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Drivers of Innovative Constructive Deviance: A Moderated Mediation Analysis

Bora Yıldız*, Serhat Erat, Lütfihak Alpkan, Harun Yıldız, Bülent Sezen

Abstract

Creative solutions are of vital importance for organizations, where competition is inevitable to survive. Right at this point; innovative constructive deviants are forefront warriors of this competition. Innovative constructive deviance, as a sub-dimension of constructive deviance, is one of the most important research areas in the current literature. Although this construct dates back to two decades ago, there are still a paucity of studies in the literature that investigates its antecedents and consequences. In this study, we propose a model of complex relations among the risk-taking propensity as an independent variable, the network building as a mediating variable, the perceived organizational support as a moderating variable, and the innovative constructive deviance as the dependent variable. The sample of this study consists of 172 civil servants working in various sectors in Istanbul. Findings show that, network building fully mediates the relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviance. On the other hand, the proposed moderated mediation analysis was also supported because of the significant interaction between risk taking propensity and perceived organizational support. Managerial and practical implications are forwarded.

Keywords: Innovative constructive deviance, Network building, Perceived organizational support, Risk taking propensity

1. Introduction

The concept of constructive deviance is one of the most striking research areas in the recent literature. This concept is defined as a set of any voluntary and intentionally behaviors having three common characteristics: (a) targeting wellbeing of organization, (b) breaking significant organizational norms and rules, and (c) conforming to hypernorms (Vadera et al., 2013). On the other hand some researchers defined this construct as an opposite form of destructive deviance (Galperin, 2003, Warren, 2003; Spreitzer and Sonenshein, 2004, Yıldız & Alpkan, 2014), which is defined as “voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well being of an organization and its member or both” (Robinson and Bennett, 1995; Bennet and Robinson, 2000). However, the common sides of these behaviors are voluntariness and intention (Yıldız et al., 2015a). Innovative constructive deviance, a sub-dimension of constructive deviance, is defined as behaviors, which target organizational wellbeing, via deviant but creative solutions. According to Galperin (2002) innovative constructive deviance refers to “beneficial acts of an innovative or creative nature that are directed to the organization”. Most of the studies on deviance focus on

* Corresponding author. Tel. + 90-555-721-3425 fax. +90-000-000-0000
Email address: dr.borayildiz@gmail.com

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the destructive deviance—the dark side of workplace deviant behaviors. Therefore, in the literature, there is little empirical work on this research area. In this respect, the purpose of this study is to uncover the antecedents of innovative constructive deviance in public organizations where obedience as an opposite concept for deviance, is a virtue. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), attitudes cause the intentions, which in turn cause the behaviors. Considering these causal relationships, the originality of this study is to combine the related variables into a holistic framework about the predictors of innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors.

In this respect, the study begins by a literature review of innovative constructive deviance, risk taking propensity, network building and perceived organizational support, then the mediator role of network building is discussed in the relations between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors. Additionally, the moderator role of perceived organizational support in this indirect relation (moderated mediations) was investigated. Lastly, conclusion and implications are forwarded.

2. Literature Review And Hypotheses

2.1. Innovative Constructive Deviant Workplace Behaviors

There are numerous studies on the antecedents and consequences of workplace deviance (Örücü and Yıldız, 2014; Keklik et al., 2014; Yıldız and Alpkan, 2014; Yıldız et al., 2014; İyigün et al., 2015; Yıldız and Yıldız, 2015; Yıldız et al., 2015c). However, most of these studies are mainly focused on destructive deviance, which lies outside of the scope of this present study. The term “constructive deviance” was firstly used by Hanke and Saxberg (1985). However, the comprehensive contribution about this construct was made by Galperin and her colleagues (Galperin, 2002; Galperin, 2003; Galperin and Burke, 2006; Robbins and Galperin, 2010; Galperin, 2012). Constructive deviant workplace behaviors violate significant organizational norms and contribute to the well-being of an organization (Galperin, 2002). Although this concept consists of three sub dimensions namely interpersonal, challenging organizational and innovative organizational constructive deviance, this study mainly focuses on the innovative organizational constructive deviant workplace behaviors. Innovative goals are among the top strategic goals of the organizations (Eren et al. 2000), and it may seem strange to label innovative behaviors as “deviant”. Innovative organizational constructive deviant workplace behaviors are defined as “beneficial acts of an innovative or creative nature that are directed to the organization” (Galperin, 2002). On the other hand Chung and Moon (2011) defined this construct as contributing to the organization’s wellbeing unconventional ways. Considering its rule breaking nature, innovative constructive deviants can bring positive changes to their organizations and serve as a locomotive about starting change towards to future (Robbins and Galperin, 2010).

