



Destructive Behaviors in Organizations: Extreme Careerism

Burcu Üzüm

Ph.D, Department of Management
Kocaeli University Kocaeli Vocational School, Kocaeli, Turkey

ABSTRACT

As a result of the literature review about destructive behaviors in organizations, careerism studies were rarely seen. The aim of this study is to reveal the reasons and results of factors affecting the extreme careerism as destructive behavior in organizations by using qualitative research method. In this study, semi-structured interview questions were prepared to the people working in public institutions and face-to-face interview method was applied. The sample consisted of 18 people who participated in the interview voluntarily. The results of the study showed that there are so-called employees- who act as destructive behavior. The results of the research are remarkable as so-called employees, learned helplessness, religious and moral values, postponing private life. Finally, in Turkish society, employees in public institutions refrain from exhibiting destructive behavior in organizations to achieve careers.

Key Words: Destructive behaviours, careerism, employees, public institution, qualitative research.

I. INTRODUCTION

Career can be considered as an effort of individuals to reach the point they want to reach throughout their working life. As a result of these efforts, there are gains such as income, status and dignity. Individuals with problematic personality structure such as extreme ambitious, dishonest, makyavelist, narcissist can try different ways to get a career. Among the reasons that lead these individuals are the structure of the organization, human resources policies, distribution of organizational justice, working conditions, legal regulations. Individuals who are under pressure from these factors may exhibit destructive behaviors that can be considered negative in the organization they work. Among the destructive behaviors in the organization, the careerism can be

defined as individual of behaviour, devoid of ethics, defying laws and procedures and pursuing careers outside of working performances.

The aim of this study is to determine whether there is a tendency towards destructive behavior in organizations by using qualitative research method. The factors that affect individuals are revealed with causes.

A. Destructive Behaviors in Organizations and Extreme Careerism

Human resources that make a difference for organizations also affect the success or unsuccess of the organization (1). Success of the organization is related to employee satisfaction. According to Herzberg, employees' satisfaction factors are achievement, recognition, self-study, responsibility and development.

When the employee satisfaction is not achieved within the framework of the stated factors, extreme dissatisfaction is likely. It is difficult for organizations to accept employees' dissatisfaction because organizations have responsibilities to their employees. Organizations that fail to fulfill these responsibilities may face unwanted situations such as job quitting, whistle blowing, sabotaging the workplace, organizational commitment and reduction of organizational trust. These types of behaviors that are unwanted in organizations are called destructive behavior. Destructive behavior in organizations, is defined as exhibiting any deliberate behavior against the interests of the organization by employee (2). As a result of a behavior, the occurrence of damage does not qualify as destructive behavior. Destructive behavior focuses on behavior, not on the harm caused by behavior.

According to (3), the behaviors of members of the organization, which violate organizational norms in a way that threatens the welfare of the organization or members of the organization, are defined as destructive behaviors. According to another definition; destructive behavior is the deliberate behavior of employees to prevent the operation of routine activities in the organization, which clearly harms the objectives of the organization (4)(5). Depending on their position in the organization, employees determine of the target for protest and exhibit destructive behaviors to indicate their dissatisfaction (6).

According to Furnham and Taylor and Gruys (1999), there are various destructive behaviors in organizations. Destructive behaviors can be categorized as follows (1)(2):

- Theft and related behaviors (theft of cash or property, abuse of employee discount)
- Destruction to property (deface, damage, or destroy property, sabotage production).
- Abuse of information (reveal confidential information, falsify records).
- Abuse of time and resources (wast time, changing time card, doing self-employment during work time)
- Unsafe behavior (non-compliance with safety procedures).
- Absenteeism (unexcused absence; misuse sick leave).
- Low quality work (slow or sloppy operation).
- Alcohol use (alcohol use at work, coming to work under influence of alcohol).
- Use of drugs (possession, use or sale drugs at work).
- Improper verbal actions (discussing with clients; verbally harass co-workers).
- Inappropriate physical actions (physically attack co-workers, sexual harassment to co-workers).

