

The Effect of Negative Work Outcomes on Employee Deviant Behavior: Exploring the Relationship Between Perceived Injustice, Boredom, Moral Disengagement and Work Withdrawal in Training Units

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Abstract

Deviant behaviour at workplace is very problematic for businesses. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the variables which cause deviant behaviour. One kind of deviant behaviour "work withdrawal" is analysed in this paper. Specifically, the role of two negative work outcomes like boredom and perceived injustice is determined to test the causes of work withdrawal. In this paper, the relationship between work withdrawal and perceived injustice, work withdrawal and boredom are determined. Moral disengagement has been used as a mediating variable. Survey Data were collected from employees of six different companies from Bahrain. The responses were collected through questionnaire. The data were analysed by using PLS. The significance of the theoretical relationship was assessed using structural equation model (SEM). The paper concludes that boredom causes work withdrawal while perceived injustice has no impact on work withdrawal. Perceived injustice causes moral disengagement. Boredom also causes moral disengagement. But moral disengagement has no impact on work withdrawal. Apart from this, we have found that boredom has a small effect on disengagement and strongly affects withdrawal. However, disengagement has a small determining effect on withdrawal, and perceived injustice has a small effect on both disengagement and withdrawal. This research paper would contribute to Human resources ethical literature by studying the causes of deviant behaviour at the workplace. Moreover, the effect of moral disengagement is observed.

Keywords

Deviant Behaviour, Perceived Injustics, Moral Disengagement, Work withdrawal

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Introduction

Deviant employee behaviours at the workplace can be harmful for the organization. Employees' deviant behavior results in organizational losses \$6 to \$200 billion annually (Murphy, 1993). Approximately 33 to 75 percent of employees are engaged in some deviant behaviours (Harper, 1990). This article examines the deviant workplace behaviours and what causes the deviant behaviour. The main theme of this paper is to widen the research in organizational studies and remove the causes of deviant workplace behaviour.

However, it is assumed that perceived injustice enhances the employee deviant workplace behaviour, including withdrawal, which can be absenteeism, turnover intentions, and work alleviations (Elovainio et al., 2003). This research aims to examine some moral disengagement by which perceived injustice and boredom are translated into employee work withdrawal.

In this study, we depend on organizational justice theory (Rasooli et al., 2019) in order to describe employee deviant behaviour. Actually, there are three forms of justice: Distributive, procedural and retributive (Vermunt and steensma, 2016). Distributive justice is mainly concerned with the distribution of rewards (or punishments) and the procedural justice deals with the decision-making processes and other organizational processes. As wenzel et al (2017) said, it is essential to recognize how employees observe injustice and respond to it. If employee experienced the injustice in their organization, they are more likely to engage in the dishonest behaviour as a revenge against employer (Houser et al., 2012).

Moral disengagement created by perceived injustice and boredom will translate into work withdrawal. This study's main objective is to recognize how different forms of injustice relate to the deviant work behaviour among employees and to what extent the moral disengagement affects their relationship. This study aims to further understand how different kinds of injustice (procedural and distributive) and boredom relate to work withdrawal and this research focused on the mediating role of moral disengagement.

This research article starts with the theoretical overview of employee deviant behaviour on which hypothesis are developed, then it follows the description and methodologies. Finally, we will conclude the paper with the implications and recommendation for additional research after the results.

Literature Review

Deviant Behavior (Work Withdrawal)

Different researchers had given different names to this type of behaviour like workplace deviance, antisocial behaviour (Silitonga et al., 2020). It is described as a voluntary activity done by employees when they either lack the motivation to obey the organizational values or become motivated to violate those values.

Griffin et al. (1998) while discussing the definitions of counterproductive work behaviour noted that almost all the definitions describe that all the deviant workplace behaviours are characterized by ignoring the organizational and societal norms and values. Moreover, they noticed that deviant behaviour might rank very low seriousness (e.g., theft) to high seriousness (e.g. violence). Also Hogan and Hogan (1989) viewed deviant work behaviour covering all counterproductive work behaviour from absenteeism to violence. Baron and Richardson (1994) indicated that deviant behaviour caters to activities that break the indirect and direct rules and threatens the organizational well-being.