2.2. Risk-Taking Propensity

Risk taking propensity is defined as “the perceived probability of receiving the rewards associated with success of a proposed situation, which is required by an individual before he will subject himself to the consequences associated with failure, the alternative situation providing less reward as well as less severe consequences than the proposed situation” (Broockhaus, 1980). On the other hand Chye Koh (1996) defined this construct as “his/her orientation towards taking chances in uncertain decision-making contexts”. According to March and Shaphira (1987) the main determinant of the risk taking propensity is the condition, which surrounds at that time. Supporting this notion Zheng
and Prislin (2012) state that individuals’ risk propensities are affected by some environmental and dispositional factors. Similarly Bulut and Alpkan (2006) propose that organizational climate and rewards may enhance employees’ propensity to assume risks.

2.3. Network Building

Building powerful networks is one of the most important power sources in organizations to effect change and power structures. However, to constitute those, networking ability of employees is a key factor. According to Ferris et al. (2005) networking ability refers to the ability of using and developing social networks to effect change in the workplace by means of understanding power structures in organization. Past studies indicate that people, who have high level of the networking ability, have also some extra positive abilities such as being good at problem solving, deal making, conflict managing and negotiating (Ferris et al., 2007). Additionally, Blas et al. (2007) assert that networking ability is also related to individual analyze capacity to understand and evaluate the actors in political environment. According to Blas et al. (2007) if people analyze their work setting correctly, they would not only understand the running of operations but also realize that who are placed in important positions. According to Vadera (2013) if people have high level networking ability they have a power of coalition, which supports their perception of constructively deviant actions as a positive meaning instead of being a troublemaker. In other words, building or developing networks provides a feel of confidence, which provides establishing a ground for possible rule breaking activities in turn innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors.

2.4. Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support refers to the perception of employees that their organizations value their contributions and give importance to their well-beings (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Esienberg et al., 1997). Past studies indicate that perceived organizational support is related to the some positive and negative constructs. According to Eisenberger et al. (1986) perceived organizational support is negatively related to the absenteeism and positively related to the employee’s affective attachment. Similarly, Elçi et al (2012) mention that both managerial support and peer support are negatively related to stress and turnover intention. On the other hand Wu and Liu (2014) state that perceived organizational support is positively related to the organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment.

2.5. Hypotheses Development

Risk taking and innovativeness are accepted in general to be positively correlated (Ergün et al. 2004). Similarly in the deviance literature, according to Galperin (2012) people with high risk taking propensity are more prone to be constructively deviant. She states that constructively deviant people have some common characteristics such as being proactive and having the potential of breaking existing significant organizational rules. Likewise, Vadera (2013) also state that risk-taking propensity, self-esteem, extroversion, being proactive and transformational leadership are the predictors of constructive deviant workplace behaviors. Supporting these notions past researches also state that there is a positive and significant relationship between risk taking propensity and rule breaking behaviors (Morrison, 2006; Howell and Higgins, 1990). However, in line with these explanations Galperin (2012) warns, “when there are few organizational rules and procedures and employees are encouraged to push the boundaries, employees who intentionally violate norms will not be considered as deviant”. As aforementioned before Caliendo et al. (2009) assert that there is a positive relationship between risk taking propensity and entrepreneurship behaviors. Additionally, a recent study confirmed these arguments with positive and significant relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors (Yildz et al., 2015b). According to these explanations we propose that risk-taking propensity may be one of the triggers of the innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors. It follows;

\[ H1: \text{Risk taking propensity increases innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors} \]

On the other hand, in the literature there are numerous studies asserting the positive effects of building powerful networks. For instance, according to recent studies it was claimed that building network increases the financial performance of new ventures (Semrau and Sigmund, 2012; Sigmund et al., 2015). Additionally, according to Konrad (2013), constituted networks are important in overcoming difficulties. On the other hand, Vadera et al. (2003) point
that the networking ability, which is the trigger of powerful networks, is one of the determinants of the constructive deviant workplace behaviors. According to this view, the acceptance of any deviant behavior as a constructive or destructive by the co-workers depends also on the social network relations of the deviant employee. It follows;

**H2: Network building increases innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors**

Network building may lead employees to feel much stronger when faced with difficulties or threats including possible outcomes of individual risky or deviant behaviors. When taking risks in order to be preserved from possible hazards and harmful effects associated with the risk, employees may try to engage in developing social networks and make use of their power of influence. It follows;

