

## Workplace Deviantbehaviour: A Review of Typology of Workplace Deviantbehaviour

*<sup>1</sup>Ili Nabila Norsilan, <sup>1</sup>Zoharah Omar and <sup>2</sup>Aminah Ahmad*

<sup>1</sup>Department of Professional Development and Continuing Education, Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang 43400, Selangor DarulEhsan, Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup>Institute for Social Science Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Putra InfoPort 43400, UPM Serdang, Selangor DarulEhsan, Malaysia

---

**Abstract:** Over the past decade, research and studies on workplace deviantbehaviour such as absenteeism, dishonesty, aggression and stealing among employees have increased along with the increase in the prevalence of deviant behaviour at workplace. Workplace deviant has been labeled with many terms and typologies. Hence, this paper discusses the concept of work place deviant and its typologies. This paper also focuses on the emerging types of deviant behaviour at work such as cyber-related deviant.

**Key words:** Workplace deviant behaviour • Counterproductive behaviour • Workplace incivility • Typology of workplace deviant behaviour.

---

### INTRODUCTION

Workplace deviantbehaviouris crucialfor every organizationto avoid sinceorganizations depend on their human capital in order to achieve effective and efficient work environment [1]. It is estimated that between 33 and 75 percent of all employees have engaged in deviantbehaviours like theft, fraud, vandalism and sabotage[2]. Other than that, the less common but still harmful are behaviours such as lying, spreading rumors, withholding effort and absenteeism. These behaviors are considered to be an antisocial behaviour because it violates workplace norms [3].

**Workplace Deviant Behaviour:** Bennett and Robinson [4] describe workplace deviant as voluntary behaviour that violates organizational norms which either threatens the organization and it members or both. Employee may lack of motivation to comply with organizational norms, rules and regulations or deliberately violate the organizational norms, rules and regulations [4]. Employee deviancehas been categorizedaccording to whether they are directed to individuals or organizations and ranging from minor to

severe [5]. Some of the actions that violate the norms may be classified as minor deviantbehaviour such as favouritism and some may be categorized as serious such as theft and sexual harassment. Diverse terms of workplace deviantbehaviourwere used in the literatures such as antisocial behaviour [6], organizational misbehaviour [7], counterproductive behaviour [8] and incivility behaviour [9]. Interestingly, a study by Blanchard andHenle[10]added cyber loafing as one of production deviantbehaviour.

**Workplace Incivility:** Workplace incivility refers to low intensity, discourteously behaviour or action with ambiguous intention to harm the target in violation of organizational norms [11]. Everton, Jolton and Mastrangelo[12] defined workplace incivility as bad manners and disrespectful behaviours that may happen intentionally or unintentionallyand harm the targets who received such behaviour. This behaviouris said to be of low intensity because both the effort to commit it and the impact is small. However, it is still a deviant action since it deviates from organizational norms and gives harms to targets such as stares someone or addressing someone

with inappropriate names [13]. Research has been identified that targets from this workplace incivility are more likely to be depressed as this also will contribute to other workplace deviant such as absenteeism and doing work wrong intentionally and others [12].

**Counterproductive Behaviour:** Counterproductive behaviour is commonly defined as employee action that violates organizational norms which can harm organizational well-being and its members including the clients, customers, supervisors or co-workers such as sabotage, theft and wasting organizational source [4]. Counterproductive behaviour is well-known to be described as deviant [5], destructive behaviour [14] and anti-social behaviour [15]. These behaviours refer to behaviours that are intentionally committed to harm targets whereas intention does not necessarily translate into such behaviour [16].

**Organizational Misbehaviour:** Researchers defined organization misbehaviour as any employees' behavior committed intentionally which violates the organizational norms and values [7]. It is a self-conscious behaviour which is formally organized such as sabotage, time-wasting and absenteeism [17]. Dysfunctional behaviour is more general in definition. This behaviour can be described as any action that can bring harm to organization, its members, employees, or stakeholders [15]. Without taking the gravity of the dysfunctional behavior into account, dysfunctional behaviour includes minor inappropriateness (smoking, talking loud and tardiness) to major deviant behaviour such as sabotage or violence directed toward organisation or others' individual [18].

