

Influence of Managerial and Workplace Factors on Counterproductive Work Behavior within Private Organizations

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ABSTRACT

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) poses significant challenges to private organizations, impacting productivity, employee morale, and overall organizational effectiveness. This study investigates the influence of managerial and workplace factors on CWB in private organizations. Drawing on a comprehensive review of existing literature and empirical data collected through surveys, the research identifies key determinants of CWB, including managerial style, workplace environment, and organizational culture. The findings indicate that authoritative and laissez-faire managerial styles are positively correlated with higher incidences of CWB, while transformational and supportive leadership styles mitigate such behaviors. Additionally, a toxic workplace environment characterized by poor communication, lack of support, and high stress levels contributes significantly to the prevalence of CWB. Conversely, a positive organizational culture that promotes inclusivity, transparency, and employee engagement serves as a protective factor against CWB. The study also highlights the role of specific workplace factors such as job satisfaction, perceived fairness, and employee recognition in influencing CWB. Employees who perceive their workplace as fair and rewarding exhibit lower tendencies towards counterproductive behaviors. Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of managerial interventions aimed at fostering a positive workplace environment and implementing effective conflict resolution mechanisms. In conclusion, this research underscores the critical role of managerial and workplace factors in shaping employee behavior within private organizations. It provides actionable insights for managers and organizational leaders to develop strategies that minimize CWB, thereby enhancing organizational performance and employee well-being. Future research directions include exploring the impact of remote work dynamics on CWB and the effectiveness of targeted managerial training programs in mitigating such behaviors.

KEYWORDS: counterproductive work behaviour, managerial style, workplace environment, organizational culture, organizational effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) has emerged as a critical concern for private organizations, as it directly impacts productivity, employee morale, and the overall functioning of the organization. CWB encompasses a range of actions that harm or intend to harm organizations or their members, including theft, sabotage, absenteeism, and workplace aggression (Spector & Fox, 2005). Understanding the underlying causes of CWB is essential for developing effective management strategies and fostering a positive organizational culture. Previous research has identified various factors contributing to CWB, emphasizing the role of both individual and organizational characteristics. For instance, Robinson and Bennett (1995) classified CWBs into two broad categories: organizational (e.g., theft, sabotage) and interpersonal (e.g., harassment, verbal abuse). This classification highlights the multifaceted nature of CWB and the need for a comprehensive approach to address it.

Managerial factors play a pivotal role in shaping employee behavior. Leadership styles, in particular, have been extensively studied in relation to CWB. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiring and motivating employees, has been shown to reduce CWB (Podsakoff et al., 2006). In contrast, authoritarian leadership, which relies on strict control and a lack of employee autonomy, tends to increase the likelihood of CWB (Tepper, 2000). Similarly, laissez-faire leadership,

marked by a hands-off approach, can lead to ambiguity and frustration among employees, thereby fostering CWB (Skogstad et al., 2007). Workplace environment is another critical factor influencing CWB. A positive workplace environment that promotes open communication, support, and recognition can significantly reduce the incidence of CWB (Bowling & Eschleman, 2010). Conversely, a toxic work environment, characterized by high stress, poor communication, and lack of support, is strongly associated with higher levels of CWB (Leiter et al., 2011). Job satisfaction and perceived organizational justice also play crucial roles in this context. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs and perceive their workplace as fair and just are less likely to engage in CWB (Cohen- Charash & Spector, 2001).

Despite the extensive research on CWB, there remains a gap in understanding the combined influence of managerial and workplace factors within private organizations. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining how different managerial styles and workplace environments contribute to the prevalence of CWB in private sector settings. By integrating findings from existing literature with empirical data, this research seeks to provide actionable insights for managers and organizational leaders to mitigate CWB and enhance overall organizational effectiveness. The subsequent sections of this thesis will delve into the specific managerial and workplace factors that influence CWB, analyze empirical data collected through surveys and interviews, and discuss the implications of these findings for management practices in private organizations. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the development of strategies that promote positive employee behavior and foster a supportive and productive organizational culture.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The prevalence of counterproductive work behavior (CWB) within private organizations represents a significant impediment to organizational performance, employee morale, and overall workplace harmony. Despite extensive research into various dimensions of workplace behavior, there remains a gap in understanding how specific managerial styles and workplace factors contribute to the emergence and persistence of CWB. Past research has predominantly focused on the general antecedents of CWB, such as personal traits and broader organizational factors, but there is a critical need to delve deeper into the nuanced impact of managerial behavior and the immediate workplace environment. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining how different managerial styles and workplace conditions influence the incidence and nature of CWB within private organizations, providing actionable insights for effective managerial practices and workplace policies.

