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THE EFFECTS OF THE PERCEIVED CORPORATE REPUTATION ON COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) is a concept that is gaining importance as it is costly to organizations and detrimental to employee's quality of work life. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effects of perceived corporate reputation (PCR) on CWB. Data drawn from 90 employees of companies in Marmara Region of Turkey was used to test the relationship. Regression analyses indicate that PCR has negative effects on three dimensions of CWB including abuse, production deviance and withdrawal. However, results did not show any significant relationship between PCR, sabotage and theft dimensions of CWB.

Key Words; Counterproductive Work Behaviour, Perceived Corporate Reputation

Özet

Üretim karşıtı iş davranışları (ÜKİD) organizasyonlara maliyeti ve çalışanların iş yaşam kalitesine zarar vermesi nedeniyle önem kazanan bir kavramdır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, algılanan kurumsal itibarın (AKİ), ÜKİD üzerindeki etkilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Türkiye'nin Marmara Bölgesi'ndeki firmalarda çalışan 90 kişiden toplanan veriler bu ilişkiyi test etmek için kullanıldı. Regresyon analizi, AKİ'nin kötüye kullanma, üretimden sapma ve geri çekilme olmak üzere, ÜKİD'nin üç boyutu üzerinde negatif etkisi olduğunu işaret etmektedir. Ancak, sonuçlar, AKİ ile ÜKİD'nin sabotaj ve hırsızlık boyutları arasında anlamlı bir ilişki göstermemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler; Üretim Karşıtı İş Davranışları, Algılanan Kurumsal İtibar

INTRODUCTION

There are considerable empirical evidence that suggests a good reputation can create several benefits such as enabling firms to charge premium prices; reducing firm costs and employee turnover; attracting applicants, investors and customers; increasing repurchases, customer retention, and profitability; and improving firm value (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Roberts & Dowling, 2002; Eberl & Schwaiger, 2005; Walker, 2010). It is generally concluded that employees prefer to work for highly reputed firms (Eberl & Schwaiger, 2005) and thus the firm takes the advantage of recruiting and retaining a competent workforce with less remuneration (Greysen, 1999; Roberts & Dowling, 2002; Eberl & Schwaiger, 2005). The reputable company is likely to form alliances, create competitive barriers, establish networks to exploit networking associations and enhance stock market performance as well as performance values on other measures (Fombrun, 1996; Sutherland, et.al., 2007).

Although corporate reputation (CR) has received growing attention from academicians and practitioners, research from the employee perspective is relatively limited. Externally, a good CR can enhance profitability because it attracts customers to its products and investors to new investment (Fombrun & Van Riel, 2004) but on the other side, employees are the ones who produce the product or service to the customers. These two valuable assets interactively affect each other as employees actively shape other stakeholders' perceptions of the company (Cravens & Oliver; 2006; Helm, 2011; Friedman, 2009; Olmedo-Cifuentes, et al., 2014) as well as they, are affected by public perceptions of the company they are working for (Davies, et al. 2003; Men, 2012; Carmeli, 2006). In other words, the reputation of

the firm is stimulated by the way customer-facing employees perceive the organization but also being part of a highly prestigious organization or winning team stimulates human behaviour (Davies et al., 2004; Carmeli, 2006).

Employees' perceptions of corporate reputation are related to their work attitudes and behaviours because each employee's sense of self is tied in part to that image (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Riordan, et al., 1997). Dutton & Dukerich (1991; p. 550) emphasized that "The relationship between individuals' senses of their organizational identity and image and their own sense of who they are and what they stand for suggests a very personal connection between organizational action and individual motivation". Riordan et al., (1997) offers empirical support for Dutton & Dukerich's (1991) reasoning and found clear evidence that employees' perception of corporate image influence both their job satisfaction and their intentions to leave. Besides, some researchers suggest that reputation influences recruitment outcomes because individuals seek to join groups and organizations to enhance their self-esteem (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Keller, 1993; Gatewood, et al., 1993). Likewise, consumers are more attracted to products with positive brands because they need for social approval or self-esteem, individuals should be more likely to accept jobs at organizations with positive reputations because reputation affects the pride that individuals expect from organizational membership (Cable & Turban, 2003).

It's apparent that individuals generally prefer to work in an organization with a reputable brand and a good reputation in order to raise their status and prestige in the society. Moreover, scholars confirm that employee perceptions of reputation have a significant impact on organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, citizenship behaviour and intention to leave (Smidts, et al., 2001, Dukerich, et al., 2002; Herrbach, et al., 2004; Carmeli, 2006; Mignonac, et al., 2006; Helm, 2011). When an organization has a positive reputation, employees feel pride and a high level of self-esteem in belonging to a community which results in a better employee-employer relationship (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Helm, 2011). Taking these arguments together, it is possible to think that CWB, a departure from organizational and group norms, could be explained by reputation perceptions of employees.

