

## Counterproductive behaviors: A case study of a private sports business<sup>1</sup>

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### **Abstract**

Counterproductive behavior (CB) is defined as intentional behavior against an organization or the partners in an organization. In the literature, it is commonly referred to as organizational deviation, which is a relatively new concept in Turkey. There is yet no study on sports businesses in the literature, which makes the current study very unique. The aim of this study is to examine the relationships between demographics and counterproductive behaviors in sports businesses. The study's sample includes 150 employees working at a private sports business in the Anatolian Side of İstanbul. The study was designed with a screening model. In the first part of the study, the participants provided demographic information. Next they completed the Counterproductive Behaviors Scale, which was developed by Bennett and Robinson (2010), and adapted into Turkish by Öztürk (2015). This instrument consisted of 2 sub dimensions. The reliability studies of the instrument were conducted for the current study. Percentage and frequency tests were used so as to determine the range of the participants' personal information. Kolmogorov-Smirnov's normality test was applied to examine whether the data had a normal distribution. Afterwards, the test results revealed that non-parametric tests were suitable for analysis ( $p < 0.05$ ). The Mann Whitney U Test was conducted to determine the significant differences for two-factor variables, and Kruskal Wallis was applied for three or more factor variables. A data analysis revealed no statistically significant differences between gender, marital status, employment type (payroll employment, contract labor, part-time employment), seniority, educational status, and counterproductive behaviors and the sub dimensions of counterproductive behaviors ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, a statistically significant difference was found between counterproductive behavior dimensions and age ( $X^2(2) = 10.135$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that participants between the ages of 26-30, especially participants in the younger part of that range, scored higher in the counterproductive behaviors dimension. In addition, a similar statistically significant difference was observed between employment positions and counterproductive behaviors ( $X^2(4) = 3.579$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), so the general services staff was found to score higher than others.

**Keywords:** Counterproductive behaviors, organizational deviation, organizational aberration, organizational behavior, private sports businesses

### **1. Introduction**

Globalization and competition force firms to develop and change (Kızıloğlu and Çelik, 2015:399). People spend most time for working during the day, so the work life is very important for employees (Bozyiğit and Durmuş, 2018). During the develop and change employees feel some stress (Göksel et al., 2017). And the stress sometimes causes negative behaviors.

### **2. Literature**

Counterproductive behaviors are defined as intentional behaviors towards an organization or other shareholders in organizations. In the literature, this concept is known as organizational deviance and is a relatively new research topic in Turkey. There was no such study on sport businesses, thus, our study is unique.

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Counterproductive behaviors can be defined as an employee's tendency to intentionally harm other employees or the organization (Spector & Fox, 2005; Barling et al., 2009:673). Based on the approach of Robinson and Greenberg (1998), and Sackett and DeVore (2001) "Counterproductive behaviors can be defined as all types of behaviors by organization members opposite to legitimate interest of the organization." The common point of this definition is that it focuses on the behaviors itself in the form of harm rather than consequences of the behavior. This definition only considers intentional behaviors, therefore unintentional actions that because negative results are excluded. Another property is the negative action of one employee towards other employee or organization. Therefore, intentional harms of an outsider (e.g. customers) are outside the scope (Gruys and Sackett, 2003:30). Small-scale counterproductive behaviors can negatively affect organizational operation (Robinson & Benett, 1995; Sackett, 2002) Therefore, organizations need to determine how to prevent such behaviors (Bolton et al., 2010:537).

Counterproductive behaviors were generally investigated in international literature (Appelbaum and Roy-Girard, 2007:22; Bolton et al., 2010:538; Appelbaum and Shapiro, 2006:14; Branch, 2008:4; Martinko et al., 2002:36; Ferris et al., 2009:279). However, negative behavior in workplace has different studies in the literature as transferred by Güllü and Şahin such as revenge (Bies, Tripp and Kramer, 1997), organizational deviance (Berry et al, 2007) , counterproductive work behaviors (Fox et al, 2007), mobbing (Leymann,1996), workplace terror (Neuman and Baron, 1998), workplace violence (Rogers and Kelloway, 1997), retaliation (Skarlicki and Folger, 1997), organizational sabotage (Di Battista, 1991; Ambrose et al, 2002), antisocial behaviors (Giacalone and Greenberg, 1997).

