



Influence of Work Experience and Job Stressor on Textile and Apparel Factory Managers' Negative Workplace Behavior

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Managers' psychologically defensive practices have been a major concern for many years to the media and to researchers (Ashkanasy et al., 2016). Research shows that such practices are a common scenario in the apparel manufacturing sector because of the expanding global sourcing and supply chain structure, buyers' negligence of labor regulation and workplace conditions, and the difficulties in monitoring apparel manufacturing sites located offshore (Haque & Azmat, 2015). Labor compliance or codes of conduct are supposed to assess factories' commitment to proper labor management and safe working conditions. However, most compliance or code of conduct reports focus on the macro-level compliance likelihood, leaving little insight into how workers are exposed to different types of managers' negative behavioral attitudes.

According to Allcorn and Diamond (1997), when an organization does not promote security, risk-taking, autonomy, self-esteem, and/or self-integrity, the employees in that organization tends to defend themselves psychologically which is called psychologically defensive workplace behavior (PDWB). The authors proposed a theoretical model that includes three major PDWB: (a) perfectionist practice (PF) [described as authoritarian and hyper-critical]; (b) arrogant-vindictive practice (AV) [described as unethical and manipulative]; and (c) narcissistic practice (NP) [described as non-cooperative and whimsical]. The authors proposed that this classification clarifies the negative behavioral attitudes of the upper management. Crawshaw (2005) has used this classification to study how to train abrasive managers to become less abusive in the workplace. This classification could also be useful in the labor-intensive manufacturing sector of the global textile and apparel industry (TAI) in which abusive managerial practices are often observed (Thul, 2015). Years of experience and job stress induced from workload play a key role in the inception of PDWB, leading to job dissatisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). In the TAI setting, the workload typically depends on the number of workers to supervise and the volume of work orders. Therefore, this study was designed to explore whether such work experience and job stressors would be related to managers' PDWB in TAI.

An online survey was used to collect the data in February 2018. The target samples were from Bangladesh which is the second largest textile and apparel exporting country of the world. For this study, some sample criteria were established: (a) the participant needed to be in a TAI supervisory role, (b) needed to have at least 2 years of work experience, and (c) needed to be in the current company for at least 6 months. In Bangladesh, 2 years is the typical time for an employee to be in a senior role and 6 months to be a permanent employee of that organization (Bdjobs, 2017). The measures for psychologically defensive workplace behavior have been adopted from Allcorn and Diamond (1997) who proposed a list of characteristics commonly

exhibits by each psychologically defensive employee. A set of 5 items have been constructed from the given attributes for each psychologically defensive workplace behavior to assess the level of psychologically defensive practice using a 5-point Likert scale. Prior constructing these set of measurement items, Cronbach's alpha (.66) has been measured for each set of items to select the best possible items and to measure the scale reliability. A total of 299 responses were recorded. Among them 94 responses were not counted due to not meeting the sample criteria, incomplete survey and missing values and 205 responses were used in the final data analysis. The total dataset was divided into two groups based on the mean of each independent variable. Years of experience was divided into two groups: above 6 years (89 response) and below 6 years (116 response). Number of workers was divided into two groups: above 5 workers (107 response) and below 5 workers (98 response). Volume of order was divided into two groups: above 1 million pieces (121 response) and below 1 million pieces (84 response).

Three sets of independent t-tests were used to investigate the difference in PDWB between two groups of the independent variables (years of experience, number of workers, and volume of order). The Shapiro Wilks test satisfied the normality assumption and the Levene test confirmed the assumption of homogeneity of variance in all the cases ($p > 0.05$). The result of t-test for differences in PDWB between two groups of sales volumes suggests that the Arrogant-Vindictive PDWB in above 1 million pcs group ($M = 3.26$; $SD = 0.69$) is significantly higher than that in below 1 million pcs group ($M = 2.97$; $SD = 0.62$) [$t(205) = 10.290$, $p = 0.002$]. There was no statistically significant difference in Perfectionist PDWB [$M = 4.26$; $SD = 0.56$] and Narcissistic PDWB [$M = 3.77$; $SD = 0.50$] behavior in these two groups. The results of t-test for differences in PDWB between two groups of years of experience suggests that there was no significant difference between two groups of above 6 years of work experience and below 6 years of work experience in terms of the three PDWB ($p > 0.10$). Finally, the results of t-test for differences in PDWB between two groups of volume of order suggests that there was no significant difference between two groups of above 1 million pieces order volume and below 1 million pieces order volume in terms of the three PDWB ($p > 0.10$).

The results show an interesting finding that is relevant to the actual scenario in TAI. Although there were no significant differences in other job stressors, when supplier managers have to complete large order volume (i.e. more than 1 million pieces in this case), they tend to be more strict, manipulative, and even become unethical, which falls under the Arrogant-Vindictive behavior. This is a crucial information for the foreign buyers to aware as they would like to have their products manufactured in ethical and labor-law compliant factories. It seems too much of the workload makes the managers behave unethically and that is precisely opposite of what buyers want to see. Therefore, buyers need to be more careful while doing large volume business with such suppliers. Other job stressor, such as the number of workers and years of experience, showed statistically insignificant effect on PDWB. Future research could be done on suppliers from other manufacturing countries and examine if they project the similar PDWB characteristics that suppliers in Bangladesh projected.

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