**Cyberloafing:** Cyberloafing is a newer form of deviant workplace behavior which includes any activities that involved company internet usage on non-work related activities while working [19]. This cyberloafing activity is time consuming and can reduce productivity such as sending and receiving non-work related emails, online shopping and download movie or music. Many bad effects resulted from cyberloafing such as decreased productivity [20], degraded the company system performance [21], put organization at risk in illegal online activities like download of non-work related materials and creating bad environment through offensive materials and 1 pornographic sites [22]. It is identified as much as 59% internet was used by employees at work for personal reasons and cyberloafing is the most usual activities at

work which can reduce productivity [20, 23]. Examples of cyberloafing includes watching YouTube, checking Facebook, playing video games, online shopping, sending and receiving e-mails from family, visiting entertainment sites, etc. [24, 25, 26]. Clearly, cyberloafing harms organisational well-being by negatively affecting organisational production, resulting from time wasted and employee lack of effort.

Generally, all of these behaviours give impact to an organisation's well-being no matter how small or severe are the behaviours. Although various definitions were used to describe deviant behaviour, researchers agreed that all these behaviours are harmful to organisations and its members [16].

**Typologies of Workplace Deviant Behaviour:** From the various definitions on workplace deviant behavior, researchers have developed typologies of workplace deviant behavior according to two dimensions: 1) according to severity, ranging from minor to severe and 2) according to target which such behaviour gives harm to individual or organisation [27, 28, 29]. This typology of deviant behaviour was early proposed by Mangione and Quine [30] which they divided into two concepts which are property deviant and production deviant [30]. Based on these two concepts, Hollinger and Clark [28] have developed a framework that only takes organization aspect into account without focusing on deviant workplace behavior of interpersonal in nature. Finally, the framework which included interpersonal aspect in two dimensions which are 1) minor vs. serious deviant and 2) interpersonal vs. organizational deviant has been developed by Robinson and Bennett [29]. From these two different dimensions, deviant behaviour can be divided into four different types of deviant. Hence, in the framework, it is suggested that one quadrant is unrelated to another quadrant which consists of production deviant, property deviant, political deviant and personal aggression [29].

**Typology of Deviant Behaviour:** Figure 1 shows the typology of deviant workplace behaviour by Robinson and Bennett [29]. There are four quadrants in the typology which are production deviant, property deviant, political deviant and personal deviant.

**Production Deviance:** The first quadrant of this typology explained about production deviance which include minor behaviour that may affect the organization's productivity

Table 1: Development of Typology of Deviant Behaviour

No	Author	Year	Typology
1	Mangione and Quine	1974	Two concept (focused on Organisational Deviant) 1. Property deviant 2. Production deviant
2	Hollinger and Clark	1982	Focused mainly on Organizational aspect
3	Hollinger	1986	According to severity (minor to severe)
4	Robinson and Bennett	1995	Two dimension 1. Minor vs serious deviant 2. Interpersonal vs organisational deviant Four quadrant - Production deviant - Property deviant - Political deviant - Personal aggression

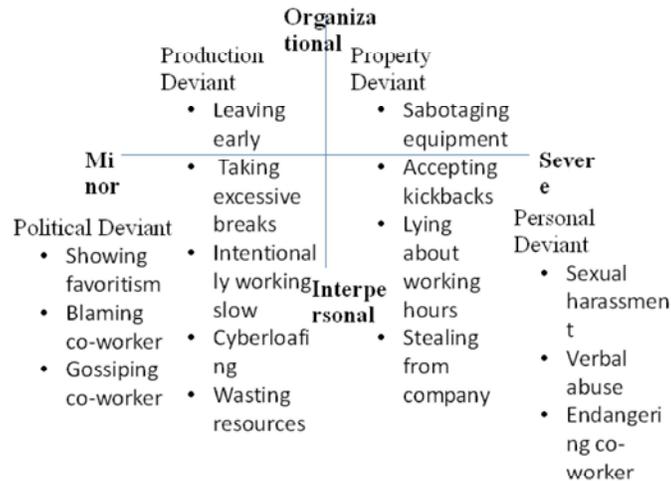


Fig. 1: Typology of Deviant Behaviour by Robinson and Bennett (1995)

