al., 2006). When employers are open to hiring an individual with disabilities, they are also willing to engage in conversations with supported employment agencies.

Attitudes Towards People with Disabilities

Attitudes were explored initially by Yuker (1970), who received numerous awards and recognitions for developing the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale. Specifically, Yuker (1970) explored to understand the effects of employing a person who has a disability. Since Yuker (1970), other social scientists have formulated attitude measurement tools relative to people with disabilities (Gething & Wheeler, 1992 & Antonak & Livneh, 2000). Although formalized legal interventions exist to prevent human atrocities and discrimination toward people with disabilities (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; The Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973; The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and the Executive Orders 11246 and 11375), laws cannot override the inherent stigmas. These stigmas prevent the acceptance of people with disabilities into the work environment. Non-disabled people with limited knowledge will perceive negative attributes or consequences of disability (Vornholt et al., 2013). These attitudes, in turn, impact social exchanges and behaviors in the work environment (Chadwick-Jones, 1976). Attitudes can be changed and shaped by structured interventions (Cook et al., 1999).

Yuker's (1970) research is widely leveraged to develop strategies for implementing supported employment. Supported employment plays a critical role in attitude development, focusing on co-workers who can collaborate. Rusch (1986) recognized the importance of attitudes towards people with disabilities and further developed the literature related to attitudes and supported employment. Employing people with disabilities requires specific integration strategies to consider the attitudes of non-disabled co-workers. When done correctly, employee retention of a person with a

disability and performance of a non-disabled co-worker increase as supervisors are impressed with workers who have positive attitudes towards employees with disabilities (Rusch, 1986; Organ, 1988).

Personality

The factor model of personality started with a study of temperament by Cattell (1933) and Fiske (1949). The model to measure personality has evolved (Digman, 1997) and has become a relevant variable in understanding human behavior within the work environment, especially Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2011). Research on personality measures is valuable for social scientists and incorporated into various assessments across institutions. One of the personality measures outcomes is an additional insight to understand people and how they fit into their environments. Assessment tools have demonstrated that behaviors tend to follow attitude and personality (McLaughlin et al., 2004). Therefore, the personality variable is valuable and relevant in this study due to the nature of the outcome variable, organizational citizenship behavior. It is straightforward to conclude that extraversion and agreeableness can impact many behavioral outcomes - specifically when a person interacts with someone who has a disability.

According to the literature, personality dimensions determine behavioral changes (Lv et al., 2012). Likewise, neuroticism and intellect can impact the quality of interaction and attitude toward a person with a disability and corresponding attitude that leads to organizational citizenship behavior. Personality has five dimensions: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and intellect (openness) (Goldberg, 1990).

The current study uses the Mini-IPIP five-factor model to measure personality and its influence on behavior (Cooper et al., 2010).

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction is a well-researched construct in the literature. Initially defined by Locke (1976), the construct is a positive emotional state about work after thinking about a job. Yet, the result of Staw and Ross (1985) provided objective and empirical support on the impact of job satisfaction on one's disposition (Judge et al., 1998). There is a multidimensional and subjective nature to one's job satisfaction, including work environment elements, pay, and attitudes (Tasios & Giannouli, 2017). Therefore, when a person with a disability enters the work environment, job satisfaction has the potential to change attitudes and influence organizational citizenship behavior. It also has a relative impact on behavior in the work environment (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). There are two ways to look at job satisfaction: affective and cognitive. Affective is a more unitary concept, and cognitive is more logical and rational (Thompson & Phua, 2012). This study uses the conceptualization of job satisfaction as a moderating variable to strengthen the effect of employee attitudes on organizational citizenship behavior.

Job satisfaction is also known as the "subjective well-being at work" (Judge et al., 2020, p.78). It evaluates the overall state of being employed in a particular role. The influence of supported employment on the work environment can change this prevailing state of being while in the work environment. It is also "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1300). When a positive state of mind exists, a person can be more inclined to perform organizational citizenship behaviors. Numerous scales have been created and

tested for validity to measure this construct, including the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) (Tasios & Giannouli, 2017). Brief scales allow for the convenience of survey participants and the constructs of various studies (Judge et al., 1998).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a term coined and measured by Smith, Organ and Near (1983). They credit Katz (1964) as the originating thought leader on types of behaviors within a properly functioning organization. It is defined as “discretionary behavior, not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system” (Organ, 1998, p.4). The culmination of this behavior from a group of individuals in the work environment leads to a more effective organization. The behaviors are hard to govern and challenging to measure as many factors contribute (Smith et al., 1983). Organizational citizenship examines how individuals perform work beyond task performance to help people or the organization. Organ (1988) also refers to it as the good soldier syndrome. The behaviors are considered altruistic and prosocial (McNeely & Meglino, 1994). Organizations that foster this behavior are typically organizations consciously aware of the values that create such an environment. These are the behaviors employees perform that are not required in their job description. The behaviors increase the firm's effectiveness by helping the employees and managers be more efficient (Bergeron, 2007). Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997) took this term to the next level when their research demonstrated a casual impact of organizational citizenship behavior on firm performance. Since the term's inception, organizational citizenship has become one of the most widely studied organizational behavior research topics. The dependent variable is relevant in this

study as we look at collective behavioral change from hiring a person with disabilities – and how they impact the employer.

There are many other intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects that influence OCB behaviors. Such behaviors include leader supportiveness, job satisfaction, task interdependence, and the personality type of neuroticism (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983). The behaviors typically are not limited by ability as they often do not require a considerable level of intellect or job task-specific knowledge. Instead, they are constrained by time and shaped by a company's control system to motivate conflict with task performance (Bergeron, 2007). The supervisor serves as a model and provides cues to the team for these behaviors, creating social and non-contractual behaviors to become the broader norm. Lee and Allen (2002) constructed an excellent measure for OCB and helped differentiate between OCB towards individuals and the organization i.e., filling in for a sick co-worker (towards individual) vs. speaking highly about the organization at a family dinner (towards organization). The current study uses this measure to explore the different types of OCB further and measure the extent to which the specific variables impact OCB.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) describes how we maximize benefits and minimize costs as we exchange with other people (Cook et al., 2013). Further, it explains that individuals are likely to measure the benefits and risks involved in the exchange. Based on the dimensions behind each of these constructs and the complexity of human behavior (Eoyang, 2006) in the context of disability, it is prudent to recognize SET (Chadwick-Jones, 1976) as a guiding lens to develop a research model. The theory is

among the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace behavior (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). SET was initially defined as the exchange of activity, tangible, or intangible, and rewarding or costly, between at least two persons (Homans, 1961). Kelley & Thibaut (1978) extended the use of SET with Game Theory and explored how individuals can change outcomes in relationships through chosen behaviors (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). It conceptualizes social behavior as an exchange and details how relationships are built over time through trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Intergroup Contact Theory

Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) considers pre-existing prejudice when groups are isolated from one another. William (1947) initially developed the theory out of the tensions between racially different groups. The idea relates to the study as we explore the integration of a person with a disability into a work environment that is traditionally and proportionately non-disabled. Allport (1954) later asserted that contact between groups under optimal conditions reduces intergroup prejudice when certain conditions exist, such as equal status, common goals, cooperation, and support from authority (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The theory is relevant to this research as it connects the structured aspects of employing people with disabilities. Cook (1984) explained how this theory guides the psychometric properties involved when groups come into frequent contact with out-groups and the resulting decrease in prejudice (Pettigrew, 1998).

