

POLITICS, JUSTICE, STRESS, AND DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR IN ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Aizzat Mohd. Nasurdin*
Universiti Sains Malaysia

Noor Hazlina Ahmad
Universiti Sains Malaysia

Amin Arwani Razalli
First Solar (M) Sdn. Bhd.

ABSTRACT

The paper aims to test a proposed model linking organizational politics and organizational justice (distributive justice and procedural justice) indirectly with deviant behaviour through stress. Data was gathered using self-administered questionnaires from a sample of 279 production employees within the electronics industry of Malaysia. Our confirmatory factor analysis results illustrate that deviant behavior is a unidimensional construct in the context of Malaysia. In addition, structural equation modeling procedure used in our model testing indicates that both organizational politics and organizational justice (distributive and procedural) affect deviant behaviour via the mediating role of stress. Our results suggest the need for organizations to have clearly-defined policies and procedures in allocating work outcomes, treat employees in a fair manner, and encourage employee participation. Although some limitations have been acknowledged, the value of this study lies in its contribution in providing validation evidence of the applicability of research findings abroad to non-Western nations. In conclusion, our proposed model was supported whereby environmental elements (organizational politics and organizational justice) were found to affect an individual's behavioural response (organizational deviance) through his/her internal affective state (stress).

Keywords: Politics; Justice; Stress; Deviant Behavior; Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen a proliferation of interest among researchers and practitioners in workplace deviance, such as incivility, aggression, sabotage, and theft. Accumulating evidence show that work-related misbehaviours have become pervasive and costly to both the organizations and individuals. According to Harper (1990), 33 to 75 percent of employees

* Corresponding Author: School of Management, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Penang, Malaysia. Tel: 6-04-6532548; E-mail: aizzat@usm.my

in the United States have engaged in some form of theft, fraud, embezzlement, vandalism, sabotage, and unexcused absenteeism. Furthermore, incidences of negative workplace deviance are now soaring out of control, in nearly 95% of all organizations (Appelbaum et al, 2007; Henle et al, 2005). Another study estimated that more than 2 million people were physically attacked at work, about 6 million workers were threatened, and approximately 16 million were harassed (Northwestern National Life Insurance Company, 1993). In terms of costs, Murphy (1993) noted that employee deviance and delinquency accounted for between US\$6 billion to US\$200 billion of organizational loss annually. Besides, it has been estimated that three-quarters of employees steal at least once from their employer and the financial costs associated with it have been estimated at US\$50 billion per year (Coffin, 2003). In the United States, retailers lose US\$15.1 billion per year in internal theft, and the rate of such theft is increasing each year (Muafi, 2011). Appelbaum et al, (2007) recently reported that three out of every four employees in the United States have stolen at least once from their employers. Research also indicates the detrimental effects of deviant acts on organizational members. For instance, victims of interpersonal workplace deviance are more likely to suffer from stress-related problems, reduced productivity, low morale, lost work time, and high turnover (O'Leary-Kelly et al, 1996), damaged self-esteem, increased fear and insecurity at work, and psychological and physical pain (Henle et al, 2005).

Although the amount of research in this field has increased substantially over the last decade, a majority of the empirical work is based on Western settings. In most cases, these studies have been devoted to examining an array of antecedents of deviant behaviour (Fagbohunge et al, 2012; Muafi, 2011; Appelbaum et al, 2007; Marcus et al, 2004; Vigoda, 2002; Peterson, 2002; Vardi, 2001; Bennett et al, 2000; Aseltine et al, 2000; Aquino et al, 1999). These factors include life stress (Ferguson et al, 2012; Aseltine et al., 2000), perceptions of the work situation (Colbert et al, 2004; Peterson, 2002; Vigoda, 2002; Vardi, 2001; Bennett et al, 2000; Aquino et al., 1999), dissatisfaction (Muafi, 2011; Marcus et al, 2004), and personality traits (Farhadi et al, 2012; O'Neill et al, 2011; Colbert et al, 2004; Bennett et al, 2000; Aquino et al, 1999). Despite the fact that employee deviance is detrimental to organizational efficacy and the issue of misbehaviours at work has been given a lot of attention in the media, published studies pertaining to this subject within the context of Malaysia has been sparse (Moorthy et al, 2011; Ahmad et al, 2008; Shamsudin, 2003). Hence, there is a need for further research in this area. Besides, the use of an Asian sample, specifically Malaysian, would provide validation evidence of the applicability of research findings abroad to non-Western nations.

As employees confront scarce resources in an increasingly competitive environment, organizational politics is bound to be rife. Although most people would agree that organizational politics is a reality of organizational life, Vigoda (2002) noted that knowledge on its aftermaths is still at its infancy. Hence, recognizing and understanding the impact of employees' perceptions of organizational politics on workplace deviance is of importance to organizations. Unfairness perceptions too play a key role in fostering deviant behaviour (de Lara et al, 2007). In contrast, greater perceptions of justice should be associated with less frequent acts of deviance (Aquino et al, 1999). A review of the literature on stress (Mujtaba et al, 2010; Crampton et al, 1995; Clarke, 1988; Kyriacou, 1987; Baum et al, 1981; Janis et al, 1977) indicates that stress is basically an internal state experienced by an individual in response to environmental elements that is perceived to be threatening. Since a political work setting increases risks because

efforts exerted by the individual may not guarantee tangible benefits, the individual is likely to feel stressful (Cropanzano et al, 1997). In contrast, as argued by Cropanzano et al, (1997), when the individual's judged his/her work environment to be fair, he/she should experience lower stress. Given that stress results in physical, psychological, and behavioral responses (Crampton et al, 1995), we anticipate that the effects of organizational politics and organizational justice on deviant behaviour would be indirect through stress. Against this backdrop, our aim is to test this proposed model within the Malaysian context.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. *Deviant Behaviour*

Workplace deviance as a research subject has received a great deal of interest in recent years. Deviant behaviour (DB) has been defined as an individual's voluntary behaviour that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both (Robinson et al, 1995). Examples of deviant behaviour include withholding effort, stealing company property, acting rudely to coworkers, abusing drugs and alcohol, taking long breaks, and others (Bolin et al, 2001). Robinson et al, (1995) initially identified four different yet related types of deviance namely production deviance, property deviance, political deviance, and personal aggression. Subsequently, even though there are different manifestations of deviant behaviours, Bennett et al, (2000) argued that these behaviours can be distinguished in terms of their targets. Typically, there are two primary types of workplace deviance. Interpersonal deviance (ID) is targeted at members of the organization and includes behaviours such as saying something hateful or making fun of someone at work. Organizational deviance (OD), on the other hand, is directed at the organization and includes actions such as taking property from work without permission and discussing confidential information with outsiders.

