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The Impacts of Perceived Ethical Climate and Codes of Ethics on Employees' Deviant Behaviors in Organizations

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Abstract

This study investigates how ethical climate and perceived existence of organizational ethical codes impact employee deviance. Due to the importance and extensiveness of the employee deviant behavior problem, it is found denotative to examine the antecedents contributing to the occurrence of employee deviance in organizations. In the light of the previous literature study, several factors that have been associated with employee deviance have been reviewed and it was seen that workplace ethics was examined as a contextual variable influencing such behaviors in the organizations. Thus, in the current study, it was aimed to evaluate the impacts of existence of ethical codes and ethical climate on employees' deviant behaviors within the organization. A quantitative survey was performed among 230 employees in public and private organizations in various sectors, such as education, health, insurance, banking, telecommunication, and retailing. The data obtained from the research were evaluated with statistical programme and the findings revealed that all five dimensions of ethical climate had significant impacts on organizational deviance. The instrumental and independence dimensions had positive impacts on organizational deviance, whereas caring, law and codes and rules dimensions had negative impacts on such behaviors. Further, it was reported that the perceived existence of organizational code of conduct had significant negative impact on organizational deviance. The findings of the research were evaluated and discussed with the implications of the previous empirical findings and both conceptual and practical suggestions were provided for the future studies.

Keywords: *Workplace deviant behavior; Employee deviance; Organizational ethical climate; Code of ethics; Business Ethics.*

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1. Introduction

In the literature, the associations between perceived ethical climate, ethical considerations of employees and their behavioral outcomes have been investigated within various industries and organizational contexts. This study focused on the investigation of how workplace ethical climate and the existence of ethical code system are related with individual outcomes of deviant behaviors. The study was built on “Business ethics” and “Ethical climate theory” while examining the concepts and was grounded in the contextual-behavioral perspective. Ethical climate is described as employees’ shared perceptions related to the ethically right acts and how ethical decisions could be approached in an organization [1]. Moreover, code of ethics in an organization may maintain a foundation for employees to make more honest decisions and to behave with integrity, trust, and confidence. A written code of ethics serves as foundational documents that can provide the framework for their responsibilities and behaviors that the organizations expect from them [2]. In sum, the locus of this study is the employees and its objective is to investigate the influence of codes of ethics and ethical climate on the perceptions and behaviors of employees in organizations. In order to gain insights about the suggestions of the study, a quantitative study was conducted in Turkey by consisting participants who are currently working in various sectors including education, health, insurance, banking, telecommunication, and retailing.

2. Problem Statement

Employee workplace deviant behaviors (WDB) may lead to great psychological costs for the organizations and create economic and social problems for the employees and the community. WDBs are described as intentional behaviors that deviate the rule of the organization and harms individual and organizational well-being [3]. Due to the importance and the extensiveness of the employee deviant behavior problems, it is found noteworthy to examine the antecedents that may contribute to the occurrence of employee deviance in organizations.

Employee WDBs involve behaviors such as withdrawal, absenteeism, intentionally serving with poor performance, bullying, production or property sabotage, unethical decision making, disobeying manager’s instructions, intentionally doing work slowly, coming late to work and leaving early, theft, etc. [4]. It is obvious that these kind of behaviors may impact organizational productivity, may result with economic loss, and may also cause social and psychological problems among employees [5], [6]. In the light of the previous literature study, several factors that have been

associated with employee deviance have been reviewed and it was seen that workplace ethics was examined as a contextual variable influencing such behaviors in the organizations. In sum, this study aimed to point out the significance of understanding the occurrence and antecedents of employee WDBs and to explain them by regarding the perceived workplace ethical climate and ethical codes.

3. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Starting from 1980's onwards, workplace deviance has been widely acknowledged as an important problem by the scholars and throughout time, different terms and concepts have been accepted to define various types of negative employee behaviors at work. The concepts, non-compliant behavior [7], organizational delinquency [8], workplace deviance [9], workplace aggression [10], organization-motivated aggression [11], organizational misbehavior [12], antisocial behavior [13], organizational vice [14], organizational retaliation behavior [15], dysfunctional behavior [16], workplace counterproductivity [17], counterproductive behavior [18] and counterproductive workplace behavior [19] are the concepts which were introduced by scholars. Puffer [7] named relevant behaviors as non-task behaviors which negatively influence work environment. Vardi and Wiener [12] used organizational misbehavior term and described as any voluntary act by employees violating core organizational/or societal norms. The concept of employee deviant behavior has been used by Robinson and Bennett [9] and was defined as intentional behavior of employee which violates norms and threatens organizational well-being. Giacalone and Greenberg [13] named such behaviors as antisocial behaviors and indicated that these behaviors bring damages, or are conducted to give damage to the organization, the employees, or any of the groups in the society. Most widely-accepted definition has been provided by Gruys [20] who also used the term employee deviant behavior. According to Gruys' [20] description, such behaviors include various intentional behaviors by an employee which violates organizational norms and which are opposing the interests of the organization. Finally, for the scope of the current study the description provided by Robinson and Bennett [9] will be used. Due to the extensiveness of its scope, the term "employee deviant behaviors" has been used in this study.

