

Employee Obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behaviour among Employees of Government Organizations and Departments

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Abstract

Employees can survive in the organizations only if they become accustomed continuously with the changing environment. Employees working in different field areas confront with frequent changes and technological innovations at their work place. Employees who are not able to match with such changes of work place get frustrated and may indulge in Counterproductive Work Behavior. Present research has focused on the issues of Employee Obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behavior among employees. To conduct the research, a sample of 224 employees working at various positions in government organizations and departments was selected randomly on availability basis. Chosen subjects were tested for employee obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behavior by using Professional Obsolescence Scale (Chauhan 2000) and Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist (CWB-C) (Paul E. Spector, 2006) respectively. Tested subjects were divided into two groups of 72 subjects each. These two groups of obsolete and non-obsolete employees were tested for their Counterproductive Work Behavior. Findings of the study show that mean score for Counterproductive Work Behavior of obsolete employee's group (116.67) was very high in comparison to the mean score (64.01) of non-obsolete employee's group. To examine the difference between mean score values for Counterproductive Work Behavior among obsolete and non-obsolete employee's group, t-test was used. T-test value ($t = 3.57, p < 0.05$) shows that there was significant difference between the mean score values of obsolete employee's group and non-obsolete employee's group which means there was positive and significant difference in the tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior among obsolete and non-obsolete employee's groups. Obsolete employees were having higher tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior in comparison to non-obsolete employees.

Keywords: Counterproductive Work Behavior, Employee Obsolescence, Employees, Technological Changes, Obsolete, Non-Obsolete

INTRODUCTION

Current rapid technological progress has led to shorter learning cycles; similarly, competencies in many domains have become obsolete faster than ever. By individual competence mean both the ability as well as the willingness to react appropriately to work environmental requirements. The human resource management literature describes a number of measures that are meant to guarantee the long-term performance and productivity of employees. Organizations employ these good practices to different degrees and with varied effectiveness. In fact, some organizations seem able to keep their employees' abilities up to date, while others suffer from obsolescence problems. Up-to-date knowledge and competencies play an essential role in the remedy of obsolescence. Older/existing employees possess experience, know-how, and seasoned judgment. But many become less enthusiastic as their careers draw to a close. Obsolescence is having profound impact on employee's behavior towards work and people at work place. This impact on employee's behavior may force them to indulge in Counterproductive Work Behavior. Counterproductive Work Behavior may have harmful effects on organization and other employees working in the organization. Present research looks at Employee Obsolescence as predictor of Counterproductive Work Behavior.

Obsolescence

Obsolescence results when an employee no longer possesses the knowledge or abilities needed to perform successfully. It may result from a person's failure to adapt to new technology, new procedures and other changes. The more likely environment changes, more likely employees will become obsolete. Jones & Cooper (1980) defines obsolescence as the extent to which a manager's knowledge and skills have failed to keep pace with the current and likely future requirements of his job. Two type of obsolescence can be seen among employees, one is ability obsolescence i.e. employee's abilities and skills are no longer sufficient to keep up with the requirements of job and other is attitudinal obsolescence i.e. employees failed to maintain flexibility in attitude to update themselves (Mahler, 1965). Obsolescence occurs when there is a gap between the job needs

and employee's capabilities which means that skills and knowledge are inadequate to perform the job efficiently and effectively. Drucker (1995) emphasizes the importance and relevance of knowledge. According to him knowledge has become the key economic resource and the dominant, even the only source of competitive advantage. So, obsolescence is the deviation between work performance and expected level of competence.

Counterproductive Work Behavior

Counterproductive Work Behavior can be defined as the conduct, activities, actions and deeds of employees which negatively affect the organization/employer and other staff members. It includes activities like theft, lie to employer, personal use of organizational resources, wastage of organizational resources, denying to take new assignments, rude behavior with customers/clients, blaming others for mistakes, gossiping with other staff members, insulting co-employees and destroying organizational property etc.

Counterproductive Work Behavior can range in minor offences to severity either at interpersonal level or at an organizational level (Benett, R.J. and Robinson, S.L. 2000). At interpersonal level Counterproductive Work Behavior affects the staff members or employees with-in the organization and at organizational level Counterproductive Work Behavior will affect the interest of organization or employer. The research of Rishipal (2012) revealed that there was significant relationship between the tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior and managerial effectiveness among different level of managers.

