Personality Traits and Counterproductive Work Behavior: Moderator Effect of Perceived Organizational Support

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Abstract: The present research initiative has been taken to explore the factors leading to counterproductive work behavior. From the existing literature review, personality traits have been chosen to examine as the potential antecedents of counterproductive work behavior. While perceived organizational support is used as the moderator in the relationship between personality traits and counterproductive work behavior. The statistical findings showed that emotional stability, a personality trait was also found to be significantly and negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior. Findings revealed that perceived organizational support had moderating effects in reducing organizational deviant behaviors in conjunction with agreeableness and consciousness. The output of this study provided significant insights regarding the causes of CWBs in organizations. If organizations know about the reasons of CWBs, they can work proactively to avoid such types of occurrences; they can take steps to improve the relationships with the employees so that the employees feel more supported and valued by them and ultimately deviance behavior will be reduced.

1. Introduction

Counterproductive work behaviors are “volitional acts that harm or are intended to harm organizations or people in organizations” [48]. The literature in this area has frequently focused on counterproductive work behavior’s dispositional and situational antecedents [8, 20, 33, 53]. Some research has focused on examining both counterproductive work behavior that is targeted towards individuals and counterproductive work behavior that is targeted towards the organization as a whole [4, 5]. Other research has examined the complex relationship between counterproductive work behavior both as an emotion-based response and a cognition-based response to perceived injustice [20, 21, 47]. The presence of counterproductive work behavior can undermine the organization’s efforts to build and maintain customer loyalty, as evidenced by the ability of such behaviors to cost organizations millions of dollars a year [34]. Employees who interact with customers play the roles of both businessperson and friend [27]. Counterproductive work behaviors can be a violation of social trust; in many cases, a simple apology may be the foundation upon which customer loyalty may be rebuilt, following perceived organizational transgressions [50]. Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) are an expensive phenomenon for an organization, costing over four billion dollars in addition to human-related costs such as low morale and turnover [24]. Even inoffensive, low-intensity CWBs can have an effect on targets, including decreased job satisfaction, job withdrawal, and increased psychological distress [13]. Both situational and individual differences can prelude counterproductive work behaviors, depending on the cognitive processing of the offender [38].

Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) encompasses a wide range of workers’ negative behaviours that threaten the survival, productivity and other legitimate objectives of an organization. The most researched counterproductive work behaviour include absenteeism [28], theft [24,25], sabotage [47], drug use [30], and overt acts of aggression or extreme apathy [38,47]. During the last decade, research on these behaviors has been extensively diverse. As a result, the term ‘counterproductive work behaviour’ became the umbrella of any negative behaviour that is directed against the workplace such as antisocial behaviours [47], delinquency [30] deviance, retaliation (47) or revenge [7]. Indeed, the Middle East has been essentially left out of the recent surge of international and cross-cultural research. For example, an analysis of all articles from the Journal of International Business Studies from 2009 to 2013 reveals that less than one percent of the 436 articles published in the decade focused on a Muslim country in the Middle East. Indeed, only a handful of organizational scholars have focused on managerial similarities and differences across borders and within countries in this part of the world [54]). The limited research in the Middle East region is attributed to several factors
such as burgeoning research costs, funding difficulties, cultural limitations which limit access to the adult population (particularly with females), and data gathering problems that range from sampling to fieldwork issues [48,49]. As there is a paucity of research on this area, the present research tries to explore the link between personality traits of employees and counterproductive work behavior in conjunction with perceived organizational support. So the main objective is to examine the effects of personality traits on CWBs; and to analyze the moderating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between personality traits and counterproductive work behavior.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Personality Traits

Typically, personality is conceptualized in terms of a small set of enduring characteristics, labelled “factors” or “dimensions” which affect the ways in which an individual acts in different circumstances [11]. The Big-Five personality dimensions [22] represent the culmination of more than 40 years of research on the emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal and motivational disposition of individuals [55]. The five factor personality taxonomy comprising of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and imagination/intellect has been consistently used to describe personality in a variety of empirical settings within different contexts [14, 29]. Its contribution has been such that it is said to represent a valid measure of personality at the global level [17,40]. Given the instrument’s common frame of reference and measurement, there has been a renewed interest in examining the predictive role of an individual’s dispositional characteristics on job related constructs such as performance, satisfaction, turnover, unusual behavior and training [41]. In particular, a series of meta-analyses during the past 15 years have confirmed that personality measures are valid predictors of job performance in many business contexts [32,35, 46]. These meta analyses suggest an emergent consensus that Big-Five traits have been found to be significant predictors of job performance in jobs requiring interpersonal interaction between employees or customers, [40] often a significant characteristic of organizational deviant behavior [52]. In this study the link between personality traits and counterproductive work behavior has been considered.

