

## **Examining the Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction on Individual Characteristics and Deviant Behavior among Support Staff in a Civil Service Organisation**

Mazni Alias, Intan Soraya Rosdi and Nasreen Khan  
Faculty of Management, Multimedia University, 63100 Cyberjaya, Malaysia

**DOI Link:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v7-i14/3649>

**Published Date:** 04 December 2017

### **Abstract**

This research article aims to examine individual characteristics that influenced employees deviant behavior in one of the Malaysian Civil Service organisation. Mount's model was used in this article as a basis to determine the influence of individual characteristics on employees' deviant behavior. In this article, job satisfaction is identified as the mediating variable. Four Hundred and twenty nine employees whom are support personnel were chosen as respondents. Findings indicated that all the tested individual characteristics except emotional intelligence predicted employees deviant behavior. The result also signified that job satisfaction mediates the relationships between employees deviant behavior and negative affectivity, conscientiousness, and agreeableness.

**Keywords:** Employees' deviant behavior, individual characteristics, job satisfaction, civil service organisation

### **Introduction**

Employees' deviant behavior has long been emerged as a critical issue either in the civil or private organisations. Research has stipulated that due to the negative effects of employees' deviant behavior, it implicates work performance and organisational effectiveness (Pearson et al., 2000) and high employee turnover (Tepper, 2000). This research article define employees' deviant behavior as a negative voluntary act which against the policies and regulations of the organisation. Employees' deviant behavior is identified as organisational issues which mostly are not unreported, unnoticed, or both (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Western researchers have highlighted the issue of employees' deviant behavior which are more higher in the civil compared to private sector. Mayhew and McCarthy (2005) postulated that support staff are highest in number compared to other categories of employees when mentioning the issue of deviant behavior. Yet, there seems to be lack of research studies which examine the individual characteristics that predict employees' deviant behavior, especially among support staff in the Asian context. In the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011 – 2015),

integrity were captured as a central component for the civil service personnel to function ethically and professionally (Malaysia, 2010).

Therefore, it is important to examine those factors contributing to employees' deviant behavior in the civil service sector in Malaysia. Effective solutions could be instituted to reduce the issues of employees deviant behaviour, once the factors that influence this negative act are duly identified. This research article attempts to test an existing model of employees' deviant behavior in studying the phenomena in Malaysia.

Thus, in the context of civil service organisations in Malaysia, the main research question is: "What causes employees' deviant behavior?". The question then leads to more specific research objectives as outlined below:

- (i) To determine the individual characteristics that predict employees' deviant behavior.
- (ii) To determine the role of job satisfaction as a potential mediator between individual characteristics and employees' deviant behavior.

### **Concept of Employees' Deviant Behavior**

Employees' deviant behavior covers various forms of behavior i.e., doing personal work during office hours, stealing, sexual aggression and violence (Wellen, 2004). Subsequently, Bennett and Robinson (2000) categorise employees' deviant behavior into interpersonal and organisational deviance. The former category is directed towards individuals, i.e. humiliating co-workers while the latter category is directed to the organisation i.e. arriving work late without permission.

In this research article, employees' deviant behavior is operationalised as negative voluntary behavior by support staffs which this behavior affects the moral conduct and workplace standards that threatens the efficacy and performance of the organisation and its employees. These include organisational deviance and interpersonal deviance.

Next, the theory deemed relevant in the study of employees' deviant behavior, namely the Social Exchange Theory (SET), is discussed in the section below.

### **Social Exchange Theory**

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is one of the most theory that was widely used in understanding employee's act (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Blau (1986) developed this theory and described it as employees' motivation in exchanging behavior and attitude between employees and employers. Some examples to be included are organisational citizenship behavior and perceived organisational support (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005).

SET was involved to support Mount et al.'s (2006) model of employees' deviant behavior. This theory highlighted that individuals tends to be dissatisfied if they received treatment which are unfavourable to them from their superior. Consistent with the norms of reciprocity which identifies that individuals will act negatively if they feel that the condition at their workplace are unfavourable. Thus, SET was used as an important underlying theory for this research study.

### Existing Model of Employees' Deviant Behavior

The model to be tested in this study is Mount et al.'s (2006) model of employees' deviant behavior, which argues that individual characteristics (i.e., agreeableness, emotional intelligence, negative affectivity, and conscientiousness) relate to employees' deviant behavior through the mediating effect of job satisfaction.

Mount et al. (2006) pointed out that individual characteristics influenced a person's deviant behavior in the workplace. This is due to the fact that people are aware of the decision that they make which involves negative behaviors. Mount also inculcated that employees' satisfaction play an important role in predicting employees' deviant behavior. To be more specific, individual characteristics have been identified to influence one's job satisfaction levels. This in turn affect employees' deviant behavior. Figure 1 shows the model of employees' deviant behavior published by Mount et al. (2006).

This study uses Mount et al.'s (2006) model of employees' deviant behavior as the basis for the research framework as shown in Figure 1.

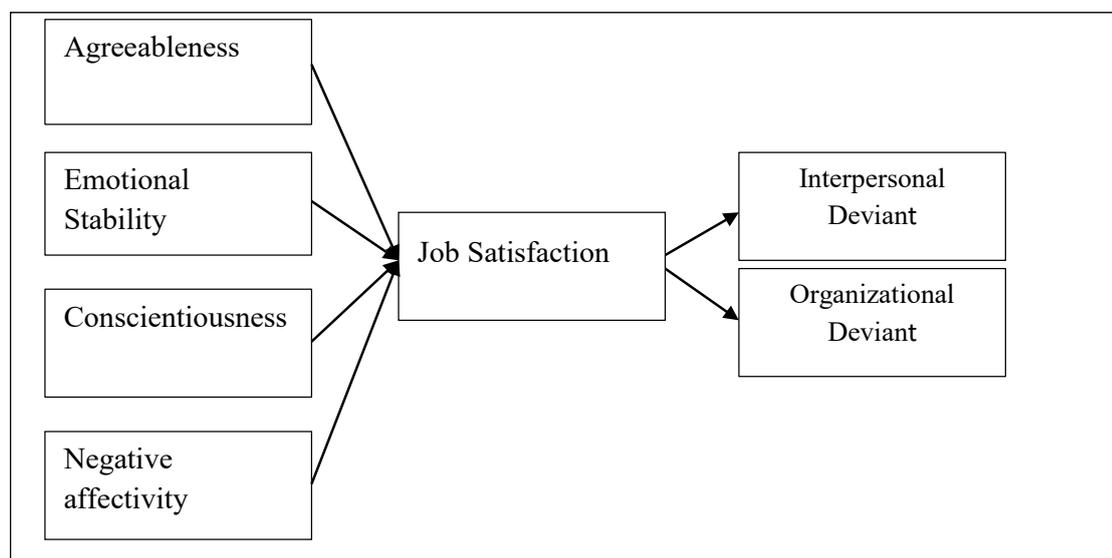


Figure 1: A Model of Workplace Deviant Behavior (Mount et al. 2006)