In conclusion, these eight variables and theories play an intricate role in the research study. The study used the authors and their related work to develop the model below. In addition, the theoretical background and associated authors created many

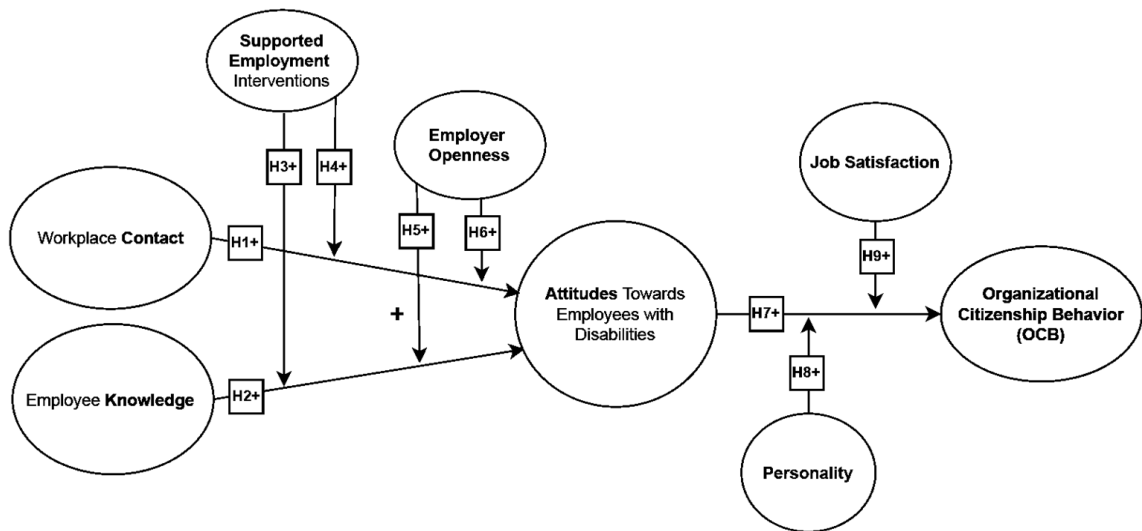
questions in the survey instrument used in this study. Therefore, it is essential to keep the latent nature of these constructs and their definitions in mind for the purpose of this dissertation.

III: RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The current study focuses on variables that may shape attitudes towards people with disabilities. It will also explore how those attitudes influence behavior. Figure 2 displays the research model that guides the current study.

Figure 2

Research Model



Workplace Contact & Attitudes

As previously discussed, exposure to a person with disabilities can affect attitudes towards the inclusion of individuals with disabilities (Li & Wang, 2013). Individuals choose their environments, but they also shape the environment with their physical existence (Elfenbein, 2007). The presence of a person with mental or physical disabilities

in the work environment can positively impact coworkers' attitudes towards employees who have disabilities through quality interactions and constructive change management procedures. According to Allport (1954), optimal structured contact between groups reduces intergroup prejudice. Therefore, interacting with people who have disabilities can positively affect attitudes towards inclusion (Lund & Seekins, 2014). When interaction levels are high, familiarity grows, and relationships form (Cook et al., 2013). Consistent with this stream of literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: As workplace contact increases, positive attitudes towards employees with disabilities will also increase.

Employee Knowledge & Attitudes

Demonstrated research has grounded the idea that attitudes toward people with disabilities are a byproduct of stereotypes and beliefs due to an absence of working knowledge and prior unstructured exposure (Nelissen et al., 2016). Accurate knowledge about people with disabilities is crucial for attitude change and social acceptance (Schalk, 2017). Training increases dissonance in preconceived attitudes and beliefs and improves people's chances of behaving differently towards those with disabilities (Junco & Salter, 2004). When structured training about disability stigmas and truths exists in the workplace, strongholds of fear and non-acceptance will break down. When employees without disabilities see past their fears, an opportunity to increase positive attitudes towards people with disabilities exists (Vornholt et al., 2013). According to intergroup contact theory, when familiarity increases and uncertainty decreases, people tend to like each other more (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). When knowledge and understanding are built between groups of people, it reduces intergroup anxiety, threats, and prejudice

(Pettigrew, 1998). When non-disabled employees increase their knowledge about people with disabilities and encounter them in the work environment, the employees' attitudes towards people with disabilities may change. Consistent with this stream of literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: As knowledge about individuals with disabilities increases, positive attitudes towards individuals with disabilities will increase

Supported Employment & Employee Knowledge

According to the available research, supported employment considers multiple interventions with employers, supervisors, and coworkers. Employment specialists teach and encourage healthy exchanges with non-disabled coworkers and employees who have disabilities (Wehman et al., 2012). One of the objectives of the supported employment model is to build natural support from coworkers (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988). Providing help and support behaviors ultimately leads to a higher degree of inclusion (Nelissen et al., 2016). The beneficial exchanges create team members who work together on a righteous mission to facilitate healthy interactions for an organization and team (Burns et al., 2007). The study has operationalized a measurement tool consisting of questions about standard supported employment practices (interventions), job carving, disability awareness training, promotion of results from disability research, and the presence of employment specialists or job coaches in the work environment. Supported employment interventions positively affect the success rates for long-term inclusion into company cultures and work teams (Leach, 2002). Consistent with the stream of literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Supported employment interventions moderate the relationship between knowledge and attitudes

Supported Employment & Workplace Contact

Supported employment provides a structured way of interacting with people who have disabilities in the work environment. Considering workplaces can be unfair, toxic, and competitive, institutional support is essential to facilitating healthy and positive contact (Eoyang, 2006). Relevant research reveals that when a qualified and formal institution with certified vocational support professionals is involved, coworkers will be more open-minded to the interventions surrounding the contact with people who have disabilities (Leach, 2002). Employment specialists help create success in the relationship between disabled employees and their supervisors (Corbière et al., 2014). They also heavily consider coworker relationships that can provide natural support for disabled employees (Rusch & Hughes, 1989). A credible supported employment agency implementing the customized integrated employment model will include disability training, worksite preparedness, fostering social inclusion, and other strategies to lead to ongoing support and natural support development (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988). Thus, consistent with intergroup contact theory and the nature of supported employment interventions, it is proposed that:

H4: Supported employment interventions moderate the relationship between workplace contact and attitudes

Employer Openness and Employee Knowledge

Research highlights the impact a leader has on workplace inclusion and the outcome variables of job satisfaction and intention to leave (Brimhall et al., 2014).

Diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of corporate human resource management and decisive factors in evaluating workplace culture (Shore et al., 2018). The available research highlighted that if an employer is open to hiring someone with mental or physical disabilities, they are actively aware of the importance of a diverse and inclusive work environment. When a work environment has people with disabilities present, the formal training to produce employee knowledge and employer openness create a formula for success (Gowdy et al., 2004). Therefore, employers who are open to hiring someone with a disability will have a higher probability of advocating and facilitating employees' education about disability. Consistent with the literature, it is proposed that:

H5: As employer openness increases, the relationship between knowledge and attitudes will become stronger

Employer Openness and Workplace Contact

As discussed in the literature review, employers influence their subordinates (Abraham, 1999). The research implies that employers and leaders impact culture and internal control systems (Bergeron, 2007). Indeed, they can control aspects of the work environment regarding the types of people invited into the company (Schur et al., 2005). When an employer is open to hiring someone with a disability, the influence of a supported employment agency has a higher propensity to create a partnership (Fry, 1997) and increase the chances of employees' exposure to people who have disabilities in the workplace. Consistent with the literature, it is proposed that:

H6: Employer openness moderates the relationship between workplace contact and attitudes

Attitudes & Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The literature review revealed that when a person interacts with someone who has disabilities, there is a unique transformational process (McLaughlin et al., 2004). The Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011) helps detail how these attitudes and behaviors work together. When employees have positive attitudes about employing people with disabilities, they will be inclined to behave with favorable actions. Therefore, non-disabled employees' and supervisors' attitudes towards people with disabilities in the workplace play an essential role in employee retention and job satisfaction (Hanley-Maxwell et al., 1986). Yuker et al. (1960) found that social relationships develop when attitude scores are high (more positive). When this happens, it is more likely that a disabled employee will perform in their role for the organization. These interactions can improve work performance and employer satisfaction, contributing to organizational health and behavior (Rusch, 1986). Employee retention and job satisfaction can increase when sound-supported employment exists. When an interaction with a person who has a disability occurs, it is not uncommon that the non-disabled person will walk away with more social utility than the disabled person (Li & Wang, 2013). When people with disabilities successfully integrate into the workplace and positive attitudes towards people with disabilities are created, the organization benefits. The outcome will be an employee who begins performing increased amounts of citizenship behavior habitually suitable for the organization (Anderson, 2019). Therefore, non-disabled employees will have a higher propensity to commit organizational citizenship behavior towards individuals and the organization with positive attitudes. Considering these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: Attitudes toward employees with disabilities have a positive direct effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Personality & Attitudes

Personality traits have a strong predictor of citizenship behavior (Chiaburu et al., 2011), and how personality interacts with attitudes can help predict behaviors. The five dimensions of personality previously discussed, such as agreeableness, have increased citizenship behavior (Mount et al., 2005). Yet other personality factors, such as neuroticism, intuitively may have an opposite effect on behaviors. Since employment specialist is limited in their firm-specific knowledge, they are restricted in their ability to control the behavioral outcomes of non-disabled employees (Nisbet & Hagner, 1988). Yet, success rates can increase with a better understanding of personality mixtures within an organization. Suppose the internal organizational staff and their personality dispositions help bolster positive attitudes. In that case, this will lead to more constructive behaviors to identify job responsibilities and teach employees with disabilities about organizational culture and internal control systems. The more a non-disabled employee can display personality characteristics beneficial for attitude change, the higher the likelihood of performing organizational citizenship behaviors (Bakker et al., 2012). Thus, it can be concluded that certain personality dispositions strengthen the effect of attitude on organizational citizenship behavior (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). With these conclusions, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H8: Employee personality moderates the relationship between attitudes and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Job Satisfaction & Attitudes

Employees satisfied with their job are more likely to perform organizational citizenship behaviors (Foote & Tang, 2008). The positive relationship between high job satisfaction and increased motivation to act is well established in the research (Tietjen & Myers, 1998). Furthermore, job satisfaction and social relationships at work increase quality of life. Suppose the outcome of supported employment services is quality of life for disabled persons (Song & Hart, 2021). In that case, that same quality of life and job satisfaction can be extended to non-disabled co-workers. Furthermore, if job satisfaction is high, attitudes towards people with disabilities will substantially impact organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H9: Employee job satisfaction moderates the relationship between attitudes and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

IV: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods and procedures used to test the research model and hypothesis. It includes information on the samples, the survey instruments used to collect data, the procedures for collecting data, and the data analysis.

Measures

Eight constructs contribute to this study; employee knowledge, work contact, supported employment, employer openness, employee attitudes, personality, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior. A combination of well-established instruments was used to gather data supporting these eight constructs for this study. In addition to the well-established instruments, two newly formulated measures for employee knowledge and supported employment were also used. Three pilot studies were conducted to help refine and validate the two new measures and develop construct validity. With the remaining constructs of the study, preexisting scales were adopted with minor or no changes or changed more significantly according to the nature of the study and pilot results. Three of the eight constructs had identical 5-point Likert scale options from strongly disagree to strongly agree: employee attitudes, employer openness, and personality. The remaining five had unique Likert scale selection options relevant to measuring that variable. Table 2 below displays the instruments and measures used in the study for each construct.

Table 2*Survey Instruments*

Construct	Measurement Scale	Original	Adopted	Scale
Employee Knowledge	Original	6	6	3-point
Work Contact with Disabled Persons	Contact with Disabled Persons (CDP) Scale (Yuker & Hurley, 1987)	20	5	5-point
Attitudes towards Employees with Disabilities	Attitudes Towards Disabled Persons scale (ATDP) (Yuker, Block & Young, 1970)	20	4	5-point
Employer Openness	Employer Openness Survey (EOS) (D. Gilbride et al., 2003)	13	6	5-point
Supported Employment	Original	5	5	3-point
Personality	Mini-IPIP personality scale (Cooper et al., 2010)	20	20	5-point
Job Satisfaction	Overall Job Satisfaction Scale (Judge et al., 1998)	5	5	7-point
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	OCB Scale (Lee & Allen, 2002)	16	12	7-point

Study Sample

The population of interest was non-disabled employees within organizations working full-time in the United States. A combination of sources and steps were used to collect this sample. First, solicitation via email took place from a randomly selected convenience sample of employees who work for Reef Tropical, a privately owned organization with 100 employees. Second, a randomly selected group of people were selected from a convenience sample of the researcher's business network. This sample consisted of chamber of commerce members, vendors, and strategic partners of Reef Tropical. Third, a select group of employers who work with supported employees and their corresponding staff was contacted to participate in the study. A partner employment specialist referred this group, The de Moya Foundation. A permission letter was sent for approval to The de Moya Foundation director and later to employers referred for the study. Finally, 50 additional Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) participants were part of the sample.