Employee Obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behavior

Employees are not functioning in stable environment. They are required to keep up with changing technology and to get engaged in continuous updation of techniques to work. Employee's competence may get outdated because of technological innovations and rapid advancements. Their previously acquired knowledge and experience become outdated and ineffective. So, obsolescence is an important issue to be considered constantly in every type of organizations. Most of the time employees with low skills, old employees and employees without any opportunity to develop or update their skills and knowledge find it difficult to keep up with the changing demands and complexities of future work environment which negatively have an effect on their behavior at work place. This change in behavior at work place can affect the interests of organization as well as the other employees working at the same organization. Now a day's Counterproductive Work Behavior is a major problem for many organizations as employees in most organizations and particularly technical professionals and managers of specialized areas need to update their-selves with the changes in environment. The research study of Rishipal and Chand P K (2012) found that there was positive relationship between Counterproductive Work Behavior and Locus of Control among employees of government organizations. Development in the field of technology leads to skills obsolescence which in turn leads to employee obsolescence and resulted into change in employee's behavior at work place. The world has changed a lot in past few years. The rapid development of new technology in every field has changed the way of working of employees. Now they have to update their selves for maintaining the level of performance. Present research investigates employee obsolescence in public sector organizations and its resultant affect in the form of employees Counterproductive Work Behavior.

Need for Study

Employees can survive in the organizations only if they become accustomed continuously with the changing environment. Employees working at different field areas confronted with frequent changes and technological innovation at their work place and the employees who are not able to match with the changes in work environment get frustrated that influences the behavior of employees at work place resulted into Counterproductive Work Behavior by employees. Because of complex and demanding jobs employee skill obsolescence has become a major issue. So, there is need to focus on the issue of obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behavior by employees which have detrimental effects on organizations especially in public sector organizations and departments.

Objectives of Study

1. To find out the degree of Employee Obsolescence among employees working with government organizations and departments.
2. To find out the tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior among employees of government organizations and departments.
3. To investigate the relationship between the tendencies of Counterproductive Work Behavior and Employee Obsolescence.
4. To compare the tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior among obsolete and non-obsolete employees of government organization and departments.

Hypotheses of Study

1. Employees of government organizations and departments would be found obsolete.
2. Employees will have Counterproductive Work Behavior.

3. There will be positive and significant association between Counterproductive Work Behavior and Employee Obsolescence.
4. Obsolete employees will have higher tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior in comparison to non-obsolete employees.

Research Method

Research Design: Employee's Counterproductive Work Behavior is one of the major and most important elements for the organizational performance and achievement. There are various factors which play significant role in the employee's work behavior. Some of them are technology, skills, attitude and knowledge. As a result of globalization, adoption of innovative techniques and human desire to create best living conditions, all these factors have become highly dynamic in nature. Consequently, present era is facing rapid advancement, technological change and attitudinal difference. The dynamism of all these factors leads to the obsolescence of technology, infrastructure and human skills. Present research will study the effect of such obsolescence and its resultant effect on employee's behavior of Indian government organizations and departments.

To conduct the research, a sample of 224 employees working at various positions from top to lowest level of government organizations and departments was selected randomly on availability basis. Chosen subjects (employees) were tested for employee obsolescence by using Professional Obsolescence Scale (Chauhan 2000). Tested subjects were divided into two categories, first category consists of obsolete employees and second was having subjects who were technologically, knowledge wise and attitudinally non-obsolete. Criteria for categorization of obsolete and non-obsolete employees was based upon the score range on the dimension of employee obsolescence. Subjects selected for first group were the employees having minimum score range of 34 to 134, whereas for forming the second group of non-obsolete employees, subjects who scored in the range 135 to 170 were selected. These two groups of obsolete and non-obsolete employees were tested for their Counterproductive Work Behavior by using questionnaire method, developed by researchers. Collected data for employee obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behavior were analyzed by using statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, correlation, regression and t-test. Results and findings were discussed in the light of existing knowledge.

