

Organizational Justice and Workplace Deviance Behavior: Evidence from University of Gondar

By

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Abstract

Employees in many institutions show different deviant behaviors due to the existence of injustice in their work environment. Research suggests that employees who perceive injustice in their workplace are more likely to engage in workplace deviance behavior. Distributive, procedural, and interpersonal justices are the main elements of the justice behavior. If an organization fails to satisfy these elements, it is proved that there is an indication of injustice. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the effect of organizational justice on workplace deviance behavior in the study area. To achieve this objective, an explanatory with cross-sectional research design was carried out to investigate the relationship and effect between organizational justice and workplace deviant behavior. The total population of the study was 120 academic and 37 administrative staff in which 30 of the academic staff were excluded for they were on a study leave. For this reason, 104 questionnaires were distributed and out of which 103 questionnaires were returned and used for the analysis purpose. One questionnaire was incomplete and the remaining 23 questionnaires were not distributed because of the inaccessibility of respondents during data collection period, hence excluded from the study. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 21 and the finding of the correlation analysis indicated that organizational justice elements were negatively correlated with workplace deviance behavior. Similarly, the regression analysis result tells us that procedural and distributive justices were a negative and insignificant effect on workplace deviant behavior but the interpersonal justices were a negative and significant effect on the outcome variable.

Keywords: *Procedural Justice, Distributive Justice, Interpersonal Justice, Deviant Behavior, rganizational Justice*

INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Background

People show a behavior which is desirable in some aspect and undesirable in another in a day to day life. Those individuals who have a desirable behavior behave in a respectful and ethical manner and create a safe and harmonious workplace environment. Those organizational behaviors like showing a helping or “citizenship” behaviors are essential and most favorable to the society. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are also considered as fair treatments (Brockner, Spreitzer, Mishra, Hochwarter, Pepper, & Weinberg, 2004). Contrary to this, there are others which are out of the norm and tradition of the society. These unusual behaviors can be labeled as workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2003), counterproductive behavior (Mangione & Quinn, 1975), and antisocial behavior (Giacolone & Greenberg, 1997). Robinson & Greenberg (1998) categorize these kinds of behaviors as workplace deviance, antisocial behavior, organizational aggression, retaliatory behavior, organizational misbehavior, and organization-motivated aggression. Others label it as workplace violence, sabotage, vandalism, revenge, destruction, dishonesty, incivility, employee theft, absenteeism, and withdrawal. For this study purpose, workplace deviance behavior or workplace misbehavior can be interchangeably used. Robinson and Bennett (1995) defined workplace deviance as “voluntary behavior of organizational members that violates significant organizational norms, and in so doing, threatens the well-being of the organization and/or its members.”

The physical as well as psychological withdrawal from the work is the manifestation of employees if they treated unfairly (Hackett 1989). Absence from work without any reason and excessive delay, acting of defiance of organizational norms, and other misbehaviors are indeed a work-process-related misbehavior. Such behaviors are affecting the individual's performance as well as the attitudes of others' coworkers (Weitz, & Vardi, 2008).

Misbehavior is a huge cost to many modern organizations through theft and cheating (Anderson and Pearson,

1999). It decreases the organization's welfare and their stakeholders (Gruys and Sackett, 2003; Bennett and Robinson, 2000; Judge, et al., 2006). Employee's misbehavior also causes damaging the financial capacity of an organization and even the cause to the life of his/her colleagues and his/her life as well. Even, it continues to disturb the society at large which leads to reduce the productivity of a given organization (Arshadi et al, 2011).

To date, our understanding of employee deviance includes a wide range of negative behaviors, such as gossiping and taking unapproved breaks, to more aggressive actions, such as aggression and violence (Bennett & Robinson, 2003).

This might be due to the existence of unfair treatment or injustice practice from their organization. In the public organizations, bureaucratic and formal organizational structure is the main determinant of justice (Greenberg, 1993). Showing fair treatment to all employees creates a conducive environment to the work situation which minimizes the workplace deviance of a certain organization and "organizational justice or fairness refers to subjective perception of employee's about equity" (Di Fabio and Palazzeschi, 2012). Bieset et al. (1986) contended that organizational fairness comprises of three main elements or dimensions such as distribution, procedural and interpersonal justice. Distributive justice is nothing but a fair distribution of resources to the concerned society or community/organization. Similarly, procedural justice is concerned with the fairness or respect of rules or legal actions without violating the public safety.

It considers free from bias, fact based, democratic, ethical viewpoints, and rule based decision makings. Interpersonal justice is the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity, and respect by concerned authorities (Colquitt et al, 2001).