2.2. *Organizational politics and deviant behavior*

Organizational politics (OP) has been defined in a variety of ways. Ferris et al, (1989) viewed organizational politics as social influence behaviours that are strategically designed to maximize one's self-interest. Ferris et al, (1992) treated politics as unsanctioned influence attempts that seek to promote self-interest at the expense of organizational goals. By combining various perspectives, Cropanzano et al, (1995) defined organizational politics as social influence acts directed at those who can provide rewards that will help promote or protect the self-interests of the actor. Kacmar et al, (1999) further refined the definition of organizational politics by viewing the construct as actions taken by the individuals that are directed toward the goal of furthering their own self-interests without regard for the well-being of others within the organization. According to Kacmar et al, (1991), organizational politics cover three main domains: (1) general political behaviour, which includes the behaviours of individuals who act in a self-serving manner to obtain valued outcomes, (2) go along to get ahead, which consists of a lack of action by individuals in order to secure valued outcomes, and (3) pay and promotion policies, which involves the organization behaving politically through the policies it enacts. Since behaviour is based on one's perception of reality rather than the objective measure of reality itself (Lewin, 1936), the subjective determination of whether an

organizational environment is political will ultimately affect an individual's behaviour. Hence, determining how pervasive politics are in an organization through the eyes of the employees is warranted.

According to Poon (2004), in a highly political organization, an employee's rewards, career progress, and even well-being may be put at risk by other influential members seeking to safeguard their own interests. Instead, rewards may be tied to relationships, power, and other less objective elements (Zivnuska et al, 2004). Likewise Cropanzano et al, (1997) argued that as the setting becomes more political, people are more likely to adopt a competitive and self-serving style of behaviour whereby they may band together to fulfill their aspirations without regards for the needs of others. In such uncertain work situations, an employee cannot be certain that his or her personal effort will be recognized, resulting in feelings of inequity (Kacmar et al, 1991) or a sense of violation of the "social contract" (Cropanzano et al, 1997). In order to restore equity (Adams, 1965), employees are likely to reciprocate by engaging in various forms of deviance including theft, interpersonal aggression, vandalism, and work slowdown (Rousseau, 1995). Vigoda (2002) provided empirical support for the direct positive influence of organizational politics on employees' aggressive behaviour.

2.3. *Organizational justice and deviant behavior*

Organizational justice in most cases encompassed distributive justice and procedural justice (Demir, 2011; El Akremi et al, 2010; Begley et al, 2002). Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of the amounts of outcomes employees receive (Greenberg, 1990a). Procedural justice, on the other hand, reflects a person's judgments about the fairness of the process of making outcome allocations decisions (Greenberg, 1990a). A more specific definition was forwarded by Moorman (1991) whereby procedural justice reflects the extent to which an individual perceive that outcome allocation decisions have been fairly made according to the organization's formal procedures and from the treatment given by the organization's authorities in implementing those procedures. This latter aspect of justice is also known as interactional justice.

As previously stated, distributive justice is concerned with the individual's perception about the fairness of outcomes obtained. Generally, the relationship between distributive justice and deviant behaviour may be attributed to equity theory (Adams, 1965). According to Adams (1965), beliefs of injustice associated with outcomes will evoke one's feelings of dissatisfaction and resentment. These unpleasant emotions will motivate the aggrieved individual to restore equity by altering their behaviours, attitudes, or both (Greenberg, 1990a). For instance, under underpayment conditions, employees may react by modifying behaviour such as becoming less productive or change the system by requesting for additional pay. However, in situations where the individual believes that he or she cannot alter the system, one option is to inflict punishment upon the parties held responsible for violating their sense of justice (Greenberg, 1990a). According to Dalal (2005), employees retaliate against unjust work outcomes by engaging in behaviour that harms the organization and/or other employees. Empirical support of this idea can be found in some studies (Ambrose et al, 2002; Skarlicki et al, 1999; Aquino et al, 1999; Greenberg, 1990b).

Procedural justice, on the other hand, concerns an individual's perception about the fairness of formal procedures governing outcome decisions and the quality of interpersonal treatment received during the execution of a procedure (Masterson et al, 2000). Several studies have shown that the means or process by which outcomes are arrived at may be as important to employees as the outcomes themselves (Demir, 2011; Pillai et al, 1999; Tyler et al, 1996; Folger et al, 1989; Greenberg, 1986). Therefore, it is highly likely that procedural justice may have a significant influence on employees' behaviours such as workplace deviance. There are two distinct sets of concerns associated with procedural justice (Lind et al, 1988). The first concern is known as the instrumental component, which reflects the types of formal procedures used to determine outcome allocation decisions. The utilization of fair procedures not only provides employees control over the outcomes they will get but help ensure that the outcomes received are fair. In an organization, the absence of fair decision-making procedures will be bound to jeopardize employees' fair distribution of rewards, leading to negative emotions such as feelings of dissatisfaction. As argued by Aquino et al, (1999), when employees are dissatisfied with the fairness of procedures used, they are more likely to violate organizational norms and commit acts of deviance. The second concern is labeled as the noninstrumental (or relational) component, which relates to the interpersonal treatment given by organizational authorities. Bies et al, (1986) referred to this particular concern as interactional justice. According to the "group-value" model (Lind et al, 1988), fair treatment received from decision-makers implies that the individual is a respected, valued, and worthy member of the organization. These feelings of respect, worth, and favorable social standing experienced by employees may stimulate them to reciprocate by engaging in positive attitudes and behaviours. Conversely, perceptions of interactional injustice will evoke feelings of dissatisfaction and resentment. In such situations, the aggrieved employees are more likely to retaliate by violating organizational norms and commit acts of deviance at the workplace. Past scholars (Forret et al, 2008; Henle, 2005; Chory-Assad, 2002; Fox et al, 2001; Greenberg et al, 1999; Skarlicki et al, 1999) have provided empirical evidence regarding the impact of procedural justice on deviant behaviours.

