

ABSTRACT

Workplace deviance is a major cause of concern for organizations. It leads to an unpleasant work environment and decreases productivity of the organizational members. It causes considerable financial and reputational losses for the organizations. The severe negative consequences and the changing nature of work and workplaces make it an organizationally relevant topic. It thus, merits the attention of researchers and practitioners in this area.

The research in this thesis comprehends the vast literature in the field. It advances the discussion with respect to the actors involved (perpetrator, organization, and victim) in workplace deviance and the changing nature of workplace deviance. Overall understanding of workplace deviance and comprehending the nuances which come with every deviant act, become critical to develop significant insights to deal with workplace deviance.

The research was undertaken: (a) to synthesize the extensive past research in the field with respect to conceptualization and measurement of workplace deviance, and the factors affecting it along with the associated theories, (b) to explore how organizations identify, understand and deal with deviant behavior along with its changing nature, (c) to determine the factors influencing workplace deviance and their interrelationships and (d) to investigate victim's coping response with a deviant act of workplace sexual harassment (WSH) and their resulting use of social media as an empowered outcome. A mixed method approach, using qualitative literature review, interviews, modified total interpretive structural modelling and survey, was adopted for the research.

The qualitative literature review of the last 18 years indicates that a considerable amount of work has been done in this field. The area has evolved with respect to the conceptualization, measurement and method used to study the field. Diverse sets of theories have been used to understand deviance. The field has evolved conceptually with a significant number of studies

using the interaction between individual and situational variables to understand the process of deviance. The review highlights a need for adoption of mixed methods to understand workplace deviance.

Findings from this research highlight that acts of workplace deviance pose considerable challenge for organizations. It discusses the parameters used by organizations to identify and understand deviance at workplace. It reflects upon the changing nature of the deviant acts due to the new vectors, such as technological literacy, social media, surveillance, flexibility, anonymity and transparency at workplace. A hierarchical framework between the antecedents of workplace deviance is presented, which allows for a better understanding of the cascading effects of different pathways leading to deviance and the possible points of address. A deeper exploration into a specific (and widely acknowledged) act of WSH highlights the interplay of the antecedents helping the victim of WSH to cope with the experience. In doing so, it offers potential areas of understanding the role of social media for WSH victims. Social media is likely to be used as a resource by victims who engage in active coping and believe in interactional empowerment through online community. The research also highlights the factors that help individuals in responding to WSH. Finally, the research provides insights into the attempts made towards preventive and reactive management of the deviant acts at workplace. The specific HR practices help to understand the possibilities of arresting workplace deviance before it becomes normalized in the organization. Proper bundling of HR practices, if adopted, keeping the interrelationships between factors of deviance and pillars of normalization under consideration, could help in dealing with the issue of workplace deviance. However, these HR practices bundles should be consistent with each other and aligned to the organizational goals and principles. Further, the research also highlights the need to minimize the gap between the intended and implemented practices to reduce the chances of normalization of deviance in the organization. Consistency amongst practices and

across organizational departments could facilitate effective implementation and enhance the intended and actual effects of HR practices. These findings have significant implications for theory and practice.

Keywords: counterproductive work behavior, human resource practices, normalization of deviance, social media, workplace deviance, workplace sexual harassment