2.2 Agreeableness

Individuals that score high on agreeableness are likely to be good-natured, friendly, cooperative, courteous, trusting, flexible, altruistic and tolerant [2]. These individuals possess cooperative values, a preference for developing positive inter-personal relationships, and are likely to seek support from social networks [16,51]. As such, this trait may assist in fostering cooperative working relationships as agreeableness will inhibit an individual’s willingness to drive hard bargains or manipulate others for personal gain [55]. This has some support in the commercial friendships literature [42,43] in which business “friends” were found to more likely to possess open and helpful attitudes, and display ongoing loyalty to their business partners. Moreover, agreeable individuals who are more likely to develop friendships with their peers are less likely to encounter role conflict between intrinsic and instrumental motives [23]. Individuals scoring high on this dimension will tend to accept suggestions, be mindful of the needs, motivations and skills of others and will consider other people’s ideas [30]. Moreover, agreeableness is specifically related to communication, trust and respect in team environments and organizational morale. In addition, highly agreeable people are less likely to be competitive and engage in conflict [40]. [7] conducted a meta-analysis of CWBs and personality traits based on the FFM model. The findings indicated that agreeableness was strongly related with interpersonal CWBs, and agreeableness was strongly related with organizational CWBs. [12] found that agreeableness was negatively related to workplace deviance behavior. Agreeable people (people high in agreeableness) tend to be more courteous, cooperative, trusting, nurturing, forgiving, and tolerant (2, 47). Because of these characteristics, it is believed that individuals high in agreeableness are less likely to participate in interpersonal deviance, even if they do not feel supported by the organization. On the other hand, individuals low in agreeableness (disagreeable people) are more likely to be argumentative, temperamental, antagonistic, vengeful, inconsiderate, emotional, and uncooperative [2]. Interpersonal conflict (i.e., deviance) is an accepted response in disagreeable people.

H1: Agreeableness is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior.

2.3 Conscientiousness

Following early disagreement as to the nature of this dimension [17], there is now general consensus that conscientiousness incorporates facets such as dependability, achievement orientation and perseverance in realizing set goals [17,40]. People that score highly on this trait have a tendency to set a limited number of substantive goals, behave dutifully and morally and display goal-motivated behaviors [32]. These individuals are hard workers, well
organized, action-oriented and tend to take responsibility for their actions [22]. Meta analyses by [2] and [32] have confirmed that this personality trait is a valid predictor for job performance across all occupational groups and assessed job criterion. In a subsequent study by [2] conscientiousness was found to be a valid predictor of job performance in highly autonomous work situations. Individuals rating highly on this dimension would be likely to set specific, challenging and accepted goals [49] and engender trust in the relationship through consistently realizing these goals. Given that agreements incorporate discretionary elements [3], the dependability dimension will be important in facilitating partner co-operation, power-sharing, respect and trust [7]. Furthermore, employees would be more likely to develop an emotional attachment with consistently reliable individuals that operationalize their goals. [5] conducted a meta-analysis of CWBs and personality traits based on the FFM model. The findings indicated that conscientiousness was strongly negatively related with CWBs. People high in conscientiousness are purposeful, hardworking, achievement oriented, dependable and persistent [2]. They are also thought to be dutiful and have a tendency to abide by rules [2]. As such, those low in conscientiousness are hypothesized to withhold effort even when they hold an unfavorable perception of the developmental environment. Conversely, individuals high in conscientiousness, due to their tendency to be achievement oriented and dutiful, and have a strong tendency to abide by rules are not likely to withhold effort regardless of whether or not they have a positive perception of the situation. [12] conducted a study and it was found that conscientiousness was negatively related to counterproductive work behavior.

H2: Conscientiousness is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior.

