Role of Emotionality and Authoritarianism in Unethical Behaviors and Their Effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Case of Fars Gas Company, Iran

Hossein Safarzadeh, Azam Tadayon, Najmeh Jalalyan, Yashar Salamzadeh and Mohammadreza Daraei

Abstract: Emotionality and authoritarianism have received particular attention in the past decade. However, few studies have been conducted on the common effects of emotion and authority on the volitional behavior of individuals (organizational citizenship, counterproductive behaviors and unethical behaviors) in an organization. The present paper adopts Levine's model to examine the role of emotionality and a tendency toward authoritarianism in individuals on organizational citizenship and their relationship with unethical behavior. Measurement of variables was performed using four different questionnaires and the collected data were analyzed through structural equation modeling using LISREL. The causal relationship between the two independent variables of emotionality and authoritarianism and also the significant effect of emotionality and authoritarianism on unethical behaviors were supported. In addition, a negative relationship was found between these variables and organizational citizenship.

Key words: Authoritarianism • Emotionality • Unethical behaviors • Organizational citizenship behavior

INTRODUCTION

A retrospective study of the bankruptcy of the reputable Arthur Anderson Accounting firm clearly shows the disastrous and counterproductive behaviors which were illegal and ethically questionable. These actions, both at individual level and company-wide, led to the bankruptcy of the company, billion dollars of financial losses and loss of jobs for hundreds of employees and investors [1]. A closer look at this example and many other similar cases is indicative of the role of unethical behaviors in success or failure of an organization. Workplace-related issues have gained considerable attention and growth in past years. With the rapid growth of communication networks, the need for creativity is ineluctable. Individuals' judgments about right and wrong issues are as important as their performance in the production and exchange of information. This judgment is influenced by several parameters which can be enumerated as below according to Naude's view:

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Sackett and Devore assert that the harms ensued by unethical behaviors affect both the members of an organization and the organization itself. Such unethical behaviors may include infringement of power, shrewdness of rivals in robbery, presenting fraud in business transactions, hiring individuals to serve the organization against their will, exploiting resources without paying fair reward, marketing defective products and the like [4]. Numerous studies have been conducted on personal characteristics and ethical behaviors in organizations. In some other studies, researchers examined the relationship between ethical beliefs and personal characteristics and found that high-risk aggressive, independent and innovative individuals are less bound by ethical standards and problem solver individuals are more ethical [3, 6].

Influential Factors
Emotion and Emotionality: Emotion is the broadest term denoting a series of events that include mental excitement and moods and is defined as a sophisticated state of an individual or social system which includes a group of different and inter-related constituents such as sensations accompanied by experience, expression of feelings through verbal and nonverbal signals, physiological moods, perception, performance techniques and behaviors [7].

The term emotion derives from the Latin root emovere meaning movement, stimulations and tension. In the quotidain language, emotion is synonymous with the outset of passive feeling and affection. Emotion is a complex psychological phenomenon which includes three components of mental experience, emotional response and explicit behavior resultant from that experience [8].

Lazarus believes that emotion as a complex response emanates from the evaluation of the interactions between the self and the environment which result from the emotional states, direction of attention, facial expression, practical orientation and behavior [1].

According to Izard, emotion is a reaction that includes the interaction between cognitive, physiological, communicative and performance variables and enables the individual to adapt with the opportunities and challenges encountered with in significant life events [9].

As we can see in different studies, there have been numerous managers who have recognized the power of emotions in the organization and seek their benefits for their organization. In fact, managers who understand the role of emotions have a higher ability in explaining and predicting individuals’ behaviors. In general, if emotions are not recognized, performance will be seriously impeded.

Each emotion includes perceptions, actions and feelings and each individual can show a different emotional reaction in a similar situation compared to another individual [10].