As it was mentioned before, the concept is substantially described as "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both" [9]. Further, in the extant literature, there have been various typologies and

several dimensions developed by scholars about employee deviant behaviors [4] [20] [21] [9] [17] [18]. At that point, Hollinger and Clark [21] suggested a separation between two classifications of deviance as property deviance and production deviance. Specifically, it was indicated that “property deviance” category consisted employee behaviors of acquiring or damaging the tangible properties or assets of the organization without authorization [21]. For instance, abstracting money or theft of any tool or equipment from the workplace took place within the property deviance category. The other class of “production deviance” was defined as the “formally proscribed norms delineating the minimal quality and quantity of work to be accomplished” [21]. Using alcohol or drug in the workplace, slowing down the work cycle, and arriving work late are among the examples for production deviance. In this typology, it can be seen that there is a common point in both categories. The common point is that the deviant behaviors were mostly targeted towards the organization rather than the employees of the organization.

Another typology of employee deviant behavior has been introduced by Robinson and Bennet [9] and denoted that deviant behaviors can have two major dimensions. The first dimension included interpersonal and the second dimension included organizational deviant behaviors. Interpersonal deviance is done directly towards individual employee such as sexual or psychological harassment, rudeness, and spreading rumors [4]. Organizational deviance refers to the behaviors that violate organizational rules and give harm to organizational well-being, such as mispending the workplace resources [22], day dreaming while on job [23], cyber-loafing [24], theft from organization, leaving work early [25], [26].

By combining these dimensions, Lawrence and Robinson [27] categorized deviant behaviors into four quadrants which are political deviance, interpersonal aggression, production deviance, and property deviance. “Production deviance” refers to acts like leaving the workplace early, gambling, and cyberloafing during work hours. “Property deviance” refers to offenses such as theft, sabotage, intentionally damaging the equipment and machines. “Political deviance” related to behaviors including gossiping, spreading rumors, favoritism; making fun, rudeness, and disobeying supervisor’s instructions. “Personal aggression” refers to behaviors such as harassment, abuse, incivility, cursing, humiliating, and telling hurtful things to coworkers [27],[28],[29].

The literature supported that a number of organizational and individual antecedents have impacts on workplace deviant behaviors. Work environment factors, contextual factors and personal factors have been reported as the main antecedents of employee deviant behaviors. In the literature, there is strong documentation about how perceptions of

organizational context influence employee job attitudes [30],[31],[32],[33],[34],[35],[36],[37],[38],[39].

Notably, organizational environment factors including organizational support, managerial support, role conflict, and job demand were demonstrated to be related with deviant behavior [40],[41]. Organizational climate has been also found to have impact on employee rude behaviors and workplace incivility acts [42]. Organizational contextual variables of perceived injustice, violence of psychological contract, lack of organizational trust, workplace aggression, lack of empowerment, and interpersonal conflicts were reported to be the significant antecedents of employee deviant behaviors [21],[9],[15],[20],[43],[44]. In addition, the quality of human resources practices and communication have been specified as the factors influencing employee deviance [45]. Thus, it is quite obvious that poor conditions of workplace, negative evaluations of job characteristics, and managerial issues will eventually cause stress and depression among employees, which in turn can potentially increase negative work attitudes and behaviors. On the other hand, individual factors such as perceived stress, work-family conflicts, job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, self-control, workplace envy, and demographic factors of age, gender and education were demonstrated as having role on employee deviant behaviors [21],[46],[20],[47],[48],[49],[50],[51],[52].