A small number of attempts have been made to categorize deviant behaviour. Redeker developed the list of several deviant behaviours but he was unable to give them any meaningful form. Robinson and Bennett (1995) classified deviant behaviour in four categories: production deviance, property deviance also known as withdrawal from work, political deviance, and personal aggression. Robinson and Bennett further elaborated the above types of deviant behaviour as follows: **Production Deviance:** Leaving before time, taking large breaks, intentionally working slowly, misusing company resources. **Property Deviance:** Damaging equipment, accepting bribes, lying about hours worked, and stealing the organization's resources. **Political Deviance:** Showing biasness, spreading false rumours about colleagues, blaming colleagues for own fault, misuse of information, and competing unnecessarily. **Personal Aggression:** Verbally

abusing, stealing colleague's belongings and threatening colleagues.

In this paper, we are mainly focusing on only one deviant behaviour: withdrawal. According to Spector et al. (2006) withdrawal is a behaviour in which employees work lesser time than required by organization. Moreover, Spector classifies the withdrawal as high absenteeism from work, arriving late at work or leaving before time, and taking excessive breaks. Spector et al. (2006) also suggest that withdrawal is associated with boredom. When employees get bored from their job, they take longer breaks, are more absent, and arrive late at work. Hanisch et al. (1998) also linked absenteeism and lateness with work withdrawal. However, withdrawal may arise from the desire to hurt the organization and its members. Absenteeism has gotten more attention than any other form of withdrawal. Johns (1997) described the withdrawal as dissatisfaction at work, and withdrawal is the escape from the situation instead of direct harm.

Moral Disengagement

Moral disengagement was initially perceived by Bandura et al. (1996) as an addition to the social cognitive model, which explains that people are involved in a self-regulatory system to have a cognitive control mechanism on their own thoughts and actions. As per Baumeister and his co-workers, the social cognitive model argues that moral agency is regulated with own processes that helps monitor people's actions as per the established internalized moral set standards. Bandura stated that individuals having high moral disengagement are more able to disengage the self-regulated related function cognitively

Tepper et al. (2009) have found out that employees will definitely work in a deviant way in order to retaliate against a co-worker. There are huge effects on withdrawal intentions, and however, withdrawal intentions has a stimulating effect on deviant behaviour, it is so broader and is not limited to any situation in which employees want to get back. They are with the opinion; withdrawal intentions create an atmosphere that helps for a wide range of expression of moral disengagement that provokes employees to go for immoral judgments of deviant activities.

Hypothesis 1: Moral disengagement has a positive relationship with work withdrawal.

Relationship Between Perceived Injustice and Deviant Behaviour (Work Withdrawal)

There are two forms of organizational justice (Matarid et al., 2018; Pillai et al., 1999). First is distributive justice, which focuses on the fair distribution of goods. 2nd is procedural justice, which focuses on the fair procedure which resolves conflict. Therefore, we use procedural and distributive justice in our research and their impact on work withdrawal and misuse of information. Adam and Gibbs (1965) describe distributive justice through equity theory, which states that people experience inequity when they could not match input to output ratio.

Hazzi (2012) believes that due to the growing international competition among the organization, it is necessary for one organization to compete in the international market to focus on human resource, which is considered a major factor for the organization's success. They must be given justice in every aspect once they perceive justice, they feel satisfied and reduce withdrawal. Therefore, organizational justice has various and significance importance on the organization as a whole and on the organization's employees. Hence organization justice has one kind of opportunity for the success of the organization and employees alike.

In this relationship we focus on how individual perceive and response to the organizational injustice. Most of the researcher focuses on the outcomes that result from injustice with employees, which highly impact organizational functioning like absenteeism, turnover intentions, work alienation and so on (Fujishiro, 2005). Moreover, alienated employees reduce their interest in the job and put less effort to achieve the target, which leads to lower productivity. Based on the literature review following hypothesis are examined:

Hypothesis 2: Perceptions of injustice will be related both directly to forms of withdrawal (absences, turnover intentions, work alienation, and alcohol use)

Relationship of Perceived Injustice with Moral Disengagement

There is a link between moral disengagement and injustice. Though they receive less attention. The link is fascinating as moral disengagement is not considered as a suitable trait but it is

considered as a flexible mental orientation which is more influenced by the societal setting where people operate. For example, Saidon et al. (2010) stated that the ethical environment in an organization enhances employees' tendency to involve in moral disengagement. So, therefore they propose that organizational injustice is a feature that can increase the people's tendency to disengage morally.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived injustice has a positive relationship with moral disengagement.