level or behaviour that may result in declined level of work done such as come late to work, absenteeism, or wasting resources provided by organization, or less efforts on task given [31]. This behaviour is a result of employee's negative feelings towards their organization [32]. Along with technological advancement used in organization, cyberloafing is also included as one of the production deviance recently studied by researchers [19].

**Property Deviance:** The second quadrant describes about property related deviant behaviour which includes serious behaviour where employee take or damage company tangible property without permission [4]. These extreme behaviours include damaging equipment, sabotaging equipment, stealing and falsify the bills and claim account to get more payment. These types of behaviour have consequences on organization's cost and production [29].

Past study found that 75 percent of employees stole company property at least once and thus employee theft has been considered as an unavoidable cost and problem of doing any business [12].

**Political Deviance:** Political deviance refers to engagement in social interaction that puts other persons at a personal or political disadvantage [4]. Example of these behaviours are favoritism, gossiping on co-workers and competing non-beneficially [28, p.566]. Victims of political deviance are likely to be depressed and this will also contribute to other workplace deviances such as absenteeism and intentionally doing work wrongly [12].

**Personal Aggression:** Personal aggression is violent or hostile acts initiated against other employees. It is a form of behaviour that is aggressive and hostile towards others

such as sexual harassment, rape, or sabotaging and endangering other co-workers [28]. Similar to political aggression, targets of this kind of behaviour are also less satisfied with their job and tend to be depressed more often, hence less committed to their job [12]. United States reported about 300, 000 incidence of workplace violence annually, a large figure considering the possibility of non-reported incidences [33].

### CONCLUSION

Employee deviance comprised of a wide range of behaviour that can be classified by the types of the deviance behavior and the gravity of the deviance. In addition to the conventional forms of employee deviance, recent research have also incorporated a newer form of employee workplace deviance, i.e. cyberloafing. With the advancement and wide use of internet at workplace, this behaviour is much more prevalent nowadays. Cyberloafing has been regarded as the most common ways employees waste time at work [24]. Although internet enables employees to be more productive, it also leads employees to engage into time wasting behaviours[24]. Moreover, cyberloafing is problematic because it often occurs under the pretext of doing actual work which in actual fact the employee is engaging in non-productive activity. Hence studies on employee workplace deviance should include cyberloafing as part of production deviance.

