A Path Model Examining the Relations among Organizational Injustice, Counterproductive Work Behavior and Job Satisfaction

Afsheen Fatima, Qureshi Muhammad Atif, Adeel Saqib, and Ali Haider

Abstract—The aim of the present study was twofold; to examine the impact of organizational injustice on job satisfaction and, to find the impact of job satisfaction on counterproductive work behaviors. A sample of 297 managers from the banking industry of Pakistan was purposively selected. To examine the hypotheses of this empirical study, data were analyzed through structural equation modeling technique using AMOS software. The results reveal significant and negative impact of organizational injustice on job satisfaction. The results further reveal significant negative association between job satisfaction and counterproductive work behaviors. Implications of these findings are discussed, and suggestions are made for the future research.

Index Terms—Counterproductive work behaviors, job satisfaction, organizational injustice, Pakistan.

I. INTRODUCTION

Managers in contemporary organizations attempt to hire and retain satisfied employees. These managers are aware of the role of job satisfaction for the prosperity and success of their organizations [1]. Job satisfaction is a pleasant emotional state which is the result of appraisal of one's job or job experiences [2]. When an individual gives emotional response to a value judgment, it is job satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) [3]. When job values are perceived as being fulfilled, i.e. satisfaction, the person will be pleased. However, the person will be unpleasing if his job values are perceived as frustrating i.e. dissatisfaction. Factors such as intelligence [4], social cues, and work conditions like job complexity, salary, promotion or social relations lead to job satisfaction [5]. Several scholars have found positive outcomes of this construct such as higher productivity and profitability [6], less absentees from work [7], less probability of leaving the job [8], organizational citizenship behavior [9] and more happier with their lives [10].

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Currently, it has become one of the main concerns for the organizational leaders to motivate and satisfy their workforce to utilize their full potential. Such efforts enhance employees' productivity which will eventually assist organizations get their goals. This grabbed the focus of the scholars and job satisfaction happens to be one of the frequently researched areas.

Present study focuses on the impact of organizational injustice on job satisfaction. Organizational Justice refers to an individual's perceptions regarding the fairness of decisions and decision-making processes within organizations and its effect over those perceptions and behavior [11], [12]. The literature shows different justice dimensions (e.g. distributive, procedural, and interpersonal). Distributive justice is the one where everything is done in fair manner while procedural justice relates to the fairness of process used to divide available rewards [13]. Interpersonal justice captures the extent to which employees are treated properly, i.e. with honor, dignity, courtesy, and value [14]. However, organizational injustice refers to an employee's faith that the person has been treated unfairly and unjust in his/her organization [15].

This study also focuses on the impact of job satisfaction on counterproductive work behavior. Unethical and counterproductive work behavior is becoming widespread problem in most of the Pakistani organizations. According to one study [16], about 33 to 75 percent of all employees normally get involved in negative behaviors such as fraud, theft, sabotage, and vandalism. The term counterproductive work behavior has been defined as any deliberate or accidental attempt that cause harm to an organization or its members [17]. It is also related with large economic costs for organizations. Such practices need to be controlled since it also includes psychological and social costs [18].

Many scholars call counterproductive work behavior as a cancer to the organizations. It represent any voluntarily or involuntarily behavior that disrupts major organizational values. It leads to intimidate the welfare of an organization, its members and/or both [19]. Managers are interested in knowing the causes of it. This phenomenon is a big challenge for all the organizations. [19] research shows that there are different shapes of counterproductive work behavior. According to [20] bureaucracy is one of the main reasons of such behaviors. These behaviors create communication gaps between employees and the management and lowers employee morale and commitment. Several factors have been identified as predictors of counterproductive work behaviors. [18] identified philosophy, value orientation, locus of control,

Machiavellianism and love of money as causes of such behaviors. He further identified that factors such as influence of work groups and supervisors, and opportunity need also assist to reduce the counterproductive work behaviors. [21] found that mostly such employees are involved in counterproductive work behaviors, who work under the supervision of managers who overly pressurized their subordinates. The present study has conceptualized this construct as combination of interpersonal and organizational dimensions of counterproductive work behaviors. As the target of such practices can either be the individual and/or the organization. The present study has contributed in the existing body of literature by proposing and empirically examining the path from organizational injustice to job satisfaction. Testing this path in the present research is one of the main contributions in the existing literature as to the best of authors' knowledge there is a lack of research on this association. The model further examines the path from job satisfaction to counterproductive work behavior. Which is also an under-researched area in this geographical region i.e. Pakistan.