Emotionality can be regarded as the extent to which one is emotionally flexible and resilient to events which are partially innate and genetic and partially gained through personal experience and epistemology [11]. Emotionality has received special attention in organizational research and its effect on different organization constructs has been supported. As a matter of fact, Judge found a close relationship between emotionality and variables such as social support, emotional burnout, personality degradation and mental pressure [12]. Witt et al. also found emotionality to be an important predictor of organizational commitment in employees [13].

Aspects of Emotionality
Emotionality Has Two Aspects: 1. Positive Aspect (PA) and 2. Negative Aspect (NA).

NA emotionality is a personal characteristic that leads individuals to a series of negative and passive reactions closely related with stress [14]. PA emotionality, which was expanded on the NA emotionally, expresses a more optimistic interpretation of phenomena in that the individual shows positive reactions to the phenomena [15]. In a study, Gaudin and Thorn examined the effect of emotion on individual ethical decisions and found out that emotional state influences individuals' attitudes to ethical issues and individual's interpretation and judgment grows along emotional improvement and results in the promotion of ethical decisions [16]. In another study, Naquin and Holton examined the relationship between emotionality, personal characteristics and commitment (including professional ethics, emotional commitment and participation) and motivation and found that positive emotionality, commitment and extroversion explained 57% of the variance of motivation [17].

Authoritarianism: The term authoritarianism was first put forth by Adorno et al. in their book The Authoritarian Personality (TAP) and was characterized by nine behavior categories: adherence to traditions, delegation of authoritarianism, despotic violence, superstitions and clichés, power and domineering, destructiveness and cynicism, aggressiveness and prominence [18].
The American Heritage Dictionary defines authoritarianism as a personality model which reflects a need for security, power and status in addition to a tendency to structuring the lines of authority, a set of values and attitudes, demand for unquestionable obedience and a tendency for hostility toward individuals and using the minorities or non-traditional groups as scapegoats.

In defining authority, one may say that authority is the probability that an individual in a social relationship lies in a situation that imposes their will against resistance [19].

Robbins believes that the major personal characteristics of individuals influencing an organization include locus of power, authoritarianism, self-esteem and adaptation with the environment. The authoritative personality was first put forth in social dominance theory in which individual differences in social dominance is the main variable [20].

The authoritative personality does not receive orders and rather gives order. Individuals characterized with this type of personality seek security, adaptation and stability. When facing with disturbing events already envisioned in their worldview, they feel anxious and insecure. These individuals are fanatically resistant to divergence from their adherence, such as religion, race, nationality, culture and language [18].

In a study, Lowe et al. found that authoritative behaviors in physicians have cultivated improper behaviors in them [21].

Individuals with a high degree of authoritarianism see domination and infringement as major source of survival for man [22].

Organizational Citizenship: Organizational citizenship behavior is an important sociological dimension. Organ was first to introduce the concept of organizational citizenship [23]. He asserts that organizational citizenship behavior is characterized by a completely voluntarily behavior which the reward system cannot explicitly or implicitly identify yet it enhances effective performance in an organization. Organ recognizes organizational citizenship behavior as an individual behavior which forms by insight rather than directed or elaborated by the formal reward system [21].

In organizational citizenship behavior, those behaviors are most addressed that although non-obligatory they bring many benefits for the organization. Graham uses his theoretical view based on political philosophy and modern political studies to group citizenship behaviors into three types [25]:

Obedience: Obedience describes employees' willingness to follow organizational rules, regulations and procedures.

Loyalty: This behavior describes employees' willingness to sacrifice personal interests for organizational interests and support of the organization.

Participation: Employees' willingness to be involved in all aspects of organizational life is described by participation which is three types:

Social participation describes the active involvement of employees in organizational affairs and social activities in the organization (e.g. attendance in optional meetings and respecting and accompanying organizational issues).

Supportive participation describes employees' willingness to participate in controversial debates to enhance their organization through comments, innovation and motivating other employees to express their ideas freely.

Practical (task) participation describes employees' participation in tasks beyond the required standards (e.g. accepting overtime assignments to finish more important projects).