As depicted in Table 3 below, the sample size for the main study consisted of 211 participants. The sample represented different age ranges, tenure, and positions within their current organization. Most participants fell within 35-44 years of age with between 6-10 years of tenure in their current organization. The mix of positional authority in the company demonstrates a quality representation, with 34 percent of the sample, or 72 participants, as frontline employees. The remaining participants are considered at some level of management, leadership, or ownership of the organizations.

Table 3*Sample Demographics (N = 211)*

	<i>Demographic</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Age	18 - 24	5.00	2.37%
	25 - 34	41.00	19.43%
	35 - 44	81.00	38.39%
	45 - 54	45.00	21.33%
	55 - 64	33.00	15.64%
	65 - 74	4.00	1.90%
	75 - 84	2.00	0.95%
Gender	Male	126.00	59.72%
	Female	84.00	39.81%
	Prefer not to say	1.00	0.47%
Tenure	less than one year	12.00	5.69%
	1-5 years	64.00	30.33%
	6-10 years	72.00	34.12%
	11-15 years	29.00	13.74%
	16-20 years	16.00	7.58%
	more than 20 years	18.00	8.53%
Position	Full-time Student	3.00	1.42%
	Frontline Employee	72.00	34.12%
	Supervisor	24.00	11.37%
	Middle Manager	20.00	9.48%
	Manager	29.00	13.74%
	Director	26.00	12.32%
	Executive	18.00	8.53%
	Self Employed	18.00	8.53%

The respective industries that the employees operated in are displayed in Table 4. Most of the participants are in information technology (13%), followed by construction (10%), finance and insurance (9%), professional, scientific, and technical services (8%),

educational service (7%), healthcare and social assistance (6%). The remaining were Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Transportation and Warehousing, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing, Wholesale Trade, and Utilities. The industries represented reflect the various types of organizations and employee participants included in the survey to bolster the validity of the findings.

Table 4

Industry Distribution (N = 211)

Industry	Frequency	Percent
Accommodation and Food Services	4.00	1.90%
Information	28.00	13.27%
Construction	22.00	10.43%
Other not listed	22.00	10.43%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	20.00	9.48%
Finance and Insurance	18.00	8.53%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	16.00	7.58%
Educational Services	14.00	6.64%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	12.00	5.69%
Retail Trade	12.00	5.69%
Manufacturing	11.00	5.21%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	10.00	4.74%
Transportation and Warehousing	7.00	3.32%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5.00	2.37%
Wholesale Trade	5.00	2.37%
Utilities	3.00	1.42%
Administration, Business Support and Waste Mgmt	1.00	0.47%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1.00	0.47%

Methods

This quantitative research study surveyed 211 participants using a digital survey instrument through Qualtrics survey software Florida International University (FIU) provided. An extensive survey design process, discussed in more detail below, resulted in 63 construct measurement questions and six demographic questions for 69 total questions in the survey.

Pilot Study

Three pilot studies were conducted to develop the survey instrument, validate the questions, and refine the theoretical research model (original model displayed in Appendix D). The survey comprised consent, demographic questions, and variable measurement questions and had one attention check question in the middle. The pilot studies allowed for the development of employee knowledge. The three pilots also helped with supported employment measurement scales and the removal of originally modeled constructs due to low factor loadings or cross-loadings. Pilot samples were collected using Amazon MTurk to include people who worked in the United States, over 18, and had full-time employment status. In addition, the researcher ensured that MTurk users had more than 100 successful HITS for the integrity of the data. The first pilot survey had 98 questions and produced 60 respondents. A different personality measurement scale was adopted once exploratory factor analysis for construct validity and analyzing the results had been performed, and questions were removed or modified. The second pilot surveyed 80 participants with a newly formed survey instrument consisting of 76 total survey questions. The survey was further modified and improved to 64 questions with

these results. Finally, data was collected on another 39 participants in the third pilot. The three pilot studies had a total of 187 respondents.

Convergent and discriminant validity for the measures were performed and analyzed with all three pilots. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted on all constructs and questions using principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation for reliability and dimensionality. Based on the pilot results, the research model was updated, and the survey instrument was slightly refined. Two constructs from the original model were removed due to variance: Team-Member-Exchange (mediator) and Personal Contact to People with Disabilities (independent variable). Additionally, a moderating variable from one factor of personality (conscientiousness) was changed to reflect all five factors of personality. The knowledge instrument scale selection options were also changed to true, false, not sure. This change provided an explicit knowledge component and separated any cross-loadings with the attitude questions. Lastly, the supported employment measurement questions were supplemented with display logic questions allowing more understanding of each factor/intervention of supported employment and its corresponding impact on attitudes.

Main Study

The main study data collection period lasted 50 continuous days, starting November 26th, 2021, through January 10th, 2022. A total of 234 individuals consented to participate in the study. After data clean-up to remove participants who did not finish, finished too quickly, and any outliers who fell outside the distributional criteria, the sample decreased to 211 with an average duration of 32 minutes to complete the survey. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic characteristics and results of

the main study where applicable. The sample was collected from various sources as previously described. Most were solicited by email using a mail merge template through Microsoft Outlook, as displayed in Appendix B. Descriptive statistics for each scale and question in the study are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics of main study (N = 211)

Construct / α	Item	Mean	SD
	<i>1=true, 2=not Sure, 3=false</i>		
Knowledge $\alpha = 0.519$	A blind person cannot be expected to execute the job responsibilities of a chemist	1.88	0.82
	Most disabilities are immediately apparent or easily noticeable	2.80	0.54
	People with mental impairment disabilities will often act inappropriately in the work environment	2.62	0.63
	Employees are obligated to disclose their disability to an employer	2.33	0.77
	Most people with autism display similar kinds of behaviors regardless of where they fall on the spectrum	2.60	0.70
	Most people with mental impairment disabilities were not born that way	2.19	0.71
	<i>1=never, 2=once or twice, 3=a few times, 4=often, 5=very often</i>		
Work Contact with Disabled Persons $\alpha = 0.894$	How often have you worked with a client, student or patient on the job who is disabled?	2.82	1.12
	How often have you worked with a co-worker or supervisor on the job who is disabled?	2.59	1.20
	How often do you encounter new co-workers who are disabled?	2.30	0.98
	How often have you had conversation with a person who is disabled at work?	3.16	1.14
	How often have you eaten a meal with a person who has a disability at work?	2.47	1.18
		<i>1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree</i>	