1. CORPORATE REPUTATION

The last four decades have witnessed significant growth in interest in the subject of corporate reputation among academics and practitioners. However, there is no generally agreed definition of the concept corporate reputation since it contains a complex nature. Fombrun & Rindova (1996) in their cross-disciplinary literature review indicated that this ambiguity is the result of perceptual glasses of different disciplines. Economists (Weigelt & Camerer, 1998), sociologists (Abrahamson & Fombrun, 1992), accounting researchers (Dufrene, et al., 1998; Sveiby, 1997), strategists (Caves & Porter, 1977; Freeman, 1984) and organizational scholars (Meyer, 1982; Dutton & Dukerich, 1991) defined the term based on their disciplinary perspectives.

Another reason for this complexity is that researchers and practitioners use the terms corporate image, corporate identity, and corporate reputation synonymously. Although these three terms are related, a distinction should be made to eliminate confusion. Gray & Balmer (1998; p. 695) simply defines corporate identity as "what the organization is" or in other words "how do internal stakeholders perceive the distinct characteristics of the organization". Organizational identity can also be separated as desired identity "what the organization wants internal stakeholders to know / think about the firm" and actual identity "what internal stakeholders actually know / think about the firm". Walker reviewed the literature and found that among the eight definitions of corporate identity seven articles defined the term as actual identity and one as desired identity that leads the conclusion that the term is viewed as actual and not firm desired identity (Walker, 2010; p. 366). A division can also be made between organizational identity and corporate identity (Balmer & Gray, 2006; Hatch & Shultz, 2003), with the former referring to what the internal stakeholders feel and think about their and the latter referring to identity on a strategic level. Although both concepts rest on the distinct characteristics of the organization (Grey & Balmer, 1998;

p. 695), corporate identity has strong links with company vision and strategy (Hatch & Schultz, 2003; p.357).

Whetten (1997; 27) defines corporate image as “What / who do we want others to think we are?” Similarly, Lewellyn, (2002; p. 448) describes image as a message sent from an organization to its external stakeholders. Walker, (2010; p. 366) emphasizes that firms actively try to project an image and therefore image can be described as an internal picture projected to an external audience. Since image is intentionally created and projected it cannot be negative unless an organization wants it to be. According to Barnett, Jermier & Lafferty (2006; p. 34) the progression from identity to image is a function of public relations, marketing and other organizational processes that attempt to shape the impression people have of the firm. Therefore, Argenti (1998; p.4) describes corporate identity as “The visual manifestation of the image as conveyed through the organization’s logo, products, services, buildings, stationery, uniforms and all other tangible bits of evidence created by the organization to communicate with a variety of constituencies.”

Many authors in the analogous school of thought tend to view corporate image and corporate reputation as interchangeable concepts (e.g. Alvesson, 1998). However, researchers of differentiated school of thought has criticised the approach of the analogous school of thought and viewed the terms corporate reputation and corporate image as different concepts (e.g. Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Fombrun, 1996; Gray & Balmer, 1998). They argued that the concept corporate image can mean falsehood or opposite to reality and therefore organisations should focus on the management of corporate reputations. In addition, O’Sullivan (1983) suggests that although the original meaning of image has been connected with a visual representation of reality, nowadays it generally refers to a fabrication or public impression created to appeal to the audience rather than to reproduce reality. He concludes that the term therefore implies a degree of falseness since the reality rarely matches up to the image (cited in Gotsi & Wilson, 2001; p. 26).

Having reviewed the literature lead the conclusion that the terms corporate image, corporate identity, and corporate reputation are interrelated and cannot be understood if considered in isolation. As Fombrun stated (1996: p. 11) “Reputations are partly a reflection of a company’s identity and image and partly the result of managers’ efforts to persuade us of their organization’s excellence”. A corporate reputation is a collective representation that describes the firm’s appeal to all of its key constituents’ (Fombrun, 1996; p.165). Therefore, in the context of this study, corporate reputation can be viewed as a roof rising above the columns including corporate image and corporate identity.