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) represents a significant challenge for private organizations, negatively impacting productivity, employee morale, and organizational effectiveness. CWBs encompass a range of detrimental actions by employees, including theft, sabotage, workplace aggression, and inefficiency. Understanding the antecedents of CWB is crucial for developing strategies to mitigate these behaviors and foster a positive work environment. Past research has identified various factors contributing to CWB, including individual characteristics such as personality traits and personal stressors. However, there is a growing recognition that managerial and workplace factors play a critical role in influencing employee behavior. Studies have shown that leadership styles, organizational culture, and the overall work environment significantly impact the incidence of CWB. For instance, research by Tepper (2000) indicated that abusive supervision is strongly associated with increased employee deviance. Similarly, Spector and Fox (2005) found that organizational constraints and job stressors are significant predictors of CWB.

Despite these insights, there remains a gap in understanding how specific managerial styles and workplace environments within private organizations uniquely contribute to CWB. Private organizations often operate under different dynamics compared to public sector entities, including varying degrees of job security, organizational flexibility, and performance pressures. Thus, there is a need for targeted research that explores these factors in the context of private organizations to develop effective interventions.

This study aims to address this gap by investigating the influence of managerial and workplace factors on CWB within private organizations. Specifically, it seeks to:

- i. Examine the relationship between different managerial styles (authoritative, laissez-faire, transformational, and supportive) and the prevalence of CWB.
- ii. Analyze the impact of workplace environment characteristics, such as communication quality, support systems, and stress levels, on CWB.
- iii. Assess the role of organizational culture in either exacerbating or mitigating CWB.
- iv. Identify actionable strategies that managers and organizational leaders can implement to reduce CWB and promote a positive workplace environment.

By addressing these objectives, this research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on CWB and provide practical insights for private organizations striving to enhance their organizational performance and employee well-being.

Definition of Term

Authoritative Managerial Style: This style is characterized by high levels of control and command, with little input or feedback from employees (Tepper, B.J., 2000). Research indicates that authoritative managerial styles can lead to increased levels stress and resentment among employees, which can manifest as CWB.

Laissez-Faire Managerial Style: This style involves minimal managerial intervention, allowing employees substantial autonomy. (Skogstad et.al., 2007). While autonomy can sometimes foster creativity, excessive lack of guidance and support can lead to ambiguity and a lack of accountability, potentially increasing CWB.

Transformational Managerial Style: Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees through vision, encouragement, and personal attention (Rafferty, A. E., & Griffin, M. A. (2004). This style generally reduces CWB by fostering a positive, inclusive work environment, enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Supportive Managerial Style: Supportive managers focus on building strong relationships with their employees, providing help and support as needed. (Gilbreath et.al., 2004). This style is effective in reducing CWB as it creates a supportive and understanding work environment, reducing stress and promoting well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) refers to employee actions that are harmful to organizations and their stakeholders, and understanding its antecedents has been a significant focus of organizational behavior research over the past three decades. Several meta-analyses and studies have identified key factors influencing CWB. Situational variables such as organizational justice, interpersonal conflict, situational constraints, and job dissatisfaction are crucial predictors. For instance, Berry et al. (2007) and Hershcovis et al. (2007) have shown that perceptions of injustice in the workplace, including distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice, can lead to higher incidences of CWB. Employees who perceive unfair treatment may resort to deviant behaviors as a form of retaliation (Colquitt et al., 2013).

Interpersonal factors also play a significant role. Townsend, Phillips, and Elkins (2000) found that low-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships correlate with increased CWB, though research specifically linking LMX to CWB remains limited (Colquitt et al., 2013). Additionally, personality traits, negative affectivity, and self-control have been identified as individual differences related to CWB. For example, Berry et al. (2007) and Mount et al. (2006) demonstrated that individuals with high negative affectivity or low self-control are more prone to engage in CWB.

Moreover, gender differences have been observed, with men generally exhibiting higher levels of CWB compared to women (Ng et al., 2016).