Attitudes towards Employees with Disabilities	I believe disabled persons are often less intelligent than non-disabled persons	4.31	0.84
$\alpha = 0.753$	Attitudes towards Employees with Disabilities - I believe it would be better for disabled persons to live and work in special communities	4.31	0.88
	Attitudes towards Employees with Disabilities - I believe it is very challenging for a disabled person to lead a normal life	3.06	1.12
	Attitudes towards Employees with Disabilities - I believe disabled persons struggle to have a normal social life	2.87	1.10
<i>1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree</i>			
Employer Openness	I believe my organization welcomes diversity: they are inclusive	4.25	0.81
$\alpha = 0.888$	I believe my organizations management style is more personal and flexible	3.99	0.86
	I believe my organization expects and rewards diversity	3.80	0.98
	I believe my organization is comfortable providing accommodations to all their employees	4.22	0.80
	I believe my organization includes people with disabilities with all workers and treats them equally	4.14	0.87
	I believe my organization can supervise a diverse workforce	4.20	0.83
<i>1=no, 2=I don't know (missing), 3=yes</i>			
Supported Employment	Does your organization have a supported employment program for people with disabilities?	1.94	1.00
$\alpha = 0.939$	Does your organization work with an employment specialist for job carving to hire people with disabilities?	1.75	0.97
	Does your organization offer disability awareness training to help you work with a person who has disabilities?	1.92	1.00
	Does your organization inform employees about results of studies showing that the majority of people with disabilities are willing and able to work?	1.42	0.81
	Does your organization work with an on-site employment specialist or job coach who helps employees with disabilities in the work environment?	1.76	0.97

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

Extraversion $\alpha = 0.861$	I am the life of the party	2.47	1.06
	I talk to a lot of different people at parties	3.09	1.25
	I keep in the background (R)	2.94	1.20
	I don't talk a lot (R)	3.03	1.22
Neuroticism $\alpha = 0.762$	I get upset easily	2.22	1.00
	I seldom feel blue (R)	2.69	1.17
	I have frequent mood swings	2.09	0.97
	I am relaxed most of the time (R)	2.43	1.05
Agreeableness $\alpha = 0.797$	I feel others' emotions	3.85	0.88
	I am not really interested in others (R)	3.95	0.91
	I sympathize with others' feelings	4.13	0.82
	I am not interested in other people's problems (R)	3.67	1.07
Intellect $\alpha = 0.749$	I am not interested in abstract ideas (R)	3.64	1.08
	I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas (R)	3.86	0.96
	I do not have a good imagination (R)	3.93	1.07
	I have a vivid imagination	3.71	1.01
Conscientiousness $\alpha = 0.736$	I like order	4.08	0.79
	I make a mess of things (R)	4.18	0.94
	I get chores done right away	3.74	1.01
	I often forget to put things back in their proper place (R)	3.94	1.07

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=neither agree nor disagree, 5=somewhat agree, 6=agree, 7=strongly agree

Job Satisfaction $\alpha = 0.946$	I feel well satisfied with my present job	5.69	1.43
	Most days I am enthusiastic about my work	5.44	1.58
	Each day of work seems to fly by	5.11	1.61
	I find real enjoyment in my work	5.47	1.51
	I consider my job rather pleasant	5.47	1.52

1=never, 2=rarely, 3=occasionally, 4=sometimes, 5=frequently, 6=usually, 7=always

Organizational Citizenship Behavior $\alpha = 0.762$	Help others who have been absent	5.23	1.45
	Willingly give your time to help others who have work-related problems	5.47	1.42

Adjust your work schedule to accommodate other employees' requests for time off	4.88	1.65
Go out of the way to make newer employees feel welcome in the work group	5.46	1.58
Show genuine concern and courtesy toward coworkers, even under the most trying business or personal situations	5.63	1.36
Give up time to help others who have work or nonwork problems	5.02	1.64
Assist others with their duties	5.35	1.32
Defend the organization when other employees wrongly criticize it	4.91	1.77
Show pride when representing the organization in public	5.33	1.88
Express loyalty toward the organization	5.50	1.77
Take action to protect the organization from potential problems	5.45	1.89
Demonstrate concern about the image of the organization	5.33	1.98

The Cronbach value is above .75 on all constructs to indicate consistency and validity of the survey results and questions except for employee knowledge. Employee knowledge had slight multi-collinearity issues, likely with attitude and employer openness. These issues point to a statistical limitation in the study of employee knowledge, yet the results above provide a high level of validity and low multicollinearity amongst all other constructs. The sample size changed slightly to 191 for supported employment due to the nature of the questions; if respondents answered “I don’t know” to all five supported employment questions, they were not included in the analysis. In addition to the three main effects, the current study drilled down on each main effect by testing six moderating interaction effects. These moderating variables helped demonstrate how the main effects changed across different levels of moderation. Finally, linear regressions were carried out with SPSS V27 to investigate nine hypotheses

and found significance in seven out of the nine. Table 6 presents the regression analysis results.

Table 6

Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	<i>N</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>adj. r</i> ²	<i>p</i>
H1	211	9.21	1,209	0.16	3.03	3.80%	.003**
H2	211	57.99	1,209	0.92	7.61	21.30%	<.001***
H3 (m)	191	24.74	2,188	0.04	1.81	20.00%	0.071
H4 (m)	191	4.65	2,188	0.03	1.34	3.70%	0.18
H5 (m)	211	33.33	2,208	0.07	2.64	23.50%	0.009**
H6 (m)	211	9.35	2,208	0.09	3.02	7.40%	.003**
H7	211	10.66	1,209	0.39	3.26	4.40%	.001**
H8 (m)	211	21.34	2,208	0.31	5.52	16.20%	<.001***
<i>H8a. Extraversion</i>	211	29.21	2,208	0.16	6.74	21.20%	<.001***
<i>H8b. Agreeableness</i>	211	23.83	2,208	0.19	5.94	17.90%	<.001***
<i>H8c. Conscientiousness</i>	211	5.94	2,208	0.04	1.10	4.50%	0.271
<i>H8d. Intellect</i>	211	7.27	2,208	0.06	1.93	5.60%	0.055
<i>H8e. Neuroticism</i>	211	7.24	2,208	-0.06	-1.92	5.60%	0.056
H9 (m)	211	60.47	2,208	0.16	10.25	36.20%	<.001***

H1 direct effect was positive and significant. As workplace contact increases, positive attitudes toward employees with disabilities also increase (beta coefficient $\beta = .164$, $t = 3.036$, $p=0.003$). Workplace contact on attitudes had a significant positive effect and predicted attitudes towards employees with disabilities but was small compared to other predictors in the study, $F(1,211)=9.21$, $p=.003$, $Adj R^2 = 3.8\%$. These results replicate previous studies from the literature. Thus, hypothesis H1 is supported.

H2 direct effect was positive and significant. As knowledge about people with disabilities increases, positive attitudes towards employees with disabilities will increase

(beta coefficient $\beta = .920$, $t = 7.615$, $p < 0.001$). Employee knowledge was the strongest positive predictor of attitude among all the main effects, $F(1,211) = 58.00$, $\text{Adj } R^2 = 21.3\%$. Employee knowledge significantly predicts attitudes towards employees with disabilities. These results replicate previous studies from the literature. Thus, Hypothesis H2 is supported

H3 moderation effect was not supported. The supported employment moderation on employee knowledge effect on attitude was not significant ($B = .043$, $p = .071$). Therefore, according to this study, supported employment interventions do not moderate the relationship between knowledge and attitudes. As such, Hypothesis H3 is not supported.