Scholars argued that when decision making is centralized to the top level management and/or participation and decision making process is low, it can decrease the fairness of organizations particularly in the service giving organizations (Schminke et al., 2000). A number of scholars (e.g., Folger, 1993; Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992) argued that if there are unfair organizational decisions or actions, an employee who is affected by it may feel angry, offended, and resentment. Another important example is that if employees perceive that there is an unfair pay or bonus among individuals who have the same status, position and profession, it may create a workplace deviance or mistreatment (Deconinck & Bachmann, 2005). They try to show a strange behavior which was not observed previously. According to a survey conducted in the 1980th of different sectors such as in the retail, manufacturing, and hospitals ensured that employees were more likely to engage in theft.

Employee theft costs billions of dollars in losses to businesses every year in other parts of the world and in Ethiopia, too. Some experts stated that one-third of all new businesses fail and nearly two percent of all business sales are lost due to employee theft. Employee theft considers numerous activities like: forged on-the-job injuries for the purpose of compensation, stealing cash, forging or destroying receipts, billing cheat, putting fictitious employees on payroll, and falsifying expense records. Employee theft may be a simple isolated event carried out by one individual, a highly organized scheme to acquire substantial financial or material gain, or anything in between. Employee theft can range from petty theft acquisitions valued below a specified dollar amount or may be grand theft, whereby the losses exceed the value established through state and federal legal statutes (<http://www.criminal-law-lawyer-source.com/terms/employee-theft.html>). Skarlicki and Folger 1997 as cited in Greenberg and Scott (1996) reported that payment inequity leads employee to participate in the behavior of theft. It is a good example of distractive response to perceived injustice (Susanna, 2006). Such kind of workplace deviance is a persistent and expensive problem for many of public organizations (Bennett & Robinson, 1999).

Dozens of public organizations in Ethiopia like universities are experiencing such problems. Many resources are being lost due to theft in many of the public service organizations. No need of an eye witness for such experience. It is a day to day act performed by employees doing in the given organization. If this practice continues, it may produce another consequence, i.e., threaten the life of others.

Exercising workplace discrimination or violence might even damage the wellbeing of other parties (Low et al., 2007). Mistreatments exhibited in employees in a certain organization also produce another reaction in others who are not the victims of a given situation (Topa et al, 2013). These in turn damages the overall goodwill of an organization and finally bankruptcy becomes the end result of workplace deviance. Therefore, the focus of this study is to investigate organizational justice and its effect on workplace deviance behavior in University of Gondar, College of Business & Economics.

Specific Objectives

- ▶ To identify the extent of organization justice (with its elements) in College of Business and Economics (CBE).
- ▶ To investigate the relationship between organizational justice and workplace deviant behavior.
- ▶ To examine the effect of distributive justice on workplace deviance behavior of employees in CBE.
- ▶ To evaluate the effect of procedural justice on workplace deviance behavior of employees in CBE.
- ▶ To see the effect of interpersonal justice on workplace deviance behavior of employees in CBE.
- ▶ To investigate the effect of organizational justice on workplace deviant behavior in CBE.

Hypothesis

- ▶ H_{a1} : Procedural justice has a negative and significant effect on workplace deviance behavior.
- ▶ H_{a2} : Distributive justice has a negative and significant effect on workplace deviance behavior.
- ▶ H_{a3} : Interpersonal justice has a negative and significant effect on workplace deviance behavior.

Methodology of the Study

Research Design

The researcher used explanatory with cross sectional research design. This helps the researcher to investigate the effect of organizational justice on workplace deviant behavior in the study area.

In order to address the specified objectives quantitative research approach was used that involves numerical measurement and analysis. Consequently, the researcher sought to use this approach because the objective of the research is to analyze the effect of organizational justice on deviance behavior in the college.

Study Participants

Target populations of the study were academic and administrative staffs of College of Business and Economics, university of Gondar, which is one of the public universities in Ethiopia. The total population of the study accounts 120 academic, and 37 administrative employees, a total of 157 were considered for this study purpose. Out of 157 employees working in the college, 30 academic staffs were excluded from the study since they were in study leave. To collect relevant data, 104 questionnaires were distributed and out of which 103 questionnaires were returned and used for the analysis purpose. One questionnaire was incomplete and the remaining 23 questionnaires were not distributed to respondents because of the inaccessibility of respondents during data collection period so that they were excluded from the study.