Perceived organizational justice refers to employees' evaluations of whether they have been treated fairly, which significantly influences their attitudes and behaviors (Moorman, 1991). In this study, we use a four-dimensional framework of organizational justice, encompassing distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and

informational components (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2013). Distributive justice concerns the perceived fairness of resource distribution within the organization, while procedural justice pertains to the fairness of the processes used to allocate these resources. Interpersonal justice relates to the respect and dignity with which employees are treated by their superiors, and informational justice involves the adequacy and timeliness of information provided by superiors regarding resource allocation (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2013).

Empirical research has demonstrated a direct negative impact of organizational justice on counterproductive work behavior (CWB) (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2013; El Akremi et al., 2010). When employees perceive organizational practices as fair, they are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors towards the organization, their managers, and their work. Conversely, perceptions of unfairness may prompt employees to engage in behaviors aimed at restoring perceived equity. Social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2008) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) support this rationale, suggesting that "negative reciprocation serves as a means to restore balance and alleviates anger and frustration caused by unfair treatment" (El Akremi et al., 2010, p. 1690).

Overall, the literature indicates that both situational and individual factors are critical in understanding the antecedents of CWB. These findings emphasize the need for organizations to foster fair treatment, effective leadership, and supportive work environments to mitigate the occurrence of such detrimental behaviors.

The Relationship Between Influence of Managerial and Workplace Factors on Counterproductive Work Behavior

The relationship between managerial and workplace factors and counterproductive work behavior (CWB) is well-documented in organizational psychology. Managerial styles significantly influence CWB, with authoritative and laissez-faire leadership often exacerbating such behaviors. Authoritative managers, who exercise high levels of control and command, can create environments of high stress and resentment, leading to increased CWB (Tepper, 2000). Similarly, laissez-faire management, characterized by minimal intervention and guidance, can result in ambiguity and lack of accountability, fostering conditions conducive to CWB (Skogstad et al., 2007).

Conversely, transformational and supportive managerial styles tend to reduce CWB. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees, fostering a positive and inclusive work environment that mitigates CWB (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). Supportive managers, who build strong relationships and provide necessary support, also contribute to lower levels of CWB by creating a respectful and supportive work atmosphere (Gilbreath & Benson, 2004).

Workplace factors also play a crucial role. Organizational justice, which includes distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice, significantly impacts CWB. Perceived fairness in resource distribution (distributive justice), fairness of processes (procedural justice), respectful treatment (interpersonal justice), and adequate, timely information (informational justice) all contribute to reducing CWB (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2013). Studies have shown a direct negative effect of organizational justice on CWB, with fair treatment fostering positive employee attitudes and behaviors (El Akremi et al., 2010).

Additionally, the quality of the workplace environment, including communication, support systems, and stress levels, influences CWB. Effective communication and robust support systems reduce misunderstandings and help employees cope with stress, thereby lowering CWB (Hershcovis et al., 2007). Conversely, high-stress environments are linked to increased CWB. In summary, positive managerial styles and a fair, supportive workplace environment are crucial in mitigating CWB, while negative managerial styles and a stressful, unjust workplace environment tend to exacerbate such behaviors. This relationship underscores the importance of effective management and a positive workplace culture in promoting

organizational well-being and reducing counterproductive behaviors.

Research Methodology Introduction

This section introduces the research design and other research methods used in this study. The section will describe in detail the research site, population and sampling techniques, use of scales, validity and reliability of scales, data collection procedures, and data analysis. The types of statistical analysis used in this study will be introduced in detail in the data analysis discussion before the summary of this chapter.

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative method, because quantitative research is suitable for predicting and controlling the relationships between variables (Creswell, 2017). Quantitative research is the best way to analyze problems of relationships between variables, with the purpose of uncovering, predicting and controlling phenomena. Survey method is used to collect the data needed for this study, involving questionnaires. According to Groves et al. (2009), compared with qualitative methods, the survey method can collect large-scale behavioral and belief data more efficiently, and make these data more comparable.

Correlational research aims to determine the extent to which a change in one factor is related to changes in one or more factors based on a coefficient index. Correlation is the most appropriate method for observing whether variables are interrelated (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2016). Correlational research is an appropriate method for observing whether variables are interrelated. This study does not seek to determine a causal relationship for a variable but wants to discuss its relationship with variables and other variables.