Studies on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) show that it is a multi-aspect concept. For instance, Organ applied five components for organizational citizenship behavior: altruism, responsibility (professional conscience), citizenship behavior, sportsmanship and respect [24]. In another scale, Graham presents a four-component scale which includes inter-personal help (helping colleagues in their work when they need it), individual initiative (establishing a relationship with others in the workplace to improve individual and group performance), individual effort (performing tasks beyond the given responsibility) and supporting loyalty and honesty (promoting external image of the organization) [26].

Numerous studies show that performance can be predicted through personality traits [27]. In addition, Organ discusses the role of personality differences in organizational citizenship behavior [28]. In another study, Elanain supports the relationship between personality and OCB and asserts that conscientiousness, being open to presenting experiences and emotional stability in individuals are the main factors in predicting OCB [29].

Moreover, numerous studies on organizational citizenship behavior have shown that ethical behaviors in an organization can be promoted through organizational citizenship.
In their study entitled "Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Employees and Superintendents", Zellars et al. asserted that a negative relationship exists between organizational citizenship behavior in subordinates and a derogatory treatment of superintendents in the National Air Force of the U.S. Army. In addition, they found a higher level of organizational citizenship behavior among the superintendents than the subordinate employees [30].

In the present paper, we build our attempt upon previous studies, including Levine's causal analysis of the effect of emotion and authority on counterproductive behaviors and organizational behaviors, to examine the effect of emotionality and authoritarianism on a tendency to unethical behaviors and their effects on organizational citizenship. The study principally assumes a causal reciprocal relationship to exist between these variables.

**Research Hypotheses:**
- There is a significant relationship between authoritarianism and emotionality in individuals.
- There is a significant relationship between authoritarianism and organizational citizenship behavior.
- There is a significant relationship between emotionality and unethical behaviors in individuals.
- There is a significant relationship between emotionality and organizational citizenship behavior.
- There is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and a tendency to unethical behaviors in the organization.

The present research is based on the above hypotheses and Levine's model.

**Research Method:** The present study is an applied research performed via descriptive-survey data collection method. The population included the management staff at Fars Gas Company (Shiraz, Iran). The National Iranian Gas Company includes three departments of refineries, gas transmission lines and gas distribution administration. The gas distribution administration decompresses the high pressure transmitted gas for home and factory use. The employees at this department include skilled workers, technicians and specialists whose tasks include maintenance and development, contributing to local economy. Fars Gas Company uses participatory and reward systems to earn employee and customer satisfaction. The population size at this company was 420. Following Krejcie and Morgan, a sample size of 201 was calculated for this size of population. However, a conservative size of 220 members was selected and queried through questionnaires of which 210 were returned.

Four different questionnaires were used to test the assumed hypotheses. Zackerman's Emotionality Scale was used to measure individuals' emotionality. This questionnaire includes 14 items and correlates highly with Arnett's emotionality scale.
Christie and Joyce's questionnaire was used to measure authoritarianism. The responses are measured on a five-point Likert's scale.

Unethical behavior was measured using Luzir's scale which included 15 items. Padsakov et al's scale was utilized to measure organizational citizenship behavior using 22 items [31].

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure the individual and overall reliability coefficients of the questionnaires. As Table 1 below shows, all questionnaires had an acceptable reliability coefficient.

LISREL was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to attest the construct validity in the questionnaires. This software was also used to perform Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the data.

**RESULTS**

In order to study the effect of emotionality and authoritarianism on the tendency to unethical behaviors and their relationship with organizational citizenship behavior, the relationship between the variables was directly examined. Figure 1 below shows the final model for the mentioned relationships.

The employees at this department include skilled workers, technicians and specialists whose tasks include maintenance and development, contributing to local economy. Fars Gas Company uses participatory and reward systems to earn employee and customer satisfaction. The population size at this company was 420. Following Krejcie and Morgan, a sample size of 201 was calculated for this size of population. However, a conservative size of 220 members was selected and queried through questionnaires of which 210 were returned.