A. Hypotheses Development

1) Organizational injustice and job satisfaction

Satisfied employees focus on their work. Such employees are less likely to waste time in thinking about unrelated matters. According to [22] job satisfaction is an outcome of workers' evaluation of the degree to which his individual needs are fulfilled in the given work environment. Similarly, [23] suggested that job satisfaction is an approach which reflects how people like or dislike their job. [24] found that distributive injustice had maximum impact on job satisfaction as compared to procedural and interactional injustice. Present study maintains that individual's job satisfaction declines as they perceive organizational injustice. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H1: Higher the organizational injustice, lower would be the job satisfaction

2) Job satisfaction and counterproductive work behaviors

High level of job satisfaction leads to feelings of enjoyment in employees. [25] also supported this concept that job satisfaction leads to high productivity through high motivation. [25] found that employees who are satisfied by job and organization are less likely to break ethical rules within the organization. He further suggested that individuals who build attachment to job and organization are more likely to abide by the rules set for the employees. [26] identified that the happier the employee the more productive he becomes. Satisfied employees give more attention to their work and improve performance, and do not waste time in thinking about unrelated matters. [27] found that job satisfaction seems to have a negative relation with counterproductive work behaviors. Similarly, [28] studied that counterproductive work behaviors are promoted by individuals with lower job satisfaction. [29] examined the influence of human resource management practices and job satisfaction on counterproductive work behaviors. He found that counterproductive work behaviors affect both

organization and its employee. There are different factors that can be used to reduce this problem such as job satisfaction. Therefore, lack of job satisfaction is found as one of the factors which leads individuals to involve in counterproductive work practices [27]-[29]. On the basis of this discussion, it is hypothesized that

H2: Lower the job satisfaction, higher would be the counterproductive work behavior

3) Conceptual framework

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Participants and Procedure

Field study was conducted in the banks situated in Rawalpindi and Islamabad regions. Participants were approached after taking prior permission from their respective Human Resource department. The personnel were assured that the researchers would not interfere in the daily tasks of the employees and would not take more than 15 to 20 minutes. Out of 350 distributed questionnaires, a total of 320 questionnaires were received back. Questionnaires carrying more than 25% blanks were discarded [30] leaving with 297 responses.

TABLE I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Variables	Percentage
Gender	
Male	59
Female	41
Total	100
Age	
18-25	5.5
26-35	61.0
36-45	33.5
Total	100
Education	
Higher Secondary	8.0
Graduation	16.0
Masters	76.0
Total	100

B. Research Instrument

All items of the instrument were anchored at a five point Likert type scale with (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Job satisfaction scale was measured with 7 items scale developed by [31]. [32] scale consisted of 4 items, and was used to measure organizational injustice. [31] scale consisted of 14 items, and was used to measure counterproductive work behavior.

III. RESULTS

Table I represents the demographic details of the participants. It shows that majority of the participants were male i.e. 59 %. It also shows that majority of the participants i.e. 61% belong to the age bracket of 26-34. 76% participants hold masters degree. Table II shows the descriptive statistics, reliabilities, standardized loadings and correlations for all the three constructs of the present research. Cronbach's alphas coefficients were computed to confirm the inter-item consistency among the items. The reliability of three constructs was found to be acceptable, as the values were greater than 0.60 [60]. This table also represents that all items were significantly loaded on their respective construct.
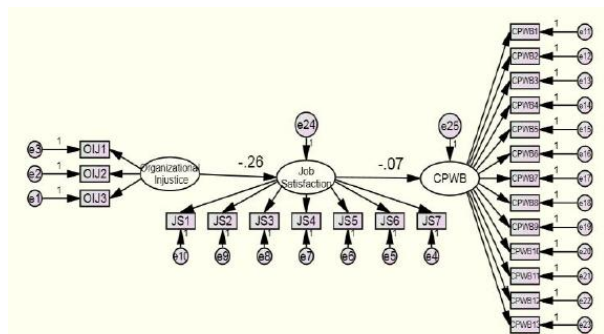

Fig. 2. The graphical output of the structural model revealing path coefficients

Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling [33]. The analysis was carried out in AMOS 18 software. Overall the results reveal good and acceptable fit of the model with $\chi^2/df < 3$, GFI,NFI,TLI>0.90 and RMSEA < 0.80 [33]. Fig. 2 shows the graphical output of the structural model revealing path coefficients (unstandardized estimates).

Table III represents that injustice cause significant negative variation in job satisfaction (-25.2%, standardized estimate) (*H1* supported), whereas, job satisfaction explains significant negative variation in counterproductive work behaviors (-23.1%, standardized estimates) (*H2* supported).

IV. DISCUSSION

Employee is the most important asset of an organization. Employees' action, whether positive or negative have direct affects on organizational performance. Since long, job satisfaction has been identified as an important construct. Therefore, several factors have been identified as predictors of this variable. The present study has emphasized on the role of injustice. There is a lack of empirical research on the relationship between job satisfaction and injustice. The findings of this study suggest that in order to enhance employees' job satisfaction, managers must not let employees have injustice perception. Doing so will ensure the existence of satisfied workforce. Productive workforce provides organizations with a competitive edge in this competitive world. Thus, this is one of the constructive and productive factors for the organization. Previous literature shows that job satisfaction leads to greater employee commitment and this leads to better organizational performance.