Destructive behaviors in organizations are harmful to the organization or colleagues except production.

If the organization does not meet the expectations of the employees; destructive behaviors are seen in organizations related to negative feelings such as frustration and anger. (7). It may be due to the fact that the organization does not properly support the employee's career development, if the employee thinks so in this way and he/she may be exhibit destructive behaviors (8). Careerism, which causes

destructive behavior, is expressed as extreme careerism, according to Bratton and Kacmar (9). Extreme careerism is; employees' efforts to gain power or prestige, according to their without work performance exhibiting positive or negative behaviors.

According to social cognitive theory; individuals have a self-regulatory role on their behavior and thoughts, and can control themselves with this mechanism. However, when the self-regulatory role is disabled, individuals have the capacity to justify their negative behaviors (10). They may deviate from the goals of the organization for their careers and they can keep their goals above everything else.

According to Feldman and Weitz (11), individual beliefs that form careerism can be listed: "Progress in organizations is not easy, relations with management and colleagues need to be used in order to advance in the career, It seems to be successful without success. This is an effective factor for progress. Sometimes the need for deceptive behavior may be felt in career progression, Long-term career goals will cause uncertainty and cause inconsistencies in individual interests, commitment to the organization is not rewarded, It is necessary to ensure personal progress rather than the interests of the organization".

Feldman and Weitz (11) stated that employees who have a tendency to careerism have created an impression that they are performing high even if their performance is low. In addition, they have been stated that such employees can establish good relations with their colleagues and show destructive behaviors in organizations. Griffin and O'Leary-Kelly (2004), on the dark side of the organizations, stated that they were behaviours like violence, stress, aggression, discrimination, sexual harassment, career, psychological contract, drug use, retaliation and theft. (12). As an indicator of careerism, employees may exhibit negative behavior towards the organization or other employees in the organization (13).

Issues related to destructive behavior are organizational commitment (14) (15), organizational support, (16), nepotism (6), tendency to lie (17), organizational citizenship (18), organizational justice (19), organizational ethic-climate (20), ethical leadership (21), management style (22). As a result of the literature review, participatory decision making, alienation, individual organization harmony (23),

cynicism, organizational silence and career-related studies have not been observed.

II. METHOD

The aim of this study is to reveal the reasons and results of the factors affecting the extreme careerism as destructive behavior in organizations by using qualitative research method.. Qualitative research is observation, interview and document analysis, such as the use of qualitative methods of collecting information, perceptions and events in the natural environment in a realistic and holistic way to reveal (24).

In this study; semi-structured interview questions were prepared and face-to-face interview method was applied to the people working in public-oriented working public institutions. Eighteen participants agreed to participate in the interview voluntarily. For qualitative research, eighteen (18) people were accepted as sufficient number of samples.

III. RESULTS

In this study, the interview questions were prepared by using the information obtained from the literature review and expert opinions. The research questions determined in accordance with the purpose of the research are as follows:

What does career mean to you? Please describe.

What can you afford for your career? Would you exhibit misleading behavior? If your answer is yes; what kind of misleading behaviors do you display? Please explain.

Is the commitment rewarded by the institution? Please explain.

Do you think there is merit in your institution? Please explain.

How do your institution see your career-making effort? How would you react when you think you can't get the your expect? Please explain.

In addition, the participants were asked questions about their working time, working hours, age, marital status, graduation status and gender.

The findings of the data obtained as a result of qualitative research are evaluated as follows:

Table1. Working Time

Working Time	n	% (f)
26 years and above	5	28
21-25 years	3	16,6
16-20 years	7	38,8
11-15 years	1	5,5
6-10 years	0	0
1-5 years	2	11,1

When the answers about the number of years of the participants were examined; It has been seen that 5 people (28%) for 26 years or above, 21-25 years for 3 persons (16,6%), 16-20 years for 7 persons (38,8%), 11-15 years for 1 person (5,5%) and 1 to 5 years (11,1%) have a working time.