**H3: Risk taking propensity increases network building**

The perception of being already supported may impede network building activities. Especially, employees with high levels of perceived organizational support may not need to have powerful networks when they engage in risky behaviors. We propose that employees with high risk taking propensity are more prone to strengthening their networks when their perceived organizational support level is low. It follows;

**H4: Perceived organizational support moderates negatively the relation between risk taking propensity and network building. Specifically, risk-taking propensity increases network building when perceived organizational support is low.**

Since we assume that both risk taking propensity and network building are the positive drivers of innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors, we propose that first risk taking propensity should be present then efforts for network building should emerge in order to feel secure when engaging in deviance. In other words we conceptualize risk-taking propensity as a kind of entrepreneurial personality trait that leads to deviant but innovative behaviors through the mediator role of building social networks. In brief, those employees who desire to engage in risky activities but not supported enough by their organizations may try to enlarge their networking activities. It follows;

**H5: Network building mediates the relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors.**

3. Methodology

3.1. Measures

**Risk taking propensity** was measured with 6-item risk taking propensity scale, which was developed by Chye Koh’s (1996) and translated to Turkish by Ağca and Kızıldağ (2013). A 5-point response format was used to measure respondents’ risk taking propensity, ranging from “1 = strongly disagree” and “5 = strongly agree”. An example item of this construct is “I take risk in some conditions when the probability of success is more than %60”. The internal consistency level of this scale is found in our study as $\alpha=0.68$. Although, Cronbach (1951) suggests the minimum reliability level should be .70, according to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) the interval of reliability level between .65 and .70 is also satisfied. **Network building** was measured with 6-item networking ability scale, which is one of the sub dimensions of “Political Skill Inventory” scale developed by Ferris et al. (2005). A 5-point response format was used to measure respondents’ networking ability, ranging from “1 = strongly disagree” and “5 = strongly agree”. An example item of this construct is “I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work whom I can call on for support when I really need to get things done”. The internal consistency level of this scale is $\alpha=0.74$. **Perceived organizational support** was measured with 8-item perceived organizational support scale, which was developed by Eisenberger et al. (1997). A 5-point response format was used to measure respondents’ perceived organizational support, ranging from “1 = strongly disagree” and “5 = strongly agree”. An example item of this construct is “My organization strongly considers my goals and values”. The internal consistency level of this scale is $\alpha=0.90$. **Innovative constructive deviance** was measured with 5-item innovative organizational constructive deviance scale, which is one of the sub dimensions of “Constructive Deviance” scale developed by Galperin (2002). A 5-point response format was used to measure respondents’ innovative constructive deviant behaviors, ranging from “1 =
strongly disagree” and “5 = strongly agree”. An example item of this construct is “Departed from the accepted tradition to solve problems”. The internal consistency level of this scale is $\alpha=.69$. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) the Cronbach’s alpha reliability level of this scale is deemed adequate for this study.

3.2. Sample and Data Collection

The sample of this study consists of 172 civil servants working in Istanbul. Galperin (2012) states that to mention constructive deviant workplace behaviors the potential rule breaking behaviors should not be supported by organization. Instead, to mention about constructive deviant workplace behaviors there must be a bureaucratic organizational milieu. Therefore, we focused on public organizations where bureaucracy is prevalence. Survey method was used to collect data by using conventional sampling method. A cross-sectional survey was used since it is more practicable and economical than the longitudinal method. Surveys were distributed to respondents by using social networks mostly by hand and via e-mail. In this context, 220 questionnaires were distributed and 180 were returned, and 8 questionnaires were eliminated because of the missing information. Therefore, a total of 172 responses (%82 response rate) were evaluated. In order to gather general demographic characteristics of the respondents, some demographical questions were asked to respondents such as gender, marital status, age, level of education, tenure and work experience. According to this information, the majority of the respondents were male (%62.2), 18-31 age olds (%48.8), marital condition is married (%69.2), level of education is graduated (%52.3), 1-10 years experienced (%47.1) and tenure for years 1-5 years (%48.8).

3.3. Analyses and Results

To test hypothesis and determine the sample characteristics SPSS 21.0 software was used. The means, standard deviations, correlations and reliability levels of all variables is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations and Reliability Levels of Variables

| Variable  | Mean | S.D. | RP     | NB     | POS     | ICDWB   |
|-----------|------|------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| RP        | 3.13 | .754 | (.68)  |        |         |         |
| NB        | 3.59 | .719 | .298** | .74    |         |         |
| POS       | 3.20 | .775 | .131   | .245** | .90     |         |
| ICDWB     | 3.74 | .648 | .214** | .455** | .238**  | .69     |

Notes: (a) RP: Risk taking propensity, NB: Network building, POS: Perceived organizational support, ICDWB: Innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors; (b) **p<0.01; (c) Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients of variables are presented in parenthesis.