This study contributes to the literature for examining the link between injustice and job satisfaction and the link between job satisfaction and counterproductive work behaviors factors. The aim of this study was twofold 1) to examine the impact of organizational injustice on job satisfaction, and 2) to examine the impact of job satisfaction on counterproductive work behavior. The hypothesized role of organizational injustice in decreasing job satisfaction was supported. Satisfaction is determined by difference between what one wants from the job and what one actually receives [2]. This difference arises when employee evaluates that what he is actually getting is not what he expected. The result of this unmatched expectation, results in reduced job satisfaction.

The results also supported the hypothesis that job satisfaction negatively impacts counterproductive work behaviors. [34] studied the role of job satisfaction in employees' reaction to problematic events in the organization. It was found that job satisfaction encourages positive reactions and holds back negative reactions to problematic events. On the contrary, job dissatisfaction results in negative attitudes and behaviors, such as, high turnover, more absenteeism, low commitment, and poor productivity. [29] suggested that job satisfaction may assist to reduce counterproductive work behavior. It has been observed that job satisfaction appears to have a negative relation with counterproductive work behavior at workplace [28]. Dissatisfied employees may find resort in counterproductive work behaviors as healing means of reinstating control over the job [35].

A. Limitations and Suggestions for the Future Research

There is still a sufficient room for the research in the area of counterproductive work behavior. The present study focused on job satisfaction and injustice. The future research may identify a path containing some other factors leading to counterproductive work behavior in our culture. For instance, powerlessness, personality, pay structures, supervision style, and facilitation at work, age, gender and autonomy. In the present study's framework, future research may also include moderators and mediators such as ethics, national culture and organizational structure. Moreover, in this study data were collected from employees working in banks within Rawalpindi and Islamabad regions. Future research should cover other sectors and regions also. Cross sectional design study is another limitation. Moreover, non- probability sampling technique was used. In future other sampling techniques should be employed.

B. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The present research has both theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, this research contributes in the existing body of knowledge related to job satisfaction, organizational injustice and counterproductive work behavior. There is a lack of empirical research on the path leading towards counterproductive work behaviors from injustice through job satisfaction. However, the present study attempted to fill this gap by designing and empirically testing the model showing path beginning from injustice to job satisfaction and further leading to counterproductive work behavior.

TABLE II: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RELIABILITIES, STANDARDIZED LOADINGS, AND CORRELATIONS

Measures	M	SD	Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Factor Loadings	Correlations		
					1	2	3
				$N = 297$			
1. Organizational Injustice	4.23	0.676	0.60				
OIJ1.				0.460^{***}			
OIJ2.				0.452^{***}			
OIJ3.				0.744^{***}			
2. Counterproductive Work Behaviors	3.62	0.457	0.632		0.232^{***}		
CPWB1.				0.430^{***}			
CPWB2.				0.446^{***}			
CPWB3.				0.748^{***}			
CPWB4.				0.535^{***}			
CPWB5.				0.483^{***}			
CPWB6.				0.405^{***}			
CPWB7.				0.468^{***}			
CPWB8.				0.469^{***}			
CPWB9.				0.445^{***}			
CPWB10.				0.488^{***}			
CPWB11.				0.445^{***}			
CPWB12.				0.428^{***}			
CPWB13.				0.475^{***}			
CPWB14.				0.422^{***}			
3. Job Satisfaction	1.84	0.917	0.883		-0.186^{**}	-0.210^{***}	
JS1.				0.726^{***}			
JS2.				0.764^{***}			
JS3.				0.796^{***}			
JS4.				0.724^{***}			
JS5.				0.655^{***}			
JS6.				0.637^{***}			
JS7.				0.750^{***}			

$^{**}p < 0.01, \ ^{***}p < 0.001$

TABLE III: RESULTS OF THE HYPOTHESES

No.	Relationships	Baseline Model *H1 and H2*
1.	Job Satisfaction ← Organizational Injustice	-0.252 ***
2.	Counterproductive Work Behaviors ← Job Satisfaction	-0.231 ***

$^{***}p < 0.001$

In terms of applied significance the study suggests that managers should try to create ethical corporate environment. They must emphasize on building relationships based on open communication, trust and respect. There should be justice based, unitary and cohesive culture around ethical values that communicate the message about the behavior being expected from the employees. The organizational leaders should emphasize on making their workforce satisfied. However, the present study demonstrates that perception of being treated unjustly can lead to decreased job satisfaction, which gives rise to counterproductive work behaviors. Employees replicate what their leaders do. Therefore, managers should demonstrate organizational justice and must exhibit a moral leadership, where managers may voluntarily help their employees to alleviate their sadness and anger. Having the perception of absence of organizational injustice will lead to employee's job satisfaction. In turn, such efforts of managers assist organizations in preventing counterproductive work behaviors. Ethical trainings may be provided to both, managers and employees, so that they become able to take ethical decisions. Managers should try to implement rules and reward systems based upon principles of equity and justice. Having justice perception, employees will be more likely to have a sense of control and lower social isolation feelings. Subsequently, employees will show more positive attitude and behaviors towards organization and managers e.g. job satisfaction. Moreover, background checks should be made while recruiting the employees in order to avoid negative applicants becoming part of the organization.

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