2.4. Stress

Specific definitions of stress vary among researchers. For instance, Janis et al, (1977) defined stress as an unpleasant emotional state evoked by threat. According to Baum et al, (1981), stress is a process in which environmental events or forces, termed as stressors, threaten an organism's existence and well-being. Stress reflects a response syndrome of negative affects which are developed when there are prolonged and increased pressures that cannot be controlled by an individual's coping strategies (Kyriacou, 1987). Clarke (1988) considers stress as an internal state or reaction to anything that an individual consciously or unconsciously perceive as a threat, either real or imagined. Mujtaba et al, (2010) defined stress as a response or a stimulus to any type of stressor. A common thread among these definitions is that stress is an internal state that results from one's transaction with the environment, and this transaction requires the person's utilization of coping resources. Stress can result in physical, psychological, and behavioral responses (Crampton et al, 1995).

2.5. Organizational politics and stress

Organizational politics have long been thought to function as a work-related stressor (Mufti et al, 2012; Vigoda et al, 2010; Vigoda, 2002). Cropanzano et al. (1997) provided three considerations as to why a political organization makes for a risky investment, which will create a sense of anxiety or tension, resulting in stress. First, in a political workplace, individuals attain rewards by competition and amassing power. However, not all organizational members have the ability to do so, thereby, they will have problems fulfilling their dreams and aspirations. To the extent that aspirations go unfulfilled, they are more prone to experience stress and dissatisfaction, which in turn, can lead to a number of negative consequences including deviant behaviour. Second, a political workplace is more volatile and less predictable. Since rewards are allocated based on power, rules are bound to continually change. This sense of uncertainty causes individuals become less confident that their efforts will result in beneficial returns, triggering their stress levels. Third, a political work environment is more threatening since different players may be actively trying to destruct or harm one another in their bid to achieve their goals. Under such circumstances, not only goals are less likely to be accomplished, but organizational members may be at risk of losing the benefits that they have already enjoyed. Since stress reflects an individual's physiological and psychological reaction when he or she meet threats or challenges that creates pressure (Arasli et al, 2008; Clark et al, 1991), a political workplace should induce stress.

2.6. Organizational justice (distributive justice and procedural justice) and stress.

There has been substantial amount of research that supports the claim that perceived injustice in organizational settings leads to undesirable consequences (Sulu et al, 2010; Gholipour et al, 2009; Colquitt et al, 2001; Cohen-Charash et al, 2001). In particular, organizational injustice may serve to trigger stress (Gholipour et al, 2009; Francis et al, 2005; Fox et al, 2001). As previously mentioned, organizational justice generally comprised distributive justice and procedural justice. Distributive justice concerns beliefs about fairness of outcomes received as a result of an allocation decision (Chory-Assad, 2002) whereas procedural justice involves beliefs about fairness of the procedures used in making these allocation decisions (Cropanzano et al, 1997) as well as the quality of interpersonal treatment a person receives from a decision maker or authority during the enactment of organizational procedures (Greenberg, 1990a). Nevertheless, the effects of these two forms of justice on psychological strain have revealed mixed results.

According to Kivimaki et al, (2008) perceptions of injustice will create effort-reward imbalance leading to stress since unfair distribution of rewards and unfair reward decision processes violates core expectations about reciprocity and exchange at work. Research interest in the linkage between injustice and strain has been on the rise. Distributive and procedural justice have all been found to be related to reports of strain (for example, Lambert et al, 2007; Francis et al, 2005; Wager et al, 2003; Elovainio et al, 2002; Fox et al., 2001; Tepper, 2001; Zohar, 1995). In their study, Wager et al, (2003) reported negative changes in blood pressure, a manifestation of physiological strain among a sample of health-care workers when they were working under a leader perceived to be unfair as opposed to the same individuals who completed a shift with a leader whom they perceived as fair. Likewise, Elovainio et al, (2002)

demonstrated positive relationships between both procedural and interactional injustice and higher levels of psychological strain, higher illness-related work absences, and lower self-reported health status. Tepper (2001) found that perceptions of distributive and procedural injustice were related to elevated levels of psychological strain symptoms including depression, emotional exhaustion, and anxiety. Fox et al, (2001) discovered that perceptions of procedural and distributive unfairness were associated with increased reports of negative emotion. Zohar (1995) illustrated the role of injustice in eliciting role strain.

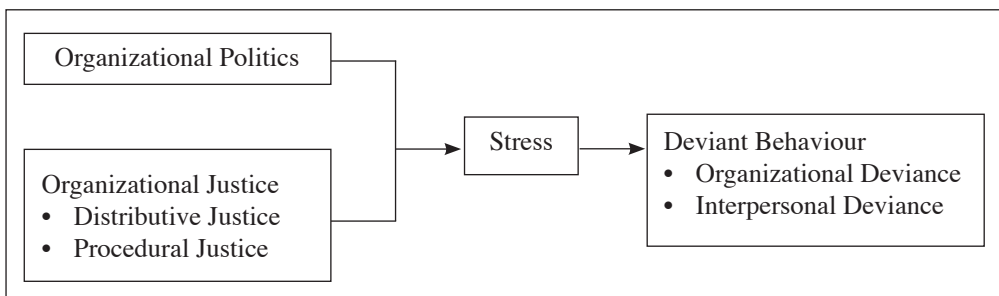
2.7. Stress and deviant behavior

Drawing of the strain theory, Agnew (1992) defines strain as any event or situation in which positive or valued stimuli are removed or threatened or negative stimuli are presented. According to Agnew (1992), strains especially conflicting social relationships, engender negative affective states (such as anger, fear, frustration) that create an internal pressure for corrective action. These corrective acts may become deviant if the individual judged them as providing an alternative means to get what they want or as an opportunity to retaliate at others whom they blame as responsible for their predicament, or as a means of escape from their negative emotions. Agnew (1992) suggested that deviant reactions to strain may take various forms ranging from minor delinquency to more serious offences. This line of argument is consistent with Maslach et al, (1981) who claims that individuals who are highly stressed are more likely to act nervously and impulsively, or display less tolerant behaviour towards others. One likely behavioural outcome is workplace deviance. The finding by Aseltine et al, (2000) provided support for the positive relationship between strain and deviant behaviour.