A variety of corporate reputation scales have been created but the most familiar is probably the Reputation Quotient (RQ) developed by Fombrun and the market research firm Harris Interactive (HI). The RQ measure includes 20 items relating products and services, emotional appeal, financial performance, social performance, vision and leadership, and workplace environment. Products and services dimension includes items that inquire quality, value, reliability perceptions of corporation’s products and services. Emotional appeal assesses how much the corporation is loved, appreciated, and respected. Financial performance consists of the perceptions of the monetary strength of the company including the expectations of the company, its risk and profitability perceptions. Social responsibility measures whether stakeholders feel the company is a responsible citizen that supports good causes and demonstrates accountability to the environment and community. Vision and leadership refers stakeholders’ feeling that the company has a clear vision for the future, effective leadership, and the capability to recognize and seize market opportunities. The vision that is clearly articulated and practiced by corporate leaders provides stakeholders with a sense of purpose and direction, which inspires public confidence and positive evaluation. Work environment refers to whether stakeholders believe the company is well managed, has a good workforce, and is a good place to work (Fombrun, 2000, 2004). The current study used the above six dimension of RQ since covers a variety of stakeholders perceptions and establish its empirical validity and reliability through cross cultural studies.

2. COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR

Although researchers describe CWB with various concepts such as delinquency (Hogan & Hogan; 1989); aggression (Baron & Neuman; 1996) deviance (Robinson & Bennett; 1995); incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999); mobbing/bullying (Zapf, 1999) the term generally encloses actions that workers engage in that harm their organization or organizational members. Collins & Griffin (1998) stated that in the present definitions of CWB, there is a consensus that the individuals exhibit lack of attention to explicit and implicit organizational rules, policies, and values. Another point common to the definitions of CWB is that employee intends to intentionally harm the organization. For instance, an individual who cannot do the job properly because s/he does not have the necessary knowledge and equipment should not be assessed as exhibiting CWB since the individual does not intentionally and purposefully perform poorly (Spector & Fox, 2005; p.152).

Researchers conceptualized and measured CWB in various ways. For instance, Hollinger & Clark (1983) divided CWBs into two dimensions known as property deviance (e.g. stealing company equipment and merchandise) and production deviance (e.g. taking excessive breaks, calling in sick when not). Robinson & Bennett (1995) added political deviance (e.g. gossiping about employees, starting negative rumours about company) and personal aggression (e.g. endangering co-workers by reckless behaviour, stealing co-worker's possessions) to these dimensions. On the other hand, Gruys & Sackett (2003) distinguished two main dimensions of the CWB as interpersonal-organizational and task relevance dimension and then examined these dimensions in 11 categories. These categories include theft and related behaviours, destruction of property, misuse of information, misuse of time and resources, unsafe behaviour, poor attendance, poor-quality work, alcohol use, drug use, inappropriate verbal action, and inappropriate physical action. After a while, Spector et al. (2006) has conceptualized CWB into five broad dimensions including abuse, sabotage, theft, production deviance and withdrawal. This study used the above five dimension of Spector et al. (2006) scale to measure CWB.

Past researches indicated various factors that may predict CWB. These include personality characteristics (e.g. Fox & Spector, 1999; Fox, et.al., 2001; Salgado, 2002; Dalal, 2005; Hough, 1992), job characteristics (e.g. Chen & Spector, 1992; Morf, et. al., 2017), organizational factors (e.g. Scheuer, M. L., 2010; Roy, 2012; Priesemuth, et. al., 2013; Fagbohunge, et. al., 2012). Some other studies have demonstrated that employees' beliefs about their organization being socially responsible have influence on CWB (Shin, et. al., 2017; Gond, et. al., 2007; Parks & Mount, 2005). The relationship between PCR and CWB can be explained via the arguments of social identity theory. According to the theory, individuals are tend to define their view of themselves with their membership of a specific social group and thus have a strong tendency to place great emphasis on the social activities carried out by their organization. When an employee recognize that his/her organization struggles to offer social benefits above and beyond meeting its legal obligations and maximizing profits for its shareholders, s/he become affectively involved in the organization to which they belong and, as a result, do not engage in CWB (Shin, et. al., 2017).

Reviewing the literature reveals that there some researches that suggests that employee perceptions of CR are related to their work attitudes and behaviours because each employee's sense of self is tied in part to that image employee's sense of self is tied in part to that image (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Riordan et al., 1997). Dutton & Dukerich (1991; p. 550) stated that "The relationship between individuals' senses of their organizational identity and image and their own sense of who they are and what they stand for suggests a very personal connection between organizational action and individual motivation". Riordan et al., (1997) offers empirical support for Dutton & Dukerich's (1991) reasoning and found clear evidence that employees' perception of corporate image influence both their job satisfaction and their intentions to leave. Besides, some researchers suggest that reputation influences recruitment outcomes because individuals seek to join groups and organizations to enhance their self-esteem (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Keller, 1993; Gatewood et al., 1993). Likewise, consumers are more attracted to products with positive brands because they need for social approval or self-esteem, individuals should be more likely to accept jobs at organizations with positive reputations because reputation affects the pride that individuals expect from organizational membership (Cable & Turban,

2003). It's apparent that individuals generally prefer to work in an organization with a reputable brand and a good reputation in order to raise their status and prestige in the society. Taking these arguments together, it is proposed that employees who have favourable perceptions of the organization will less engage in CWB. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Higher levels of employees' perceptions of CR will be negatively associated with abuse dimension of CWB.

