

Relationship Between Psychological Capital and Counterproductive Work Behavior

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Plethora of research studies and the acquisitioned knowledge of workplace experience signify the importance of behavioral positivity in the workplace environment. The research article empirically demonstrates the relationship between the psychological capital and counterproductive work place behavior and otherwise. This study includes sample of employees (N=235) of the faculty members of the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Self-administered questionnaire was used to measure the construct and about 235 employees successfully responded in this research. The research finds that their state-like psychological capital has a significant influence on counter productive work Behaviour.

Keywords. Psychological capital, counterproductive work behavior, employees' performance, work place environment, job satisfaction; interpersonal conflicts

Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) is the personnel trait that harms organizational effectiveness (Sackett, Berry, Wiemann & Laczko, 2006). CWB includes such acts as theft, sabotage, verbal abuse,

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withholding of effort, lying, refusing to cooperate and physical assault (Penney & Spector, 2005). The implied meanings CWB are; organizational delinquency (Hogan & Hogan, 1989), organization-motivated aggression (O' Leary-Kelly et al., 1996), organizational retaliatory behaviours, workplace aggression and workplace deviance (Robinson & Bennet, 1995), revenge and intimidation (Gallagher et al., 2008) and antisocial behaviour in organizations (Lee et al., 2005). At work place some workers involve in exploitation of other workers by degrading, mocking, and abusing and some time spreading rumors against it, which is known as workplace bullying (Hauge, Skogstad & Einarsen, 2009). CWB occurrences in organizations had posed adverse effects on both organizations in terms of low productivity, increased insurance costs, lost or damage property and increased turnover (Leblanc and Kelloway, 2002; Penney and Spector, 2002).

Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB)

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) consists of volitional acts that harm or intend to harm organizations and their stakeholders (e.g., clients, coworkers, customers, and supervisors) (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2012). Specific CWBs include abusive behavior against others, aggression (both physical and verbal), purposely doing work incorrectly, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal (e.g., absence, lateness, and turnover). The key characteristic of CWB is that the action itself must be purposeful and not accidental, that is, the employee makes a choice or decision to behave in such a way that is either intended specifically to harm, or harms by purposeful action even if unintentionally. Poor performance that is unintended (e.g., an employee tries but has insufficient skill to successfully complete job tasks) is not CWB because the purpose of the employee was not to perform the job incorrectly. To beat CWB the employee must purposely avoid using safe equipment or procedures, thus behaving in a reckless manner that results in injury, even though the injury itself was not desired. Alternately, the individual might engage in the behavior for the specific purpose of causing harm, e.g., by damaging equipment.

Our definition is not unlike Sackett (2002), who defines CWB as behavior that runs counter to an organization's legitimate interests.

Unlike Sackett, we don't define CWB purely from the perspective of the organization as the entity that is harmed. We also extend the harm to employees, customers and other stakeholders. Of course, if a stakeholder is harmed it is likely the organization is harmed as well. However, there could be instances in which an employee does something hurtful to a coworker or customer that has no adverse effect on the organization. CWB is a general term that overlaps a number of related but distinct constructs. It is perhaps most similar to the idea of workplace aggression (Neuman & Baron, 1997; 1998; O'Leary-Kelly, Spector, 1975; 1978), which is defined as behavior intended to harm organizations and/or people in organizations. The distinction is that CWB does not require specific intent to harm. However, aggression consists of behaviors that we classify as CWB; for example, Neuman and Baron (1998) include the same behaviors we list as CWB under the categories of hostility, obstructionism, and overt aggression.

Violence is a term used to refer to some forms of aggression, and depending upon the definition it can be synonymous. A narrow definition includes only physical acts of violence that are classified as crimes, that is, homicide, rape, robbery, and assault (Bulatao & Vandebos, 1996; LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002). Robbery may be violence, but it is not necessarily aggression, as in most robberies the victim is not physically harmed, but merely threatened. Others have distinguished physical from psychological violence, such as verbally abusive actions (Barling, 1996). In either case, definitions of violence may or may not involve intentions to harm but merely define the act in terms of its nature and result. It is narrower than CWB in focusing specifically on harm to people. It should also be noted that it is possible to commit unsuccessful violence that is still violence. Shooting a gun at someone and missing would still be considered a violent act even if no physical harm were done.

Retaliation is behavior in response to perceived organizational injustice that is intended to punish the party or parties perceived as the cause (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Like aggression, it is volitional behavior intended to harm, but the construct assumes an underlying motive to restore equity and justice, making this a special case of aggression. Most acts of retaliation as described by Skarlicki and Folger (1997) are subsumed under CWB; however, the latter term does not

assume that the behavior is necessarily in response to injustice, although in many cases it may be.

