Original Article

Investigate the Relationship between Organizational Justice and Personality Characteristics with Counterproductive Work Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal) and personality characteristics (conscientiousness and agreeableness) with counterproductive work behavior (CWB). The statistical population comprised of all personnel of Isfahan Power Distribution Company. The sample included 121 people, selected randomly by clustral sampling manner and response to the Colquitt's organizational justice questionnaire, NEO personality questionnaire and Bennet and Robinson's counterproductive work behaviour scale. Results indicated that there is a negative significant relationship between four facets of organizational justice and two dimensions of personality characteristics with organizational oriented CWB and interpersonal oriented CWB. Regression analysis showed that predictive variables were able to predict 34% of organizational oriented CWB and 32% of interpersonal oriented CWB and informational justice was the best predictor of two dimension of counterproductive work behaviour. The results indicated that the manners that increase personnel's perceived justice and respect to the personality characteristic in personnel selection have an important role in decrease of counterproductive work behaviour.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Justice, Personality Characteristic, Organizational Oriented Counterproductive Work Behaviour, Interpersonal Oriented Counterproductive Work Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

In order to achieve its goals, every organization needs the optimized operation of its personnel. One of the most important goals of the organizations is that they have desirable productivity, and one of the factors that affect the productivity is the operation of the personnel. According to this, organizations and industries need to reinforce the behaviors that increase the productivity and prevent or try to reform those which decrease the productivity. The primary works done by psychologists, have focused more on positive work behaviors, like aggression or absence, which can affect the operation. Works done by researchers in this area led to a general classification of these behaviors as Counter-Productive Work Behaviors , which include any kind of deliberate behaviors shown on the part of an organization's members which are at odds with the goals and desires of the organization [1]. These behaviors can take a variety of forms ranging from spreading rumors in the organization to internet abuse and physical aggression which cause serious damages to the organizations. For example, the emergence of counter-productive work behaviors on the part of organization members may lead to a decrease in the personnel's morale, and an increase in absence and job abandonment, the result of which would be less productivity [2]. Most of the researches done on CWBs have dealt with the recognition of the basis of these behaviors and factors such as the personnel's understanding of the organizational justice [3], their job [4] and personal characteristics/traits [5] are known as the basis of CWBs. in previous researches done on CWBs usually specific types of these behaviors, like theft, were considered. But recent works done by Robinson et al. [6] have shown that if these CWBs are considered generally, the results would be more satisfying. They have classified the

CWBs into two general groups of Organization-Oriented and Interpersonal. Thus this research aims to eliminate this defect. Bennett et al. [7] believe that in work environment there are two kinds of motivations which constitute the basis of CWBs. Instrumental motivation and emotional motivation. Instrumental motivation is an effort to make coordination by means of reforming the situation, making respect/equality and improving the current situation. For example, the cause of theft in work environment could be the person's attempt to decrease the inequality that exists between his own income and that of his employer. Emotional motivation is the need for expressing the emotions which stem from fury, anger or disappointment. The behaviors caused by this kind of motivation may target the organization or colleagues.

Stressor-Emotional Model has taken into account the effect of environmental stressors like perceiving the injustice in the emergence of CWBs, and is supported by researches [8]. Organizational justice has motivational properties which make the personnel act in order to reform the injustices perceived and these actions often include showing CWBs [9]. Personnel's understanding of the organizational justice decreases the mental pressures of work environment, emergence of isolator behaviors, subversion and the like [10]. Devinish et al. [11] have shown that all of the three types of distributive, procedural and interactional justice have negative significant relation the CWBs. Sean et al. [12] have shown that the existence of distributive and procedural justice prevent the emergence of CWBs. Jones [13] has shown that the injustice understood on the part of the personnel, has positive significant relation with the emergence of CWBs. Sabahi et al. [14] have also shown that there is a negative significant relation between distributive justice and organization oriented counter-productive behaviors and also between procedural and interactional justice and the organization oriented and person oriented CWBs.

In addition to the understanding of organizational justice, personality characteristics/traits also affect the CWBs. In researches done by psychologists on the personality, they try to understand what types of personality traits can predict the future behaviors and work operation in work environments [15]. The researches indicate that there is a relation between specific personality traits and Counter-Productive Work Behaviors. Salgado [16] has shown that conscientiousness is the best predictor of CWBs like theft. Another meta-analysis done by Berry, Ones et al. [17], showed a greater relation between conscientiousness and CWBs. Smithikrai [18] has considered three variable groups of personality traits, organizational controls and organizational theories as the basis of CWBs. The results showed that these three variable groups make up 38 percent of CWBs but the ability to predict was greater for personality traits than conscientiousness and agreeableness. Yang et al. [19] have shown that the more sense of conscientiousness and agreeableness in the personnel, the less the possibility of emerging CWBs. As pointed above, CWBs can take a variety of forms such as spreading rumors and physical aggression which lead to a decline in the personnel's morale, job abandonment and less productivity. All of these can endanger the safety of the workplace. Therefore, the results of this research can be effective in decreasing the emergence of CWBs and as a result a promotion of our country's workplace safety. In this research the hypothesis are as follow:

1. There is a negative significant relation between the perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal) and personality traits and the CWBs.
2. There is a negative significant relation between the perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal) and personality traits and the interpersonal CWBs.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The statistical population of this research comprises all of the personnel of Isfahan's power distribution company in April 2010, which includes 1100 people. This research uses clustral sampling method. Since there are 8 scales, and there must be 15 samples for each scale, thus 120 people were needed as samples. To access this number of people, 150 persons were sampled randomly from the selected clusters. Finally, 125 questionnaires were collected among which four were incomplete. It should be mentioned that 30.5 percent of the samples were females and 69.5 percent were males. To evaluate CWBs, Bennett and Robinson's scale [7], to evaluate perceived organizational justice, Colquitt's organizational justice questionnaire [20] and to evaluate personality traits of conscientiousness and agreeableness, Neo's personality questionnaire are used in this research.

Workplace Deviance Scale:
This scale is introduced by Bennett et al. [7]. It has 19 questions among which 12 questions are related to organization-oriented CWBs, and 7 are related to interpersonal CWBs. The grading is based on Likkerti's 7-degree scale. Researches show an adequate validity of this device [21]. For validity evaluation, the correlation of the questions are used in a way that among the questions, the one that generally evaluated the organizational counterproductive structure was selected and the correlation of this question with the other ones was 0.61 and significant in P<0.01 level. The reliability of organization-oriented and interpersonal subscales, using Cronbach's alpha method, were 0.087 and 0.90 which show their desirable reliability.

Organizational Justice Questionnaire:
In order to measure the perceived organizational justice, Colquitt's organizational justice questionnaire [20], which includes 20 questions, was used. The grading method of this questionnaire is based on Likkerti's 5-degree scale ranging from total agreement to total disagreement. Evidences show an adequate validity of this

questionnaire [21]. The reliability of distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal justice, using Cronbach's alpha method, was 0.60, 0.79, 0.84, and 0.89 respectively.

NEO-FFI Personality Questionnaire:

In order to measure personality traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness, NEO personality questionnaire, introduced by McCrae and Costa [22], is used in this research. Garousie Farshi [23] has standardized this questionnaire in Iran and has reported an adequate validity for that. In this research the short form of this questionnaire, called NEO-FFI, including 60 questions is used. The grading of this questionnaire is based on Likertti's 5-degree scale, ranging from total agreement to total disagreement. Cronbach's alpha for conscientiousness and agreeableness were 0.74 and 0.85 respectively.

RESULTS

The sample consisted of 121 people among which 30.5 percent were females and 69.5 were males. The average age of the sample people was 34.1 years and the average for years of work experience was 9.7 years. It is also mentionable that 24 percent of the samples were single and 76 percent were married.

Table 1. Average, Standard Deviation and Correlation Coefficient among the variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Distributive justice	16.8	3.7							
Procedural Justice	11.85	3.3	0.550**						
Informational justice	15.82	3.93	0.579**	0.824**					
Interpersonal Justice	19.61	2.56	0.024	0.068	0.110				
Agreeableness	43.67	5.58	0.228*	0.137	0.197	0.671**			
Conscientiousness	47.84	5.9	0.042	0.59	0.082	0.801*	0.468*		
Organizational Counterproductive Behavior	19.93	9.81	0.330**	0.423**	0.474**	0.271**	0.231**	0.376**	
Interpersonal Counterproductive Behavior	11.71	7.33	0.331**	0.416**	0.461**	0.328**	0.356**	0.332**	0.695**

*$P \leq 0.05$; **$P \leq 0.01$

Table 2. The results of regression analysis using step by step method between predictor variables and organizational counterproductive work behaviors

Statistical Indicators	Multiple correlation	Determination Factor	B	T	P
Informational Justice	0.474	0.225	-0.446	-5.967	0.001
Conscientiousness	0.582	0.339	-0.339	-4.521	0.001

$P < 0.001$; F=30.392

The first hypothesis indicates a negative significant relation between the aspects of perceived organizational justice and personality traits and the organization-oriented CWBs. The results inserted in table 1 show that the relation between organization-oriented CWBs and the distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice, interpersonal justice, agreeableness and conscientiousness are 0.330. 0.423, 0.474, 0.271, 0.231, 0.376 respectively and all of these factors are significant in $p < 0.001$ level. Therefore the first hypothesis is affirmed. The results written in Table 2 also show that the multiple correlation coefficient between the predictive variables and organizational CWBs is 0.582 which is significant in $p < 0.001$ level. These variables specify 34 percent of organizational CWBs. The results also show that among the predictive variables, informational justice and conscientiousness predicted organizational CWBs in a significant way. The obtained Bs also show that informational justice has the most important role in specifying the organizational CWBs' variance, in a way that by introducing this variable in the first step, 22 percent of the organizational CWBs are specified and by introducing the second variable, conscientiousness, this rate is increased to 34 percent, meaning that this variable would specify 12 percent of the related variable's variance.

