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Perceived Organizational Support and Workplace Deviance in the Voluntary Sector

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Abstract

Workplace deviance in organizations has becoming a serious issue discussed amongst researchers and managers. It seems that the cost of workplace deviance is detrimental as it affects organizational effectiveness and performance. The aim of this paper is to extend the workplace deviance construct into voluntary sector and to examine the correlation between perceived organizational supports with workplace deviance. Data were gathered from a sample of 346 volunteers that involved in emergency relief services in Malaysia. Results from the factor analysis indicated three forms of workplace deviance and the hierarchical multiple regression analyses have revealed that perceived organizational support has a significant negative effect on workplace deviance. Theoretical and managerial implications of the findings were discussed.

1. Introduction

In the past three decades, researchers and managers have constantly investigating the pervasiveness of workplace deviance. Workplace deviances, such as personal aggression, theft and withdrawal behavior are costly problems to organizations (Appelbaum, Iaconi, & Matousek, 2007). Early work by Harper (1990) showed that 33 to 75 percent

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of employees in United States have engaged in some form of theft, vandalism, sabotage, personal aggression and unexcused absenteeism. Recently, Bashir, Nasir, Qayyum and Bashir (2012) found 82 percent of employees in Pakistan public organizations frequently arrive late to work, 90 percent would have longer lunch breaks and 66 percent would leave office early.

Such negative work behaviors are known as workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Murphy (1993) believed that workplace deviance resulted in organizational losses estimated to range from US$6 to US$200 billion annually. Moreover, the impact of workplace violence was found to cause adverse effect such as substantial mental disturbance and job stress on their employees which subsequently affecting their work performance (Shamsudin, Subramaniam, & Ibrahim, 2011).

The amount of research in workplace deviance has increased substantially over the last decade and the majority of the empirical work was based on western settings (Nasurdin, Ahmad, & Razalli, 2014). Moreover, most studies have eventually been devoted to examine the antecedents of workplace deviance in private and public organizations (Abdul Rahim, Shabudin, & Mohd Nasurdin, 2012; Alias, Rasdi, Ismail, & Samah, 2013; Alias & Rasdi, 2015; Kozako, Safin, & Rahim, 2013; Shamsudin, 2003), while it is scarce to investigate the voluntary organization. The incidences of deviant behaviors such as incivility, harassment, drug abuse, impersonation and possession of a false identity have been frequently reported in local media. In addition, local studies pertaining to the degree to which volunteers believe that their organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being will influence them to engage in workplace deviance was scarce. Hence, this study contributes to the literature of work behavior and volunteers of emergency relief service, knowing that the emergency relief service is a highly imperative service to the public. On top of that, volunteer organizations are heavily relying on their volunteers for their daily operation. Therefore, the present study seeks to extend the workplace deviance construct into a voluntary organization using a sample of volunteers of emergency relief services and to examine whether perceived organizational support will have a significant negative relationship with workplace deviance.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 The typology of workplace deviance

In recent years, workplace deviance has received a great deal of interest by researchers and managers (Nasurdin et al., 2014). Workplace deviance refers to voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and, in doing so, threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Examples of workplace deviance include sabotage, withdrawal behavior, theft, abuse of time and resources and accepting kickbacks (Bashir et al., 2012; Nasir & Bashir, 2012; Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

Robinson and Bennett (1995) have identified two types of workplace deviance namely, interpersonal and organizational deviance. In their typology, they further categorized according to the severity of each behavior. Personal aggression was a major type of interpersonal deviance where it involves physical and verbal actions directed toward other individuals such as harassment and abuse, while political deviance was a minor type of interpersonal deviance where it involves behaviors that intentionally disadvantage other individuals such as gossiping and incivility. The second type of workplace deviance is organizational deviance. Organizational deviance consisted of production deviance (minor behaviors which intentionally reducing organizational efficiency of work output such as wasting resources, aloof and intentionally work slower than usual) and property deviance (major behaviors that harm the organization's assets and possessions such as sabotage and theft).

2.2 Perceived Organizational Support and Workplace Deviance

Perceived organizational support refers to individuals evidently believe that the organization has a general positive or negative orientation toward them that encompasses both recognition of their contributions and concern for their welfare (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). On the basis of social exchange theory, individuals would evaluate the cost and benefits associated with a transaction (Blau, 1964). Chinman and Wandersman (1999) suggested that the costs and benefits can be used to enhance participation in voluntary groups,