Mount et al. (2006) posited that certain individual dispositions have direct effects with employees' deviant behavior through the mediating effects of job satisfaction. Their model used job satisfaction as the mediating variable on workplace deviance. Agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability were employed as the exogenous variables in their study. Mount et al. (2006) hypothesises that disposition has a direct effects on job satisfaction and that an individual's attitude towards job experiences (i.e., job satisfaction) plays an important role in determining an employee's employees' deviant behavior. Previous researchers empirical findings had also identified the importance of individual characteristics in predicting employees' deviant behavior such as from Bechtoldt, Welk, Hartig, and Zapf (2008) (i.e., emotional labour); Berry et al. (2007) (i.e., agreeableness and conscientiousness); Marcus and Wagner (2007) (i.e., self-control) and Ng and Feldman (2008) (i.e., age).

Apart from the study by Mount et al. (2006), there are also other researchers who have presented various findings on the relationships between individual characteristics, job satisfaction, and employees' deviant behavior. Results from the studies are discussed in the following sections.

### **Individual Characteristics and Employees' Deviant Behavior**

This study limits its focus to negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional intelligence as these variables affect employees' intentions in deviant behavior (Scheuer, 2010). Mount et al.'s (2006) model of employees' deviant behavior was used as a basis for this research. Mount et al. (2006) posited that certain individual dispositions have direct effects with employees' deviant behavior through the mediating effects of job satisfaction. Their model used job satisfaction as the mediating variable on employees' deviant behavior. Agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability were used as individual characteristics in their study. Mount et al. (2006) hypothesises that disposition has a direct effects on job satisfaction and employees' deviant behavior and that an individual's attitude towards job experiences (i.e., job satisfaction) plays an important role in determining an employee's employees' deviant behavior. Previous researchers empirical findings had also identified the importance of individual characteristics in predicting employees' deviant behavior such as from Berry et al. (2007) (i.e., agreeableness and conscientiousness); Marcus & Wagner, 2007) (i.e., self-control) and Ng and Feldman (2008) (i.e., age).

Apart from the study by Mount et al. (2006), there are also other researchers who have presented various findings on the relationships between individual characteristics, job satisfaction, and employees' deviant behavior. Results from the studies are discussed in the following sections.

According to Salovey et al. (1999, p. 141), emotional intelligence denotes to "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to regulate them, and to use emotion-based information to guide thinking and action". Bibi et al. (2013) in their survey involving 160 university teachers in seven civil and private universities in Pakistan showed that emotional intelligence has relationship with employees' deviant behavior. A study done by Potcovaru (2014) involving a sample of 441 Romanian employees also revealed similar results.

### **Conscientiousness and Employees' Deviant Behavior**

Individual with high conscientiousness has been identified as responsible and reliable (Costa & McCrae, 1985). According to Kamdar and Van Dyne (2007), high-conscientiousness employees engage in actions that involve positive effort to assist the organisation's performance. However, individuals who were low in conscientiousness were identified to be frequently involved in deviant act (Tseng, 2006). A recent survey conducted among one hundred and seventy employees in three sectors (i.e., electronic, textile, and sports) found that there conscientiousness influenced employees' deviant behavior (Javed et al., 2014)

### **Negative Affectivity and Employees' Deviant Behavior**

Negative Affect influenced an individual's behavior. It is linked with negative emotions such as anxiety or fear which implicates the relationships at workplace such as deviant behavior (Reio & Ghosh, 2009). Individuals having such characteristics have high level of hostility and anger (Watson & Clark, 1988). Martinko et al.'s (2006) study has also highlighted that negative

affect predict aggressive behaviors at work. They are likely to react with fear and anxiety compared to low negative affectivity individuals. A survey involving 310 employees from 40 Taiwanese organisations using hierarchical linear modelling also highlighted similar result. Result shows that employee with high neurotic most of the time act deviant (Chen, Chen, & Liu, 2013).

### **Agreeableness and Employees' Deviant Behavior**

High agreeability individuals have been known to higher patiences and compatibility with others while those with less agreeability are self-centred and sceptical (Babamiri, Sabbagh, & Harsini, 2013). Bodankin and Tziner (2009) study using 89 employees from three high technology industries in Israel revealed negative correlation between agreeableness and interpersonal deviance ( $r = -.31, p < .01$ ). Similar results were found in Monnastes's (2010) study among 325 employees from various types of organisations. The results reported that agreeableness was negatively correlated with interpersonal deviance ( $r = -.29, p < .01$ ) and organisational deviance ( $r = -.27, p < .01$ ). Similar result was also found by Babamiri et al. (2013) involving 121 respondent selected randomly by cluster sampling indicated that agreeableness is a significant predictor of employees' deviant behavior.

Therefore, the review of the individual characteristics which had been highlighted provides a clear link to predict employees' deviant behavior. The research hypothesis are proposed as follows:

*Hypothesis 1: Individual characteristics (negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional intelligence) have significant influence on employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 1-1: Negative affectivity has significant influence on employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 1-2: Conscientiousness has significant influence on employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 1-3: Agreeableness has significant influence on employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 1-4: Emotional intelligence has significant influence on employees' deviant behavior.*

Apart from the individual characteristics discussed above, a person's job satisfaction levels have also been found to influence employees' deviant behavior. Relevant research findings are presented in the section below.