2.4 Emotional stability

Emotional stability refers to how well an individual responds to stress [37]. People that score highly on this factor are more stable, calm and relaxed [14]. They are more able to accommodate stressful situations, resolve conflicts and handle negative feedback. Emotional stability is positively related to problem solving coping strategies [31] and organizational commitment [39]. People that are high in neuroticism (the antithesis of emotional stability) are more likely to appraise stressful situations as threats rather than challenges, seek out emotional support and use emotion-focused coping strategies [14,19]. Alternatively, emotionally stable individuals tend to have greater self-efficacy and organizational commitment [36]. [12] also proposed that emotional stability would be negatively related to counterproductive work behavior. Furthermore, they hypothesized that emotional stability would moderate the relationship between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort. Specifically, the relationship between perceptions of the developmental environment and withholding effort was hypothesized to be stronger for individuals low in emotional stability. Individuals low in emotional stability tends to be anxious, depressed, angry, emotional, worried and insecure [2]. They also tend to engage in avoidance-based coping when faced with a stressful situation [15]. In their study [12] it was found that emotional stability was negatively related to counterproductive work behavior.

H3: Emotional stability is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior.

2.5 Perceived organizational Support

Given that perceptions of the group and supervisory norms as well as an employee’s perception of the level of coworker support have been found to be related to higher levels of counterproductive work behavior, it is logical to question if perceptions of the organization contribute to counterproductive work behavior as well. This issue, perceived organizational support, has not been investigated much in the literature. To date, only a few studies have looked at the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior. Perceived organizational support refers to an “employees’ general belief that their work organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being” [45]. According to organizational support theory, the development of perceived organizational support is due, in part, to an employee’s tendency to assign the organization humanlike characteristics [18]. Because of this personification of the organization, employees view favorable or unfavorable treatment by the organization as an indication of the extent to which the organization likes them [45]. Therefore, if employees feel supported by the organization they will feel obligated to care about that organization’s well-being and put forth effort to help the organization succeed and achieve its goals. This support interacting with the personality traits will also result in a better outcome [1]. In addition, some research has looked at variables that are related to, or predict, perceived organizational support. The level of perceived organizational support felt by an individual is related to such variables as pay, rank, job enrichment, organizational rewards, promotions, verbal praise, and one’s influence over organizational policies [18]. Receipt of praise, approval and other similar favorable treatments are
likely to increase the level of perceived organizational support felt by an employee. For this reason the present study seeks to see the moderating effect of POS in the relationship between personality traits and counterproductive work behavior. Hence the following hypotheses have been developed to test POS as the moderator;

H4: Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behaviour.
H5: Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between conscientiousness and counterproductive work behaviour.
H6: Perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between emotional stability and counterproductive work behaviour.

3.0 Methodology
The focus of this study is to examine the relationship between agreeableness, contentiousness, emotional stability with counterproductive work behaviour. Also, the study investigates the moderating effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship between personality traits and counterproductive work behaviour. For the purpose of the study, data were collected from 203 respondents using proportionate random sampling. A structured questionnaire survey was administered to collect the data. The respondents were the public servants of United Arab Emirate government. The collected data were analysed with the help of smart PLS software 2.0M3 as the study used partial least square structural equation modelling as a technique of data analysis. There were there independent variables, one moderating variable and one dependent variable in this study. In PLS analysis, at first the measurement model was analysed to confirm the reliability and validity of data and then structural model was analysed to test the hypotheses of this study.

4.0 Findings
As the present study used PLS SEM as a technique of analysing the data, at first the measurement model output is analysed. Table 4.1 shows the output of measurement model.

![Table 4.1: measurement model output](https://www.example.com/table41.png)

4.1 Reliability Test
In this study reliability test is done and evaluated using Cronbach alpha values. The table 4.1 depicted the Cronbach alpha values for the constructs are; 0.901 for agreeableness (AG); 0.893 for consciousness (CONS); 0.841 for emotional stability; 0.823 for perceived organizational support (POS); and 0.935 for Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB). So all the Cronbach alpha values are above 0.7 which is considered the acceptable reliability
In addition to the Cronbach alpha values, Composite Reliability (CR) was also tested and the acceptable value of CR is 0.7 (Hair et al, 2010). In this study all the constructs had composite reliability more than 0.70. So the data of this study showed good internal consistency.