H2: Higher levels of employees' perceptions of CR will be negatively associated with sabotage dimension of CWB.

H3: Higher levels of employees' perceptions of CR will be negatively associated with theft dimension of CWB.

H4: Higher levels of employees' perceptions of CR will be negatively associated with production deviance dimension of CWB.

H5: Higher levels of employees' perceptions of CR will be negatively associated with withdrawal dimension of CWB.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

Participants in this study were employees of companies in Marmara Region of Turkey. A total of 90 questionnaires were collected according to the preferences of managers (face to face interactions or electronic mail). A majority of the respondents (81, 2%) were male. As to the educational qualification, 43, 2 % had obtained a university degree. 44, 8% of the participants were aged between (31 – 40) years and the majority of the participants (49, 7%) with job tenure between (1– 5) years.

3.2. Data Analysis and Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations and correlations for all of the variables in this study. The results indicate that there is a negative correlation among employees' perception of CR and CWB.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistic, correlations and alpha reliabilities of the measures

Variables		Mean	Std D.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Perceived CR	1	3.68	1.73	-	-.329*	-.224**	-.177*	-.524*	-.312**
2. Abuse	2	2.80	0.99	-	-	-.278**	-.115**	-.346*	-.187*
3. Sabotage	3	2.38	1.89	-	-	-	-.296*	-.301**	-.419**
4. Theft	4	1.26	1.64	-	-	-	-	-.350*	-.102*
5. Production Deviance	5	2.21	2.31	-	-	-	-	-	-.290**
6. Withdrawal	6	3.11	2.54	-	-	-	-	-	-

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In order to investigate whether employees' perceptions of CR are predictors of CWBs, regression analysis was conducted (Table 3). The results revealed that perceived CR has negative effect on three dimensions of CWB including abuse ($\beta = -.323^*$) production deviance ($\beta = -.120^{**}$) and withdrawal ($\beta = -.241^*$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1, 4 and 5 was supported. Results did not show any significant relationship between perceived CR, sabotage and theft. Thus, Hypothesis 2 and 3 was not supported.

Table 2. The Impact of Employees' Perceptions of CR on CWB

VARIABLES					
Independents	Dependent	R ²	β	t	p
CR	Abuse	,551	-,323*	-6,71	0,000
CR	Sabotage	,116	-,148	-4,66	,103
CR	Theft	,308	,252	3,12	,065
CR	Production Deviance	,024	-,120**	,209	0,000
CR	Withdrawal	,274	-0,241*	-6,09	0,000

*Significant at 0,05 (one tailed)

**Significant at 0,01 (one tailed)

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study aims to investigate the relationship between employees' perceptions of CR and CWB. According to the results of the analysis H1, H4 and H5 that predict a negative relationship between perceived CR and the dimensions of CWB including abuse, production deviance and withdrawal is supported. On the other hand, the findings indicate no significant relationship between perceived CR and the dimensions of CWB including sabotage and theft. Therefore H2 and H3 are not supported.

Researchers who have studied CWB give emphasis to the role of negative emotions. Improving reputation perceptions in the eyes of employees may increase good feelings towards the company which in turn can lessen goal obstruction; violations of rules, norms, and promises; or attacks on power and status. As Men (2012; p. 172) stated "employees with good feelings towards the company, such as admiration, trust, and respect" are more willing to engage in organisational activities. It's apparent that individuals generally prefer to work in an organization with a reputable brand and a good reputation in order to raise their status and prestige in the society. Consequently, researchers agree that CR affects how employees behave and perform (Men, 2012; Davies, et. al., 2004; Helm, 2011) and in line with the past literature findings of this study indicate an empirical support for that PCR have a negative influence on employees' intentions to engage in CWB.

Some limitations of this study should be mentioned. Firstly, the study was conducted in Kocaeli, and the sampling of respondents involved maritime companies which might have an impact on generalizability. Second, as Fox & Spector (1999) argued, self-report methodology is essentially problematical in organizational behaviour research since respondents tend to give socially desirable responses. On the other hand, situational variables such as leadership style, organizational climate, personality types, perceived organizational justice, and work stress may also influence CWB and would be useful for future research to explore. Still, more research is needed on whether and how PCR is related to CWB and also more information can be extracted from research studies if measures of mediating and moderating variables are included in the study design.

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