2.8. Stress as a mediator in the relationships between organizational politics, organizational justice, and deviant behaviour

As mentioned earlier, given that stress is an internal state that results from an individual's transaction with environmental elements that are perceived to be threatening, and can lead to a variety of responses, one would expect environmental elements (in the form of organizational politics and organizational justice) to affect deviant behavior (a form of behavioural response) through stress. Specifically, politics would enhance stress, which results in greater deviance. Conversely, justice would reduce stress, leading to lower deviance. Our proposed model is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Proposed Model



3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and sampling procedure

Our respondents consisted of production operators employed in manufacturing firms within the electrical and electronics sector of Malaysia. A two-tiered sampling design was employed. First, we randomly select 20 firms from a total of 118 firms that were listed in the directory of manufacturing firms located in one particular state of Malaysia at the time of study. Permission to conduct a survey was first sought from the human resource management departments in these firms. Second, we identified the number of production operators working in these companies. This information was obtained through interviews with the officials in each firm's human resource department. In total, 18393 production operators were employed in these 20 firms. However, the researchers opted to distribute 400 questionnaires in proportion to the number of operators in each firm. This was done with the help of the firms' human resource officials. The workers were given two weeks to answer the questionnaires, after which they were required to submit their sealed responses to their respective human resource departments. Collection of the questionnaires was made by the researchers after the stipulated period. In all, 279 useable questionnaires were returned and analyzed representing a response rate of 69.75%.

3.2. Measure

The major measures for the study were perceptions of organizational politics, organizational justice, stress, and deviant behaviours. Perceptions of organizational politics were assessed with 10 items adopted from Kacmar and Carlson (1997). This instrument is supposed to measure three dimensions of organizational politics, namely General Political Behaviour, Go Along to Get Ahead, and Pay and Promotion. Two items for General Political Behaviour dimension was included in the questionnaire while four each from the Go Along to Get Ahead and Pay and Promotion scales were adopted based on the highest lambda values. Organizational justice was measured using a 15-item instrument developed by Niehoff et al, (1993). Of the 15 items, 5 items were aimed at measuring distributive justice, 5 other items were meant to gauge the extent of formal procedures and the remaining 5 items were used to measure interactional justice. Stress was measured using 10 items developed by Vigoda (2002). Participants were asked to respond to these variables using a rating scale ranging from (1) "Strongly Disagree" to (5) "Strongly Agree". In terms of the criterion variables, seven items were used to measure interpersonal deviance whereas another 12 items were utilized to gauge organizational deviance. These items were derived from Bennett et al, (2000). Responses to the items were made using a rating scale ranging from (1) "Never" to (5) "More than 20 times".

3.3. Analyses

Structural equation modeling (SEM) procedure using AMOS (Arbuckle, 1997) was used for data analyses and model testing.

4. RESULT

4.1. Profile of respondents

Almost all respondents (90%) were females. This overwhelming percentage of women as production operators is not an unusual phenomenon. The “feminization” of manufacturing workers is due to the shift towards export-led industrialization (Ng, Mohamad, & Hui, 2006). According to Ng et al. (2006), as in other developing countries, the Industrialization agenda stated in the Sixth Malaysia Plan has been somewhat women-led as export-led. Of those who completed the survey, 56.6% were married. Almost 95% of the sample comprised of Malays. The higher percentage of Malays as the respondents in this study is similar to that of Arasaratnam, Hashim, and Shamsudin (2004). The great majority (87.5%) have MCE/STPM and lower qualification. At the time of data collection, the average age of participants was 29.08 years (S.D = 5.86 years), their job tenure was 5.98 years (S.D.= 3.75 years), and had been employed in the organization for 6.14 years (S.D.= 3.78 years).

4.2. Measurement model

We initially performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine the factorial validity of the factors and subsequently to assess the goodness of fit of the model as suggested by Byrne (2001). Figure 2 shows the confirmatory factor analyses for the five measurement scales. The measurement model yielded a moderate fit given the sample data ($\chi^2 / df = 1.130$, GFI = .839, AGFI = .815, CFI = .954, TLI = .950, RMSEA = .051). As shown in Figure 2, the factor loadings of all items ranged from .48 to .90. A closer scrutiny of Figure 2 suggests support for a unidimensional model of organizational politics, procedural justice, distributive justice, and deviant behaviour respectively. Our comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.95 surpassed Hoyle’s (1995) rule of thumb of 0.90. Since our measurement model provides acceptable fit, we surmised that it can be used for our model testing.

4.3. Model testing

The central point in analyzing structural models is the extent to which the hypothesized model “fits” or adequately describes the sample data (Byrne, 2001). We tested our proposed model using structural equation modeling (SEM) procedure. Our model yielded a reasonable fit given the sample data ($\chi^2 / df = 1.174$, GFI = .997, AGFI = .975, CFI = .998, TLI = .998, RMSEA = .030). Figure 3 illustrates the parameter estimates of the relationships between our research constructs. As depicted in Figure 3, organizational politics ($\beta = .52, p < .001$), distributive justice ($\beta = -.12, p < .05$), and procedural justice ($\beta = -.25, p < .001$) have significant and direct effects on stress. The three independent variables accounted for 68% of the variance in stress. The effect of stress on deviant behaviour was also found to be significant ($\beta = .47, p < .001$) whereby this variable accounted for 22% of the variance in deviant behaviour. As can be seen from Figure 3, a mediation model best fits the data. Our analysis reveals that organizational politics and organizational justice affect deviant behavior through stress, thereby, supporting the proposed model.