Although limited in Turkey, there are international studies relating work behavior to productivity/organizational deviance with various variables. Examples of counterproductive behaviors can be given as intentionally doing a task wrong, taking breaks without control, insulting each other, hitting each other, scolding each other, talking about a personal problem aloud during work hours, refraining from information sharing, gossiping, behaving to sabotage colleagues, vandalism, theft, aggressive behaviors, sexual harassment, sabotage, embezzling, riots, and withholding colleagues (Chirasha and Mahapa, 2012:415).

Figure 1. summarized the typology presented by Robinson and Bennett. As seen from the figure, deviance was considered in two dimensions, namely organizational and individual. Organizational dimension is considered under production deviance and deviance against ownership where individual dimension is considered under two dimensions such as political deviance and personal attack. This figure is important as it shows another dimension. Small-scale damages are divided as production deviance and political deviance where serious-scale damages are divided as deviance against ownership and personal attack. Robinson and Bennett united deviance between organizations and individual in conceptual form with these typologies and formed a bridge between separate two sections (Avci, 2008:41,42).

Production deviance consists of negative behaviors such as giving breaks longer than required, leaving work early, intentionally working slowly, and wasting resources. Equipment deviance consists of negative behaviors such as sabotaging materials of organization, stealing something from an organization, taking bribes, and claiming longer extra working hours than reality. Political deviance consists of negative behaviors such as favoritism in an organization, gossiping about colleagues, defamation, and unbeneficial competition. Personal conflict consists of negative behaviors

such as sexual harassment, swearing, stealing from colleagues, and putting a colleague in danger (İyigün and Çetin, 2012:17).

It can be seen that Counterproductive Behaviors Typology of Robinson and Bennett (1995) were adopted in various studies in Turkish literature (Dirican, 2013:21; Kırbaşlar, 2013:61; Örmeci, 2013:37; Yalap, 2016:33; Avcı, 2008:41; Bülbül, 2013:15; Behrem, 2017:45; Doğan ve Kılıç, 2014:117; Özüren, 2017:44; Demir, 2009:55; Demir, 2011; İyigün, 2011:59).

Figure 1. Deviated work behavior typology



In this approach, Robinson, and Bennett (1995) analysed individual behavior and organizational behavior in two groups and this approach is commonly adopted in counterproductive behaviors (Berry, Ones, Sackett, 2007). However, there are also other approaches. For example, Spector et al. (2006) contributed to literature with work Counterproductive behaviors dividing deviance behavior into five dimensions (Bolton et al., 2010:537).

- Abuse: Harmful and bad behaviors that affect others.
- Production Dysfunctionality: Intentionally making mistakes at work or letting mistakes.
- Sabotage: Destroying properties of organization.
- Theft: Taking someone else's goods or property in unrightfully way.
- Retreating: Avoiding job with being late and being absent.

On the other hand, according to Kelloway counterproductive work behaviors were considered under Protest Approach. Accordingly, work Counterproductive behaviors such as "sabotage", "theft", and "aggression" are considered as a type of tool or protest method to reach desired goals within organization. The Protest Approach of Kelloway et al. complies with deviant workplace behavior typology of Robinson and Bennett (1995). Kelloway stated that Robinson and Bennett failed to emphasize why these negative behaviors occur and proposed a model with four different behavior dimensions to tackle this gap (Özüren, 2017:47).

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- “Counterproductive behaviors targeting organization with individual movement”
- “Counterproductive behaviors targeting organization with collective movement”
- “Counterproductive behaviors targeting individuals with individual movement”
- “Collective movement with individual target”

The purpose of this study was to analyse the relationship between demographic variables in sport businesses and behavior against productivity. For this purpose, 150 employees in a private sport business in İstanbul voluntarily participated in this study

### 3. Methodology

This study adopted the survey model. The first section included questions regarding demographic information of participants. Additionally, Counterproductive Behaviors Scale consisting of 2 dimensions as counterproductive behaviors against organization and individuals developed by Bennett and Robinson (2000) and adapted to Turkish by (Öztürk, 2015) was adopted. An additional reliability analysis was conducted for this thesis.