Source of Data and Data Collection Instruments

To collect the required data, both primary and secondary data were used. Questionnaires were serving as the primary sources of data. The questionnaires were designed to collect quantitative data and they were filled by employees. The natures of the questionnaires were closed-ended questions. These types of questions were accompanied by a list of possible alternatives from which respondents were required to select the answer that best describes their situation. It had two main sections which comprises the personal profile of respondents

and the variables impact. All construct items were assessed using five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Distributive justice was assessed with a 5-item scale, Procedural injustice was assessed with a 5-item scale, and Interpersonal justice was assessed with a 9-item scale measuring the perceived justice related to behaviors. All organizational justice items were used and adopted from Colquitt's (2001). Work place deviant behavior questions were adopted from Bennett & Robenson (2000) which consists of two dimensions, namely organizational deviant behavior and interpersonal deviant behavior. The items were five point likert scales in each dimension. In addition, reports of the office, articles, magazines and internets were used as a secondary source of data.

Data Analysis

The researcher used statistical package software (SPSS.21) in order to analysis the study questions, which were adopted from previous researchers and to test the validity of the developed hypotheses. The Variance Inflation Factory (VIF) and (Tolerance) were used (to check the collernality problem), Durbin-Watson were used (to test the reasonableness of the assumptions of independent errors). Skewness test was used to ensure the normality of the data distribution. The Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis were also used to analysis the relationship/effect between the dependent and independent variables.

Validity and Reliability

Validity

The instrument for this study were reviewed for adequacy. The Literature in the study was used as a guideline for the modification of the questionnaires which ensure content validity. The questionnaires were subjected to an expertise opinion about their validity, and were validated by research experts. In addition to this, the English version questionnaires were translated to the local language for the sake of clarifying any ambiguity, which ensures again content validity.

Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which a researcher's instrument gives constant results or data after repeated trials. The internal consistencies of the factors were estimated by using Cronbach's Alpha and Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.6 is acceptable, above 0.7 is considered as good reliability and the value which is greater than 0.8 is very good (Reimers et al, 2012). As indicated in Table 2.0 of this study, the reliability of the constructs were tested by Conbach's alpha value, accordingly, all the measurement item scales were satisfying the minimum cut of point, which was greater than 0.7.

Table 2.0: Reliability Test

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Organizational justice procedural Justice	.832 .820
Distributive Justice	.820
Interpersonal Justice	.811
Org deviance behavior	.835

Source: own survey, 2018

Result & Discussion

Extent of Organizational Justice

As indicated on the Table 3.1 below, the mean score and standard deviation of organizational justice indicated the level of the different dimensions of organizational justice range from 2.8476 to 3.2607 and .80745 to .99610 respectively. The highest mean score of interpersonal Justice was (M=3.2607, SD= .99610). This result con-

firmed that employees give more value and are agreed with the measuring statements of interpersonal justice. This is to mean that most employees are agreed and the essence of interpersonal justice has widely shared to employees which enhance employees to use their full potential. Further, the next highest mean score was procedural Justice with a mean score of 3.1354 with a standard deviation of 0.82118. This shows that the level of agreement with the measuring statements was somewhat good. Moreover, the result of distributive justice has the lowest mean score of 2.8476 with a SD of .80745.

Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
procedural Justice	103	3.1354	.82118
Distributive Justice	103	2.8476	.80745
Interpersonal Justice	103	3.2607	.99610
Valid N (listwise)	103		

Source: Own survey, 2018

The Relationship between Organizational Justice Elements and Workplace Deviant Behavior

The relationship between organizational justice (with its components) and workplace deviance behavior (in terms of organizational and interpersonal deviance) was investigated by using correlation analysis as presented in Table 3.2. It is evident that there is a relatively medium but significant negative relationship between organizational justice and workplace deviance behavior ($r=-0.368$, $p<.05$). Workplace deviance behavior with procedural and distributive justice respectively shows a negative and significant relationship among each other at (-0.268 , $p<.05$; $r=-.246$, $p<.05$). This result tells us that if there is a decline in the implementation of procedural justice such as free from bias, fact based, democratic, ethical viewpoints, and rule based decision makings, then people prefer to show a behavior which is out of the norm i.e., deviant behavior. Similarly, when distributive justice becomes lower and lower, people exhibits a high level deviant behavior in an organization. In other words, if there is some unfair case in terms of resource distribution from the college to departments or from the department to first line employees, then there is a possibility of reflecting unethical behavior towards employees.