### **Job Satisfaction and Employees' Deviant Behavior**

Greenberg and Baron's definitions (2008) refers job satisfaction as an employee's attitude towards their work which leads to a decision by comparing actual outcomes versus desired expectations about his or her job (Foulkrod et al., 2010). Employees whom having higher level of satisfaction about their job behave positively (Scott-Cawiezell et al., 2005). Contradictly, those employees having low levels of job satisfaction are less committed and have the tendency to be absent from work (Ladebo, 2004). Herschovis et al. (2007) identified that constraints lead to negative emotions such as frustration which then lead to aggression. A study conducted in Pakistan which data were collected from various civil and private sectors organisations, such as hospital, telecommunication organisation, and banks found that low level of job satisfaction influenced employees' deviant behavior (Anjum & Parvez, 2013)

Based on the above, we postulate that:

*Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between job satisfaction and employees' deviant behavior of employees.*

Further, there is sample research capturing how specific individual characteristics discussed earlier, e.g. negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional intelligence directly impacts a person's job satisfaction levels. The research findings are discussed below.

### **Individual Characteristics and Job Satisfaction**

Research evidences have indicated that certain individual characteristics deliberately affected job satisfaction (Afsar et al., 2011; Foulkrod et al., 2010). This is also supported by Naz et al. (2013) that signified individual characteristics influenced the level of employee's job satisfaction.

### **Negative Affectivity and Job Satisfaction**

Researcher such as Connolly and Viswesvaran's (2000) identified that negative affectivity influenced job satisfaction. Similarly, in another study indicated that negative affectivity is negatively correlated with job satisfaction (Bruk-Lee et al., 2009), A cross-sectional examination study taken from a sample of 440 academic staff in Malaysia civil research universities found that negative affectivity is one of the main individual characteristics which predicted job satisfaction (Mehrad et al., 2015).

### **Conscientiousness and Job Satisfaction**

Judge et. al. (2002) signified that conscientiousness implicates job satisfaction because this individual characteristics represents an individual inclination towards goal achievement. Their meta-analysis study which involved 334 correlations from 163 independent samples reported that there was a positive association between conscientiousness and job satisfaction ( $r = .26$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Tseng's (2006) study also investigated the relationship between individual characteristics with job satisfaction among technological industry employees in Taiwan. His result showed that the variance in job satisfaction was explained by the Big Five personalities. The results indicated that conscientiousness was associated with job satisfaction ( $r = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ). A survey using sample consist of 150 non-academic employees from Sri-Lankan universities also revealed that conscientiousness had significant positive relationship with job satisfaction (Kappagoda, 2012).

### **Agreeableness and Job Satisfaction**

Bruk-Lee et al. (2009) highlighted that individuals high in agreeableness view situations positively which then contributes to higher job satisfaction. In addition, agreeable individuals have good socialising skills and their experiences at work were more favourable than disagreeable individuals which then lead to higher job satisfaction. A cross-sectional study by Mehrad et al. (2015) involving Indonesian and Malaysian respondents also found that high agreeableness was positively correlated with job satisfaction ( $\beta = .12$ ). Similar result using convenience sampling method among 150 employees in three newly established universities in India also indicated similar result (Kappagoda, 2012).

### **Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction**

Previous studies emphasized that emotional intelligence play an important role in influencing an employee's satisfaction (Patra, 2004; Villard, 2004). Sy et. al. (2006) research conducted among 187 food service employees who concluded that emotional intelligence predicted job satisfaction. Bar-On (2004) and Howard (2009) also found significant associations between dimensions of emotional intelligence and level of job satisfaction among human service workers in the North America. A survey done from 208 employees from different location in India also reveals similar results for emotional intelligence and employee's job satisfaction (Ealias & George, 2012).

Hence, the individual characteristics as mentioned would reveal beneficial data in understanding an employee's job satisfaction. The following are the proposed hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 3: Individual characteristics (negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional intelligence) have significant influence on job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 3-1: Negative affectivity has significant influence on job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 3-2: Conscientiousness has significant influence on job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 3-3: Agreeableness has significant influence on job satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 3-4: Emotional intelligence has significant influence on job satisfaction.*

Specific individual characteristics such as negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional intelligence, and job satisfaction have influenced an employees' deviant behavior. Evidence on past reviews also highlighted the possibility of individual characteristics in predicting job satisfaction which has also been clarified by Mount et al., (2006) in their study. Subsequently, their study also identified that individual characteristics and employees' deviant behavior is mediated by job satisfaction. The discussion on job satisfaction as a potential mediator is captured in the following section.

### **Job Satisfaction as Mediator**

Lack of empirical study has looked into job satisfaction as a mediator in employees' deviant behavioral studies. There have been findings on job satisfaction as a mediating variable. However, those studies focus on other dependent variables such as stress and affective commitment (Omer et al., 2011), compensation structure and organisational commitment (Ida & Ali, 2010).

From the above findings, it seems that further investigation is required to determine the role of job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Besides, this paper aims to test Mount et al.'s (2006) model of employees' deviant behavior, which argues that job satisfaction is a significant mediating variable in the relationship between individual characteristics and employees' deviant behavior. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*Hypothesis 4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationships between individual characteristics (negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional intelligence) and employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 4-1: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between negative affectivity and employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 4-2: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between conscientiousness and employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 4-3: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between agreeableness and employees' deviant behavior.*

*Hypothesis 4-4: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and employees' deviant behavior.*

## **Method**

This section highlights the scope of the study as well as the research methods adopted. This study had focused on support staff in one of the civil agencies in Malaysia. In Malaysian civil service organisations, the issue of employees' deviant behavior among support staff has turned to be a serious issue. Incidences involving employees' deviant behaviors of support staff in various civil services have been featured regularly in the media mass edia (Abdul Rahman, 2008; Awanis, 2006).

Statistics showed that employees' deviant behavior in the Malaysian civil service department, which capture numbers of disciplinary actions imposed on all categories of staff for the years 2009 and 2010, compared to other job categories, the support staff category has the highest number of disciplinary actions imposed on employees (Civil Service Department, Malaysia, 2011). As they are the front liners delivering services to the Malaysian civil, it is imperative that the existence of employees' deviant behavior among support staff be treated to maintain civil confidence and preserve the integrity of Malaysian civil service organisations.