Percentage (%) and frequency tests were conducted to determine the distribution of personal information of participants. To test whether the data had normal distribution, Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was applied. Accordingly, data were compliant with non-parametric test conditions ( $p < 0.05$ ) and Mann Whitney U Test for two factor variables and Kruskal Wallis test for three or more factor variables were conducted to identify significant differences.

### 4. Findings

When the scale core values were analysed, it can be seen that counterproductive behaviors tendency of sport business employees participating in this study were lower than average for general scale and sub-dimensions. When scale and sub-dimension reliability analysis was conducted, it was seen that scale had high Cronbach Alpha value and sub-dimension had relatively higher Cronbach Alpha value.

Table 1. Scale score values

	n	Mean	Variance	Standard deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Counterproductive behavior	19	24,980	28,020	5,2934	0,806
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	6	8,53	6,089	2,468	0,610
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	13	16,447	11,685	3,4183	0,746

When Kolmogorov Simirnov table was investigated to determine whether counterproductive behaviors scale and sub-dimensions had normal distribution, it was seen that neither scale nor sub-dimensions had normal distribution ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, non-parametric tests were required to determine whether demographic variables had significant difference with counterproductive behaviors scale and sub-dimensions. Mann Whitney U Test for two factor variables and Kruskal Wallis test for three or more factor variables were conducted to identify significant differences. Results were presented in the Table 4.

Table 2. Demographical properties of participants

		n	%
<b>GENDER</b>	Female	77	51,3%
	Male	73	48,7%
	Total	150	100,0%
<b>AGE</b>	Between the age of 21-25	6	4,0%
	Between the age of 26-30	54	36,0%
	Between the age of 31-35	51	34,0%
	Between the age of 36-40	39	26,0%
	Total	150	100,0%
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	Single	78	52,0%
	Married	72	48,0%
	Total	150	100,0%
<b>SENIORITY</b>	Between the year of 1-3	45	30,0%
	Between the year of 4-7	84	56,0%
	Between the year of 8-10	21	14,0%
	Total	150	100,0%
<b>EDUCATION</b>	Primary education	14	9,3%
	High school	37	24,7%
	Associate degree	19	12,7%
	Undergraduate	55	36,7%
	Master	25	16,7%
	Total	150	100,0%
<b>WORK VARIABLE</b>	Regular	87	58,0%
	Contracted	63	42,0%
	Total	150	100,0%
<b>POSITION</b>	High-level managers	39	26,0%
	Specialist	31	20,7%
	Education personnel	21	14,0%
	Office personnel	19	12,7%
	General service personnel	40	26,7%
	Total	150	100,0%

Table 3. Counterproductive behaviors scale sub-dimensions Normality Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Counterproductive behavior	0,153	150	0,000
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	0,189	150	0,000
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	0,215	150	0,000

Kruskal-Wallis test results for age variable of participants were presented. Based on the analysis results, there was statistical difference for counterproductive behaviors ( $X^2(2)=10.13$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against organization sub-dimension ( $X^2(2)=22.50$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) of participants. Participants between 26-30 years old who were relatively younger, had higher scores than counterproductive behaviors dimension and counterproductive behaviors against organization sub-dimension. On the other hand, there was no significant difference for counterproductive behaviors against individuals sub-dimension. ( $X^2(2)=0.84$ ;  $p>0.05$ )

Table 4. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for age variable

	Age	n	Mean Rank	df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
Counter productive behavior	Between the age of 26-30	54	85,50	2	10,13	<b>0,01*</b>
	Between the age of 31-35	51	69,58			
	Between the age of 36-40	39	58,32			
	Total	144				
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	Between the age of 26-30	54	74,18	2	0,84	0,66
	Between the age of 31-35	51	74,65			
	Between the age of 36-40	39	67,37			
	Total	144				
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	Between the age of 26-30	54	92,12	2	22,50	<b>0,00*</b>
	Between the age of 31-35	51	66,21			
	Between the age of 36-40	39	53,56			
	Total	144				