We tested our hypothesis in two steps. Firstly, a simple mediation analysis was conducted by means of hierarchical regression analysis. Then, the proposed conditional indirect effect was tested, where the proposed moderator variable was integrated with the simple mediation model. In order to test simple mediation analyses, Baron and Kenny’s (1986) three steps approach was followed. However, recent studies state that although Baron and Kenny’s (1986) approach is most commonly used approach to assessing mediating effect, this approach is insufficient when testing the significance of the indirect effect (Hayes, 2009). To alleviate this problem Sobel test is used (Sobel, 1982). Preacher and Hayes (2004) state that Sobel test is more useful and reliable when testing a mediation effect. They assert that the most powerful side of the Sobel test (compared to the Baron and Kenny’s approach) is that it directly assesses the indirect effect. Despite the usefulness of the Sobel test, scientists also argued about the indirect effect whether normally distributed or not (Edwards and Lambert, 2007). To clarify this doubt MacKinnon et al. (2004) suggest using bootstrapping method. According to their view, the possibility of the asymmetric distribution problem or other related power problems would be eliminated with using bootstrapping confidence intervals (CIs). In line with these explanations to assess the mediating affect the SPSS macro called “PROCESS” was used (Hayes, 2012).

Table 2. Test of Mediation Effect

Regression Results for Simple Mediation

| Variable  | $\beta$ | SE  | t    | p    |
|-----------|---------|-----|------|------|
| Risk taking propensity $\rightarrow$ Network building (Step 1): | .298 | .225 | 12.054 | .000*** |
| ($F^2=.083; F=16.563; P<.001$) | | | | |
| Risk taking propensity $\rightarrow$ Innovative constructive deviance (Step 2): | .214 | .207 | 15.281 | .000*** |
As presented Table 2 Baron and Kenny’s (1986) all conditions, which are necessary to simple mediation analysis, were supported. According to the regression models, innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors were significantly (p<.001) and positively (β=.214; t=15.281) predicted by risk taking propensity. Thus, H1 was supported. Likewise, innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors were significantly (p<.001) and positively (β=.410; t=6.653) predicted by network building. Thus, H2 was supported. Additionally, network building was significantly (p<0.001) and positively (β=.298; t=12.054) predicted by risk taking propensity. Thus, H3 was supported. On the other hand, when the mediator variable was included in the model, in step 4, the relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors was nonsignificant (β=.086; t=1.205; p>.05) compared to the Step 4-1 (β=.214; t=2.855; p<.01), and the relationship between network building and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors was significant (β=.429; t=6.000; p<.001). According to these regression results, it is easy to say that network building fully mediates the relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviant workplace behavior. As seen in Table 2, Sobel test was used to test statistical significance of the indirect effect. The two-tailed significance test indicates that the indirect effect (ab) is statistically significant (Sobel z=3.3365, p<.001). Additionally, bootstrap results confirmed the Sobel test (see Table 2), with a bootstrapped 99% CI around the indirect effect not containing zero (.124, 2.522) (MacKinnon et al., 2004). According to these results H5 was supported.

Table 3 represents the results of H4. With regard to H4, we predicted that the positive relationship between risk taking propensity and networking building would be stronger for employees with low level of perceived organizational support than for employees with high level of perceived organizational support. Before starting the analysis to avoid multicolinearity problem, and using lower order coefficients to simplify interpretation of the results, we followed the mean centering approach (Aiken and West, 1991; Fairchild and MacKinnon, 2009). The results indicate that the interaction effect (risk taking propensity x perceived organizational support) was significant (β=.086; t=1.205; p>.05). In order to support this result, the form of this interaction was presented in Figure 2. We plotted the moderation graph by dividing into two groups by one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean. According to these results H4 was supported. Although the results indicate that perceived organizational support interacts with risk taking propensity to influence network building, they don’t directly assess the conditional indirect effects of the model. Therefore, we examined the conditional indirect effects of risk taking propensity on innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors through network building at three values of perceived organizational support (see middle of Table 3): the mean (0.00), one standard deviation above the mean (.775), one standard deviation below the mean (-.775). According to normal conditional effects of moderator variable two of the three conditional indirect effects (based on the moderator values at the mean and at -1 standard deviation) were positively and significant different from zero. Bootstrap CIs confirmed these results. Thus, H4 was supported, such that the indirect and positive effect of risk taking propensity on innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors through network building was observed when levels of perceived organizational support were moderate to low, but not when employees’ perceived organizational support was high.
To test moderated mediation effect, the SPSS macro PROCESS was used (model 7) (Hayes, 2013). This macro is specifically developed for assessing the complex relationship (Hayes, 2012). According to Fairchild and MacKinnon (2009) if a model consists of four variables namely independent (X), mediator (M), dependent (Y) and moderator variable (Z), evaluating these four variables in a single model gives more comprehensive information than using two separate models. Likewise, Hayes (2013) states that the simple mediating effect analysis’ question is how and the moderating effect analysis’ question is when. On the other hand, the arising analytical question here is when of the how (moderated mediation). According to these definitions he suggest using conditional process analysis, which is possible for testing moderating and mediating effect(s) in a single model, to obtain more information about the proposed conceptual model. According to Preacher et al.’s (2007) PROCESS macro also computes conditional indirect effects at various random values of the perceived organizational support that fall within the range of the data (see the lower half of Table 3). This output supply the possible probing of the interaction using mean centering approach as one standard deviation above and below the mean, and it allowed us to identify the values of perceived organizational support for which the conditional indirect effect was just statistically significant at alpha = .001.
4. Conclusion