H4 moderation effect is not supported. The supported employment moderation on workplace contact effect on attitude was not significant ($B = .032$, $p = .180$). Therefore, according to this study, supported employment interventions do not moderate the relationship between workplace contact and attitudes. As such, Hypothesis H4 is not supported.

H5 moderation effect is supported. As employer openness increases, the relationship between knowledge and attitudes will become stronger. Employer openness moderation on employee knowledge effect on attitude was positive and significant (beta coefficient $\beta = .072$, $t = 2.646$, $p = .009$). The fact that H5 was positive indicates that employer knowledge had a more substantial effect on attitude at higher levels of employer openness. Support of H5 is novel and an insightful takeaway.

H6 moderation effect is supported. Employer openness moderates the relationship between workplace contact and attitudes. Employer openness moderation on workplace

contact effect on attitude was positive and significant (beta coefficient $\beta = .093$, $t = 3.022$, $p = .003$). The statistic that H6 was positive indicates that workplace contact had a more substantial effect on attitude at higher levels of employer openness. H6 is novel and an insightful takeaway. Thus, hypothesis H6 is supported.

H7 direct effect was positive and significant. Attitudes toward employees with disabilities have a positive direct effect on organizational citizenship behavior. Attitudes' effect on OCB was statistically significant (beta coefficient $\beta = .397$, $t = 3.266$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, $F(1,211) = 10.67$, $\text{Adj } R^2 = 4.4\%$, the finding of positive significance is novel and insightful. Therefore, H7 would be a core takeaway from this study to advance research on disability in the workplace. Attitudes have a significant positive effect on OCB, and as such, hypothesis H7 is supported

H8 moderating effect was positive and significant. Employee personality moderates the relationship between attitudes and OCB. Combined Personality, with all five dimensions, had a significant moderation effect on attitudes effect of OCB ($B = .312$, $p < .001$). These results replicate previous studies. Personality does moderate this relationship, and the study breaks down each factor's respective effect. For the five dimensions of personality, extraversion ($B = .155$, $p < .001$) and agreeableness ($B = .193$, $p < .001$) had the most considerable positive and significant moderation impact. In addition, intellect ($B = .063$, $p = .055$) was nearly significant and had a positive effect. Yet, neuroticism ($B = -.06$, $p = .056$) was also nearly significant and had a negative effect. These results suggest that attitudes have a weaker impact on organizational citizenship behavior at higher levels of neuroticism. Lastly, conscientiousness ($B = .039$, $p = .271$) did not significantly moderate attitudes effect on OCB. Thus, hypothesis H8 is supported a

- H8a. Extraversion is supported
- H8b. Agreeableness is supported
- H8c. Conscientiousness is not supported
- H8d. Intellect is not supported
- H8e. Neuroticism is not supported

H9 moderating effect was positive and significant. Employee Job Satisfaction moderates the relationship between attitudes and OCB. Job Satisfaction moderation on attitudes effect on OCB was positive and significant (beta coefficient $\beta = .156$, $t = 10.245$, $p < .001$), which means that attitudes have a more substantial effect on organizational citizenship behavior at higher levels of job satisfaction, as discussed in the literature review. The current study successfully replicated the results of previous studies with this finding. It is thus understood that job satisfaction has a relevant place in the research model as a moderator and variable under consideration for behavioral impact; hypothesis H9 is supported

Table 7*Summary of Findings*

Hypothesis	Results
H1: As the amount of workplace contact increases, positive attitudes towards employees with disabilities will also increase	Supported
H2: As knowledge about People with Disabilities increases, positive attitudes toward employees with disabilities will increase	Supported
H3: Supported Employment interventions moderate the relationship between Knowledge and attitudes	Not Supported
H4: Supported Employment interventions moderate the relationship between workplace contact and attitudes	Not Supported
H5: As employer openness increases, the relationship between knowledge and attitudes will become stronger	Supported
H6: Employer openness moderates the relationship between workplace contact and attitudes	Supported
H7: Attitudes Towards Employees with Disabilities has a positive direct effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Supported
H8: Employee personality moderates the relationship between attitudes and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Supported
H8a. Extraversion	Supported
H8b. Agreeableness	Supported
H8c. Conscientiousness	Not Supported
H8d. Intellect	Not Supported
H8e. Neuroticism	Not Supported
H9: Employee Job Satisfaction moderates the relationship between attitudes and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Supported

V: DISCUSSION

This study measures the effect of hiring a person with disabilities on an employee's Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Through empirical research, this study demonstrates how OCB can be elicited through employee attitude modifications. More specifically, these organizational behavioral changes can be triggered by employing people with disabilities. This chapter summarizes the data and findings. It also initiates a discussion of the findings' implications, limitations, and addresses the prospects of future research.

Theoretical Implications

To reiterate, the theory of intergroup contact states that interaction between groups, under certain conditions, reduces prejudice (Allport et al., 1954). Since existing research corroborates the effect of knowledge and contact on attitude towards people with disabilities (Yuker & Hurley, 1987), these findings bolster intergroup contact theory. The findings also extend the theory and contribute to the body of literature by offering insight into the moderation effect of employer openness on employee knowledge and work contact with people who have disabilities. This is relevant because intergroup contact shapes attitudes — particularly as individuals work together that are not usually around one another. The employer, in this case, serves a catalyst which shapes employee attitudes to society's benefit.

Social exchange theory contends that individuals are likely to measure the benefits and risks involved in an exchange to produce optimal outcomes (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Then, they are likely to pursue the relationships that offer the greatest benefit. These quests for beneficial exchange occur regularly in a business environment

(Anderson, 2019). Considering the results of this study, social exchange theory is supported in that employers and employees are rewarded from interacting with a person who has a disability; indeed, this study establishes a direct main effect of employees' attitudes towards people with disabilities and organizational citizenship behavior. Although perceived benefit may not initially manifest itself due to stigma, forced controlled exchanges create behaviors that benefit individuals and the organization long-term. That is one of this study's key insights. It is so important because, through social exchanges that demonstrate positive outcomes, employers can repudiate any negative assumptions made regarding the hiring of people with disabilities. This change in perception affects employees, but also employers. Therefore, these results should motivate employers to create structured exchanges and share knowledge about disability with their non-disabled employees. Finally, considering positive attitudes towards people with disability produce positive behaviors (supported hypothesis H7), employers must be made to appreciate the performance value creation that comes from hiring a person with disability.

Social scientists and conceptual theorists could find value in using these demonstrated social and organizational behavioral change results because it shows there is great value in employing people who have disabilities and want to work. In their own way, scholars along with employers can help enable this fundamental human purpose. When employers are open to hiring a person with a disability and when attitudes towards people with disabilities improve, this study shows that these conditions are responsible for considerable social and economic value creation.