4.2 Convergent Validity Test

Convergent validity is tested to see whether the items represent the constructs or not. In this study convergent validity was tested by evaluating the values of items loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). Usually the acceptable values of item loading is 0.50 [52,29] but 0.40 is also acceptable for the validity of data. In this study there were 32 items and 7 items were deleted due to their low factor loadings. Table 4.3 shows that all the items loading are above 0.50 which gives convergent validity at indicators levels. On the other hand all the AVE values for the constructs are above the minimum threshold level which is 0.5. So it can be concluded on the basis of the findings that the values of AVE and item loadings are good enough for the convergent validity of the data.

4.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was also tested using smart PLS M2.0 software. Table 4.2 shows the discriminant validity output of the study. According to [13], the average variance shared between each construct and its indicators should be greater than the variance shared between the construct and other construct. When the AVE is higher than the estimated correlations among each pair of constructs, discriminant validity is established. The measurement model also demonstrates good discriminant validity since the square root of the AVE for each construct was higher than its correlation with other factors.

Table 4.2: Discriminant validity output

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AG</th>
<th>CONS</th>
<th>EM</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>CWB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>0.361</td>
<td>0.767</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EM</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POS</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>0.362</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.783</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWB</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.187</td>
<td>-0.220</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>0.808</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 showed that the values of square root of AVE for each construct are higher in that particular diagonal and it indicates good discriminant validity. So the above description reveals that the values of Cronbach alpha are above the minimum level, composite reliability values for all the constructs are above the acceptable range, item loading, AVE and square root of AVE are also within the acceptable range. Finally it can be said that the data of this study have good reliability and validity.

4.4 Predictive Relevance (Q²)

The predictive sample relevance technique (Q2) can effectively be used as a criterion for predictive relevance. Based on blindfolding procedure, Q² evaluates the predictive validity of a large complex model using PLS. While estimating parameters for a model under blindfolding procedure, this technique omits data for a given block of indicators and then predicts the omitted part based on the calculated parameters. Thus, Q² shows how well the data collected empirically can be reconstructed with the help of model and the PLS parameters. The Q² value more that 0 (zero) indicates that the model has enough predictive relevance. The Q² value of this study is 0.112 which is an indication of a good predictive relevance capability of the model.

4.5 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The coefficient of determination (R²) value indicates how much variation in endogenous variable is caused by the exogenous variables. The present study got a R² value of 0.249 which indicates that the dependent variable is influenced by the independent variables by 24.49%. So the three independent variables considered in this study have minor negative effect on the counterproductive work behavior.

4.6 Goodness of Fit (GoF)

GoF (Goodness of Fit) index is crucial to assess the global validity of a PLS based complex model [50]. It is the geometric mean of the average communality and average R² for all endogenous constructs. The GoF index is bounded between 0 and 1. [52] suggest using 0.50 as the cut off value for communality [50] and different effect sizes of R² (Cohen 1988) to determine GoF small (0.10), GoF medium (0.25) and GoF large (0.36). These may serve as baselines for validating the PLS based complex models globally. This study obtains a GoF value of 0.490, which exceeds the cut-off value of 0.36 for large GoF [48]. So it indicates that the GOF of this model is quite good.
4.7 PLS structural model

In the structural model of PLS analysis, hypotheses testing can be done. Here the path coefficient, t statistics, average estimate and error are considered. Table 4.3 showed the structural model for hypothesis testing.

Table 4.3: Structural model output

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Path Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>T- Value</th>
<th>P- Value</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>AG-&gt;CWB</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>0.398</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>CONS-&gt;CWB</td>
<td>-0.173</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>0.358</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>EM-&gt;CWB</td>
<td>-0.575</td>
<td>0.392</td>
<td>1.964</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table 4.3 showed the results of hypotheses testing for this study. The explanation for the hypotheses testing is given below.

Hypothesis 1: Agreeableness is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior. This hypothesis is not supported as the table 4.3 depicted that the path coefficient value is 0.070 and the corresponding t statistics is 0.262 (P, 0.396). So it is not accepted that agreeableness is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior. Here the path coefficient is also not significant as the value is less than 0.10 [46]. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of [30,6] who found negative relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behavior. Moreover, agreeable individuals who are more likely to develop friendships with their peers are less likely to encounter role conflict between intrinsic and instrumental motives [23]. So it requires further studies to investigate the relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behavior.