Table2. Working Time in Current Position

Working Time in Position	n	% (f)
21 years and above	1	5,5
16-20 years	4	22,3
11-15 years	4	22,3
6-10 years	3	16,6
1-5 years	6	33,3

When the working time of the participants is examined; it was seen that 1 person (21.5%) working for 21 years and over, 16-20 years 4 people (22.3%), 11-15 years 4 people (22.3%), 6-10 years 3 people (16.6 %) and 1-5 years 6 people (33.3%).

Table3. Age of Participants

Age	n	% (f)
31-35 age	2	11,1
36-40 age	4	22,3
41-45 age	3	16,6
46-50 age	4	22,3
51-55 age	2	11,1
56 age and above	3	16,6

When the data of the participants' ages were examined; it was seen that 2 people (11,1) in the 31-35 age group, 4 people in the 36-40 age group (22,3%), 3 people in the 41-45 age group (16,6%), 4 people in the 46-50 age group (22,3%), 2 people (11,1%) in the 51-55 age group and 3 persons (16,6%) in the 56 years and above age group.

Table4. Graduation Status of Participants

Graduation Status	n	% (f)
High school	4	22,3
Undergraduate	3	16,6
Graduate	4	22,3
Postgraduate	2	11,1
PhD	5	28

When the graduation status of the participants were examined, it was determined that 4 of them were high school graduates (22.3%), 3 of them were undergraduate (16.6%), 4 of them were graduate (22.3%), 2 of them were postgraduate (11.1%), 5 of them were Ph.D. (28%).

Table5. Marital Status of Participants

Marital Status	n	% (f)
Married	16	88,9
Single	2	11,1

When the marital status of the participants was examined; it was seen that 16 person (88.9%) were married and 2 person (11.1%) were single.

Table6. Gender of Participants

Gender	n	% (f)
Male	12	66,7
Female	6	33,3

When the gender of the participants were examined, it was seen that 12 employees (66.7%) were male and 6 employees (33.3%) were female.

Participants (P); When the answers to the question of what career means to you are examined, the common concepts emphasized are as follows: P(1) and P(16) said that: "position on to demonstrate knowledge, skills, experience and attitudes and behavior according to position", P(9) said that: "specialization", P(2) said that "promotion", P(3) said that "the reason for respect and self-development", in addition to these discourses, P(5) added "self-esteem and respect". P(4) said that "education and training", K (6) is K (10) stated that "doing the work", P (7) when he/she said "come and rise", P(12) added that "while staying in the same position while providing revenue growth", P(8) said that "efforts to reach a specific target", P(11) said that "success", P(14) responded to this expression as "stepping up to the upper". K(13) said that "success in the profession", P(15) said that "training", P(17) said that "self-expression", P(18) expressed their opinions about the career as "the most perfect and the desire to capture the beauty".

What can you afford for your career? Would you exhibit misleading behavior? If your answer is yes; what kind of misleading behaviors do you display? Please explain to the question, P(5) said "I can neglect my house, family and children for a certain period of time", P(15) said that "I postponed my

marriage life and making children", P(11) and P(17) said that "I didn't get married". All of the participants answered that "I do misleading behaviors and continue to do my job". P(11) said that "Those who do not have personality can be misleading". P(16) considered deviance behaviour "cheat somebody of his/her rights".

Is the commitment rewarded by the institution? Please explain. All participants stated that "commitment is not a reward". P(1), P(2) said that "commitment can be to the manager but it can not to the institution", P(13) stated that "the commitment of the institution in the private sector has been rewarded but it is not a reward in public institutions". P(12) said that "commitment is servility and betraying? These are rewarded, they seem to have worked without work and they have a position over co-workers".

Do you think there is merit in your institution? Please explain to the question; P(3) said that "merit varies from person to person", P(4) and P(16) said that "merit are applied within the framework of laws". P(15) said that "replied that merit is very rare". The other participants stated that "there is no merit" and they have stated that "uninformed, inexperienced people have reached top positions as manager relations, political relations, urbanism and uncle relations".

