

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Work Locus of Control as a Moderator of Relationship between Work Stressor and Counter Productive Work Behavior

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study was conducted to determine whether the work locus of control is a moderator of the relationship between counterproductive behavior at work and work stressors.

**Methods:** To investigate this relationship, 346 full-time working adults employed at Nishter hospital Multan and Allied hospital Faisalabad were surveyed during the period from January 2019 to January 2020 via three checklist questionnaires. Using hierarchical regression analysis, both main and moderator effect were tested in order to determine whether work locus of control influence employee's tendencies engage in counterproductive behavior in response to work stressors.

**Results:** Shows that the work locus of control interacts significantly with work stressors in predicting counterproductive behavior at work, suggesting that the work locus of control is an important variable to consider when studying productive behavior at work. The implications of these findings and ideas for future research are discussed.

**Conclusion:** CWB has a detrimental effect on organizations and individuals related with the organization; therefore, organizations should be attentive of the probable influences influencing employee participation in CWB.

**Keywords:** Counterproductive behavior at work, Deviations in the workplace, Location of control in the workplace, Stress at work, Personality

## INTRODUCTION

Counterproductive behavior in the workplace or in CWB denotes to deliberate behavior by workers that troubles organization members or the organization itself (Rotundo Spector, 2010). If a worker is not present at work due to ailment or a family reserve, this must not deliberate as CWB. The employee's absence made difficult for the supervisor or co-worker is considered the employee's absence.

Absence from your job can often have undesirable significances. But the variance amid the two instances mentioned above is that the 1<sup>st</sup> is the involuntary absence and the second is deliberate absence. Moreover, if it is found that an employee is trying to achieve better job performance, CWB does not cover poor job performance. The reason why an employee is not doing well is simply because there is no such possibility and ability. If an employee deliberately slows down while working, poor performance can be considered CWB (Rotundo and Spector, 2010).

Personality factors and work stress are clearly related variables because they affect employees. Personality can impact how a worker responds and interprets to the various work-related stresses they practice. The two variables are associated as personality can impact the method employees interpret and retort to work stressors. Current studies have shown that personality can be measured a probable moderator in the association amid the CWB and work stressor (eg Bowling and Eschleman, 2010). This ensures that it is significant to study the interactive impacts of personality and work stressors in the CWB.

McCrae and Costa (1987) introduced the five-factor model of personality. It is also known as to pays close attention how personality can be related with CWB. Various analysis has provided suggestion that the five major proportions are related to CWB (for example, Salgado, 2002) and that some proportions of the five major dimensions may be differently related to CWB-I and CWB-O in a study by Mount et al., 2006.

Rotter in 1990 shows that the LOC refers to the degree at which individuals believe they have control over the events that affect them. It is usually divided into external and internal LOCs. Individuals with a high internal LOC, also known as internal, have faith in that the results are their own actions and behavior, while those with a high external LOC classified as external have faith that the results are the result of fate or luck. It is dependent on other people or are unpredictable (Rotter, 1990).

**Problem statement:** There is a serious problem with the emergence of counterproductive work-related behavior in the Punjab hospitals in Pakistan. In addition to productive behavior at work, employees also exhibit counter-productive behavior at work. Possible reasons for this behavior are a large power distance in management, high burnout and widespread exclusion from the workplace.

Taking into account the existing literature and theories, the following hypotheses were formulated.

- 1 Workplace stressors will be positively associated with counter-productive behavior at work.
- 2 Workplace stressors will be related to the work locus of control.
- 3 Work locus control will look at unproductive behavior at work.
- 4 Maintaining work locus control will make it easier to link stress at work with counterproductive behavior at work.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

Participants in this study were engaged from a group of full-time nursing and teaching staff from university hospitals in Punjab, Pakistan. 346 potential participants were selected using a questionnaire adapted from Sprung (2011). Among these participants, 177 completed questionnaires were used for analysis of data, with a 43% response rate. The investigator alienated the contributors into 3 main groups, i.e., the participants age was 21-29 (38.3%), 30-45 (51.4%) and 40+ (10%) years, with a S.D of 25.88, 43.16 and 47.89, respectively. The usual work experience of the participants was 8.5 years with 6.3 S.D. Most of the members are men (54.2%). The occupations represented in this sample were health departments and teaching or nursing staff.

Subsequently the Levene's test statistic value of is less than the critical value, we do not reject the null hypothesis at a 0.05 value which was quite significant (see Table 5). The one-way anova result showed no substantial variance among females and males,  $F(1,175) = 0.306, p > 0.05$ .

**Instruments:** The Spector WLC scale (shortened form) (i.e. the standard value is  $\alpha = 0.72$ ) was used to measure the working LOC (Spector 1988). Employs CW evolution comprised with a total of 8 items. Half of the elements mirror the external LOC and the other half the inner LOC.

Table 1: Demographics

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean±SD
Age			
21-29	46	38.3	25.88±2.293
30-45	62	51.7	34.16±2.919
40>	12	10	47.89±6.846
Sex			
Male	96	54.2	
Female	81	45.8	
Job Tenure (years)			6.21±6.825
0-10	100	82.6	
20-Nov	13	10.7	
21-30	8	6.6	

Table 2: Test of homogeneity of variances

Work stress	LeveneStatistic	df1	df2	Sig.
	2.897	1	175	0.091

**Counter-productive behavior at work:** A CWB 33-point checklist (i.e., standard value of  $\alpha = 0.9$ ) was used to measure CWB (Spector et al., 2006). A multifaceted CWB score will represent behavior in all of these metrics, providing future clues for any organizational setting, such as "guidance for people in the workplace" or information about situational behavior.

