Chapter 17
Understanding the Nature of Deviant Workplace Behaviors

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ABSTRACT

Today, deviant organizational behaviors increase gradually and cost organizations billions of dollars. Not only the manufacturing industries but also the tourism industry is characterized by deviant workplace behaviors. Deviant behaviors are widely observed in tourism enterprises. Deviant behaviors are displayed almost every day in tourism enterprises. Many enterprises face the destructive consequences of deviant behaviors. Therefore, deviant behaviors in the scope of tourism enterprises are worth examination. The current study aims at discovering the nature of deviant workplace behaviors in the tourism industry. For this purpose, the term “deviance” and organizational deviant behaviors were defined. Later the nature of the deviant behaviors in tourism industry was discussed, and lastly, antecedents and consequences of deviant behaviors were put forward.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational deviant behaviors are among the concepts which are commonly examined due to the fact that they are acknowledged as undesirable behaviors in workplaces (Appelbaum, Iaconi, & Matousek, 2007). Rather than being rarely-displayed behaviors in organizations, organizational deviant behaviors are observed almost every day in organizations (Hsieh, Liang, & Hsieh, 2004). Today, organizational deviant behaviors have increased at a degree of giving warning signs to organizations and their cost to business has reached billions of dollars (Stewart et al., 2009). A wide range of behavioral patterns plays an important role in the emergence of these costs. For instance, Bennett and Robinson (2000) argue

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that 15% of employees have stolen at least once from their organizations, and an estimated 33%-75% of employees perform actions such as theft, sabotage and fraud. Proliferation of such behaviors negatively affects not only organizations but also individuals within the organization. For example, 58% of women in organizations stated that they faced such behaviors and 24% stated that they were exposed to sexually explicit acts in the organization (Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006).

Today, organizational deviant behaviors cost billion dollars to organizations (Stewart et al., 2009). For instance, costs arising from organizational deviant behaviors in the USA may reach up to 200 billion dollars annually (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006). If individuals have felt uncomfortable in the enterprise and in the working environment, or, have faced certain cases affecting them negatively, they would react in some way; however, it is not easy to predict how it would happen (Robbins & Judge, 2013). Scandals in Enron and WordCom companies can be provided as the most well-known examples of huge losses which had to be borne by business. What lies behind the bankruptcy of these two companies is the deviant behaviors (Cavender & Miller, 2013). Deviant behaviors are intensively observed not only in manufacturing industries but also in tourism industry (Lin, 2017). Even, it can be indicated that deviant behaviors are observed in tourism industry more than in other industries due to its labor-intense nature. For instance, in a study conducted by Harris and Ogbonna (2002) in hospitality industry, it was noted that more than 85% of the employees sabotaged services one week before the research and 100% of employees indicated that service sabotage takes place in the organization every day.

The fact that individuals’ deviant behaviors cause devastating costs and become more and more common in organizations has brought along the necessity of developing the theoretical frameworks which explain these behaviors. In this regard, the dark side of the individuals’ behaviors has started to be researched with an increasing pattern (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Researchers examined negative behaviors observed in organizations within the framework of different concepts: counterproductive work behaviors (Spector & Fox, 2002), anti-social behaviors (Giacolone & Greenberg, 1997), organizational misbehaviors (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). The most commonly used term in literature for explaining negative behaviors in organizations is the “deviant behaviors” (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

Taking into consideration the characteristics of tourism industry (long working hours, low wage and high number of unqualified personnel) the frequently-displayed deviant behaviors have been examined in the current study. In this scope, the study consists of three sections. First, deviant behaviors are defined, later the nature of the deviant behaviors in tourism industry is discussed, and lastly their antecedents and consequences are explained.

BACKGROUND

Definition of Deviance

The term ‘deviance’ has firstly been used in 1950s by sociologists to define the behaviors violating the normative standards regulating right and wrong behaviors in societies (Jensen, 2011). Deviant behaviors, as a sociological concept, are regarded as the failure in meeting interpersonal expectations within groups of friends, married couples, working groups and society (Seçer & Seçer, 2009). In other words, deviant behaviors refer to the behaviors which are not welcomed or accepted by society. Robinson and Bennett (1995) indicated that the term ‘deviance’ encompass the actions which involve the violation of important norms, and those unacceptable violations threaten the well-being of society. What is involved in deviant
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