

# Overview of Counterproductive Work Behavior in Millennial Generation Employees (Study on Employees at PT. X)

Kahlaa Vira Jauzaa<sup>1</sup>, Tommy Y. S. Suyasa<sup>2\*</sup>, Daniel Lie<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bachelor of Psychology Study Program, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Tarumanagara, Jakarta, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author. Email: [tommys@fpsi.untar.ac.id](mailto:tommys@fpsi.untar.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

Counterproductive work behavior is employee behavior that violates organizational norms, which threatens the organization and/or its members. The aim of the study is to describe counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employees (born between the year of 1980 and 2000) at PT. X. This research uses non-experimental quantitative research method. Participants are 100 millennial generation employees at PT. X. The measuring instrument used to measure counterproductive work behavior is the Indonesian version of interpersonal and organizational deviance scale which are distributed to participants in the form of a questionnaire. The results showed that the data were not normally distributed with an empirical median of 0.34, lower than the hypothetical median of 2.5. This concludes that the level of counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employees at PT. X is low.

**Keywords:** counterproductive work behavior, millennial generation employees, employees

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An organization is a deliberately coordinated social unit consisting of two or more people, who work on a relatively continuous basis to achieve a common goal or set of goals [1]. In organizations, the professionalism of members is needed to be able to maintain the productive work behavior, so that the organization has hope and positive capital to be able to develop and provide organizational progress [2]. Improving performance in general and individual productivity can support organizational goals [3]. Creating an organization consisting of competent, professional, and high-performance human resources is not an easy thing [2]. The reason is that in an organization there is not only productive work behavior, but also behavior that can harm other employees and/or the organization. With the evidence in online newspapers, this harmful behavior is still common in organizations because it is something that is not easy to avoid.

In a case that occurred in August 2020, it was reported that there was a theft case occurred in an organization. It was reported that the seven workers stole materials belonging to the company where they worked. The theft was reasoned that the worker had not yet received a salary, so they sold the company's materials for money [4]. In January 2020, it was reported that nine civil servants in West Aceh were

threatened with dismissal because they had not come to work for months, and even more than two years [5]. Another online newspaper reported about six government employees in the Special Region of Yogyakarta did not report to work without any valid reasons on the first day after the Eid 1441 holiday [6].

These cases portray behaviors that are detrimental to the organization. In psychology term, this detrimental behavior is defined as a counterproductive work behavior. The concept of counterproductive work behavior can be explained by deviant behavior in the workplace. Deviant behavior in the workplace is employee behavior that violates organizational norms which threatens the organization and/or its members [7]. This behavior consists of two dimensions based on the target behavior [7]. The first dimension is with the target of interpersonal behavior (CWB-I) that has the potential to harm members of the organization. The second dimension is the target of organizational behavior (CWB-O) that has the potential to harm the organization.

Based on the definition of counterproductive work behavior, it can be concluded that this behavior is detrimental to the organization and its workers by violating organizational norms, which means that counterproductive work behavior can have an impact on the organization and other workers. This is because counterproductive work behavior is a detrimental

behavior that is contrary to organizational goals and is done in full awareness [8]. Gruys and Sackett [9] stated that counterproductive work behavior is a deliberate act to go against the rules, interests, and legitimate values of the organization. So it can be said that counterproductive work behavior will disrupt the organization by having a direct impact that causes significant losses such as decreased performance in the organization [10]. Increased counterproductive work behavior can bring economic and social losses [11].

Individual social losses can be in the form of poor communication between members of the organization. This can also have an impact on the communication function of the workgroup in the form of sharing information, making decisions, influencing, coordinating, motivating, and identifying becomes bad because of counterproductive work behavior, so that it has an impact on the organization such as the process for achieving organizational goals is not optimal [12], [13], [14].

Counterproductive work behavior is reported to have occurred in the aviation industry, thus causing a negative impact on the industry [15]. This is due to long night shifts, aggressive and destructive passengers, and dangerous physical factors, making it difficult to work on airplanes [16]. Counterproductive work behavior in the aviation and tourism industry needs to get more attention to avoid the losses associated with such behavior [15]. This is the reason for the researchers to conduct research on one of the aviation industries in Indonesia, that is PT. X based in Jakarta and Surabaya.