Boredom

Boredom can be explained as a state of reasonably low excitement and dissatisfaction which can be attributed to an insufficient interesting environment (Mikulas & Vodanovich, 1993). Boredom at work is now common at workplace. The estimation ranges from a quarter up to 87% says that, they get bored at work. (Watt & Hargis, 2010). Research has revealed severe negative consequences of boredom such as high turnover, absenteeism from work, low performance, low efforts, dissatisfaction from work, counter productive work behaviour, and work-related injuries (Bruursema, Kessler, & Spector, 2011). There are previous studies of work-related boredom that focused on boredom proneness as an indicator of boredom. It can be supposed that high boredom prone have more chances to experience boredom in any work-related situation as compared to less boredom prone people, definition of boredom proneness do not actually indicate actual level of experienced boredom in any given situation.

Different theoretical disciplines has boredom as a subject of investigation, including philosophy psychology (Vodanovich & Kass 1990), management (Hackman & Oldham 1976) and sociology (Barbalet 1999). Many tactics are concerned with the aspect of boredom concerning arousal (Zuckerman 1979), motivation and cognition (Damrad-Frye & Laird 1989). However, no proof can indicate boredom increase or decrease in arousal. (Thackray et al. 1977). Concerning motivation, few people argued that boredom causes unwillingness to perform any action. While others believe that boredom creates a sensation-seeking approach and motivation for people to go for change from the current boring situation. Few studies show the relationship of job boredom on deviant workplace behavior. Kass, Vodanovich, and Callender (2001) found that people who are highly bored on the job have significantly high scores on an objective measure of nonappearance in a job, which is a form of withdrawal. Therefore, we state that the employees who have a high level of boredom tend to withdraw from work.

Hypothesis 4: Boredom has a positive relationship with work withdrawal

Relationship of Boredom with Moral Disengagement

According to Kanevsky (2003), the action in response to boredom is to disengage from work morally. Moreover, highly bored employees are more likely to engage in moral disengagement. There are many forms of moral disengagement that boredom can create; therefore, the following hypothesis is accordingly formulated:

Hypothesis 5: Boredom has a positive relationship with moral disengagement

Sample

Our study is composed from companies from Bahrain. We have collected data from 5 companies in Bahrain. The data collection period was from January 2019 to May 2019. Altogether 275 questionnaires were distributed. The final sample consisted of 200 employees.

Results and Methodology

Assessment of Measurement Model

Independent Variable

The two factors of negative work outcome, namely perceived injustice and boredom are

considered independent variable in the current study. Therefore, we measure these independent variables by using (Bruursema, 2007).

Dependent Variable

We measured worked withdrawal with judgmental questions by adopting 4 items from the work of Spector et al. (2006). We use this approach because it helps us in getting unbiased data from employees.

PLS Path Model

We select PLS path model for analysing the data. As it is structural modelling technique based on variance-based. It is considered as best model to deal with sample-size and it is beneficial in exploratory research as well which test and validate models (Henseler et al., 2009). Wold (1975) stated that it demands a modelling approach when the research model and settings are exploratory. Looking at these literature recommendations we decide that PLS path modelling is suitable and found appropriate by several prominent studies (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Because of the two-step analytical approach, the assessment of measurement is made. PLS 3.0 is mainly used to analyse the data (Al-Aali & Ahmed, 2021; Shah et al., 2021; Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015).

