

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND DEVIANT WORKPLACE  
BEHAVIOR AMONG CUSTOMER SERVICES EMPLOYEES  
OF A CALL CENTER IN MALAYSIA

By

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## ABSTRACT

Researchers have shown an increased interest in conducting studies in deviant workplace behavior since the past researches shown the cascading effects of workplace deviance on the organization as a whole. However, there is still question on the association and the influence of occupational stress and its relation to the occurrence of workplace deviance despite the increase in attention given to the study of deviant workplace behavior. This study tries to identify the correlation between occupational stress in a customer call center towards the deviant workplace behavior of its employees. The current research has been conducted among 400 customer services employees in a selected call center in Malaysia. The data was collected using a questionnaire survey method and the data analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation method and linear regression method to identify the association and to test the research hypotheses. The findings of this study reveal that there is no significant correlation between occupational stress and deviant workplace behavior on the whole. However, the results show that the interpersonal deviance level in the selected call center is linked with the responsibility pressure, role conflict and workload dimensions. Furthermore the occurrence of workplace deviance is significantly associated with the job vs non-job conflict among the employees. Ignoring these issues may cause a decrease in the work performance of the customer services employees, causing the organization valuable performance and profitability.

**Keywords:** deviant workplace behavior, workplace deviance, employee deviance, occupational stress, work stress.

## ABSTRAK

Para penyelidik telah menunjukkan peningkatan minat dalam menjalankan kajian kelakuan menyimpang di tempat kerja sejak kajian lepas menunjukkan kesan meluas dari penyelewengan tempat kerja di organisasi secara keseluruhannya. Walau bagaimanapun, masih ada persoalan mengenai perkaitan dan pengaruh tekanan kerja dan hubungannya dengan berlakunya kelakuan menyimpang di tempat kerja walaupun terdapat peningkatan dalam perhatian yang diberikan kepada kajian tingkah laku menyimpang di tempat kerja. Kajian ini cuba mengenal pasti hubungan di antara tekanan kerja di pusat panggilan ke arah tingkah laku menyimpang di tempat kerja di kalangan pekerjanya. Penyelidikan ini dijalankan di kalangan 400 pekerja perkhidmatan pelanggan di sebuah pusat panggilan yang terpilih di Malaysia. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kaedah soal selidik dan analisis data telah dijalankan menggunakan kaedah korelasi Pearson dan kaedah regresi linear untuk mengenalpasti perkaitan dan untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa tiada korelasi signifikan di antara tekanan kerja dan tingkah laku menyimpang di tempat kerja pada keseluruhannya. Walau bagaimanapun, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa tahap kelakuan menyimpang *interpersonal* di pusat panggilan yang dipilih dikaitkan dengan dimensi bebanan tanggungjawab, konflik peranan dan beban kerja. Manakala penyelewengan di tempat kerja dikaitkan dengan masalah kerja dan masalah bukan kerja dalam kalangan pekerja. Mengabaikan isu-isu ini boleh menyebabkan penurunan prestasi kerja kakitangan perkhidmatan pelanggan, serta menyebabkan penurunan prestasi dan keuntungan organisasi.

**Kata kunci:** tingkah laku devian di tempat kerja, penyelewengan tempat kerja, penyelewengan pekerja, tekanan kerja.

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## **List of Abbreviation**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| DWB  | Deviant Workplace Behavior             |
| ODB  | Organizational Deviant Behavior        |
| IDB  | Interpersonal Deviant Behavior         |
| KMO  | Keiser-Meyers-Oklin                    |
| OSS  | Occupational Stress Scale              |
| OSR  | Responsibility Pressure                |
| OSQ  | Quality Concern                        |
| OSC  | Role Conflict                          |
| OSJ  | Job vs Non-Job Conflict                |
| OSW  | Workload                               |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Science |
| SPM  | Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia               |

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This chapter explains the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, and significance of the study. Following that, this chapter also highlights the scope and limitations of the study, and also the organization of chapter in this study.

### **1.2. Background of study**

Managing employee behaviors is a concern for any organizations globally, especially for profit oriented organizations since such behaviors can be detrimental to their financial interests (Appelbaum et al., 2007). The way employees conduct themselves at work would affect the organization and its members either positively or negatively. Therefore it is important to know the appropriate way to behave in a workplace. Ideally, employees should carry out their designated tasks and responsibilities at work and not engage in behaviors that can undermine the organization or other employees either physically or mentally. Any action that can cause detrimental effects is unwanted and can be considered deviant. Deviant workplace behavior committed by the employees when they either lack the motivation to conform to normative expectations of the social context or become motivated to violate those expectations (Kaplan, 1975).

As a result of workplace deviance, billions of dollars were lost each year. According to Harper (1990) it has been estimated that 33 percent to 75 percent of all employees have engaged in behaviors such as theft, fraud, vandalism, sabotage, and voluntary

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