Sample: Employees of government organizations and departments were surveyed for Employee Obsolescence and their Counterproductive Work Behavior. Initially a sample of 224 employees was randomly selected on availability basis as subjects for testing employee obsolescence. Selected subjects were then divided into the categories of obsolete and non-obsolete employees. From these two categories, two groups each having 72 subjects were selected randomly from obsolete and non-obsolete employees. Employees of both the groups were then tested for their Counterproductive Work Behavior.

Method of Data Collection: For conduction of survey, questionnaire method was used. To collect the data for employee obsolescence, Professional Obsolescence Scale (Chauhan 2000) was used and Counterproductive Work Behaviour Checklist (CWB-C) developed by Paul E. Spector (2006) was used to collect information for employees Counterproductive Work Behaviour.

Statistical Tools and Techniques: For analysis of data various statistical techniques such as measures of central tendency and dispersion were used. To find out intra group relationship and in between variables, Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation, t-test and regression analysis techniques were used.

Results and Findings: Results of the study were found out by using various descriptive and inferential statistical techniques with the help of SPSS software. Findings have been presented as under:

Table (1): Exhibit the Mean Score, Standard Deviation And Range of Scores for Employee Obsolescence.

N	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	Std. Dev.
224	41	156	115	123.0385	35.84

Table (1) shows that the mean score (123.0385) and standard deviation (35.84) for Employee Obsolescence. The range of scores lies in between 41 to 156. The standard deviation value shows that the individual scores are widely spread with respect to mean value. This means that present sample of subjects was consist of both the obsolete and non-obsolete employees. So for the purpose of research, sample of subjects was categorized into two categories i.e. obsolete and non-obsolete employees. Table (2) depicts the categorization of selected subjects on the basis of obsolescence and non-obsolescence.

Table (2): Criteria for Categorization on the Basis of Obsolescence and Non-Obsolescence.

Categories	Criteria	N
Obsolete	Score range from 34 to 134	107
Updated	Score range from 135 to 170	117

As shown in Table (2), Employees classified for obsolete category were having the score range of 34 to 134 and score range of 135 to 170 for non-obsolete employees. Out of 224 employees, total of 107 employees were found obsolete and rest 117 employees were found non-obsolete according to the required standards of technology, knowledge and attitude. From these two obsolete and non-obsolete categories of employees two groups were

formed by random selection and each having 72 subjects. After forming the groups, subjects were tested for their tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB).

Table (3): Showing Descriptive Statistics for Counterproductive Work Behavior among Both Groups

Groups	N	Min	Max	Range	Mean	Std. Dev.
Obsolete Employees Group	72	80	150	70	116.67	13.38
Non-obsolete Employees Group	72	55	80	25	64.01	5.4

Table (3), exhibits mean score for Counterproductive Work Behavior of obsolete employees group was 116.67, which was very high in comparison to the mean score of non-obsolete employees group, mean = 64.01. This means that subjects selected for obsolete employees group were having higher tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior in comparison to non-obsolete employees group. Value of Standard deviation for obsolete employees group was 13.38 and for non-obsolete employees group was 5.4 which show that the scores of second group are less scattered in comparison to scores of first group so there is more consistency in the scores of second group.

Table (4): Independent T-Test for Comparing the Tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior among Obsolete and Non-Obsolete employees groups.

Groups	N	Mean	t value	p value
Obsolete Employees Group	72	116.67	3.57	.001
Non-obsolete Employees Group	72	64.01		

To examine the difference between mean score values for Counterproductive Work Behavior among obsolete and non-obsolete employees group, t-test was used. Findings shown at Table (4) $t = 3.57$, $p < 0.05$ shows that there was significant difference between the mean score values of obsolete employees group and non-obsolete employees group which means there is positive and significant difference in the tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior among obsolete and non-obsolete employees groups.

Table (5): Inferential Statistics to Show Relationship between Counterproductive Work Behavior among Obsolete & Non-Obsolete Employees Groups.

Groups	N	Karl Pearson Correlation (r)	R ²
Obsolete Employees Group	72	0.961	0.923
Non-obsolete employees Group	72	0.855	0.731

Table (5) shows that there was high degree of positive and significant relationship between the scores of Employee Obsolescence and the tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior for both the groups. Positive relationship between Employee Obsolescence and Counterproductive Work Behavior proves that the obsolete employees were having higher tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior, whereas, non-obsolete employees were not obsolete having the higher tendency of Counterproductive Work Behavior.

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