How do your instituion see your career-making effort? How would you react when you think you can't get the your expect? Please explain to the question; all participants answered "I did not see any response". P(1) said that "remain silent", P(8) and P(10) said that "I will reproach", P(15) said that "exhibit irritable behavior", P(17) said that "I am sad and endure in silence". The other participants stated that, institution of respond will not be changed and that their reactions would be "wait".

IV. CONCLUSION

Adams et al. (8) have found an inverse relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and careerism. However, in this study, the participants stated that they continue to do their jobs because they work in a public institution. In this respect, there is no decrease in organizational citizenship behavior. Turkish society has a commitment to the state. However, it has been emphasized that there is commitment to the manager, but there is not commitment to the institution.

Employees stated that they were postponing their wish to have a family and to have children for their careers. This statement was made explicit by a female employee, and a male employee stated that he was still not married. This situation; it shows that employees ignore their private lives for their careers.

It is understood from the findings obtained that there is no merit in the institution studied. There is an intense sense of nepotism in public institutions. Lack of merit refers to the existence of cases such as favoritism and discrimination. Furthermore, an employee evaluated misleading behaviors as cheat somebody of his/her rights. This situation can be described as devotion to both religious and moral values.

Extreme Careerism derives "so-called employees" who pretend to show high performance. Participants talk about so-called employees. Such people claim that their self do work very hard, but they are not work hard.

The participants stated that they could not get a response from the institution and they predicted that the situation would not change. As a result, they prefer to wait. This situation can be expressed as learned helplessness. Employees cannot take the promotion they expect for their careers. This situation can be explained by the collectivism and high power distance as a characteristic of Turkish society. Also according to the statements of employees; It is possible to state that there is a perception of organizational injustice and inequality. Employees give organizational silence reactions as a result of the injustice they suffer, but they continue their work because they work in a public institution.

The results obtained are influenced by the individual characteristics of the participants such as personality, age, gender, duty consciousness, morality and religious values. A similar result was found by Furnham and Taylor (1). In addition, social culture characteristics such as commitment to the state also affect the behaviors and attitudes of the participants. As a result, in Turkish society, employees in public institutions refrain from showing destructive behavior in organizations to achieve careers.

REFERENCES

1. Furnham, A. & Taylor, J. (2004). The dark side of behaviour at work. The dark side of behaviour at

work understanding and avoiding employees leaving, thieving and deceiving. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan Houndmills.

2. Seer, B. & Seer, H. Ő. (2009). Örgütlerde üretkenlik karşıtı iş davranışları: Belirleyicileri ve önlenmesi. (Ed.) A. Keser, G. Yılmaz, S. Yürür. Çalışma Yaşamında Davranış, 425-462. Kocaeli: Umuttepe Yayıncılık.
3. Robinson, S., Bennett, R. J. (1995). A typology of deviant workplace behaviors: a multidimensional scaling study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(2): 555-572.
4. Marcus, B. (2004). Antecedents of counterproductive behavior at work: a general perspective. *American Psychological Association*, 89(4): 647-660.
5. Demir, M., Tütüncü, Ö. (2010). Ağırlama işletmelerinde örgütsel sapma ile işten ayrılma eğilimi arasındaki ilişki. *Anatolia: Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 21(1):64-74.
6. Özüren, Ü. (2017). Tekstil işletmelerinde nepotizm uygulamalarına bağlı olarak üretkenlik karşıtı davranışlar ve sonuçları. *Basılmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul Kültür Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İstanbul.*
7. Doğan, A., Deniz, N. (2017). Algılanan liderlik tarzının üretkenlik karşıtı iş davranışlarının ortaya çıkmasındaki etkisinde örgüt kültürünün rolü. *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 10(52): 1014-1024.
8. Adams, J. W., Srivastava, A., Herriot, P. & Patterson, F. (2012). Careerist orientation and organizational citizenship behavior in expatriates and non-expatriates. *Journal of Career Development*, 40(6): 469-489.
9. Bratton, V. K., Kacmar, K. M. (2004). Extreme careerism the dark side of impression management. (Ed.) R. Griffin & A.O'Leary-Kelly. *The Dark Side of Organizational Behaviour*, 291-308. San Francisco: Jasssey-Bass.
10. Yıldız, B., Yıldız, H. & Alpkan, L. (2015). Olağandışı işyeri davranışlarının bir öncülü olarak kariyerizm. 3. Örgütsel Davranış Kongresi, 684-689, Tokat.
11. Feldman, D. C., Weitz, B. A. (1991). From the invisible hand to the gladhand: Understanding a careerist orientation to work. *Human Resource Management*, 30(2): 237-257.