Figure 2: Measurement Model

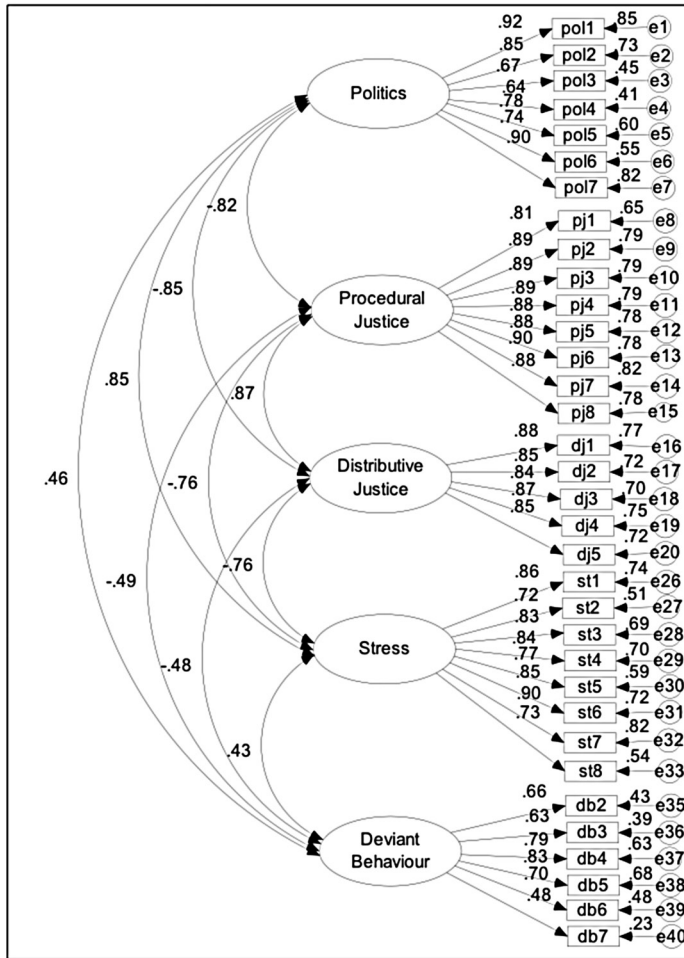
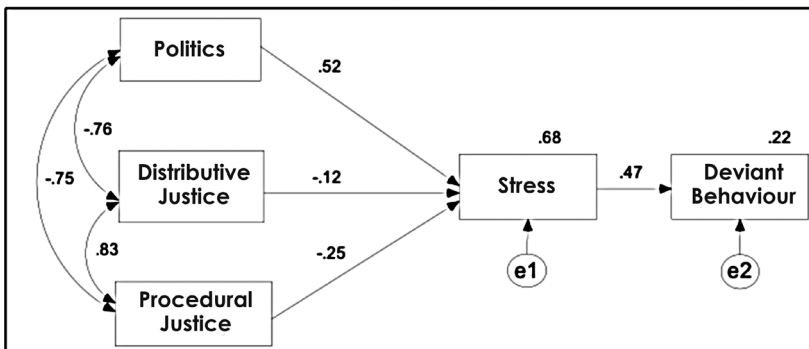


Figure 3: Path Coefficients of the Model for Our Sample



5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The goal of the present study was to test a model that specifies the relationships between organizational politics, organizational justice, stress, and deviant behaviours. Overall, the hypothesized model (see Figure 3) fits reasonably well to our data. One interesting finding relates to the results of our confirmatory factor analysis whereby deviant behaviours were found to be unidimensional. Instead of loading on to two separate dimensions based on the seminal work by Bennett et al. (2000), our deviant behaviour scale loaded on one single dimension. Obviously, our findings seem to suggest that the two-factor structure of deviant behaviour may not be generalized across samples. One explanation for this finding may be attributed to societal values of Malaysians. According to Abdullah (1996), being collectivistic, Malaysians value harmonious relationships and community spirit. Hence, behaviours associated with negative acts regardless of targets (be it individual or organization) are considered as offensive.

The results of our model testing serve to further validate prior findings concerning the relationships between perceptions of organizational politics, organizational justice, stress, and deviant behaviours within a non-Western context. Previous research by Vigoda (2002) in Israel demonstrated that organizational politics have a direct and indirect effect on aggressive behaviour via job distress. However, as advocated by Vigoda (2002), given the scarcity of research on the relationships between organizational politics and distress constructs, more empirical examination should be encouraged for the purpose of external validation and predicting power. The present study extended Vigoda's (2002) earlier work by examining both organizational politics and organizational justice as separate constructs.

Our results produced evidence that the effects of organizational politics and justice on deviant behaviour are indirect via stress. Fragmented empirical evidence for this pattern of relationship has been reported in the literature. For example, organizational politics have a significant and positive impact on stress. Researchers (e.g. Poon, 2004; Kacmar et al, 1991) argued that the existence of workplace politics will create a situation of inequity and uncertainty, which in turn, leads to greater employees' stress. In our study, distributive justice and procedural justice were found to be negatively related to stress. As have been mentioned earlier, the existence of distributive justice suggests that the amount of rewards and other outcomes employees' received are judged as fair. Likewise, procedural justice implies that the employee's welfare is being taken care since fair formal procedures not only provides employees control over the outcomes they will get but help ensure that the outcomes received are fair. Besides, fair treatment received from decision-makers implies that the employee is a respected, valued, and worthy member of the organization. In such situations, employees who judged themselves to be recipients of fair rewards and treatment are more likely to become less stressful and experience greater feelings of satisfaction. Our findings on the relationships between organizational justice dimensions (distributive justice and procedural justice) and stress concurs with earlier studies (Francis et al, 2005; Wager et al, 2003; Elovainio et al, 2002; Fox et al, 2001; Zohar, 1995). In addition, this study found evidence that stress was positively related to deviant behaviour consistent with other researchers (Vigoda, 2002; Aseltine et al, 2000; Johnson et al, 1996; Agnew, 1992). As argued by Agnew (1992), stress stimulates negative emotions that create an internal pressure for the individual to retaliate in order to remedy feelings of

disequilibrium. One way to do so is through acts of deviance. In sum, it can be concluded that politics and justice affect deviant behaviours through the mediating role of stress. When employees perceived that politics is rampant at the workplace, the more stressful they become, and the more likely they will perform workplace deviance. On the contrary, when employees believed that justice prevails within an organization, the less stressful they become, and the less likely they will engage in dysfunctional behaviours in the form of workplace deviance.