## **Participants**

This study distributed 500 questionnaires and 429 were returned, resulting in response rate of 85.8%. Social demographic profile of respondents is depicted in Table 4-1. The data consist of 429 employees. 35.4% are male and 64.6% are female employees. Respondent's age ranged from 21 years old to 60 years old. The majority of the respondents' age ranged from 31-40 years old. State wise, majority of the respondents were from Petaling Jaya (27.5%) and Johor (27.5%), followed by Kedah (27.0%) and Terengganu (17.9%).

## **Procedure**

The study had utilised a cross-sectional survey to determine employees' deviant behavior. This study utilized multi stage cluster random sampling. At least two stages were involved in multi-stage sampling. Large clusters of population are selected at the first stage and at the second stage; units are selected from the clusters to derive the final sample. Multi stage cluster random sampling was chosen because this study involved human population in large geographical areas.

The sampling frame of this study consists of all support staff 2 representing the civil agency located in the west, east, south and north Malaysia. At the second stage, for each cluster, support staffs 2 were randomly sampled using Statistical Package for Social Science which contributes to a total sample of 500. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed and 429 questionnaires were returned.

The questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. The questionnaire used in this study was originally written in English language. However, the questionnaire had been translated to the

native Malay language. This is to cater the language proficiency of the support staff that was less conversant in English. To ensure that meanings, thoughts and concepts of the items remain unchanged, easy to understand and convey similar meanings to the original instrument, two local professional translators who have good command in both languages were assigned to endorse the translation. It is important to ensure that all items are fully understood by the samples specifically to capture the true perception pertaining to the questions and convey the same meaning as found in the original instruments (McGorry, 2000).

Anonymity was also assured in this study. It has long been highlighted by scholars that it is important for the full anonymity of research participants and strict confidentiality be assured of during the data collection exercise. This is especially important when the studies involve looking into behaviors that may be illegal and can result in employees' dismissal from their jobs (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Since Lee (1993) has identified that there are occurrences of respondents not being truthful when answering questions about sensitive topics such as deviant behavior, this study had utilized anonymous surveys to encourage people to respond to questions more openly.

Each questionnaire was attached with a letter of appreciation for the respondents' contribution. All the questionnaires were sealed in an envelope. In this study, the questionnaires were self-administered by the respondents. Therefore, all the instructions are clear and no ambiguous sentences are used in the questionnaire in order to avoid wrong interpretations to any of the questions. Since the data collection procedure was self-administered, the respondents in this study were allowed to take the questionnaires out of their office during lunch time. The questionnaires were collected from the respondents on the same day.

### **Measures**

The research questionnaire focus on the respondent's social demographic details and items which relates to employees' deviant behavior and individual characteristics. The instruments used in this study were taken from established instruments. Since all existing instruments found so far were developed in western countries, the instruments for this study were adopted and adapted to accommodate to the local context.

### **Employees' Deviant Behavior**

The two dimensional scales developed by Bennett and Robinson (2000) are organisational and interpersonal deviance scales. Organisational deviance dimension has twelve items while the latter has seven items. Bennett and Robinson (2000) have conceptualised deviance into two dimensions. In this study, three items were omitted (i.e., "falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money that you spent on", "make an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work" and "used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job") as they are inappropriate for the current sample and the context study. Therefore, this instrument was left with 15 items. Sample items are, "Civilly embarrass someone at work", "Act rudely toward someone at work."

For employees' deviant behavior measurement, this study used 5 items from Hollinger and Clark (1983). Specifically, the items chosen are more suitable to be used as it is appropriate

in the perspective of Malaysian culture and context. According to Asma and Pederson (2003), Malaysians are indirect while shame and face are important considerations which influence employee's interaction and behavior. The 5 items are, "Take office supplies (e.g., paper, pens) or equipment home without permission", "Use office computer for personal reasons during working hours", "Use the company phone to make personal calls without permission", "Make photocopies/fax machine at work for personal use without permission" and "Use sick leave when not sick". The original instrument from Hollinger and Clark (1983) consists of 30 items however 25 items were removed because it is irrelevant and similar with Bennett and Robinson's (2000) scale.

### **Negative Affectivity**

Negative affectivity was measured using Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) which was developed by Watson et al. (1988). Comprises of 7-item ranging from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely). Items in PANAS describe negative emotions. High scores indicate high levels of negative affectivity, and vice-versa. The internal reliability for this instrument was .88.

### **Conscientiousness**

This construct was measured using 12 items that were adopted and adapted from Dawson, (1996). Conscientiousness measurement items were responded on a scale ranging from 1 "disagree" to 7 "agree". Sample items are "I keep my belongings neat and clean" and "I do not waste a lot of time before settling work". Internal reliability for this instrument were  $\alpha = .95$ .

### **Agreeableness**

This instrument was taken from the NEO Individual characteristics Inventory (Costa and McCrae, 1985). It is a twelve item scale and has demonstrated valid internal consistency by previous researchers such as Dawson (1996) ( $\alpha = .76$ ). Items were rated using a seven-point Likert-like scale ranging from "disagree" to "agree". Sample items include, "I try to be courteous to everyone I meet" and "Most people I know like me". In this study, the internal reliability coefficient was .77.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

This measurement in this construct was developed by Wong and Law (2002). Emotional intelligence comprised of 16 items which were rated on six points Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree. Sample items are "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time" and "I have a good understanding of my own emotions". Internal reliability coefficient was .93. This study employed the overall measures of emotional intelligence.