Practical Implications

These findings do not imply that hiring a person with a disability through supported employment can solve organizational problems; however, it demonstrates that supported employment benefits organizations. Most importantly, this study views the organization as a potential vessel for educational opportunities — altering attitudes and behaviors of non-disabled employees towards those who have disabilities. When employers display a greater openness to hiring individuals with disabilities combined with employee knowledge of, and contact with, people who have disabilities —employee attitudes produce a welcoming environment for people with disabilities. Therefore, to affect organizational change, performance, and value — every organization should expose its workforce to people with disabilities and provide courses that debunk the misconceptions that persist. Shaping the employer’s mindset is the beachhead approach; focus resources to win a small battle that establishes a stronghold that serves as prelude to substantial organizational and societal impact. Supported employment agencies should continue to foster awareness by investing in employer-partner relationships, educating the public, and maintaining ties with the business community.

In examining an employer’s open-mindedness towards hiring a person with disabilities prior to integrating a supported employee within the environment, this study spotlights the relevance of employment specialists. Surveys of prospective employer partners, interviews with organizational leaders, and company reputations should be considered prior to placing a person with a disability into the work environment. After all, it is counterproductive to incorporate a person with a disability into a toxic work environment with unsympathetic leaders.

Since organizational citizenship behaviors supplement the overall value of the organization from a performance perspective (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997), an employer must create a conducive environment by identifying opportunities to encourage the propensity of such behaviors occurring organically. Moreover, these findings indicate that meeting with an employment specialist representing a supported employment agency improves the likelihood of successful integration. Of course, encouraging employers to conduct independent research to discover studies such as this and disseminating key findings with their employees is another viable option. In other words, marketing and raising awareness strategies matter; indeed, more time and effort should be spent communicating and shaping employers' viewpoints, so they appreciate the value in implementing supported employment. If marketing and promotional campaigns are to encourage employers to hire a person with disabilities — to maximize their impact — considerable thought must go into tactical execution. Ideally, this study may yield additional governmental grants and spur private fund-raising efforts on behalf of employment specialists — focusing the marketing campaigns on the empirical support for value creation.

Additionally, this study finds that job satisfaction and the personality factors — in particular, agreeableness and extraversion — strengthen the effect of attitudes on organizational citizenship behavior. Regarding job satisfaction, employers ought to investigate practical ways to measure and shape employee satisfaction while simultaneously improving employee attitudes towards people with disabilities. During the implementation phase, these efforts are complimentary. As this study makes clear, when job satisfaction and attitudes both grow more positive, preferred behaviors also become

more commonplace. In addition, personality factors — agreeableness and extraversion — can improve the likelihood of constructive outcomes. Therefore, to measure factors for employees working with those who have disabilities, leaders can leverage personality inventories. More specifically, they should identify extraverted and agreeable employees so they can be assigned to work closest with the employment specialists as well as employees who have disabilities. By positioning these employees strategically within an organization, their attitudes should exert a greater impact on colleagues' behaviors.

In summation, employers, and human resource management professionals often benefit from hiring people with disabilities. That is, supported employment is a viable approach that leverages diversity and inclusion as a value-added intervention; this conclusion could be marketed to best connect with employers. Likewise, organizations that already employ people with disabilities enjoy opportunities to invest in their staff through structured education as well as introduce non-disabled people to those with disabilities. Lastly, this study helps justify resource allocation from government grants and private donors who are looking for evidence of program successes. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that disability awareness training is a successful approach and a cost-effective use of finite funding.

Study limitations and implications for future research

Although it achieves a sample size sufficient to ensure reliability, this study could have benefited from a larger sample size that captured a more diverse group of participants to allow for greater generalizability. Moreover, since a group of participants was randomly selected from an organization where the researcher held a leadership position, there could result in supervisory bias embedded within the sample selection

process. In addition, in the sample solicitation process, a group of participants were asked to participate by the director of a supported employment agency — Lily DeMoya from The de Moya Foundation. In theory, this self-selection bias presents two limitations: the respondents could feel obligated to join due to the nature of the relationship with the director and the people who were invited had a person with a disability working within their organization. Given the nature of the dissertation timeframe and the novelty of survey construction, the knowledge survey instrument requires further refinement; to provide a higher Cronbach alpha, it could benefit from additional questions. Unfortunately, because of these limitations, the knowledge construct measurement may lack validity and reliability.

There is an abundance of research on attitudes towards people with disabilities and related organization behavior (Yuker & Hurley, 1987 & Organ, 1988). In this study, though, attitude towards people with disabilities serves as a mediator and subsequent independent variable with the power to shape organizational performance through employee behaviors. Considering these novel findings, future researchers may wish to look for other performance variables dependent on, or that interact with, attitudes towards people with disabilities. To help integrate a person with disabilities into a work environment, empirically founded interventions must be explored and implemented. There are also several questions worth examining further. When hiring a person with a disability, can job satisfaction be increased through supported employment interventions? How can interventions factor in personality assessments to ensure healthy working relationships?

Other variables not included in this study that impact behavior in the work environment should be considered. These variables include organizational control systems, work type, the severity as well as the nature of the disability, distinguishing developmental and intellectual disabilities from physical ones, quality of interactions, leadership styles, and company culture (Organ et al., 2005). To differentiate attitude and behavioral outcomes between participants who have worked with a person who has a disability and participants who have never worked with a person who has a disability — constructing a stratified sample with statistical comparisons is warranted.

This study's theoretical model captures supported employment's moderation and interaction effects. Although significance was not explored, these results suggest direct effects of supported employment interventions likely exist. Future research ought to scrutinize these direct effects; they can use this study's questions or make some slight modifications. This approach offers an improved understanding of supported employment intervention's impact on knowledge, contact, and attitude.

As this study demonstrates that when attitude and behaviors are positive, organizational citizenship behavior is more likely to occur, subsequent research should conduct a longitudinal study to measure the correlation between financial performance and hiring a person with a disability. In other words, Do the collective behavioral changes that this study captures directly affect a firm's financial performance? Following the example of Gowdy et al. (2004), a logical next step involves treating the business owner(s) and their executive teams as the unit of analysis to see whether their behavior affects the hiring process for a person with disabilities. Finally, if those leaders change

their behaviors in making decisions and managing people, how does that effect the firm's effectiveness?

Conclusion

Suppose a company leader wants to implement transformational leadership tactics to improve the organization's long-term performance. To help make that a reality, they should consider hiring an employee with a disability and implementing structured interventions. Since the presence of a person with mental or physical disabilities in the work environment can positively impact coworkers' attitudes towards people with disabilities, this is a sound hiring decision — regardless of the industry in question. If handled properly, this can increase organizational citizenship behaviors. Most importantly, leaders can positively influence employees' attitudes towards people who have disabilities. Considering about a quarter of US adults live with a disability (CDC, 2018), increasing knowledge through structured intervention benefits all involved. Indeed, when employees' attitudes towards people with disabilities change, constructive behaviors occur. Although supported employment interventions were not demonstrated as a moderation effect, previous studies found positive outcomes regarding success rates for long-term integration into company cultures (Leach, 2002).