Clearly, the results of the present study brings into light two important things that the top management need to be cognizant of. First, because deviant behaviours at the workplace can lead to negative consequences, employers must act to control, minimize, or eliminate them. For a start, organizations must treat their members fairly and make use of fair procedures in allocating rewards. Specifically, policies on pay raises and promotions must be transparent, clearly-defined, and objective. One suggestion would be to implement a career progression system based on merit. Since job performance has been empirically proven to be affected by one's cognitive ability (Côté et al, 2006; Murphy et al, 1997), individuals who are rewarded and promoted on the basis of "behaving politically" instead may not be competent to perform. In the aggregate, organizational effectiveness would be jeopardized. Second, allowing employees to participate in decision-making will also be able to help them better understand the organizational processes, thereby, buffering the threat associated with perceptions of organizational politics. Another option would be to provide employees with more autonomy. When employees believe that they have more control over their environment, they are less likely to be adversely affected by organizational politics judgments. These, in turn, should reduce the negative influence of workplace political judgments on employees' deviant behaviours towards the organization as well as its members.

6. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The first limitation of this study stems from the use of self-report data to assess deviant behaviour. Although there has been support for the use of self-reports (Spector, 1992), given the sensitive nature of the dependent variable, the accuracy of the findings could have been tempered. Second, the sample was drawn entirely from production workers employed in the Malaysian manufacturing sector. Thus, the findings may not be generalized to other samples across different industries. Third, the sample was somewhat biased in that Malays were over-represented relative to other ethnic groups. It is possible that racial similarity may have had some confounding effects on the deviant behaviour under investigation.

7. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, employers should realize that organizational politics and organizational justice will eventually affect employees' behavioural responses through their affective internal state. In the quest for limited reward allocation, mobility, and career advancement, organizational politics has become a fact of working life. It is often perceived as unpleasant and represents harmful manipulations by powerful individuals. As such, organizational politics has been frequently cited as a form of work-related stressor. When a workplace is rife with politics where rewards allocation are made based on competition, power, and policy changes,

employees are likely to experience a high level of uncertainty, triggering their stress levels. Engaging in deviant behaviours may be one form of behavioural responses to stress. Therefore, to mitigate workplace deviance, organizational authorities should ensure that organizational politics take a back seat. On the other hand, organizational justice and fair treatment by organizational leaders could minimize the level of stress experienced by employees, which would subsequently lessen the likelihood of workplace deviance. Thus, employing institutions are encouraged to establish a culture that gives priority to providing equitable rewards for employees' contribution, implementing clearly-defined policies and procedures in a consistent manner, and treating employees with respect. By doing so, employees' are less likely to experience negative feelings associated with dissatisfaction and stress, which in turn, result in lower levels of deviant behaviours.

REFERENCES

- Abdullah, A. (1996). *Going Glocal: Cultural Dimensions in Malaysian Management*. Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Institute of Management.
- Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in Social Exchange. In L. Berkowitz (Eds.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (pp.267-299). New York: Academic Press.
- Agnew, R. (1992). Foundation for a general strain theory of crime and delinquency. *Criminology*, 30, 47-87.
- Ahmad, Z., & Norhashim, M. (2008). The control environment, employee fraud and counterproductive workplace behaviour: An empirical analysis. *Communications of the IBIMA*, 3, 145-155.
- Ambrose, M. L., Seabright, M. A., & Schminke, M. (2002). Sabotage in the workplace: The role of organizational injustice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 89(1), 947-965.
- Appelbaum, S. H., Iaconi, G. D., & Matousek, A. (2007). Positive and negative deviant behaviors: Causes, impacts, and solutions. *Corporate Governance*, 7(5), 586-598.
- Aquino, K., Lewis, M. U., & Bradfield, M. (1999). Justice constructs, negative affectivity, and employee deviance: A proposed model and empirical test. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 20(7), 1073-1092.
- Arasaratnam, M., Hashim, Z., & Shamsudin, S. B. (2004). Occupational lead exposure of soldering workers in an electronic factory. *Journal of Occupational Safety and Health*, 1(2), 51-57.
- Arasli, H., & Tumer, M. (2008). Nepotism, favoritism and cronyism: A study of their effects on job stress and job satisfaction in the banking industry of North Cyprus. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 36(9), 1237-1250.

- Arbuckle, J. L. (1997). *Amos users' Guide Version 4.0*. Chicago, IL: Smallwaters Corporation.
- Aseltine, R. H., Jr., Gore, S., & Gordon, J. (2000). Life stress, anger and anxiety, and delinquency: An empirical test of the general strain theory. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *41*(3), 256-275.
- Baum, A., Singer, J. E., & Baum, C. S. (1981). Stress and the environment. *Journal of Social Issues*, *37*(1), 4-35.
- Begley, T. M., Lee, C., Fang, Y., & Li, J. (2002). Power distance as a moderator of the relationship between justice and employee outcomes in a sample of Chinese employees. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *17*(8), 692-711.
- Bennett, R. J., & Robinson, S. L. (2000). Development of a measure of workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *85*(3), 349-360.
- Bies, R. J., & Moag, J. S. (1986). Interactional justice: Communication criteria of fairness. In R. J. Lewicki, B. H. Sheppard, & M. Bazerman (Eds.), *Research on negotiation in organizations* (pp. 43-55). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Bolin, A., & Heatherly, L. (2001). Predictors of Employee Deviance: The Relationship between Bad Attitudes and Bad Behavior. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *15*(3), 405-418.
- Byrne, B. M. (2001). *Structural Equation Modeling With AMOS: Basic Concepts, Applications, and Programming*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Chory-Assad, R. M. (2002). Classroom justice: Perceptions of fairness as a predictor of student motivation, learning, and aggression. *Communication Quarterly*, *50*(1), 58-77.
- Clark, L. A., & Watson, D. (1991). Tripartite model of anxiety and depression: Psychometric evidence and taxonomic implications. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *100*(12), 316-336.
- Clarke, J. (May 1988). Stress in management. *Business Credit*, 46-48.
- Coffin, B. (2003). Breaking the silence on white collar crime. *Risk Management*, *50*(9), 8.
- Cohen-Charash, Y., & Spector, P. E. (2001). The role of justice in organizations: A meta-analysis. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *86*(2), 278-321.
- Colbert, A. E., Mount, M. K., Harter, J. K., Witt, L. A., & Barrick, M. R. (2004). Interactive effects of personality and perceptions of the work situation on workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*(4), 599-609.

- Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millinneeum: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 425-445.
- Côté, S., & Miners, C. T. H. 2006. Emotional intelligence, cognitive intelligence, and job performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 51(1), 1-28.
- Crampton, S. M., Hodge, J. W., Mishra, J. M., & Price, S. (1995). Stress and stress management. S.A.M. *Advanced Management Journal*, 60(3), 10-24.
- Cropanzano, R., Howes, J. C., Grandey, A. A., & Toth, P. (1997). The relationship of organizational politics and support to work behaviors, attitudes, and stress. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 18(2), 159-180.
- Cropanzano, R., Kacmar, K. M., & Bozeman, D. P. (1995). The social setting of work organizations: Politics, justice, and support. In R. Cropanzano & K. M. Kacmar (Eds.), *Organizational Politics, Justice, and Support: Managing the Social Climate of Work Organizations* (pp. 1-18). Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
- Dalal, R. S. (2005). A meta-analysis of the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(6), 1241-1255.
- De Lara, P. ZM., & Verano-Tacoronte, D. (2007). Investigating the effects of procedural justice on workplace deviance: Do employees' perceptions of conflicting guidance call the tune? *International Journal of Manpower*, 28(8), 715-729.
- Demir, M. (2011). Effects of organizational justice, trust and commitment on employees' deviant behavior. *Anatolia - An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 22(2), 204-221.
- El Akremi, A., Vandenberghe, C., & Camerman, J. (2010). The role of justice and social exchange relationships in workplace deviance: Test of a mediated model. *Human Relations*, 63(11), 1687-1717.
- Elovainio, M., Kivimika, M., & Vahtera, J. (2002). Organizational justice: Evidence of a new psychosocial predictor of health. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92(1), 105-108.
- Fagbohunbe, B. O., Akinbode, G. A., & Ayodeji, F. (2012). Organizational determinants of workplace deviant behaviors: An empirical analysis in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 7(5), 207-221.
- Farhadi, H., Fatimah, O., Nasir, R. S., & Wan Shahrazad, W. S. (2012). Agreeableness and Conscientiousness as antecedents of deviant behavior in workplace. *Asian Social Science*, 8(9), 2-7.

- Ferguson, M., Carlson, D., Hunter, E. M., & Whitten, D. (2012). A two-study examination of work-family conflict, production deviance and gender. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 81*(2), 245-258.
- Ferris, G. R., & Kacmar, K. M. (1992). Perceptions of organizational politics. *Journal of Management, 18*(1), 93-116.
- Ferris, G. R., Russ, G. S., & Fandt, P. M. (1989). Politics in organizations. In R. A. Giacalone & P. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Impression Management in the Organization* (pp. 143-170). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Folger, R., & Konovsky, M. A. (1989). Effects of procedural and distributive justice on reactions to pay raise decisions. *Academy of Management Journal, 32*(1), 115-130.
- Forret, M., & Love, M. S. (2008). Employee justice perceptions and coworker relationships. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 29*(3), 248-260.
- Fox, S., Spector, P. E., & Miles, D. (2001). Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) in responses to job stressors and organizational justice: Some mediator and moderator tests for autonomy and emotions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 59*(3), 291-309.
- Francis, L., & Barling, J. (2005). Organizational injustice and psychological strain. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 37*(4), 250-261.
- Gholipour, A., Saeidinejad, M., & Zehtabi, M. (2009). The explanation of anti-citizenship behavior in the workplaces. *International Business Research, 2*(4), 76-86.
- Greenberg, J. (1986). Determinants of perceived fairness of performance evaluation. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*(2), 340-342.
- Greenberg, J. (1990a). Organizational justice: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow. *Journal of Management, 16*(2), 399-432.
- Greenberg, J. (1990b). Employee theft as a reaction to underpayment inequity: The hidden cost of pay cuts. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 75*(5), 561-568.
- Greenberg, L., & Barling, J. (1999). Predicting employee aggression against coworkers, subordinates and supervisors: The roles of person behaviors and perceived workplace factors. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 20*, 897-913.
- Harper, D. (1990). Spotlight Abuse – Save Profits. *Industrial Distribution, 79*(10), 47-51.
- Henle, C. A., Giacalone, R. A., & Jurkiewicz, C. L. (2005). The role of ethical ideology in workplace deviance. *Journal of Business Ethics, 56*(3), 219-230.