Table 5. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for position variable

	Position	n	Mean Rank	df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
Counterproductive behavior	High-Level Managers	39	67,97	4	3,579	0,466
	Specialist	31	83,15			
	Education personnel	21	69,50			
	Office personnel	19	71,71			
	General Service Personnel	40	81,86			
	Total	150				
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	High-Level Managers	39	61,91	4	10,329	<b>0,035*</b>
	Specialist	31	85,40			
	Education personnel	21	63,02			
	Office personnel	19	76,76			
	General Service Personnel	40	87,03			
	Total	150				
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	High-Level Managers	39	73,95	4	0,952	0,917
	Specialist	31	77,53			
	Education personnel	21	79,90			
	Office personnel	19	68,18			
	General Service Personnel	40	76,60			
	Total	150				

Table 6. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for gender variable

	Gender	n	Mean Rank	Z	p
Counterproductive behavior	Female	77	74,08	-0,41248	0,680
	Male	73	76,99		
	Total	150			
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	Female	77	72,01	-1,0266	0,305
	Male	73	79,18		
	Total	150			
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	Female	77	76,68	-0,35037	0,726
	Male	73	74,26		
	Total	150			

The Man Whitney-U test was performed at  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance level to determine whether there was a significant difference between counterproductive behaviors tendency level of participants and sub-dimensions for gender.

The test results indicated that, there was no significant difference between male and female counterproductive behaviors tendencies for counterproductive behaviors ( $z=-0.41248$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against individuals ( $z=-1.0266$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), and counterproductive behaviors against organization ( $z=-0.35037$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) sub-dimensions.

Table 7. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for marital status variable

	Marital status	n	Mean Rank	Z	p
Counterproductive behavior	Single	78	76,73	-0,363	0,716
	Married	72	74,17		
	Total	150			
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	Single	78	74,68	-0,244	0,806
	Married	72	76,39		
	Total	150			
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	Single	78	78,67	-0,958	-0,958
	Married	72	72,06		
	Total	150			

The Man Whitney-U test was performed at  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance level to determine whether there was a significant difference between counterproductive behaviors tendency level of participants and sub-dimensions for marital status.

The test results indicated that there was no significant difference between married and single Counterproductive behaviors tendency for counterproductive behaviors ( $z=-0.363$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against individuals ( $z=-0.244$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), and counterproductive behaviors against organization ( $z=-0.958$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) sub-dimensions.

Table 8. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for work type variable

	Work variable	n	Mean Rank	Z	p
Counterproductive behavior	Regular	87	73,18	-0,772	0,439
	Contracted	63	78,70		
	Total	150			
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	Regular	87	74,82	-0,228	0,819
	Contracted	63	76,44		
	Total	150			
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	Regular	87	72,06	-1,174	0,240
	Contracted	63	80,25		
	Total	150			

The Man Whitney-U test was performed at  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance level to determine whether there was a significant difference between counterproductive behaviors tendency level of participants and sub-dimensions for work type.

The test results indicated that, there was no significant difference between regular and contracted worker counterproductive behaviors tendency for counterproductive behaviors ( $z=-0.772$ ;

$p > 0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against individuals ( $z = -0.248$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ), and counterproductive behaviors against organization ( $z = -1.174$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) sub-dimensions.

Table 9. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for seniority variable

	Seniority	n	Mean Rank	df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
Counterproductive behavior	Between the year of 1-3	45	75,16	2	2,77	0,250
	Between the year of 4-7	84	79,15			
	Between the year of 8-10	21	61,64			
	Total	150				
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	Between the year of 1-3	45	73,93	2	3,96	0,140
	Between the year of 4-7	84	80,27			
	Between the year of 8-10	21	59,76			
	Total	150				
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	Between the year of 1-3	45	77,23	2	0,64	0,730
	Between the year of 4-7	84	76,26			
	Between the year of 8-10	21	68,76			
	Total	150				