Considering this study's results, employers who hire and employees who work with a person who has a disability benefit from the experience. Furthermore, job satisfaction and certain personality factors (agreeableness and extraversion) enhance this benefit and increase the overall impact. In the end, this results in employees who become more likely to exhibit citizenship behaviors. The combination of factors this study examines is novel and produced intriguing results. Ultimately, these results offer hope to

those living with a disability. It should also encourage anyone who recognizes that more people performing purposeful work benefits everyone. Ultimately, these findings reinforce the reality that those living with disabilities can meaningfully contribute to society if given the opportunity.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – SURVEY PARTICIPANT SOLICITATION EMAIL

Hi James,

I am completing the doctoral program at Florida International University, Chapman Graduate School of Business. My dissertation research studies the impact of Supported Employment on organizational behavior and its relationship to firm performance.

Considering your experience working with Cru, I would like to invite you to my dissertation research study.

It will only take 10 minutes of your time. Please click on the link below to complete the survey or you can copy and paste the URL link into your browser address bar.

FOLLOW THIS LINK TO THE SURVEY:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://fiu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_26m4ON5ZvchY50i

Please reach out to me if you have any questions about the survey or any technical difficulties. Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. If your organization offers Supported Employment, please feel free to forward this research survey to your co-workers.

Regards,

Claude B. Kershner IV

Doctoral Candidate (DBA)

Chapman Graduate School of Business

Florida International University

610-570-3721

ckers005@fiu.edu



APPENDIX B – AMAZON MTURK CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

Worker requirements

Require that Workers be Masters to do your tasks (Who are Mechanical Turk Masters?)

Yes No

Specify any additional qualifications Workers must meet to work on your tasks:

Location	is	UNITED STATES (US)
Employment Status - Full time (35+ hours per w	True	Remove
Number of HITs Approved	greater than	500

APPENDIX C – COMPANY PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER



November 26th, 2021

Name of Company

Subject: **Participation in Research Study**

Dear **Mr./Mrs. Owner / Manager**,

I am writing to seek your support for a research study that focuses on employer-supported programs for workers with disabilities. I am a co-investigator and a third-year doctoral student at Florida International University, and this study is for my doctoral dissertation. I am requesting permission to send the employees of your organization a **ten-minute digital survey**. We are collecting data for research and have received your name from **The de Moya Foundation**. This research study aims to measure collective behavioral changes from employees related to working with people who have disabilities.

We intend to use the data collected to advance the knowledge on how supported employment impacts an organization. **Therefore, we specifically request that you assist in the study by distributing a survey link to your employees.** If you agree, I will send you a link to the survey for distribution. All participants will have complete confidentiality, and private information will not be recorded. We are also attaching a letter from Lily DeMoya, who recommended that I contact you for access to collect data. Finally, we are attaching a copy of the consent letter and sample survey questions for your review.

Thank you for giving careful consideration to this request for participation. We assure you that all protocols will be followed and privacy regulations adhered to. If you have any questions or concerns, my contact information is 610-570-3721, and email ckers005@fiu.edu
Best regards,

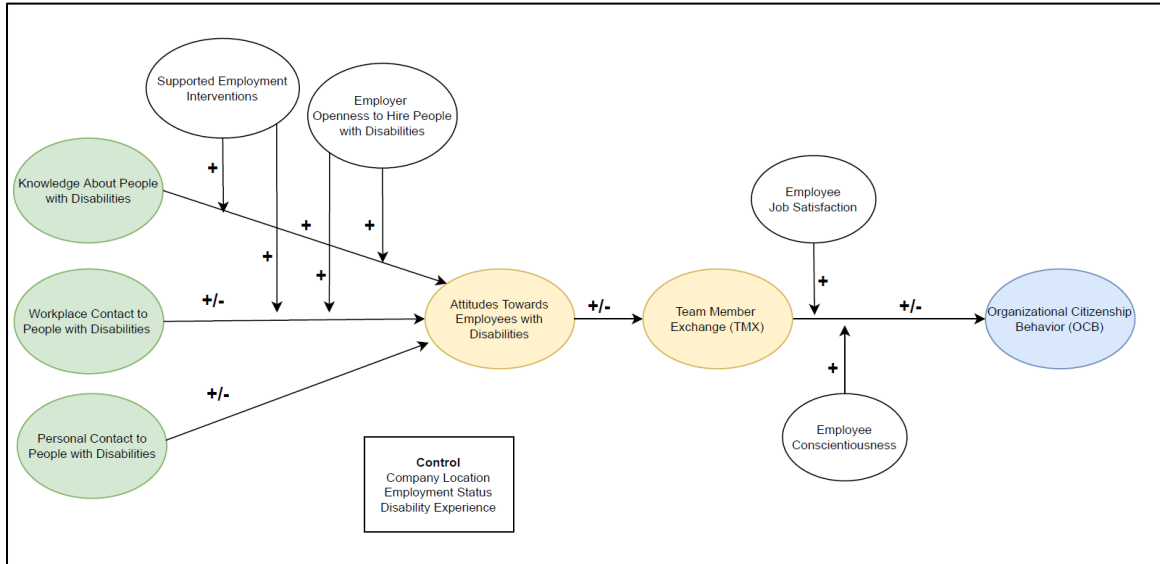
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claude B. Kershner".

Claude Kershner, Doctoral Candidate

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Marakas".

Dr. George Marakas, Principal Investigator

APPENDIX D – ORIGINAL THEORETICAL RESEARCH MODEL



VITA

CLAUDE B. KERSHNER IV

Born, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- 2003-2007 Bachelors in Business Administration
Lehigh University
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
- 2007-2010 Research Coordinator
CB Richard Ellis
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- 2010-2011 Masters in Business Administration, Entrepreneurship
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
- 2010-2011 Graduate Assistant
Riata Center for Entrepreneurship
Stillwater, Oklahoma
- 2011-2021 President of Business
Reef Tropical
Key Largo & Florida City, FL
- 2022 onwards Business Owner & Operator
Pool Centurion & A.R.C.H. Consulting
Florida City, FL
- Adjunct Professor, Entrepreneurship
Miami Dade College
West Kendall, FL

PRESENTATIONS

Doctoral Consortium at the Engaged Management Scholarship Conference 2021 –
*“Hiring People with Disabilities from an Employers Perspective and Organizational
Citizenship Behavior.”*

Academy of International Business (AIB) Latin American and the Caribbean Chapter
Conference 2021 – *“Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumer Purchase Intention
within a Global Crisis: A Cross-Region*