Revenge (Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997) consists of actions against perceived agents of harm or violation of social order. This can occur, not only in response to injustice (retaliation) but in response to other events that cause harm. Furthermore, these actions can consist of acts generally agreed to be aggressive or otherwise counterproductive, but they can also consist of constructive action. Bies et al. (1997) see revenge as sometimes serving a positive social function of helping to regulate interpersonal behavior. The threat of revenge can inhibit CWB and other negative behaviors directed toward individuals who are perceived capable of striking back. Revenge overlaps with CWB in the extent to which it involves counterproductive acts, but it can involve other acts that might not be harmful to individuals or organizations. Rather it involves a demonstration of power that can have positive social regulatory functions.

Deviance is volitional behavior that violates organizational norms and causes harm to the organization or its employees (Hollinger, 1986; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). The norms are those defined by the dominant management of organizations, and are prescribed by both formal and informal policies, rules, and standards. Although deviance includes many behaviors considered CWB, it excludes behaviors that may harm but are normative. For example, in organizations in which abusive supervisory behavior is normative, such acts would not be considered deviance, although they would be CWB if they are harmful. Conversely, resistance to abusive supervisory behavior or unfair incentive practices would be considered deviant relative to organizational norms, but perhaps not relative to workgroup (or societal) norms, and to the extent that such actions result in positive change, might arguably NOT be considered counterproductive. Deviance is distinct from aggression, retaliation, and revenge in that there is no specification of underlying motive for the behavior, e.g., causing harm (aggression and retaliation) or restoring social order (revenge). The foregoing conceptualizations of deviance and revenge also serve as a reminder that power and politics in organizational life may play a nontrivial role in what becomes defined as counterproductive, as in the cases of whistleblowing, labor actions, resistance to unfair or oppressive treatment, or

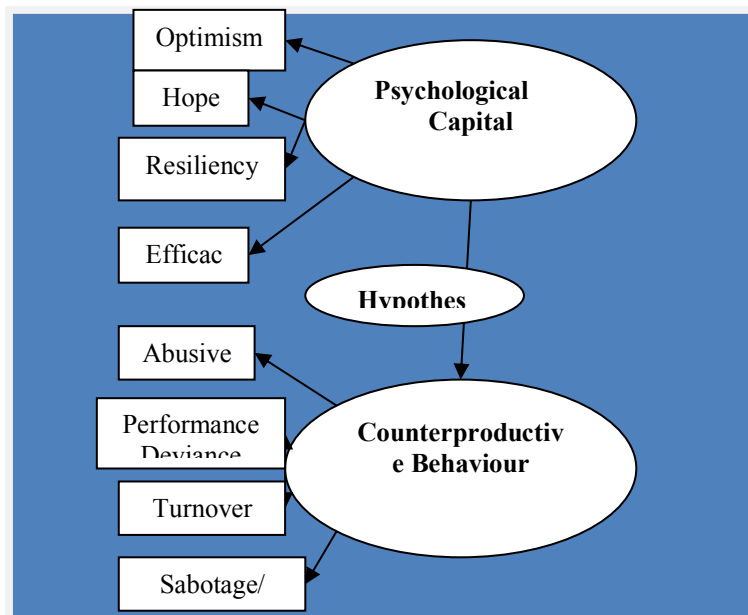
organizing for change. What might be counterproductive from the organization's point of view (filing a grievance over unfair treatment) may be productive for the individual, and likewise, what may be counterproductive for the individual (being treated unfairly and not complaining) can benefit the organization.

Psychological Capital

According to Luthans et al (2007) PC is one's positive appraisal of circumstances and probability for success based on motivated efforts and perseverance. Basically, PC, as explained earlier, comprises of four attributes, originally, states as confidence/efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Luthans & Youssef, 2004). These states have synergistic effects when utilized during the work to achieve targeted objectives as this declared core construct that gives better performance than any other human possessed characteristics (Luthans, Avolio, Norman, & Avey, 2006). At organization level PC plays a vital role in accomplishing goals when it converges from the different directions towards a single point i.e. PC of the leaders and the workers, as the followers are often imitate their leaders (Avolio & Luthans, 2006).

Psychological Capital & Counterproductive Work Behaviour

To understand the relationship between PC and CWB, an examination of the source of CWB seems important. Specifically, Fox and Spector (1999) advance the argument that workplace constraints, acting as stressors, are the primary cause of CWB. First, employees are exposed to stressors (e.g., having to rely on incompetent colleagues in order to personally succeed) and then respond with CWB (e.g., failing to help a co-worker or sabotage). An important mechanism in the relationship may be that individuals higher in PC are less susceptible to the negative influence of stressors, and thus exhibit fewer CWBs. Specifically, those high in PC may be more resilient to stressful events, stressors and setbacks (Masten & Reed, 2002) and do not experience the negative repercussions as strongly.



Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to measure the effect of Psychological capital (PC) on CWB and determine issues faced by managers and administrators in controlling CWB.

The main hypothesis of the research is:

Hypothesis

Psychological Capital has significantly positive effect on controlling Counterproductive behavior at workplace.

Conceptual Framework

The in-depth review of the related literature and the theories helped this research to formulate its conceptual framework

Research Methodology

The research is descriptive cum co-relational in nature which was based upon combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The aim of this research was to investigate the relationship between

psychological capitals, counterproductive work behaviour in education sector of Pakistan. Higher education institutes of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were selected for the study and survey method was adopted for data collection.

Sampling is a procedure to select adequate numbers of unit that proportionately represent the whole population. For this study due public sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were randomly selected at first stage and the unit of analyses which was the teachers was systematically selected in the second stage of the sampling. The sample of the universities found at a result of sampling process is as follows:-

- a. University of Peshawar
- b. Kohat University of Science & Technology, Kohat
- c. Hazara University
- d. Gomal University D I Khan
- e. Malakand University

Data Collection Method

In order to collect the data of the research study from respondents, a detailed and comprehensive questionnaire was selected to measure the responses on constructs such as; Psychological capital, counter productive work behavior. The questionnaire was developed by incorporating different scales used by the different researches in the past as explained below:

- Psychological Capital including hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy were measured using a shorter 12-item version of the original 24-item Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ-24) developed by (Luthans et al., 2007) on Likert Scale 5 points.
- Counterproductive work behaviour was measured using 13 items self-report questions. According to Bennett and Robinson (2000); Fox and Spector (1999), self report often provides a more accurate and valid assessment of counterproductive work behaviours than other methods because these behaviours are often performed in private.

Survey of permanent faculties of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities were carried out to obtain their perspectives regarding topic in hand. The population comprised of 1000 male and female faculty members including lecturers, Assistant Professors and Professors. The final sample was consisted approximately 286 faculty members of five stated universities. According to Ullah et al (2012) simple random sampling (SRS) technique for data collection is used when the sample size is less than 300. So in this study SRS technique is used for the data collection.

Population (N)	Formula	Computation	Sample
1000	$n = N / (1 + N * e^2)$	$n = 1000 / (1 + 1000 * (.05)^2)$ $n = 1000 / (1 + 1000 * .0025)$ $n = 1000 / 3.5$	285

Where n= sample size, N=population e=chance of error i.e. .05
Sample per university = $285 / 5 = 57$ faculty members

Finally total 286 questionnaires were administered and responses of 250 were received back thereby making the response rate above 90% which is considered having high rate of precision ad confidence interval. Out of 250 responses of 15 were found incorrect or incomplete therefore, not included in the study. The responses of 235 were found complete and correct in all respects and included in the study.

Demographic Analysis

Age of the respondents

Majority of the respondents were found between the age group 40 and above followed by 29 to 39 years i.e. 98 and only 28 respondents were found between the age group 18 to 28 years.

Table 2. *Respondents Age*

	Frequency	Percent
18 to 28 years	28	11.9
29 to 39 years	98	41.7
40 and above	109	46.4
Total	235	100.0

Gender of the respondents

Similarly to above table No 3 indicated that majority of respondents were found male i.e. 183 (77.9%) and only 22.1% total 52 respondents were found female. Moreover table No 4 show the marital status of the respondents. Table show that majority of the respondents were found married and only 33.6% total 79 respondents were found un-married.

Table 3

Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Female	52	22.1
Male	183	77.9
Total	235	100.0

Table 4

Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent
Married	156	66.4
Un-Married	79	33.6
Total	235	100.0

Levels of management currently held by the respondents

The below table show the level of management currently hold by the respondents in respective organizations. Table show that majority of respondents i.e. 142 (60.4%) hold middle level of management, followed by 60 (25.5%) hold low level management and only 33 respondents hold high level of management.

Table 5

Management Levels

	Frequency	Percent
Low Level Mgmt	60	25.5
Middle Level Mgmt	142	60.4
Top Level Mgmt	33	14.0
Total	235	100.0

Regression Analysis:

To check the association between psychological capital and counterproductive work multiple regression analysis technique was utilized.

Table 6

Regression Analysis Summary

Regression Weights	R Square	F	Sig	Hypothesis Substantiated
PC->CWB	.975	532.293	.001	Yes

In the Model summary table, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is equal to 0.975 (or 97.5%) indicates that the variation or change in the psychological capital response is 97.5% explained by the predictors given in the function at sig. level 0.001 and degree of freedom=16 the result indicates the good enough correlation among the predictors and also the correlation between predictors and dependent variable. On the basis of above analysis it is concluded that H_1 hypothesis i.e. H_1 : Psychological Capital has significant positive effect on controlling Counterproductive behavior is found verified and accepted.