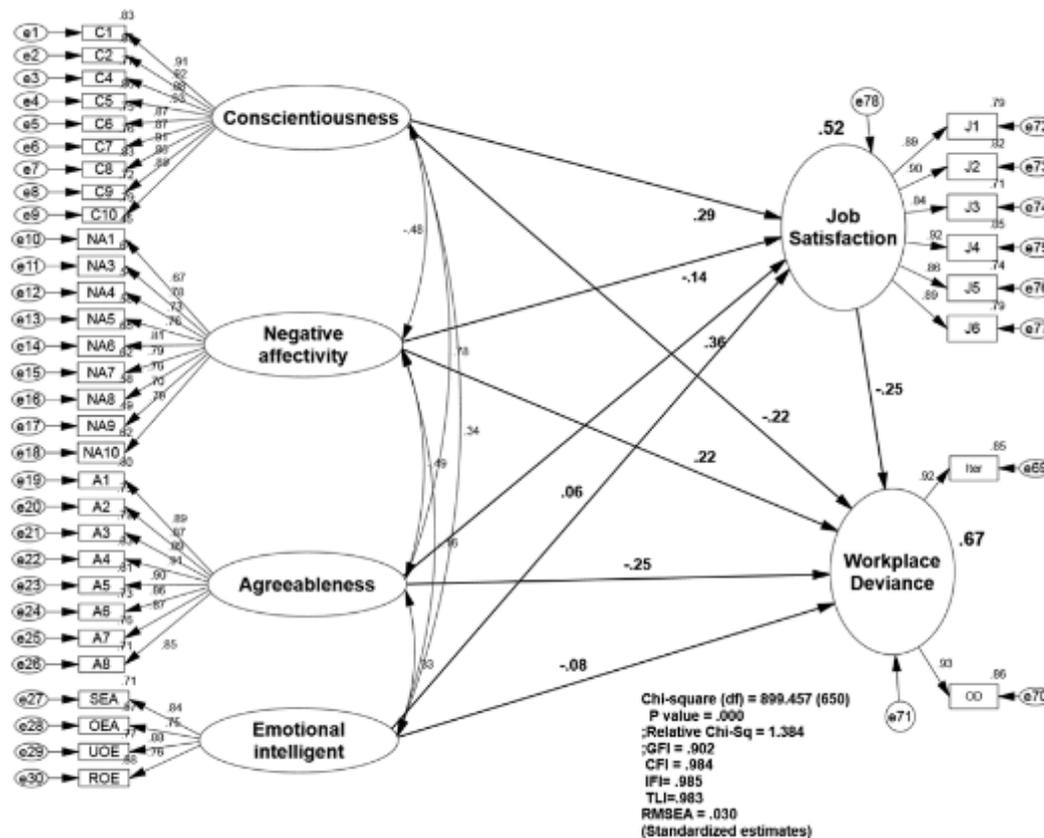
### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction was assessed using the 9-item of job satisfaction scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). Items were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items were: "I am satisfied with my current job; I feel real enjoyment in my job". The job satisfaction scale internal consistency was .90.

**Results**

*Test of the Structural Model*

The aforementioned fit indices are also used to measure the fit of the proposed structural model. The results indicated that except for the  $\chi^2$  measure, all values satisfied the recommended level of acceptable fit:  $\chi^2=899.457$  ( $p<0.05$ ),  $\chi^2/df=1.384$ ,  $GFI=.902$ ,  $CFI=.984$ ,  $IFI=.985$ ,  $TLI=.983$ , and  $RMSEA=0.050$  (as shown in Figure 2). The result established a good overall fit for the proposed structural model. The model clarified 52% of the variance in Job satisfaction and 67% of the variance in employees' deviant behavior. Thus, the proposed theoretical model fits with the sample data and supports the analysis in this study.



Note:

( ) Before accounting for mediator variables (job satisfaction)

$\beta > .20$  = significant at 0.01

Figure 2: Results of Testing the Proposed Model

Figure 2 (constructed in AMOS 21.0 with standardized values) shows the path coefficients of the proposed model. Except Hypothesis 1-4, all the other hypotheses on the direct relationships between the exogenous variables (conscientiousness, negative affectivity, and agreeableness) are supported at 0.05 significance level (Hypothesis 3-2: conscientiousness → employees' deviant behavior,  $\beta=-.29$ ; Hypothesis 1-1: negative affectivity → employees' deviant behavior,  $\beta=.25$ ; and Hypothesis 1-3: agreeableness → employees' deviant behavior,  $\beta=-.35$ ).

This study also found a significant relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction ( $\beta=.29, p<.01$ ); negative affectivity and job satisfaction ( $\beta=-.14, p<.05$ ); and in the relationship between agreeableness and job satisfaction ( $\beta=.39, p<.01$ ). This study also found that job satisfaction influence employees' deviant behavior ( $\beta=-.25, p<.01$ ).

Job satisfaction as the mediating variable in this study was included in the analysis. The result indicated that the relation of exogenous variables (conscientiousness, negative affectivity, and agreeableness) to employees' deviant behavior was diminished but still significant ( $\beta=-.22, \beta=.22$  and  $\beta=-.25$ ).

The result shows that, the total effect of agreeableness on employees' deviant behavior is the strongest ( $\beta=-.25$ ). Then this is followed by followed by conscientiousness ( $\beta=-.22$ ) and, negative affectivity ( $\beta=.22$ ). Subsequently, the analysis showed that the  $R^2$  value of employees' deviant behavior is .67. Thus, indicated that that conscientiousness, negative affectivity, agreeableness, emotional intelligent and job satisfaction explained 67 percent of the variance in employees' deviant behavior.

### **Significance of Indirect Effects**

From the findings, it seems that three out of the four indirect effects within the multiple mediation models were significant. However, despite the fact that the strength of the relationships between conscientiousness, negative affectivity and agreeableness to employees' deviant behavior were significantly reduced after accounting for the mediator, it is still imperative that these effects be tested more rigorously.

For that matter, the bootstrapping technique, which is a technique commonly utilized and recommended by scholars have been used to further examine the significance of indirect effects in the study (Preacher et al., 2007). Five thousand bootstrap samples were created using Preacher and Hayes (2008) multiple mediation macro. The mean estimated indirect effects for all four mediational paths were computed across all samples, as well as the 95% confidence intervals and standard errors for each of the estimates. As recommended by Shrout and Bolger (2002), the confidence intervals for each indirect path were to be investigated to determine significance levels. The indirect effect would only be significant if zero was not included within the range the confidence internals.

Support was found for three indirect effects: Conscientiousness and employees' deviant behavior as mediated by job satisfaction ( $SE=-.074, CI= -.035$  to  $-.137, p<.05$ ). Thus, this study provided evidence that job satisfaction was significantly mediated the relationship between conscientiousness and employees' deviant behavior (partial mediation effect). Thus, Hypothesis 4-2 is supported.

This study also found the significant indirect effect between negative affectivity and employees' deviant behavior as mediated by job satisfaction ( $SE=.034, CI= .012$  -  $.076$ ). In others word, there is partial mediation effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between negative affectivity and employees' deviant behavior. Thus, Hypothesis 4-1 is supported.