Conceptual Framework

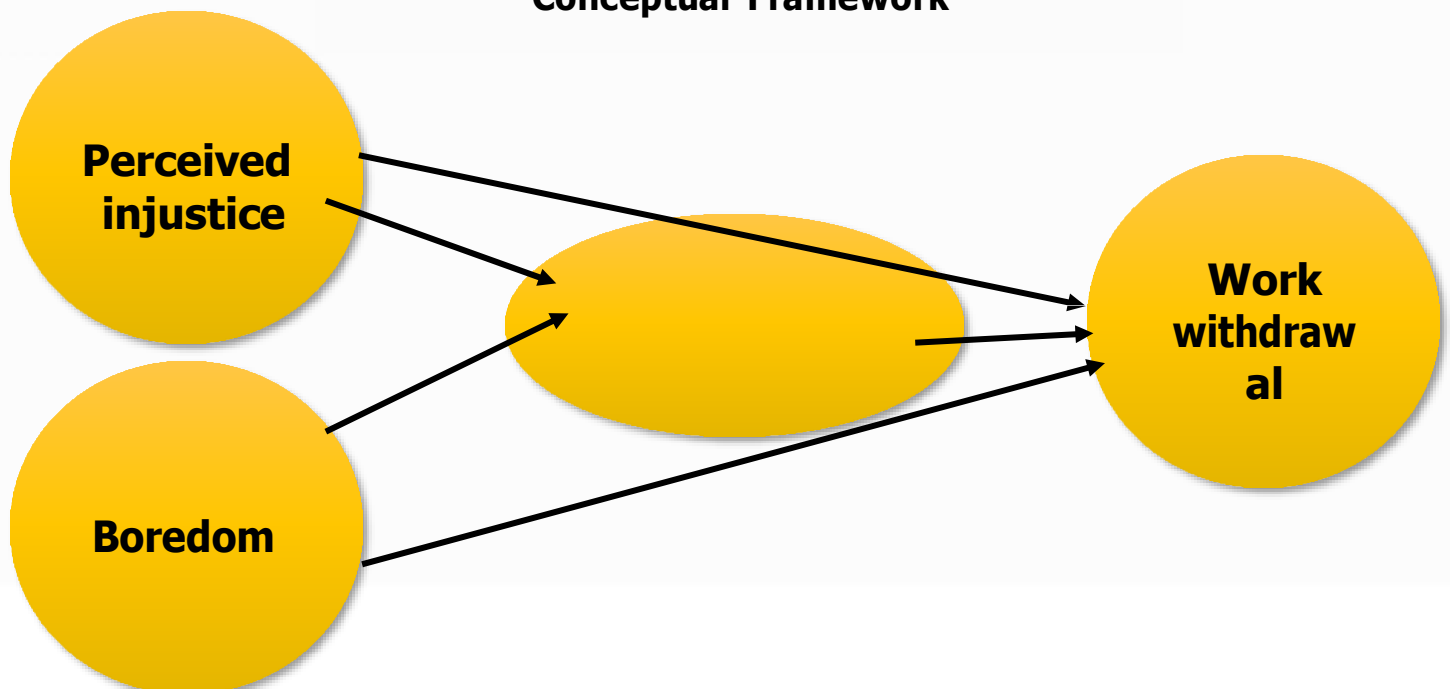


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Discriminant Validity

As per Fornell and Larcker (1981), the construct validity was ascertained succeeding (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). First, constructs' discriminant validity is shown below in Table 1 respectively. 0.7 is the acceptable level for composite reliability and AVE from 0.503. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Predictive Power of the Model

R^2 is a measure which represent the portion of variances of a dependant variable that is explained by an independent variable. Whereas, the strength of a dependent and independent variables is explained by correlation.

Table 2
Measurement Model

Latent Variable	Item	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Boredom	BOR1	0.669	0.933	0.503
	BOR10	0.781		
	BOR11	0.748		
	BOR12	0.807		
	BOR13	0.762		
	BOR14	0.592		
	BOR16	0.578		
	BOR2	0.583		
	BOR3	0.546		
	BOR5	0.705		
	BOR6	0.795		
	BOR7	0.747		
	BOR8	0.756		
BOR9	0.783			
Disengagement	MD1	0.708	0.903	0.541
	MD2	0.846		
	MD3	0.768		
	MD4	0.665		
	MD5	0.504		
	MD6	0.799		
	MD7	0.765		
	MD8	0.776		
Perceived injustice	PI1	0.727	0.902	0.508
	PI10	0.664		
	PI11	0.629		
	PI2	0.815		
	PI3	0.814		
	PI4	0.820		
	PI5	0.698		
	PI8	0.601		
	PI9	0.599		
Withdrawal	WW1	0.828	0.911	0.719
	WW2	0.869		
	WW3	0.849		
	WW4	0.846		

Table3
Discriminant Validity

Latent Variable	1	2	3	4
Boredom	0.709			
Disengagement	0.351	0.736		
Perceived Justice	-0.189	-0.248	0.713	
Withdrawal	0.619	0.246	-0.098	0.848