The Kruskal-Wallis test results for seniority variable of participants were presented. Based on analysis results, seniority levels had no significant difference for counterproductive behaviors ( $X^2(2) = 2.77$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against individuals sub-dimension ( $X^2(2) = 3.96$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) and counterproductive behaviors against organizations sub-dimension ( $X^2(2) = 0.64$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

Table 10. Participation ratio for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for education status variable

	Education	n	Mean Rank	df	X <sup>2</sup>	P
Counterproductive behavior	Primary education	14	99,32	4	5,376	0,251
	High school	37	75,76			
	Associate degree	19	70,71			
	Undergraduate	55	74,54			
	Master	25	67,54			
	Total	150				
Counterproductive behaviors against individuals	Primary education	14	95,57	4	8,175	0,085
	High school	37	85,81			
	Associate degree	19	65,32			
	Undergraduate	55	71,53			
	Master	25	65,48			
	Total	150				
Counterproductive behaviors against organization	Primary education	14	97,86	4	5,842	0,211
	High school	37	66,72			
	Associate degree	19	79,84			
	Undergraduate	55	75,47			
	Master	25	72,74			
	Total	150				



The Kruskal-Wallis test results for seniority variable of participants were presented. Based on analysis results, education levels had no significant difference for counterproductive behaviors ( $X^2(4)=5.376$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against individuals sub-dimension ( $X^2(4)=8,175$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) and counterproductive behaviors against organizations sub-dimension ( $X^2(4)=5,842$ ;  $p>0.05$ ).

The Kruskal-Wallis test results for position variable of participants were presented. Based on analysis results, there were statistical differences for counterproductive behaviors ( $X^2(4)=3.579$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), counterproductive behaviors against organization sub-dimension ( $X^2(4)=0.952$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) of participants. However, there was statistically significant difference for counterproductive behaviors against individuals sub-dimension ( $X^2(4)=10,329$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). General service personnel had higher scores compared to other personnel.

## 5. Discussion

Lower counterproductive behaviors of sport business employees analysed under this study on scale level and sub-dimension levels can be seen as a positive result. It is believed that being a sport business, providing different dynamism to organization, and involvement of participants with sports presented these positive results. Based on the results of the findings, there was no significant difference for counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions for gender, marital status, work type (regular, contracted, part-time), seniority, and education level ( $p>0.05$ ).

Change in counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimension participation ratio for age variable is compliant with higher scores of younger participants for counterproductive behaviors dimension and counterproductive behaviors against organization sub-dimension. According to Demir (2009: 61, 62), demographic variables such as age, marital status, education level, and gender have an effect on organizational deviance behavior. For example, Kwok, Au, and Ho (2005) stated that young employees and employees with lower seniority in organization had higher tendency for deviance behavior under negative behaviors as they lack organizational loyalty under current conditions.

Additionally, people mature with age and gain calmer approach skills. Tendency for negative behaviors in younger age can be linked with higher expectations. As individuals get older, they can accept their current situation easily and have the tendency to be forgiving for fights and negative events in the workplace. Higher counterproductive behaviors tendency of younger participants and lower counterproductive behaviors tendency for older participants in this study can be explained in this manner.

On the other hand, when counterproductive behaviors and sub-dimensions participation ratio for position variable was investigated, there was statistically significant difference for counterproductive behaviors against individuals sub-dimension ( $X^2(4)=10.329$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). General service personnel had higher scores compared to other personnel. This result may be linked with lower education and awareness level of general service personnel. Lowest Counterproductive behaviors tendency of upper management compared to other positions may be explained with education and awareness level for that position. It could be stated that these individuals prevent turning problems in workplace or with colleagues into negative behavior and present a professional behavior. Additionally, it could be said that managers perform what is expected and prevent financial or immaterial losses to organization.

## 6. Result and conclusion

Preventing development of negative deviance behavior within workplace and promoting positive workplace behavior that contributes to organizational objective is critical for long-term success of an organization. Evaluating rules, perspectives, and social value restructure of an organization is vital for employees with deviance behavior (Appelbaum et al., 2007:596). Organizations need to take precautions to minimize negative behaviors. This is necessary for workplace peace and comfort as well as to decrease financial costs for organizations.

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