PT. X provides air transportation services serving 97 routes to 49 cities in Indonesia, and international routes to five countries. PT. X aims to improve the performance of workers to provide transportation services to the community, but it is not uncommon for counterproductive work behavior to occur in this organization. Counterproductive work behaviors that occur include faking sick, intentionally being late for work, verbal violence caused by interpersonal conflicts between employees, and subordinates who do not heed the tasks given by their superiors. Counterproductive work behavior that occurs at PT. X became one of the reasons for researchers to conduct research in the aviation industry. In addition, PT. X is unique that this company is dominated by millennial generation employees as much as 80%.

The millennials are those born in the year between 1980 and 2000 [17]. In previous studies, it was found that this generation tend to perform more counterproductive work behavior compared to other generations. Counterproductive work behavior research conducted by Lawal et al. [18] involving participants born between 1964 and 1999 on support staff at a Nigerian university showed that older support staff had a lower tendency to

engage in counterproductive work behaviors, compared to younger support staff. The low tendency of counterproductive work behavior of the older support staffs is due to their age who will retire from their work, while the younger support staffs has a perspective that they still have the opportunity to get a better job, therefore they are involved in more forms of counterproductive work behavior. The result of this study is also supported by study of Cohen et al. [19] involving participants born from 1934 to 1995, which found that older participants had a lower tendency to engage in counterproductive work behavior compared to younger participants.

Based on previous research, it can be concluded that millennial generation employees tend to perform counterproductive work behaviors. It should be noted that millennial employees are the second dominant generation in the organizational world after Generation X (born in 1965 to 1980) [20]. This is also supported by the 2019 National Labor Force Survey (SAKERNAS) data [21], that the millennial generation is the second dominant in the world. So, it can be concluded that the millennial generation will dominate the working population in organizations in the next few years [22]. Therefore, it is important for organizations to treat millennial generation employees appropriately to prevent counterproductive work behaviors.

Another reason the researchers conduct research on counterproductive work behavior on millennial generation employees is also due to previous research that did not focus on millennial employees. One previous research involved generation X and millennials born in the year between 1961 and 1997 [23].

Another counterproductive work behavior study involved police officers consisting of baby boomers, X, and millennials born in the year between 1959 and 1999 [24]. From the two previous studies, it can be said that each study is not specific to millennial generation employees. Therefore, researchers conducted research on counterproductive work behavior on millennial generation employees at PT. X.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study involved 100 millennial generation employees at PT. X. Participants in this study consisted of 59 female and 41 male employees. Participants in this study were born between 1980 and 2000, with a minimum education of Senior High School / Vocational High School, and a minimum of one year of work experience

The measuring instrument used to measure counterproductive work behavior in this study is the interpersonal and organizational deviance scales which have been adapted to Bahasa Indonesia [24]. This

measuring instrument consists of two dimensions, the CWB-I with a total of 20 statements and CWB-O with a total of 28 statements. All items on the measuring instrument are positive.

Examples of CWB-I statements are “revealing/telling actions of superiors/coworkers that are inappropriate to friends”, “playing pranks on superiors/coworkers”, and “saying something that might offend superiors/coworkers”. Examples of CWB-O statements are “faking sick”, “writing an inaccurate/invalid note/receipt to get reimbursement”, and “bringing home office equipment, without permission from superiors/coworkers”.

The reliability of CWB-I after distributing questionnaires to several participants showed Cronbach's alpha of 0.881 by eliminating item 45 because the correlation coefficient was below 0.2.

The reliability of CWB-O after distributing questionnaires to the participants showed Cronbach's alpha of 0.908. There is no item reduction because all item correlation coefficients are above 0.2. This indicated that the reliability of each dimension of this measuring instrument is high.

The measurement uses cumulative assessment method, that is the intensity of behavior in the last month. Zero times in a month equals 0. Once in a month equals the score of 1. Twice in a month equals the score of 2. Three times in a month equals the score of 3. Four times in a month equals the score of 4, and five times or more in a month equals the score of 5. The higher the score on the dimensions of CWB-I and CWB-O, the more counterproductive work behavior is conducted by employees.