**Work Stress:** By the quantitative workload inventory of Jexand Spector (1998) (ie, standard value  $\alpha = 0.89$ ); Workload was measured. This scale includes five items that measure the amount of work that the participant has to do in the workplace. Each item is an expression of the participant's effort.

A questionnaire of approximately 20 minutes was used which confined the demographic information and variables from the questionnaire. Before responding to the questionnaire, participants were requested to accept and sign informed consent. Participants were then completed a questionnaire, starting by entering their contact number and name as an identification form. I have received a contact number to confirm additional procedures. Participants were also enquired to provide demographic information to compare and separate respondents. After this procedure, the respondent's name becomes an anonymous identity to protect the identity of the participants.

## RESULTS

Table 3: Crosstabs

Work stress CBW		Valid		Missing		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%
	177	51.2	169	48.8	346	100

Additionally, we performed the Shapiro-Wilk normality tests and the data appears to be normally dispersed as it trails the diagonal line and does not seem to have a non-linear pattern,  $p > 0.05$ . There was a statistically significant, moderately positive correlation between the scores on both scales,  $r = 0.233$ ,  $p < 0.5$  and  $0.001$ , which designates that stress at work is significantly positively connected to counterproductive behavior at work.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for Work related stress and Work locus of control

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Work stress	3.6186	.6506	177
Work locus	4.8333	.4082	177

This time Spearman's rho was used because the locus scale data exhibited no linearity. According to the results of the analysis, the word locus of control (internal-external) was significantly associated with occupational stressors, and the relationship was positive,  $r_s = 0.204$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Our 2<sup>nd</sup> hypothesis was also established.

Table 4: Partial correlations

Control variables			Workstress	CWBC
Locus total	Workstress	Correlation	1	0.498
		p	.	.000*
		df	0	176
	CWBC	Correlation	0.498	1
		p	.000*	.
		df	176	0

After analyzing the overall score of the CWB scale, together with the work stress and the work locus of control, we wanted to see how the CWB subscales relate to these variables. We found two dimensions represented in the CWB organization subscale and the CWB-person subscale. As can be seen in Table 3, we find many different correlations. The organization of CWB was positively and significantly correlated with CWB employees, work stress and the CWB aggregate. The CWB subjects only had a significant and positive relationship with CWB-org, but still had a strong positive relationship with the worklocus and a very weak relationship with workstress.

Table 5: Correlations

	CWB-org	CWB-pers	Work locus	Work stress	CWB-total
CWB-org	1	.171*	-0.27	.257**	.284**
CWB-pers	.171*	1	0.488	0.02	0.121
Work locus	-0.27	0.488	1	.204*	0.174
Work stress	.257**	0.02	.204*	1	.233*
CWB-total	.284**	0.121	0.174	.233*	1

Note: \* the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. \*\* correlation is significant at the level of 0.01

The next pair of analyzes were aimed at answering questions about probable differences amid the groups. In the initial analysis, our dependent variable on the one-way ANOVA was the level of occupational stress and our independent variable was the age of the participant at three levels (see Table 4). We found no major effects for the age under study  $F(2, 120) = 1.004$ ,  $p > 0.05$

Table 6: Demographic

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Mean±SD
Age			
21-29	46	38.3	25.88±2.293
30-45	62	51.7	34.16±2.919
40>	12	10	47.89±6.846
Sex			
Male	96	54.2	
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We conducted our third one-way ANOVA to control the differences between participants' counterproductive behavior at work and gender. We found significant results,  $F(1, 175) = 41.879$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . If we look closely at the results, we can see that the women in our sample (mean = 3.3519, SD = 0.8819) showed significantly higher levels of counterproductive behavior at work than men (mean = 2.3854, SD = 1.07233).

## DISCUSSION

In this study, we first tried to answer 4 questions. 1<sup>st</sup>, the investigator tried to investigate the nature of the association amid work stress and self-deprecating behavior. It was assumed that the association between them would be related positively and such an outcome was originated. As counterproductive behavior denotes to employee behavior that harms their workplaces and

organizations, it is believed that high levels of stress in the workplace will be associated with high levels of unproductive behavior, and the data suggest such an association. Though moderate, this substantial association presented us that high levels of work stress can upsurge counter-productive behavior. In other words, increased work-related stress is related with an increase in self-destructive behavior. This is a phenomenon that should be addressed in future research.

All these results suggest that we should use more scales and factors to explore the true nature and consequences of self-destructive behavior in future research. This behavior can lead to more serious and permanent problems in the workplace. Monitoring and analyzing this data can be vital in adequately helping people with high levels of stress and self-destructive behaviors.

One possible explanation for the relationship between a functioning LOC and CBWB is that people with an outside LOC may attempt to change their environment and upsurge their sense of control by resorting to destructive activities (Allen and Greenberger, 1980). Once frustrated, staffs working outside the LOC can use any CWB to control their environment. These destructive actions can help the employee avoid feeling helpless. In turn, trainees can find more productive ways to deal with frustration, such as communicating with a supervisor or a colleague. This means that CWB can function as a method for outsiders to increase their perception of control over their work environment.

Finally, it has been suggested that LOC at work is moderately related to stress at work and the NEO. It has been hypothesized that a higher level of work-related stress is associated with an upsurge in both CWB forms, and the consequence will be stronger in the case of people outside the workplace.

**Limitations:** Application of the self-report measure, cross-section design

## CONCLUSION

CWB has an unfavorable effect on organizations and persons related with the organization; Therefore, organizations should be conscious of the probable reasons influencing employer participation in CWB. This analysis delivers the first indication that the LOC study is a significant variable to ponder for CWB; The LOC of the work showed significant CWB effects as well as interactions with occupational stressors in forecasting CWB even afterward governing the overall LOC. As this study results are counterintuitive and different from preceding analysis, upcoming studies are fortified to wholly comprehend the role of the LOC study in predicting CWB.

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