Sample Size

Since the total number and overall characteristics of private employees are relatively certain, this study combines relevant conclusions of empirical methods and uses Krejcie and Morgan (1970)'s calculation technique to determine the sample size. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) proposed a basic sample size calculation formula for determining the sample size of a given population, which has been used by many researchers. For the sample size of this study, appropriate sample sizes can be determined using empirical methods and statistical methods. The general standard for determining the sample size of a questionnaire survey study through the empirical method is between 100-500 (Singh and Masuku, 2014). Hill et al. (2005) believe that the questionnaire survey sample size is preferably between 100- 200, with at least no less than 100. Fowler (1993) pointed out that for quantitative research, the sample size should be at least 100-200, and specific subgroups should be at least 50-100. It is generally required to be at least greater than 100, with better results between 200-300. At the same time, the sample size must be greater than 30 in order to make statistical inferences, otherwise the robustness of the results is poor (Hill 1998).

Sampling Technique

The main criterion for selecting a sample for study is that the sample must be able to represent the population that researchers wish to infer about (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008). The sample of this study consisted in private sector. There are two sampling techniques in research methods, namely random sampling and non-random sampling. For studies of large populations, the best technique is simple random sampling, because with this random sampling technique, the probability of each person in the population being selected is equal (Lavrakas, 2008), while non- probability sampling does not involve random selection, but rather selection of population elements according to non-random criteria (Dudovskiy, 2016). Therefore, this study adopts random sampling technique.

Four common methods for obtaining such samples are simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified random sampling, and cluster random sampling.

Pilot study

In order to ensure the smooth progress of this survey, we conducted a small sample pilot study to ensure the internal consistency reliability of the four scales involved using Cronbach's α coefficient. The purpose of this

pilot study is to further improve the questionnaire items so that they can be accurately understood by the respondents and avoid misunderstandings, as well as to check for possible deficiencies in the scales during the survey process, such as cross-cultural semantic deviations. As Leon et al. (2011) pointed out, pilot studies can provide valuable feasibility assurance to help improve procedures, estimate key parameters to guide resource allocation decisions, and can enhance the transparency and interpretability of subsequent evaluations.

Connelly (2008) pointed out that for descriptive research designs, pilot study sample sizes typically range from 10-30, and pilot study sample sizes can also account for 10% of the actual sample. Plus, Bland and Altman (1997) suggest the following empirical practice for interpreting Cronbach's α coefficient. In this pilot study, the Cronbach α coefficients all reached 0.7 or above, so the reliability of related scales is acceptable.

Validity Scale validity refers to the degree to which a scale can accurately measure the concepts or constructs that it intends to measure (Kline, 2000). It reflects the quality of the scale and is an important indicator to ensure the reliability and usability of the scale (Reynolds et al., 2009). Factors affecting test validity include content validity, criterion validity, and structural validity (Straub et al., 2004). These different types of validity evaluate the validity of the scale by determining the consistency of measurement results with standards. Among them, content validity is fundamental.

Reliability

Reliability is an indicator reflecting the stability and consistency of the results of a measurement tool (Furr, 2011). It directly affects the accuracy of scale results and is the primary criterion for judging scale quality (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2018). Commonly used statistical methods to judge scale reliability include test-retest reliability, Cronbach's α coefficient, and component correlation (Tang Qing et al., 2015). In practical applications, the reliability coefficient of a scale must reach at least 0.7 before it is considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978); In basic research, this standard can be increased to 0.8 (Straub et al., 2004). This section discusses the reliability test conclusions of various research scales in previous studies to ensure that each instrument used in this study has good reliability.

Data Analysis Techniques

This study analyzes research questions and hypotheses. The main methods used are the social science statistical software package (SPSS) and structural equation modeling (AMOS). Data analysis is explained in the form of descriptive analysis and inferential statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis methods mainly include calculation of characteristic values (such as mean, mode, standard deviation, etc.) of data, drawing data distribution charts, cross-table analysis of data, etc.; Inferential statistical analysis mainly includes hypothesis testing, Pearson correlation analysis, analysis of variance, regression analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), etc. Data missing value treatment has been performed before this analysis. To analyze the data, in the first step all of the responses were coded by SPSS version 21 software.

SUMMARY

This chapter details the research methods, including research design, population and sampling procedures, descriptions and evaluation criteria of various scales, analysis of scale validity and reliability of survey procedures, methods of data collection and data analysis. The content discussed in this chapter lays the groundwork for the results of the research in the next chapter.

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