Agreeableness and employees' deviant behavior as mediated by job satisfaction ( $SE=-.092, CI= -.053$  to  $-.156, p<.05$ ). Thus, this study provided evidence that job satisfaction was

significantly mediated the relationship between agreeableness and employees' deviant behavior (partial mediation effect). Thus, Hypothesis 4-3 is supported.

However, support was not found for the relation of emotional intelligent and employees' deviant behavior as mediated by job satisfaction ( $SE=.016$ ,  $CI= .002$  to  $-.043$ ,  $p>.05$ ). In others word, there is no mediation effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between emotional intelligent and employees' deviant behavior. Thus, Hypothesis 4-4 is not supported.

### **Discussion**

This research study test test the model of employees' deviant behavior involving individual characteristics. Results provided support for theoretical model investigates the prediction of individual characteristics with job satisfaction as the mediator. The results findings indicated that job satisfaction mediates individual characteristics except for emotional intelligence.

### **Relationship between Individual Characteristics and Employees' Deviant Behavior**

The result in the direct model showed that negative affectivity influenced employees' deviant behavior. Appelbaum and Shapiro (2006) highlighted similar findings. Goh (2007) further explained that those employees having high-negative affectivity were likely to to less socialised and observed the work environment as irritating. Support staffs with such individual characteristics were most likely to demonstrate employees' deviant behavior due to their task which requires them to deal with the civil in various moods and behaviors.

This research also signified that agreeableness predicted support staffs' employees' deviant behavior. Important distinction to note that the results in this study were consistent from other researchers (Monnaste, 2010; Babamiri et al., 2013). This may be due to several reasons. The social interactions with disagreeable people were characterised by conflict and disagreement which predicted employees' deviant behavior.

This study result also showed that conscientiousness play an important role in predicting employees' deviant behavior. Similar research was found from the following studies such as from Lee et al.'s (2005) empirical study involving the five Korean workplace. Monnastes's (2010) online survey among 325 individuals from various types of employment. This study result also reveals similar from Tseng (2006).

On the contrary, this study signified that emotional intelligence did not predict employees' deviant behavior. The result of this study was not consistent with previous researchers' result (i.e., Bibi et al., 2013; Potcovaru, 2014). Such contradict result may be due to that support staff are front line service providers whom are exposed to customers' feedback and complain. They were being trained to handle their emotions and communication specifically when interact or facting customers.

The findings show that job satisfaction influenced negative behavior of support staff. Previous researchers had also strongly signified that job satisfaction influenced an employees' deviant behavior (Marcus & Wagner, 2007; Anjum & Parvez, 2013).

The result of this study was also similar with (Bruck-Lee et al., 2009) and (Mehrad et al., 2015) studies. Employees with low negative affectivity are known to have a state of calmness and serenity. Therefore, implicates support staffs' job satisfaction.

Subsequently, results signified that agreeableness affect support staffs' job satisfaction. Research that involve respondents whom are Malaysian and Indonesia participants concluded that agreeableness affects job satisfaction. Consistent result was found from Kappagoda (2012) and Mehrad et al. (2015) quantitative study apparently.

The results of this study revealed that conscientiousness influence employees' deviant behavior. The result of this current study did support the findings of previous study such as Tseng's (2006) study, who investigated conscientiousness with job satisfaction among employees in Taiwan. Similarly, with Kappagoda (2012) study who used 150 Sri Lankan non-academic employees.

Emotional intelligence which is tested in this study did not predict employees' deviant behavior. This study also demonstrated that emotional intelligence did not influence job satisfaction as hypothesises by past researchers (e.g., Patra, 2004; Sy et al., 2006). The inconsistencies of the result is perhaps due to the support staffs' job which did not require much degree of emotional intelligence since their tasks are mainly focused on performing routine duties. Some jobs did not require a high degree of emotional intelligence therefore individuals with high level of emotional intelligence did not succeed in certain jobs (Mousavi et al., 2012).

The results further revealed that emotional intelligence did not have direct effect with job satisfaction and employees' deviant behavior. Due to the insignificant result of the variables to the mediating and the dependent variables, there was no need to test for mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986). However, the insignificant of the variables towards the mediating variable is discussed next.

In this study, the effect of individual characteristics except for emotional intelligence on work deviant behavior partially mediated through job satisfaction. Inclusion of job satisfaction influenced employees' deviant behavior. It is concluded that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between relevant individual characteristics and employees' deviant behavior.

The findings also held the earlier results of Mount et al. (2006) that identified job satisfaction should not be expected to fully mediate the personality-employees' deviant behavior relationship. In addition, the negative views of job satisfaction leads support staff to act negatively however, this association may be suppressed or facilitated depending on the support staffs' individual characteristics.

Therefore, based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that individual characteristics (i.e., agreeableness, conscientiousness, and negative affectivity) were important in predicting support staffs' job satisfaction and employees' deviant behavior. The present findings of this study reveal that individuals are inclined to be deviant if they possessed certain characteristics. Support staffs with high negative affectivity, low conscientiousness, and low quality of agreeableness were more inclined to engage in employees' deviant behavior than others. It could be concluded that deviance is a reflection of one's personality. The findings of the study also contributed to the workplace deviant literature from the perspective of individual characteristics since there is a belief that deviant workplace behavior had been widely tested but not strongly supported by research.

An employee's belief on how an organisation values him or her, influence an employee's job satisfaction. The findings revealed that job satisfaction partially mediated the relationships between negative affectivity, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and workplace deviant. It is suggested that negative affectivity and agreeableness are as important as job satisfaction which influenced employees' deviant behavior in the Malaysian civil service organisation. It is suggested that organisations not only have to look into the employee's characteristics in reducing the prevalence of employees' deviant behavior but also an employee's job satisfaction.

### **Limitations**

During the research, limitations do occurred. Issues of deviant behavior are sensitive which affects the employee's self-image. Therefore, not all respondents are open to share their negative act or experiences. Another limitation this study occur, is social desirability. Social desirability is also known as one of the potential for common method bias. Employees may not admit that they engaged in various forms of negative act. Hence, to reduce social desirability, participants' anonymity were employed as suggested by Benett and Robinson (2000). This research also uses self-administered questionnaires to reduce the effect of dishonesty.