Similarly, interpersonal justice was negatively correlated with workplace deviance ($r=-0.374$, $p<.05$). Since the study variables have negatively and significantly correlated, this showed that the null hypothesis has rejected and conversely, the researcher accepted the alternative hypothesis. As a result, it can be concluded that there is sufficient evidence at the 5% level of confidence that there is a negative relationship between organizational justice (with its components) and workplace deviance at College of Business and Economics, university of Gondar. The finding of this study was in line with the work of the previous scholars such as (Dar, 2017). According to Dar, Organizational deviance was negatively and significantly correlated ($r= -0.342^{**}$) with distributive justice. Interpersonal deviance was also negatively and significantly correlated with distributive justice ($r= -0.342^{**}$). (Faheem and Mahmud, 2015) also proved that there was a strong negative correlation ($r=-.56$) between interactional justice and workplace deviance and also between procedural justice and workplace deviance. Similarly, their result confirmed that distributive justice and workplace deviance was negatively correlated at ($r= -0.007$).

Many studies proved that organizational justice/injustice has positive as well as negative outcomes such as in job satisfaction, organization citizenship behavior (making extra effort to the organization), organizational commitment and the like, and on the contrary, it produces negative consequences such as tardiness, poor performance, absenteeism, and exhibiting deviant behavior (Cohen et al, 2001; Judge, 2006).

To summarize, the correlation analysis on Table 3.2 tells us that there is a noticeable negative relationship between distributive justice and workplace deviance behavior. The negative result illustrates that when the practice of organizational justice decreases, it is true that employees increases in explaining a deviant behavior. This is because of the result of injustice in the organization i.e., in the college and it happens due to the violation of the principles of equity and this could spoil the overall operation of the university. Most public sector organizations like University of Gondar are experiencing the problem of injustice as this study proves. Usually, organizations resource allocation and people interaction as well as the way we treat people lacks justice. Respecting rule of law and implementing equally and fairly are also common problems observed in any public institutions. This may bring into being a physical as well as psychological withdrawal from the work or absence from work without any reason and excessive delay, workplace aggression, theft, dissatisfaction, acting of defiance of organizational norms, and other related misbehaviors.

Table 3.2. : Correlation between Independent and Dependent Variable

	Organizational Justice	Procedural	Distributive	Interpersonal	Workplace deviance	
Organizational J	Pearson Corr.	1	.814**	.750**	.875**	-.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
Procedural J	Pearson Corr.		1	.398**	.606**	-.268**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.006
Distributive J	Pearson Corr.			1	.477**	-.246*
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.012
Interpersonal J	Pearson Corr.				1	-.374**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.000
Workplace deviance	Pearson Corr.					1
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

Regression Analysis

The value of R^2 is almost .147, which tells us that organizational justice can account for 14.7% of the variation in workplace deviant behavior. There might be many other factors that can explain this variation, but this model, which includes only organizational justice components, can explain approximately 14.7% of it. This means that 85.3% of the variation in workplace deviance behavior cannot be explained by organizational justice. Therefore, there must be other variables that have an influence on the workplace deviance behavior (see Table 3.3 below).

The Durbin-Watson statistic found in the last column of Table 3.3 informs us about whether the assumptions of independent errors are reasonable. If the value was less than 1 and greater than 3, the assumption of the independent error was not met. The closer to the value of 2 tells us the better of the assumption, and for these data the value is 2.06, which is so close to 2 that the assumption has almost certainly been met.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.384 ^a	.147	.121	.48319	2.004
a. Predictors: (Constant), Interpersonal, proceduralV, org just					
b. Dependent Variable: workplace Deviance Behavior					
Source: own survey, 2018					

The ANOVA output in Table 3.4 examines the overall significance of the model; it shows that the ratio of the regression value to the value of residuals is positive; this implies the presence of a significant correlation between predictor variables and dependent variable. Further, p-value .000, which is less than the set limit of .05, it tells us about whether all the justice components are eligible and to be included in the regression model as a significant predictor of the criterion variable. The ANOVA table shows that all the predictor variables procedural, distributive, and interpersonal justice are a significant predictors of workplace deviance, hence the model of the study sufficiently and significantly explained the variation in deviance behavior.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	6.683	3	2.228	9.812	.000 ^b
	Residual	22.477	99	.227		
	Total	29.160	102			
a. Dependent Variable: organ Div behavior						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Distributive, procedural, Interpersonal justice						

Source: own survey, 2018

Table 3.5 indicated that the result of the VIF value ranging from 1.327 to 1.765. Field (2009) clarified that the VIF values below 10 and the tolerance statistics above 0.2 could not have collinearity problem. For this research model the VIF values of variables are below 10 and the tolerance statistics are above 0.2. Therefore, we can safely conclude that there is no collinearity problem in the data. It was also tested the normal distribution of the data with the help of skewness coefficient, where the values were close to zero (0), but less than (1) indicated that the current data was meeting the normality distribution.