Hypothesis 2: Conscientiousness is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior. The path coefficient for this variable is - 0.173 with a negative sign. So it is a significant path but the corresponding t statistics is 0.927 (P, 0.356) which is not significant. Therefore, this hypothesis is not supported. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of [30,6] who found negative relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behavior. Moreover, agreeable individuals who are more likely to develop friendships with their peers are less likely to encounter role conflict between intrinsic and instrumental motives [23]. So it requires further studies to investigate the relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behavior.

Hypothesis 3: Emotional stability is negatively correlated with counterproductive work behavior. This hypothesis got strong support. The findings showed that emotional stability is negatively and significantly correlated with counterproductive work behavior. The path coefficient for this variable was - 0.575 and the t statistic was 1.964 (P< 0.05). So the findings revealed that emotional stability is a significant factor that negatively influences counterproductive work behavior which leads to the decision that hypothesis 3 is accepted.

4.8 Moderating effects of Perceived Organizational Support

In this study moderating effect of perceived organizational support was tested in the relationship between three personality traits (agreeableness, consciousness and emotional stability) and counterproductive work behaviour. Table 4.4 shows the output of moderating effect test.

Table 4.4: Moderating effect of perceived organizational support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Path Coefficient</th>
<th>T Statistics</th>
<th>P Value</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG*P OS -&gt; CWB</td>
<td>-1.470</td>
<td>2.198</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONS *POS -&gt; CWB</td>
<td>-0.767</td>
<td>1.775</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EM*P OS -&gt; CWB</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.961</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the moderating effect of perceived organizational support between agreeableness and counterproductive work behaviour, it was found that the interaction path (AG*POS) coefficient was - 1.470. On the other hand the t statistics of the moderating effect was 2.198 (p, 0.015) which is significant at 5% level. In PLS analysis, moderating effect exists if the interaction path is significant. So here the interaction path is significant (p< 0.05) which indicates that perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behaviour. Hence hypothesis 4 is supported. In the test of moderating effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship between conscientiousness and counterproductive work behaviour, it was found that the interaction path coefficient (CONS*POS) was - 0.767 with a t value of 1.775 (p, 0.03). On the other hand the direct path coefficient of POS to CWB was 0.446 with a t value of 1.803. As the interaction path is significant at 5% level, it indicates that perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between conscientiousness and counterproductive work behaviour. So hypothesis 5 is supported. Finally, moderating effect of perceived organizational support was examined in the relationship between emotional stability and counterproductive work behaviour. It was found that the interaction path...
this study that employees having agreeableness, interpersonal deviance, even if they do not feel highly in agreeableness are less likely to participate in these characteristics, it is believed that individuals competitive and engage in conflict [40]. Because of highly agreeable people are less likely to be environments and organizational morale. In addition, related to communication, trust and respect in team ideas [30]. Moreover, agreeableness is specifically and skills of others and will consider other people's scoring high on this dimension will tend to accept in counterproductive work behavior. Individuals organizations that reduce the chances to be involved helpful attitudes, and display ongoing loyalty to their organizations. This is also found in willingness to drive hard bargains or manipulate as agreeableness will inhibit an individual's behavior among employees. Emotional stability is an important character of employees that help them accommodate stressful situations, resolve conflicts and handle negative feedback. Individuals rating highly on this dispositional trait are more likely to develop stronger relationships through adopting rational approaches to partner communication and minimizing dysfunctional conflict arising from emotive assessments of organizational situations. Emotional stability of employees helps them take rational decisions that are in line with the principles of the organizations. The present study also revealed that consciousness personality trait is negatively and significantly related to counterproductive work behavior. Therefore, organizations can improve employee productivity by avoiding counterproductive work behavior if they can recruit people scoring high on this personality trait. If employees feel supported by the organization they will feel obligated to care about that organization’s well-being and put forth effort to help the organization succeed and achieve its goals. And this perceived organizational support for the employees creates a feeling among the employees that motivate them to avoid deviant behaviors. In this study moderating effect of perceived organizational support was tested in the relationship between three personality traits (agreeableness, consciousness and emotional stability) and counterproductive work behavior. The findings showed that perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between agreeableness and counterproductive work behaviour which indicates that when perceived organizational support is higher, employees are less likely to get involved in counterproductive work behaviour. Therefore, counterproductive work behaviour can be reduced substantially if the organization supports the employees a lot. The significant interaction of perceived organizational support and agreeableness implies the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance varies as a function of agreeableness in the in-class sample. This suggests coefficient (EM*POS) was -0.083 with a t value of 0.050 while the direct path coefficient of POS was -0.024 with a t value of 0.052. Therefore, it can be said that perceived organizational support doesn’t moderate the relationship between emotional stability and counterproductive work behaviour.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion
This study tried to examine the influence of personality traits towards the counterproductive work behavior; and to investigate whether perceived organizational support moderates the relationship between personality traits and (agreeableness, consciousness and emotional stability) counterproductive work behavior. Currently, workplace behaviors are mainly investigated in different ways to get a more comprehensive description of which personality traits are influencing workplace behaviors. It is due to the fact that innate characteristics of employees determine how they react to different situations. The present study has taken three types of personality traits namely agreeableness, consciousness and emotional stability as the factors that might hinder the counterproductive work behavior of employees in any organizations. The findings of this study revealed that consciousness and emotional stability are negatively associated with counterproductive work behavior. Employees having agreeableness are likely to be good-natured, friendly, supportive, polite, naive, flexible, altruistic and tolerant [2]. These characteristics of employees create cooperative values in them, and they are less likely to get involved in deviant behaviors. As such, this trait may assist in fostering cooperative working relationships as agreeableness will inhibit an individual’s willingness to drive hard bargains or manipulate others for personal gain [55]. This is also found in this study that employees having agreeableness characteristics are more likely to possess open and helpful attitudes, and display ongoing loyalty to their organizations that reduce the chances to be involved in counterproductive work behavior. Individuals scoring high on this dimension will tend to accept suggestions, be mindful of the needs, motivations and skills of others and will consider other people’s ideas [30]. Moreover, agreeableness is specifically related to communication, trust and respect in team environments and organizational morale. In addition, highly agreeable people are less likely to be competitive and engage in conflict [40]. Because of these characteristics, it is believed that individuals high in agreeableness are less likely to participate in interpersonal deviance, even if they do not feel supported by the organization.