Research data was collected by means of a questionnaire distributed online through Google Form to participants. For each statement in the questionnaire, participants need to choose one of the five options available.

**3. RESULT**

After the research data was obtained, the description of counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employees at PT. X will be seen from the level of counterproductive work behavior. The normality test of the research data was first carried out using one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnoff test. The normality test on the counterproductive work behavior variable showed  $p = 0.009$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that the data are not normally distributed. Therefore, a comparison is made between the median and mode, and hypothetical median. The counterproductive work behavior measuring instrument used in this study is

based on a frequency scale with a scale of 0-5, so the hypothetical median is 2.5.

**Table 1 Results of Counterproductive Work Behavior Norms in General**

|                |         |        |
|----------------|---------|--------|
| N              | Valid   | 100    |
|                | Missing | 0      |
| Mean           |         | ,4776  |
| Median         |         | ,3416  |
| Mode           |         | ,00    |
| Std. Deviation |         | ,48832 |
| Minimum        |         | ,00    |
| Maximum        |         | 2,22   |

Based on table 1, the median is 0.34 and the mode is 0. When compared to hypothetical median which is 2.5, it can be concluded that the level of counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employees at PT. X is low.

**Table 2 Results of Counterproductive Work Behavior Norms for CWB-I Dimension**

|                |         |        |
|----------------|---------|--------|
| N              | Valid   | 100    |
|                | Missing | 0      |
| Mean           |         | ,3905  |
| Median         |         | ,2632  |
| Mode           |         | ,00    |
| Std. Deviation |         | ,47408 |
| Minimum        |         | ,00    |
| Maximum        |         | 2,21   |

After processing the data on each dimension of counterproductive work behavior, the result for CWB-I and CWB-O are obtained. Based on table 2, the first dimension is CWB-I with median = 0.26 and mode = 0, below the hypothetical median which is 2.5. Therefore, it can be said that the CWB-I dimension of participants at PT. X is low.

**Table 3 Results of Counterproductive Work Behavior Norms for CWB-O Dimensions**

|                |         |        |
|----------------|---------|--------|
| N              | Valid   | 100    |
|                | Missing | 0      |
| Mean           |         | ,3905  |
| Median         |         | ,2632  |
| Mode           |         | ,00    |
| Std. Deviation |         | ,47408 |
| Minimum        |         | ,00    |
| Maximum        |         | 2,21   |

Based on table 3, the dimension of CWB-O shows median of 0.43 and mode of 0. Therefore, it can be concluded that the CWB-O of participants in PT. X is low.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The results indicate a low level of counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employees at PT. X. This behavior still occurs, but with low intensity. The results of this study are in line with the results of research by Santos and Caballero [25] which showed a low level of counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employee.

One of the reasons for the low level of counterproductive work behavior at PT. X is due to the establishment of teamwork by helping each other, so that good relationships between superiors/coworkers are created. This is supported by the results of the study of Kuron et al. [26] who found that millennial employees have five important things at work, namely interest in work, achievement, good coworkers, work collaboration, and salary. These five things have been fulfilled at PT. X. Therefore, millennial generation employees at PT. X will work productively rather than counterproductively.

This study has limitations that allow bias in the results of the study. In this study, the measurement of counterproductive work behavior was measured by self-report and this measuring instrument also consisted of sensitive items, so that participants tended not to answer the questionnaire honestly, which biased the research results. In Psychology, the dishonesty of participants in answering questionnaires is called social desirability. Social desirability occurs when participants answer each item of the questionnaire according to what they perceive as something desired by the people around them [27].

In accordance with the statement of Bennett and Robinson [28], that counterproductive work behavior is difficult to express in measurement. Another limitation of this research is that there are certain types of CWB-I and CWB-O at PT. X which was not investigated on the measuring instrument [24], thus it is possible that counterproductive work behavior is not fully measured in this study.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

From the results of this study it can be concluded that the level of counterproductive work behavior in millennial generation employees at PT. X is low.

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