### **Practical implications**

This research involves support personnel which have lower qualification. Therefore, it is suggested that reserachers could look into respondents with higher education. This study employed individual characteristics as the independent variables. It is recommended that future studies could look into other individual characteristics variables.

The model used in this study adds new understanding of the individual characteristics and the mediating role of job satisfaction on support staff' deviant behavior in the Malaysian civil service ontext and Asian perspective. Last but not least, the recommendations highlighted will guide other researchers to have a better understanding on the prediction of individual characteristics and employees' deviant behavior in the Malaysian civil organisation.

### **References**

- Abdul Rahman, A. R. (2008). *Predictors of workplace deviance behavior in Malaysia*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Universiti Sains Malaysia.
- Afsar, B., Shahjehan, A., & Rehman, Z. U. (2011). Negative affectivity, conscientiousness and job scope (A case of IT and telecom industry). *Annals of the University of Petroşani, Economics*, 10(4), 5-18.
- Anjum, M. A., & Parvez, A. (2013). Counterproductive Behavior at Work: A Comparison of Blue Collar and White Collar Workers. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce and Social Sciences*, 7(3), 417-434.
- Appelbaum, S. H., & Shapiro, B. T. (2006). Diagnosis and remedies for deviant workplace behaviors. *Journal of American Academy of Business*, 9(2), 14-21.
- Asma, A., & Pedersen, P. B. (2003). *Understanding Multicultural Malaysia: Delights, Puzzles and Irritations*. Malaysia: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Awanis, K. I. (2006). *The relationship between deviance behavior among mara employees in northern Malaysia and its predictors*. Unpublished Master Dissertation, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

- Babamiri, M., Sabbagh, U., & Harsini, A. Z. (2013). Investigate the relationship between organizational justice and personality characteristics with counterproductive work behavior. *Journal of Life Science and Biomedicine*, 3(4), 268-272.
- Bar-On, R. (2004). *The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i): Rationale, description and psychometric properties*. Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science.
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51(6), 1173-1182.
- Bechtoldt, M. N., Welk, C., Hartig, J., & Zapf, D. (2008). Main and moderating effects of self-control, organizational justice, and emotional labour on counterproductive behavior at work. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 16(4), 479-497. doi:10.1080/13594320701662618
- Bennett, R. J., & Robinson, S. L. (2000). Development of a measure of workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(3), 349-360. DOI: 10.1037//0021-9010.85.3.349
- Berry, C. M., Ones, D. S., & Sackett, P. R. (2007). Interpersonal deviance, organisational deviance, and their common correlates: a review and meta-analysis. [Meta-Analysis Review]. *Journal Applied Psychology*, 92(2), 410-424. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.92.2.410
- Bibi, Z., Karim, J., & ud Din, S. (2013). Workplace incivility and counterproductive work behavior: Moderating role of emotional intelligence. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 28(2), 317.
- Blau, P. (1986). *Exchange and Power*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Bodankin, M., & Tziner, A. (2009). Constructive Deviance, Destructive Deviance and Personality: How Do They Interrelate? *Economic Inferences*, XI(26), 550-564.
- Brayfield, A. H., & Rothe, H. F. (1951). An index of job satisfaction. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 35(5), 307-311. DOI: 10.1037/h0055617
- Bruk-Lee, V., Khoury, H. A., Nixon, A. E., Goh, A., & Spector, P. E. (2009). Replicating and Extending Past Personality/Job Satisfaction Meta-Analyses. *Human Performance*, 22(2), 156-189. DOI: 10.1080/08959280902743709
- Chen, C. C., Chen, M. Y. C., & Liu, Y. C. (2013). Negative affectivity and workplace deviance: The moderating role of ethical climate. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 24(15), 2894-2910. DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2012.753550
- Connolly, J. J., & Viswesvaran, C. (2000). The role of affectivity in job satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 29(2), 265-281. DOI: 10.1016/S0191-8869(99)00192-0
- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1985). *The NEO Personality Inventory Manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
- Coyle-Shapiro, J. A. M., & Conway, N. (2005). Exchange relationships: examining psychological contracts and perceived organisational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(4), 774-781. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.90.4.774
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 1-27. DOI: 10.1177/0149206305279602
- Dawson, L. C. (1996). *Dispositional and Attitudinal Explanations of counterproductivity in the workplace*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Berkeley, California
- Davies, M., Stankov, L., & Roberts, R. D. (1998). Emotional intelligence : in search of elusive construct. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(4), 989-1015.

- Ealias, A., & George, J. (2012). Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction: a correlational study. *Research journal of commerce and behavioral science*, 1(4).
- Ferguson, J. (2007). *Knowledge Creation Diffusion Utilization*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Graduate school of Vanderbilt, Chattanooga
- Foulkrod, K. H., Field, C., & Brown, C. V. R. (2010). Trauma Surgeon Personality and Job Satisfaction: Results from a National Survey. *American Surgeon*, 76(4), 422-427.
- Goh, A. (2007). *An attributional analysis of counterproductive work behavior in response to occupational stress*. PhD Dissertation. University of South Florida, Australia
- Greenberg, J., & Baron, R. A. (2008). *Behavior in Organisations* (9th ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Herschovis, S. M., Turner, N., Barling, J., Arnold, K. A., Dupre, K. E., Inness, M., LeBlanc, M., & Sivanathan, N. (2007). Predicting workplace aggression: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(1), 228-238. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.228
- Hollinger, R. C., & Clark, J. P. (1983). *Theft by employees*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Howard, M. C. (2009). *Emotional Intelligence as a predictor of job satisfaction, organisational and occupational commitment among human service workers*. PhD Dissertation, Capella University, United States.
- Ida, I. I., & Ali, B. (2010). Is job satisfaction mediating the relationship between compensation structure and organisational commitment? A study in the Malaysian Utility Power. *Journal of Global Business and Economics*, 1(1), 1-19.
- Javed, R., Amjad, M., Faqeer-Ul-Ummi, U. Y., & Bukhari, R. (2014). Investigating factors affecting employee workplace deviant behavior. *International Journal of Innovation and Applied Studies*, 9(3), 1073.
- Judge, T. A., Heller, D., & Mount, M. K. (2002). Five-factor model of personality and job satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(3), 530-541.
- Kamdar, D., & Dyne., V. (2007). The joint effects of personality and workplace social exchange relationships in predicting task performance and citizenship performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(5), 1286-1298. DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.92.5.1286
- Kappagoda, S. (2012). The Impact of Five-Factor Model of Personality on Job Satisfaction of Non-academic employees in Sri Lankan Universities. *South East Asian Journal of Contemporary Business, Economics and Law*, 1.
- Ladebo, O. (2004). Employees' personal motives for engaging in citizenship behavior: The case of workers in Nigeria's agriculture industry. *Current Research in Social Psychology*, 9(16), 220-233.
- Lee, R. M. (1993). *Doing research on sensitive topics*. London: Sage Publication.
- Lee, K., Ashton, M. C., & Shin, K. (2005). Personality correlates of workplace anti-social. *Applied Psychology*, 54(1), 81-98.
- Marcus, B., & Wagner, U. (2007). Combining dispositions and evaluations of vocation and job to account for counterproductive work behavior in adolescent job apprentices. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 12(2), 161-176. DOI: 10.1037/1076-8998.12.2.161
- Martinko, M.J., Douglas, S.C., & Harvey, P. (2006). Understanding and managing workplace aggression. *Organizational Dynamics*, 35 (2), 117-130.
- Mayhew, C., & McCarthy, P. (2005). Occupational violence/bullying in public service organizations. *Journal of Occupational Health and Safety, Australia and New Zealand*, 21(1), 33-42.