The b-values of Table 3.5 tell us about the relationship between workplace deviance behavior and each predictor (distributive, procedural and interpersonal justice) variables. The negative value confirmed that whether there is a negative relationship between the predictor (distributive, procedural and interpersonal justice) or the outcome (workplace deviance behavior). Existence of perceived injustice in an organization's environment will certainly lead deviant workplace behavior. For these data, all three predictors indicating negative relationships, this implies that when distributive, procedural and interpersonal justices are highly exhibited in the workplace, the inclination of employee's workplace deviance behavior might be lower.

Many scholars in their empirical literature stated that organizational justice elements and workplace deviant behavior did not show a statistically significant effect among each other. For instance, Faheem & Mahmud (2015), proved that distributive and procedural justice did not show a statistically significant effect on workplace deviant behavior at ($\beta = -.006, p > .05$; $\beta = -.079, p > .05$), as this study proves and interactional justices at ($\beta = -.036, p > .05$), which is somewhat deviated from the current study. Hemdi & Nasurdin (2006) find out from regression analyses revealed that distributive justice was not significantly affects deviant behaviors as this study did but not found a similar finding with this study with respect to procedural justice and deviant behaviors.

Model	Unstand Coefficients	Standzd Coeff	T	Sig.	Co linearity Statistics	Skewness			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	Statistics	
1	(Constant)	2.491	.217		11.465	.000			
	procedural J	-.032	.074	-.052	-.437	.663	.617	1.621	.133
	Interpersonal J	-.158	.064	-.304	-2.468	.015	.567	1.765	.011
	Distributive J	-.051	.068	-.080	-.747	.457	.754	1.327	-.281

Dependent Variable: Deviance Behavior
Source: Own survey, 2018

Hypothesis Testing

There were three hypotheses constructed in this study. Since Pearson correlation coefficient shows only the strength and direction of the relationship between variables, it is important to use regression analysis to test the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

It is clear stated in Tables 3.6 that procedural, and distributive justice respectively did not show a statistically significant and but negative caused of deviance behavior at ($\beta=0.032$, $p>.05$; and $\beta=-0.080$, $p>0.05$). Interpersonal justice shows a negative and significant effect on workplace deviant behavior ($\beta=-0.158$, $p<0.5$). Thus, H1a, H1b were rejected and H1c was accepted.

Table 3.6: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Decision criteria/reason	Decision	
H1a: Procedural justice has a negative and significant effect on workplace deviance behavior	($r=0.032, P>.05$)	.663	Rejected
H2b: distributive justice has a negative and significant effect on workplace deviance behavior	($r=-0.051, P>.05$)	.457	Rejected
H3c: interpersonal justice has a negative and significant effect on workplace deviance behavior	($r=-0.158, P<.05$)	.015	Accepted

Source: own survey, 2018

Conclusion and Implication

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effect of organizational justice on workplace deviance behavior in College of Business and Economics, University of Gondar.

The correlation analysis result tells us that procedural, distributive and interpersonal justice have negatively related with workplace deviance behavior. Procedural justice is concerned with making and implementing decisions according to fair processes. However, the link between procedural justice and workplace deviance behavior shows negative which implies that when the practice of procedural justice decreases, the extent of deviant behavior increases. This confirmed that the decision made by the college lacks procedural clarity. Unclear procedures mean that the college exhibited and follows complex bureaucratic procedures. This results a physical as well as psychological withdrawal from the work or absence from work without any reason and excessive delay, workplace aggression, theft, dissatisfaction, acting of defiance of organizational norms, and other related misbehaviors. This procedural injustice leads a decline in the interaction between employees working in the organization, which violates the interpersonal aspect of justice. The study result of the beta value of all organizational justice elements shows a negative result, tells us that injustice has been exercised and hence produces a deviant behavior. When there is lack of fairness and support of staff in an organization, the organization may face behaviors that are destructive of relationships among employees. This study result has

agreed with the social exchange theory, suggests that respondents who perceived low organizational support, organizational justice, and ethical climate were more inclined to act deviant behavior.

Implication

In reality, one can conclude that in order to contain both staffs deviant behaviors towards organization, work, or co-workers, Department heads and college Deans must treat employees fairly and make use of fair procedures in making decisions. They are required to think how to know about and deal with organizational justice issues such as procedural, distributive and interpersonal justices in order to reduce destructive behaviors of employees in the workplace. It provides awareness to leaders that injustice in resource allocation, decision making and interpersonal interaction creates issues which may further decline the overall operation of the university.

When employee's perceived justice exercised in an organization, their response is positive and it creates the existence of commitment, loyalty, helping colleagues, and extra role behavior. In addition, this study may bring a guideline to policy makers and top officials while developing policies/rules that they should not ignore justice as an important mechanism in rewarding and motivating employees.

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