- Hoyle, R. H. (1995). The structural equation modeling: Basic concepts and fundamental issues. In R.H. Hoyle (Eds.), *Structural Equation Modeling, Concepts, and Applications* (pp. 1-15). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Janis, I. L., & Mann, L. (1977). *Decision Making*. New York: Free Press.
- Johnson, P. R., & Indvik, J. (1996). Stress and violence in the workplace. *Employee Counselling Today*, 8(1), 19-24.
- Kacmar, K. M., & Baron, R. A. (1999). Organizational politics: The state of the field, links to related processes, and an agenda for future research. In G. R. Ferris (Eds.), *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management* (pp. 1-39). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.
- Kacmar, K. M., & Carlson, D. S. (1997). Further validation of the perceptions of politics scale (POPS): A multiple sample investigation. *Journal of Management*, 23(5), 627-658.
- Kacmar, K. M., & Ferris, G. R. (1991). Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS): Development and construct validation. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 51(1), 193-205.
- Kivimaki, M., Vahtera, J., Keltikangas-Jarvinen, L., Virtases, M., Hintsanen, M., Vaananen, A., Singh-Manoux, A., & Ferrie, J. E. (2008). What are the next steps for research on work stress and coronary heart disease? *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 2008(6), 33-40.
- Kyriacou, C. (1987). Teacher stress and burnout: An international review. *Educational Research*, 29(2), 146-152.
- Lambert, E. G., Hogan, N. L., & Griffin, M. L. (2007). The impact of distributive and procedural justice on correctional staff job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 35(6), 644-656.
- Lewin, K. (1936). *Principles of Topological Psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lind, E. A., & Tyler, T. R. (1988). *The Social Psychology of Procedural Justice*. New York: Plenum.
- Marcus, B., & Schuler, H. (2004). Antecedents of counterproductive behavior at work: A general perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(4), 647-660.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 2(2), 99-113.
- Masterson, S. S., Lewis, K., Goldman, B. M., & Taylor, M. S. (2000). Integrating justice and social exchange: The differing effects of fair procedures and treatment on work relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(4), 738-748.

- Moorman, R. H. (1991). Relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviors: Do fairness perceptions influence employee citizenship? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76*(6), 845-855.
- Moorthy, M. K., Somasundaram, N. R., Arokiasamy, L., Nadarajah, G., & Marimuthu, M. (2011). A study of the workplace theft behaviour of employees in supermarkets in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research, 3*(5), 272-277.
- Muafi (2011). Causes and consequence deviant workplace behavior. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology, 2*(2), 123-126.
- Mufti, E. O., Zaheer, Z., Parvaiz, G. S., & Khan, S (2012). Occupational Stress! A comprehensive analysis of higher education universities of Khyber Paktunkhwa, Pakistan. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research, 2*(5), 4439-4446.
- Mujtaba, B. G., & McCartney, T. (2010). *Managing Workplace Stress And Conflict Amid Change*. Coral Springs: Llumina Press.
- Murphy, K. R. (1993). *Honesty in the workplace*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Murphy, K. R., & Shiarella, A. H. (1997). Implications of the multidimensional nature of job performance for the validity of selection tests: Multivariate frameworks for studying the validity. *Personnel Psychology, 50*(4), 823-854.
- Ng, C., Mohamad, M., & Hui, T. B. (2006). *Feminism and the Women's Movement in Malaysia: An Unsung (R)evolution*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Niehoff, B. P., & Moorman, R. H. (1993). Justice as a mediator of the relationship between methods of monitoring and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal, 36*(3), 527-556.
- Northwestern National Life Insurance Company. (1993). *Fear and violence in the workplace*. Minneapolis, MN.
- O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., Griffin, R. W., & Glew, D. J. (1996). Organization-motivated aggression: A research framework. *Academy of Management Review, 21*(1), 225-253.
- O'Neill, T. A., Lewis, R. J., & Carswell, J. J. (2011). Employee personality, justice perceptions and prediction of workplace deviance. *Personality and Individual Differences, 51*(5), 595-600.
- Peterson, D. K. (2002). Deviant workplace behavior and the organization's ethical climate. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 17*(1), 47-61.

- Pillai, R., Schriesheim, C. A., & Williams, E. S. (1999). Fairness perceptions and trust as mediators for transformational and transactional leadership: A two-sample study. *Journal of Management*, 25(6), 897-933.
- Poon, J. (2004). Moderating effect of perceived control on perceptions of organizational politics outcomes. *International Journal of Organizational Theory and Behavior*, 7(1), 22-40.
- Robinson, S. L., & Bennett, R. J. (1995). A typology of deviant workplace behaviors: A multidimensional scaling study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(2), 555-572.
- Rousseau, D. M. (1995). *Psychological Contracts In Organizations: Understanding Written And Unwritten Agreements*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Shamsudin, F. M. (2003). Workplace deviance among hotel employees: An exploratory survey. *Malaysian Management Journal*, 7(1), 17-33.
- Skarlicki, D. P., Folger, R., & Tesluk, P. (1999). Personality as a moderator in the relationship between fairness and retaliation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(1), 100-108.
- Spector, P. E. (1992). A consideration of the validity and meaning of self-report measures of job conditions. In C. L. Cooper & I. T. Robertson (Eds.), *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 1-17). New York: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Sulu, S., Ceylan, A., & Kaynak, R. (2010). Work alienation as a mediator of the relationship between organizational injustice and organizational commitment: Implication for healthcare professional. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 5(8), 27-38.
- Tepper, B. J. (2001). Health consequences of organizational injustice: Tests of main and interactive effects. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 86(2), 197-215.
- Tyler, T. R., DeGoeyp, P., & Smith, H. (1996). Understanding why the justice of group procedures matters: A test of the psychological dynamics of the group-value model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(5), 913-930.
- Vardi, Y. (2001). The effects of organizational and ethical climates on misconduct at work. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 29(4), 325-337.
- Vigoda, E. (2002). Stress-related aftermaths to workplace politics: The relationships among politics, job distress, and aggressive behavior in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23 (5), 571-588.
- Vigoda, E., & Talmud, I. (2010). Organizational politics and job outcomes: The moderating effect of trust and social support. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 40(11), 2829-2861.

- Wager, N., Fieldman, G., & Hussey, T. (2003). The effect on ambulatory blood pressure of working under favourably and unfavourably perceived supervisors. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 60(7), 468-474.
- Zivnuska, S., Kacmar, K.M., Witt, L. A., Carlson, D. S., & Bratton, V. K. (2004). Interactive effects of impression management and organizational politics on job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(5), 627-640.
- Zohar, D. (1995). The justice perspective of job stress. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16(5), 487-495.