R^2 is used in order to know the predictive power of the model. By using PLS Algorithm function in the Smart PLS 3.0, R^2 is determined. R^2 is 0.158 for disengagement and 0.384 for withdrawal. These are dependant variables in this model. R^2 of both is greater than the acceptable threshold of 0.1 (Falk & Miller, 1992). A formula is used for the computation of effect size. Which is $f^2 = (r^2 \text{ included} - R^2 \text{ excluded}) / (1 - R^2 \text{ included})$. R^2 in the total size is a complement of f^2 analysis of specific latent variables on the dependant variables (Chin, 2010). As per Cohen, (1988) f^2 values of 0.02 is considered as small, 0.15 medium and 0.35 are considered as large. So, in this study, we have found that boredom has a small effect size on disengagement and has a strong effect on withdrawal. However, disengagement has a small determined effect size on withdrawal and perceived injustice has a small effect size on both disengagement and withdrawal.

Cross validated redundancy Q^2 is computed by using blindfolding approach (Fornell & Cha, 1994). Table 5 shows the results; as per the approach, Q^2 value for latent construct is greater than zero which suggests that model do possess predictive relevance (Chin, 1998).

Table 3

Assessment of R^2

	R Square
Disengagement	0.158
Withdrawal	0.384

Meanwhile, R^2 for disengagement is 0.158 which means that there is 15.8% variance explained by disengagement. R^2 for withdrawal is 0.384, variance is explained 38.4% by withdrawal.

Table 4

Assessment of F^2

	Boredom	Disengagement	Withdrawal
Boredom		0.114	0.523
Disengagement			0.002
Perceived Justice		0.041	0.001

Table 5

Assessment of Q^2

	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
Disengagement	1,568.000	1,463.946	0.066
Withdrawal	784.000	581.529	0.258

Assessment of Structure Model

Table 6

Assessment of structural model

Hypo:	Relationship	Beta	SE	t-value	P Values	Decision
H1	Disengagement -> Withdrawal	0.038	0.074	0.512	0.304	Not-Supported
	Perceived Injustice ->					
H2	Withdrawal	0.026	0.073	0.355	0.361	Not-Supported
	Perceived Injustice ->					
H3	Disengagement	-0.189	0.074	2.564	0.005	Supported
H4	Boredom -> Withdrawal	0.61	0.07	8.777	0	Supported
H5	Boredom -> Disengagement	0.316	0.078	4.064	0	Supported

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 6 reports the positive relation between boredom and disengagement (beta= 0.316 t-value= 4.064 p-value= 0). There is also significant relationship between boredom and withdrawal and perceived injustice and disengagement. On the other hand, there is negative relationship between disengagement and withdrawal and perceived injustice and withdrawal.

By analysing the data, we found that H1 and H2 are not supported whereas, other three hypothesis H3, H4, H5 are supported. We can say that disengagement does not lead to work withdrawal. If employees perceive injustice, they are not likely to withdraw work. However, if employee perceived injustice, they would be disengaged from the work. Boredom also leads to work withdrawal and disengagement.

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

The study has an important theoretical contribution to various types of knowledge related to insufficient pay, boredom, and perceived injustice. At first, there is an increase of dishonest

behaviour in workplace. So, we have contributed in the growing research of dishonest behaviours by outspreading the range of outcomes through analysing the work behaviours of employees. Moreover, our study has put an insight on the different behaviours that employees show such as disengagement, withdrawal from work. Apart from this, a vital contribution of this study is that there is a mediator work withdrawal in deviant workplace outcome relationship. Work withdrawal as a mediator is taken in a very few studies. The changing aspects of deviant workplace are carefully analysed among employees. Regardless of the fact of other studies indicating that employees are more likely to engage in deviant workplace behaviour. Moreover, this study also contributes to the literature by considering the both positive and negative aspects of workplace behaviour. Moreover, the study also suggests that perceived injustice, boredom and insufficient pay can be considered as a predecessor to deviant workplace behaviour such as disengagement from work and work withdrawal.