### REFERENCES

1. Ahmed, I., W.K. Ismail, S.M. Amin and M. Ramzan, 2012. A look at social exchange at work: a literature survey approach. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 19: 951-956.
2. Harper, D., "Spotlight abuse-save profits." *Industrial Distribution*, 79(3): 47-51.
3. Fagbohunbe, A., F. Akinbode and Ayodeji, 2012. organizational determinants of workplace deviant behaviours: an empirical analysis in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 7: 5.
4. Bennett, R.J. and S.L. Robinson, 2002. The past, present and future of deviant research. *International Journal Greenberg (Ed.), Organizational Behaviour: The State Of The Science*. New York: Wiley
5. Bennett, R.J. and S.L. Robinson, 2000. Development of a measure of workplace deviant. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85: 349-36.
6. Robinson, S.L. and A.M. O'Leary-Kelly, 1998. Monkey see, monkey do: the influence of work groups on the antisocial behaviour of employees. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41: 658-672.
7. Vardi, Y. and Y. Wiener, 1996. Misbehaviour in organizations: a motivational framework. *Organizational Science*, 7: 151-165.
8. Fox, S. and P.E. Spector, 2005. A Model of Work Frustration-Aggression. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 20: 915-913.
9. Cortina, L.M., V.J. Magley, J.H. Williams and R.D. Langhout, 2001. Incivility in the workplace: Incidence and impact. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 6: 64-80.
10. Blanchard, A.L. and C.A. Henle, 2008. Correlates of different forms of cyberloafing: The role of norms and external locus of control. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 24: 1067-1084.
11. Andersson, L.M. and C.M. Pearson, 1999. Tit-for-tat? The spiraling effect of incivility in the workplace. *Academy of Management Review*, 24: 452-471.
12. Everton, W.J., J.A. Jolton and P.M. Mastrangelo, 2005. Be nice and fair or else: understanding reasons for employees' deviant behaviours", *Journal of Management Development*, 26(2): 117-131.
13. Iannacchione, B., M. Hudson, M.K. Stohr, C. Hemmens, J. Thayer and K. Brady, 2014. Ethics in a mountain country jail. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 1: 20.
14. Murphy, K.R., 1993. *Honesty in the Workplace*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks and Cole Publication Co.
15. Giacalone, R.A. and J. Greenberg, 1997. *Antisocial behaviour in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
16. Penny, M. and E. Spector, 2005. Job stress, incivility and counterproductive work behaviour (CWB): the moderating role of negative affectivity. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 26: 777-796.
17. Richards, J., 2008. The many approaches to organisational misbehaviour: a review, map and research agenda', *Employee Relations*, 30(6): 653-78.
18. Fleet D.V. and R.W. Griffin, 2006. Dysfunctional organizational culture: the role of leadership in motivating dysfunctional work behaviours. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, pp: 21-24.
19. Lim, V.K.G., 2002. The IT way of loafing on the job: Cyberloafing, neutralizing and organizational justice. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 23: 675-694.

20. Malachowski, D., 2005. Wasted time at work costing companies billions. San Francisco Chronicle.
21. Sipior, J.C. and B.T. Ward, 2002. A strategic response to the broad spectrum of internet abuse. *Information Systems Management*, 19: 71-79.
22. Lichtash, A.E., 2004. Inappropriate use of e-mail and the Internet in the workplace: The arbitration picture. *Dispute Resolution Journal*, 59: 26-36.
23. Mark Griffiths, 2010. Internet abuse and internet addiction in the workplace. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 22(7): 463 - 472.
24. Askew, K., J.E. Buckner, M.U. Taing, A. Ilie, J.A. Bauer and M.D. Coovert, 2014. Explaining cyberloafing: The role of the theory of planned behavior. *Computers in Human Behavior*.
25. Liberman, B., G. Seidman, K.Y.A. McKenna and L.E. Buffardi, 2011. Employee job attitudes and organizational characteristics as predictors of cyberloafing. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27(6): 2192-2199.
26. Kidwell, R.E., 2010. Loafing in the 21st century: Enhanced opportunities—and remedies—for withholding job effort in the new workplace. *Business Horizons*, 53(6): 543-552.
27. Hollinger, R.C., 1986. Acts against the workplace: Social bonding and employee deviance. *Deviant Behavior*, 7: 53-75.
28. Hollinger, R.C. and J.P. Clark, 1982. Formal and informal social controls of employee deviance. *Sociological Quarterly*, 23: 333-343.
29. Robinson, S.L. and R.J. Bennett, 1995. A typology of deviant workplace behaviors: A multidimensional scaling study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38: 555-572.
30. Mangione, T.W. and R.P. Quine, 1975. Job satisfaction, counterproductive behavior and drug use at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60: 114-116.
31. Shahzad, A. and Z. Mahmood, 2012. The mediating - moderating model of organizational cynicism and workplace deviant behavior: (Evidence from banking sector in Pakistan). *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 12(5): 580-588.
32. Kidwell Roland, E. and Christopher L. Martin, 2005. The prevalence (and ambiguity) of deviant behavior at work. *Managing Organizational Deviance*, pp: 1-21.
33. Magyar, S.V., Jr, 2003. Focus on training, education and software. *Occupational Health and Safety*, 72: 64-68.