Table 3. The results of regression analysis using step by step method between predictor variables and interpersonal counterproductive work behaviors

Statistical Indicators	Multiple correlation	Determination factor	B	T	P
Informational justice	0.461	0.212	-0.409	-5.265	0.001
conscientiousness	0.547	0.300	-0.217	-2.524	0.013
agreeableness	0.568	0.322	-0.174	-1.986	0.049

$P < 0.001$; F=18.552

The second hypothesis indicates a negative significant relation between the aspects of perceived organizational justice and personality traits and the interpersonal CWBs. The results inserted in Table 1 show that the relation between the interpersonal CWBs and the distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice, interpersonal justice, agreeableness and conscientiousness are 0.331, 0.416, 0.461, 0.328, 0.356 and 0.332 respectively and all of these factors are significant in P< 0.001 level. The second hypothesis is thus affirmed. The results of Table 3 show that the multiple correlation coefficient between the predictive variables and interpersonal CWBs is 0.568 which is significant in P< 0.001 level. These variables specify 32 percent of the interpersonal CWBs' variance. The results also show that among the predictive variables, informational justice, conscientiousness and agreeableness, predict interpersonal CWBs in a significant way. The obtained Bs also show that informational justice plays the most important role in specifying interpersonal CWBs' variances in such a way that informational justice in the first step specify 21 percent of the related variables' variances and with introducing the second variable i.e. conscientiousness, in the second step, these variables specify 30 percent of the interpersonal CWBs' variance and with the introduction of agreeableness in the third step this rate is increased up to 32 percent.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was the study of the relationship between the perceived organizational justice variables and personality traits and the counterproductive work behaviors. As expected, the results showed that there is a negative significant relation between four facets of organizational justice and both organization-oriented counterproductive work behaviors and interpersonal counterproductive work behaviors. These results are correspondent with the results of previous researches [11, 13]. According to Stressor-Emotion Model [8], showing counterproductive work behaviors begins with understanding the stressor factors on the part of the personnel. Environmental stressor is one of objective characteristics perceived by the personnel. One of the factors that cause stress is the injustice perceived by the personnel. On the other hand, according to Equity Theory [24], the person who experiences the inequality tries to balance the situation, using such mechanisms as escaping his duties. Those who perceive their results as unjust are discontented and express behaviors which would bring them back the sense of justice. Thus the personnel whose understandings are based on the existence of justice within the organization show less counterproductive work behaviors. According to Bennett and Robinson [7], the relationship between organizational justice and counterproductive work behaviors indicates instrumental motivation according to which showing counterproductive work behaviors is an attempt for making coordination by means of reforming the situation, bringing equality and developing the current situation.

Furthermore, the results of this research showed that two personality traits, conscientiousness and agreeableness, have negative significant relation with both types of counterproductive work behaviors. These results correspond with the results of previous researches [18, 19]. Those with high agreeability have more agreement and compatibility with others, favor helping the others, have more patience, and are good humored. But those with less agreeability are pugnacious, self-centered, skeptic and competitive. Thus a negative relationship between agreeability and counterproductive work behaviors is expected, since according to the features of agreeableness, those with high agreeability are less likely to show counterproductive work behaviors. As conscientiousness is generally related to being single-minded, having a sense of responsibility and believing in the ethics, those who have a great deal of these characteristics are less likely to show counterproductive work behaviors. On the other hand, since those with lesser sense of responsibility have less conscientiousness, they escape their duties and are more likely to transgress the law and consequently they are more likely to show counterproductive work behaviors. Thus there is a possible and logical relation between conscientiousness and counterproductive behaviors. According to Bennett et al. [7], emotional motivation, the need for expressing the emotions that stem from fury, anger and disappointment, is one of the basic motivations underlying counterproductive work behaviors. It could be mentioned that those with less conscientiousness and agreeability, need more emotional motivation and are more likely to show counterproductive work behaviors.

Finally, according to the results of this research, it is suggested that researchers consider the role of personality traits as the mediator between environmental variables and counterproductive work behaviors in future researches. According to the results of the research, informational justice, compared with other variables, had the maximum ability to predict. Thus it is suggested that managers use methods that increase the quality and quantity of the received information and consequently increase justice and equality among the personnel.

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