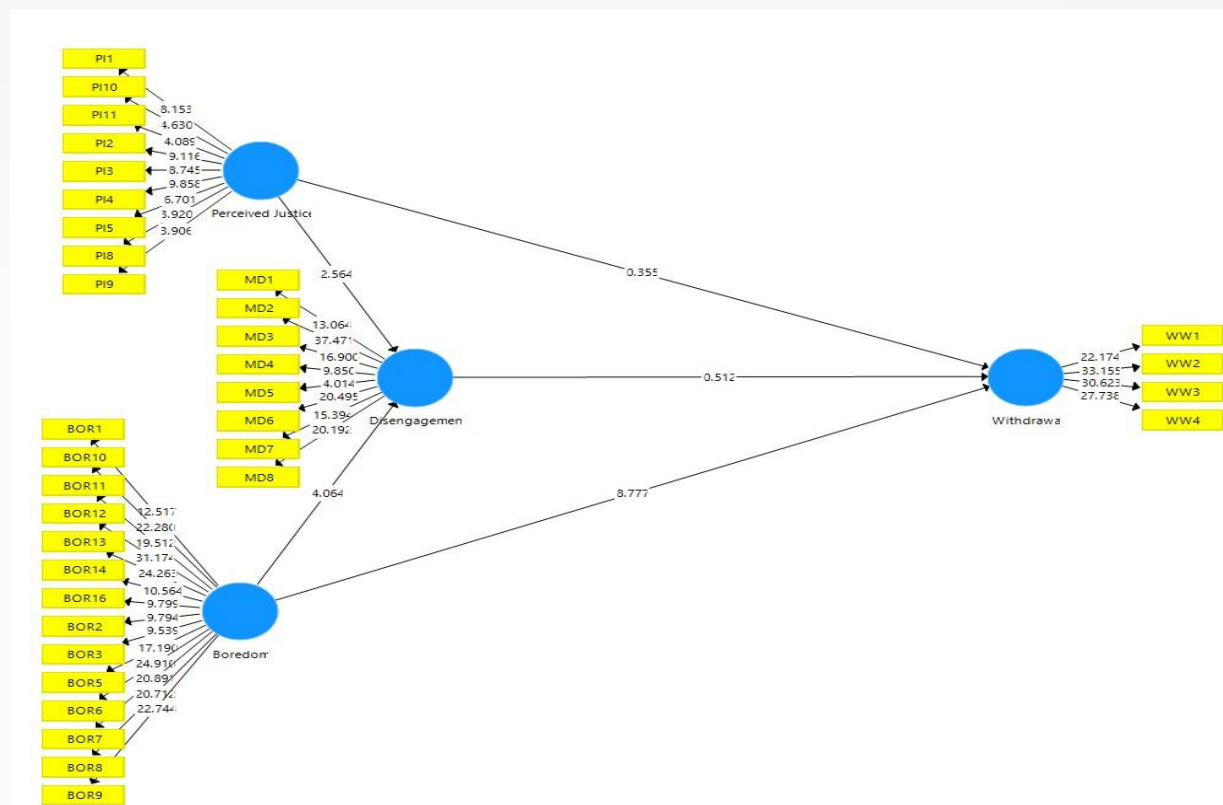


Figure 2: Structure model

Limitation and Future Research

Although it is not possible to fully eliminate the dishonesty of employees in organization, but we can reduce the risk associated with dishonest behaviours. Our study has several limitations. We have derived our conclusions from an objective approach, we have not observed their behaviours or asked them reasons, so, and our research may be biased. Moreover, our research was only limited to Bahrain region.

As our research is only limited to Bahrain. This topic can be further researched in other parts of the region and well across other continents. After determining the outcomes and reasons for dishonest behaviour, we can reduce this type of behavior from the organization and make them profitable. Second, the present study used a self-reporting data collection method which might cause common method problems. Third, the present study used cross-sectional data; therefore, it is suggested that the future researchers may use the longitudinal research method.

Conclusion

Summing up, there are multiple factors contribute in escalating the deviate employee behaviour in the workplace. Indeed, perceived injustice, moral disengagement and boredom are the major causes of deviant behaviour. Considering these variable, 5 hypotheses were made; out of them

three were supported, and two were not supported. The relationship between moral disengagement with withdrawal and the relationship between perceived injustices with withdrawal were not supported but the relationship between boredom and perceived injustice with disengagement and boredom with withdrawal were supported. We can say that disengagement does not lead to work withdrawal. If employees perceive injustice, they are not likely to withdraw work. However, if employees perceived injustice, they would be disengaged from the work. Boredom also leads to work withdrawal and disengagement. Therefore, if organization will not take the right action situation can change from bad to worse.

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