12. Linstead, S., Griffin, R. W. & Maréchal, G. (2014). Theorizing and researching the dark side of organization. *Organization Studies*, 35(2): 165-188.
13. Yıldız, B. (2016). Kariyerizm ile zorunlu vatandaşlık davranışları arasındaki ilişkide işten ayrılma niyetinin moderatör etkisi. 24. Ulusal Yönetim ve Organizasyon Kongresi, 29-31 Mayıs 2016, 196-203, İstanbul.
14. Demirel, Y. (2009). Örgütsel bağlılık ve üretkenlik karşıtı davranışlar arasındaki ilişkiye kavramsal yaklaşım. *İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 8(15): 115-132.
15. Doğruöz, E., Özdemir, M. (2018). Eğitim örgütlerinde üretim karşıtı iş davranışları ve örgütsel bağlılık ilişkisi. *Elementary Education Online*, 17(1): 396-413.
16. Akbaş-Tuna, A., Boylu, Y. (2016). Algılanan örgütsel destek ve işe ilişkin duyuşsal iyi oluş halinin üretkenlik karşıtı iş davranışları üzerine etkileri: hizmet sektöründe bir araştırma. *İşletme Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 8(4): 505-521.
17. Erdost-Çolak, H. E., Yıldırım-Sırkıntıoğlu, Ş. & Esen, Ü. B. (2018). Çalışanların yalan söyleme eğilimi ve üretkenlik karşıtı davranışları arasındaki ilişkide kişiliğin düzenleyici rolü. *Kastamonu Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 20(2): 76-95.
18. Polatçı, S., Özçalık, F. & Cindiloğlu, M. (2014). Üretkenlik karşıtı iş davranışı ve örgütsel vatandaşlık davranışı üzerinde kişi-örgüt uyumunun etkileri. *Niğde Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 7(3): 1-12.
19. Demir, M., Ayas, S. & Harman, A. (2018). Üretim karşıtı iş davranışları üzerinde örgütsel adalet algısının rolü: banka çalışanları örneği. *International Journal of Academic Value Studies*, 4(19): 435-448.
20. Doğan, S., Kılıç, S. (2014). Algılanan örgütsel etik iklim ve üretkenlik karşıtı iş davranışları arasındaki ilişkilerin incelenmesi. *C.Ü. İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 15(1): 269-292.
21. Arıok, M., Gündüz-Çekmecelioğlu, H. (2017). Etik liderliğin üretim karşıtı iş davranışları üzerindeki etkisi: Ankara üretim sektöründe bir uygulama. *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 10(52): 915-928.
22. Kanten, P. ve Ülker, F. (2014). Yönetim tarzının üretkenlik karşıtı iş davranışlarına etkisinde işe yabancılaşmanın aracılık rolü. *Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 32: 16-40.
23. Yıldız, B. & Alpkan, L. (2014). A theoretical model on the proposed predictors of destructive deviant workplace behaviors and the mediator role of alienation. 4 th International Conference on Leadership, Technology, Innovation and Business Management 501-509, https://abs.mehmetakif.edu.tr/upload/0575_8883_yayinDosya.pdf.
24. Yıldırım, A. (1999). Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinin temel özellikleri ve eğitim araştırmalarındaki yeri ve önemi. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 23: 7-12.