Findings

This study was conducted to identify the relationship between psychological capital, counterproductive work behavior. For this purpose employees of Public Sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were considered working population for this study. While keeping in time, financial and other constraint total 285 sample size were selected. Questionnaire was developed on the basis of literature. Each questionnaire contained two section, one is required to be filled by individuals and second part of the questionnaire contain question related to employees job performance evaluation, required to be filled by supervisor the the employees. Total 285 questionnaires were distributed amongst five selected universities. Out 285 total 245 questionnaires corrected in all respect were received back, which were analyzed by using SPSS. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between variables and decide toward the rejection or acceptance the hypothesis. Result show that majority of respondents are male and married. Similarly majority of respondents were found between the age group 40 and above. Moreover, majority of the respondents hold middle level of management followed by low level and very few respondents hold high level of management. Perception of employees toward the question “I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management” revealed that majority of the respondents were found disagreed. However majority of the respondents were found agreed with the statement “I feel confident contributing to discussions about the company's strategy” show that employees are indirectly contribute in policy formulation. Responses for the question “I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues” majority were found neutral. Similarly, majority of the respondent were found agreed with the statement “If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out”. Majority of the respondents were found agreed with the statement “Right now I see myself as being pretty successful at work”. Moreover responses for the statement “I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals” show that majority were found strongly agreed with said statement. However majority were found disagreed with the statement “At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself” and also for the statement “At this time, I can be “on my

own” so to speak at work if I have to” and strongly disagreed with the statement “I usually take stressful things at work in stride”. Respondent’s responses for the question “I can get through difficult times at work because I’ve experienced difficulty before” found neutral. Similar responses were received for the question “I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job”. Whereas, majority were found disagreed with the statement “I’m optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work”. However, majority were found neutral for both statements “At this time, Abusive supervision enhances the job commitment among employees” and “Abusive supervision enhances job satisfaction level among employees”. However, majority of the respondents were found strongly disagreed with statements such as “Abusive supervision enhances employee motivation”, “Abusive supervision enhances worker’s efficiency” and “Performance deviance enhances the job commitment among employees”. Majority of the respondents responses were found disagreed with both statements “Controlled performance deviance enhances job satisfaction among employees” and “Controlled performance deviance enhances employee motivation”. However, responses of majority were found neutral with the statement “Controlled performance deviance enhances worker’s efficiency” and strongly agreed with the statements “Controlled employees turnover enhances the job commitment among employees” and “Controlled employee turnover enhances the job satisfaction level among employees”. Study found that majority of the respondents found strongly agreed with the statement “Controlled employee turnover enhances motivation level among employees” and agreed with the statement “Controlled employee turnover enhances workers efficiency”. Majority of the responses for the questions “Controlled theft/sabotage within the organization enhances the job commitment among employees” and “Controlled theft/sabotage within the organization enhances the job satisfaction level among employees” were found strongly disagreed. And majority were found agreed with the statements “Controlled theft/sabotage within the organization enhances motivation level among employees” and “Controlled theft/sabotage within the organization enhances workers efficiency”.

On supervisor employees’ evaluation the study found that majority of the respondents found strongly disagreed show that majority

of the employees are not top performer. However, similar responses were received for the question “This employee is in the top 10 percent of frontline employees here”. Research study found that majority of the respondents were found agreed with the statement “This employee is very dedicated to satisfying the needs/wants of customers” show that employees well know how to satisfy customers’ needs and wants. Majority of the respondents were found strongly disagreed with the statement “This employee knows what customers expect better than others”. However majority of the respondents were found agreed with the statement This employee knows more about menu items than others” and similar responses were received for the question “This employee knows more about operational system than others” show that majority of the employees know the operation system as compared to others. Research study found that there is strong significant positive relationship between psychological capital and counterproductive work behavior. All the attributes of counterproductive work behavior have significant relationship with psychological capital.

Conclusion

Counterproductive work behavior is employee behavior that goes against the legitimate interests of organizational stakeholders, if not timely controlled, will have detrimental effects for the organization. (Sacket et.al, 2006). It is therefore important to take such behaviours into consideration when hiring new employees and when implementing human resource functions. The research concludes that employees with Psychological Capital have positivity of their work performance, citizens of their organizations, prolonged stay with organizational loyalty and least degree of counterproductive work behavior. Psychological capital at workplace not only reduces employees’ undesired behaviours rather it also nurtures better performing individuals having organizational loyalty, commitment, and positive reflections of organizational citizenship behavior. The research helps human resource practitioners to understand positive implications of the construct and use it human capital as source of competitive advantage towards attainment of organizational goals.

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