- McGorry, S. (2000). Measurement in a cross-cultural environment: survey translation issues. *Qualitative Market Research. An International Journal*, 3(2), 74-81. DOI: 10.1108/13522750010322070
- Mehrad, A., Halimatussadiyah, H., Ma'rof, R., & Haslinda, A. (2015). The role of personality factors on Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff at Public Research University, *Journal of Educational, Health and Community Psychology*, 4 (1), 16 – 24.
- Monnastes, S. N. (2010). *Perceived Organisational support and counterproductive work behavior: How personality moderates the relationship*. Unpublished Master Dissertation, San José State University, California.
- Mount, M., Ilies, R., & Johnson, E. (2006). Relationship of personality traits and counterproductive work behaviors: The mediating effects of job satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology*, 59(3), 591-622. DOI: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2006.00048.x
- Mousavi, S. H., Yarmohammadi, S., Nosrat, A. B., & Tarasi, Z. (2012). The relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of physical education teachers. *Annals of Biological Research*, 3(2), 780-788.
- Naz, S., Rehman, S., and Sagib, H. (2013). The relationship between job satisfaction and personality trait among bank employees. *Far East Journal of Psychology and Business*, 11(3), 57–72.
- Ng, T. W. H., & Feldman, D. C. (2008). The relationship of age to ten dimensions of job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(2), 392-423.
- Patra, S. (2004). Role of emotional intelligence in educational management. *Journal Indian Education*, 30(1), 98-104.
- Pearson, C., Andersson, L., & Porath, C. (2000). Assessing and attacking. *Organizational Dynamics*, 29(2), 123-137. DOI: 10.1016/S0090-2616(00)00019-X
- Potcovaru, A. M. (2014). The Influence of the Counterproductive Work Behavior on the Organizational Performance. In *Proceedings of Administration and Public Management International Conference* (Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 84-89). Research Centre in Public Administration and Public Services, Bucharest, Romania.
- Preacher, K. J., Rucker, D. D., & Hayes, A. F. (2007). Addressing moderated mediation hypotheses: Theory, methods, and prescriptions. *Multivariate behavioral research*, 42(1), 185-227. DOI: 10.1080/00273170701341316
- Preacher, K., & Hayes, R.F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior Research Methods*, 40(3), 879-891 DOI: 10.3758/BRM.40.3.879
- Reio, T.G. & Ghosh, R. (2009). Antecedents and outcomes of workplace incivility: Implications for human resource development research and practice. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 20 (3), 237-264.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, cognition and personality*, 9(3), 185-211.
- Scheuer, L. M. (2010). *A climate for workplace aggression: The influence of abusive supervision, organisational factors, and subordinate predispositions*. Unpublished Master Dissertation, Northern Illinois University, United States.
- Scott-Cawiezell, J., Main, D. S., Vojir, C. P., Jones, K., Moore, L., Nutting, P. A., Kutner, J.S., Pennington, K. (2005). Linking nursing home working conditions to organisational performance. *Health Care Management Review*, 30(4), 372-380.

- Shim, J. (2008). Concept exploration of workplace incivility: Its Implication to HRD. Retrieved from [http://www.midwestacademy.org/Proceedings/2008/papers/Shim&Park\\_49.pdf](http://www.midwestacademy.org/Proceedings/2008/papers/Shim&Park_49.pdf)
- Shrout, P. E., & Bolger, N. (2002). Mediation in experimental and nonexperimental studies: New procedures and recommendations. *Psychological Methods*, 7(4), 422–445. DOI: 10.1037//1082-989X.7.4.422
- Sy, T., Tram, S., & O’Hara, L. A. (2006). Relation of employee and manager emotional intelligence to job satisfaction and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 68(3), 461-473. DOI: 10.1016/j.jvb.2005.10.003
- Tepper, B. J. (2000). Consequences of abusive supervision. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42(1), 100-108. DOI: 10.2307/1556375
- Tseng, H. Y. (2006). *Communication factors which promote employee's job satisfaction in Taiwan high-tech industry: A personality traits study*. Unpublished Master Dissertation, The University of Akron, United States.
- Villard, J. A. (2004). *Determining the relationship between job satisfaction of county extension unit employees and the level of emotional intelligence of extension country chairs*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, School of The Ohio State University, United States.
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 47, 1063-1070. DOI: 10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063
- Wellen, M. J. (2004). *From individual deviance to collective corruption: A social influence model for the spread of deviance in organisations*. Paper presented at the Social change in the 21st century conference centre for social change research, Queensland University of Technology, Australia.
- Wong, C., & Law, K. S. (2002). The effect of leader and follower emotional intelligence on performance and attitude: An exploratory study. *Leadership Quarterly*, 13(3), 243-274. DOI: 10.1016/S1048-9843(02)00099-1