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The $t$ values corresponding to the standardized values in the path model show that at 99% confidence level, organizational citizenship behavior ($Z_4$) has a negative correlation with emotionality ($t = -2.56, p<.01$) and at 95% confidence, unethical behavior ($Z_1$) has a direct relationship with emotionality ($Z_2$) ($t = 2.45, p<.05$).

In addition, the $t$ values corresponding to the standardized values show that at 99% confidence level, emotionality ($Z_2$) ($t = 10.50, p<.01$) and unethical behavior ($Z_1$) ($t = 8.95, p<.01$) have a direct relationship with...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotionality</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unethical behavior</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational citizenship</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.727</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 1: Modeling the relationship between emotionality, authoritarianism, organizational citizenship behavior and unethical behaviors.

Table 2: Coefficients of variables in the SEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables direct relationships</th>
<th>Estimated</th>
<th>Standardized</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Significant?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotionality (Z2)</td>
<td>Organizational citizenship (Z4)</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>-2.56</td>
<td>P&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unethical behavior (Z1)</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>P&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism (Z3)</td>
<td>Emotionality (Z2)</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>P&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational citizenship (Z4)</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>-4.67</td>
<td>P&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unethical behavior (Z1)</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>8.95</td>
<td>P&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational citizenship (Z4)</td>
<td>Unethical behavior (Z1)</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>-3.66</td>
<td>P&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Fitness of path analysis model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Acceptable range</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>χ²/df</td>
<td>.976</td>
<td>df&lt;2</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>.43108</td>
<td>p&gt;.05</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>RMSEA&lt;.09</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>GFI&gt;9</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGFI</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>AGFI&gt;-.85</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>NFI&gt;-.90</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>CFI&gt;-.90</td>
<td>Model confirmed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, at 95% confidence level, organizational citizenship behavior (Z4) has a negative correlation with authoritarianism (t = -4.67, p<.01). Moreover, at 95% confidence level, unethical behavior (Z1) has a negative correlation with organizational citizenship behavior (Z4) (t = -3.66, p<.01) (Table 2).

Table 3 below exhibits the measures related to path analysis model’s fitness, which all are at an acceptable level.

**Hypothesis Testing:** As statistical results indicate, there is a direct relationship between emotionality and authoritarianism in individuals and there is also a direct relationship between these two variables and the tendency toward unethical behaviors. The results also show that there is a direct negative relationship between organizational citizenship and a tendency to unethical relationships. As the results indicate, there is a significant positive relationship between emotionality and a tendency toward unethical behaviors. In other words, individuals with a high level of emotionality are more prone to unethical behaviors. This finding is in line with those of Zuckerman [32] and Chandra [33], who studied the relationship between drug addiction, unethical behaviors and emotionality). Because of the capriciousness, adventurousness and risk-taking disposition of emotional individuals they are more susceptible to unreasonable ways of gaining emotion.
including unethical behaviors. In addition, the results of the present study show that there is a significant direct relationship between authoritarianism in individuals and their tendency toward unethical behaviors. That is one may claim that highly authoritative individuals are more prone to unethical behaviors. This claim is in line with the findings of Lowe et al. [21] who studied on physicians and those of Laguna et al. [34] who studied police officers. There is a causal relationship between emotionality and authoritarianism in individuals in that highly emotional individuals have a high desire for authoritative behavior as well.

There is negative relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and emotionality, authoritarianism and a tendency toward unethical behaviors. Since an organizational citizenship behavior increases performance efficiency in the organization and includes components such as altruism, sportsmanship, sacrifice of personal interests for the interests of the organization, this negative relationship is justified.

Therefore, organization managers should pay attention to individual characteristics in the organization and by realizing the role of emotionality and authoritarianism in individuals improve the predictability of behaviors and reap its benefits.

REFERENCES