The second personality trait of this study is consciousness. It is a character of individuals who are hardworking, well organized and tend to take responsibility for their actions. The present study revealed that consciousness personality trait negatively influences counterproductive work behavior. Employees who score highly on this trait have a tendency to set a limited number of substantive goals, behave dutifully and morally and display goal-motivated behaviors that are expected by employers to avoid negative behavioral consequences in the organizations. As people high in conscientiousness have a tendency to abide by the rules, they are less likely to get involved in those activities that go against the interest of the organizations. Therefore the findings of this study evidenced that consciousness of individuals is a factor that hinder counterproductive work behavior along with other traits. Emotional stability is an important character of employees that help them make rational decisions that are in line with the principles of the organizations. The present study also revealed that consciousness personality trait is negatively and significantly related to counterproductive work behavior. Therefore, organizations can improve employee productivity by avoiding counterproductive work behavior if they can recruit people scoring high on this personality trait.
that when employees understand that their organization is supporting them, they are less likely to engage in counterproductive work behavior. It might be due to the fact that the support received is from the organization; as a result, employees want to respond to that support by not engaging in behavior that would negatively affect the organization. On the other hand, there was significant moderating effect of perceived organizational support in the relationship between consciousness and counterproductive work behaviour. The study showed that though perceived organizational support exists, consciousness of employees motivate them to take rational decisions which are easily influenced by the organizational support. Emotional stability among employees helps avoid counterproductive work behaviour; and perceived organizational support might strengthen their emotional stability to avoid such types of behaviour. But in the present study it was not noticed significantly. So perceived organizational support is not an important issue to strengthen the emotional stability of employees which will provide safeguards against counterproductive work behaviour in the organizations. As perceived organizational support was found to be related to personality traits in demising workplace violence, it suggests increasing the amount of support an organization exhibits to its employees is less likely to be related to organizational deviance. If organizations are having problems with their employees engaging in counterproductive work behavior, they should take steps to improve their relationships with the employees so that the employees feel more supported and valued by them. Companies might implement recognition programs to help show employees that they are appreciated by the organization; they can also take other measures to show employees that they support them. However, it may be more beneficial to look at other factors that more closely relate to counterproductive work behavior in order to produce sustained results.

6. References