After the testing hypotheses, H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5 were supported. The findings show that risk-taking propensity is a statistically significant predictor of innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors. This result is consistent with the relevant literature. (Morrison, 2006; Howell and Higgins, 1990; Vadera, 2013; Yıldız et al., 2015b). On the other hand the relationship between network building and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors is also consistent with the literature. The hierarchical regression analysis results show that network building fully mediates the relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative deviant workplace behaviors. On the other hand we hypothesized that perceived organizational support has a moderating effect on risk taking propensity-network building relationship. In this hypothesis we proposed that when employees with high risk taking propensity feel their perceived organizational support is low they would be more prone to strengthen their networks to feel comfortable at rule breaking activities. The hierarchical regression analysis results show that the interaction between risk taking propensity and network building is significant. As a result of this analysis low level of perceived organizational supports interacts with the high level of risk-taking propensity. The detailed information about this relationship was presented in Table 3. Based on Blau’s (1964) social exchange theory we suggest that if employees perceive their perceived organizational support’s level is low they develop some networks to feel supported by their network to avoid any resistance against their rule breaking behaviors. In other words, to exhibit constructive deviant workplace behaviors, employees, who are with high risk taking propensity, will need to strengthen their networks when their perceived support level is low. The moderated mediation analysis shows that employees, who perceive organizational support at moderate or low levels, exhibit innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors trough network building.

Although numerous studies have investigated the partial relations of our research model in the past, the originality of this study is that these relations are taken in a single model. We believe that by means of this study, we tried to close some gaps in literature. Firstly, we believe that by investigating the innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors we drew attention to this sub dimension of constructive deviant workplace behaviors. Thus, with this study we contributed to the existent constructive deviance literature in terms of determining its predictors. Secondly, although there are many evidences related to the positive relationship among risk taking propensity, network building and constructive deviant workplace behaviors, the originality of this study is that we predict an ordered causal relationship where network building serves as a mediator in relationship between risk taking propensity and innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors. Thirdly, according to direct relationship between risk taking propensity and network building we predict conditional effects of perceived organizational support on this relationship. The stand point of this relationship we think that if the employees perceive insufficient support in their organizational milieu they will compensate this shortcoming with the developing powerful networks. Lastly, as distinct from past studies we wanted to see the whole picture of these complex relations in a single model namely moderated mediation model. According to these explanations all suggested hypotheses were supported.

Despite the strengths, this study is not without limitations. Firstly, we included only innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors. However, there are also interpersonal and challenging organizational constructive deviant workplace behaviors and these sub dimensions lie outside the scope of this study. Future researches, should examine
the constructive deviance as a whole to determine whether all sub dimensions of this construct are unique or not. Secondly, it is easy to say that there are numerous situational and contextual variables that could affect these complex relations. Further researches should explore the possibility that certain situational or contextual variables mediate or moderate these relations. Additionally, future studies may investigate the current relations with more detailed analyses such as two-way interaction or three-way interaction models. In the direction of the findings, employees with high risk taking propensity should be supported to developed powerful networks in organizational milieu to exhibiting innovative constructive deviant workplace behaviors. Of course, supporting rule-breaking activities is not desired by organizations since they may look for these activities as a threat for organizations. However, in a good manner supporting employees’ networking abilities might be useful to see how they use their risk taking propensities; constructively or destructively.

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