In this study, we focused on “ethical climate” and “existence of code of ethics” as organizational contextual factor which have been indicated as work environment factors contributing to employee deviant behaviors [53],[54],[55]. Ethics comes from Greek term “ethos” meaning “character” and “morality” that refer to behavior and habits. Business ethics is described as rules, standards, codes, and principles that serve as guidelines for morality and morally right actions in organizational context. Moreover, from a theoretical perspective, Lewin [56] suggested that individuals’ workplace attitudes and behaviors are the function of the psychological field in which they work. In management and organizational behavior studies, the workplace psychological environment has been conceptualized by the concept of organizational climate [57]. At this point, ethical climate is suggested to be a form of organizational climate, which is ultimately related to how individuals perceive ethical rules, how they make ethical decisions, and how they react to ethical problems.

Ethical climate refers to the perceptions related to the organizational procedures, practices, and interpersonal relations in terms of their ethical content. Organizational ethical climate generally refers to the shared employees’ perceptions about how they deal with ethical dilemmas and how they implicate ethically correct behaviors. Victor and Cullen [58],[59]

performed the first theoretical and experimental study on ethical climate. They developed a theoretical basis for the measurement of ethical climate by utilizing philosophical and sociological perspectives. The authors operationalized ethical climate with five dimensions involving caring, law and code, rules, instrumental and independence climates. Actually, Victor and Cullen [58] developed this model based on Kohlberg's [60],[61] cognitive moral development theory [62]. Kohlberg [60] indicated that morality was cognitive and developmental and suggested three stages of moral development. Accordingly, moral development is accrued through a progress from childhood to adulthood. In this typology, preconventional level is the first stage of moral development, in which the individuals see the rules as they are imposed to them. People evaluate ethical problems based on an egoistic perspective and just focus on their own benefits. Conventional level is the second stage of moral development, where individuals signify right and wrong actions in their social relationships. At this stage of moral development, individuals begin to consider society as a whole when making judgments and the main point is maintaining law and following the rules. The third level of moral development is named as postconventional level. At this level, individuals view rules as internal to them and evaluate acceptable/unacceptable behaviors based on their subjective individual values. Moreover, individuals follow the internalized principles of justice, even if they conflict with laws and rules. In sum, even Kohlberg's model was developed to explain an individuals' moral development progress, Victor and Cullen [63] adapted the model to the organizational context.

Turning back to the dimensions of ethical climate, Victor and Cullen [58] defined caring climate as a "combination of the individual/benevolence and local/ benevolence climates". In these climate types employees have high level of consideration towards the well-being of both organization and the individual members of the organization [64]. "Caring" work climate is such a climate which is mostly preferred by the employees since it is related to a an interest for others' well-being [65],[66]. "Law and code" climate refers the consideration of the employees is basically towards laws and regulations while dealing with ethical dilemmas. Thus, in such a climate, the individuals' behaviors and decisions are based on laws and codes that show the organizational members what is accepted or not. Additionally, Victor and Cullen [59] indicated that in "rules" climate, employees are expected to definitely obey organizational principles and rules. "Instrumental" climate represents individual egoism as stated by Kohlberg [60],[61]. In instrumental climates, employees follow their own self-interests and they perceive their organization as prompting them to behave egoistically and to consider

personal ethics while dealing with ethical dilemmas. Therefore, it can be inferred that instrumental climates may serve as incentive to crime or deviance in the organizations. At last, “independence” climate represents individual locus of analysis, in which employees behave “according to their personal moral beliefs based upon a set of well-considered principles” [67].

Previous scholars have debated that each of the types of ethical climates can be the predictors of individuals’ ethical decision making process and concerns for ethical behaviors in the organizations [68],[69],[70],[71],[72],[73],[74],[75]. The question of how does ethical climate impact upon employees’ attitudes and behaviors can be relied on the Social Identity Approach [76],[77] and Cognitive Moral (Dis)engagement Theory [78]. In this study, it is proposed that the impacts of each ethical climate dimension on employees’ behaviors can be explained by employee’s affective and moral connection with his/her organization and, by cognitive moral (dis)engagement. Further, it is put forward that ethical climate would be associated with employee deviant behaviors based on Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT) developed by Salancik and Pfeffer [79]. SIPT posits that people observe their environment in order to look for hints to interpret their work surrounding and to interpret acceptable ways to act [80]. Subsequently, ethical climates may be seen as a guidance to enable employees understand which behaviors are ethical/unethical and are acceptable/unacceptable in the workplace.

Embracing that conceptual knowledge, Barnett and Vaicys [81] confirmed that the ethical climate perceptions indirectly influence employees’ attitudes and behavioral intentions. As employees develop ethical judgments with in those climate types, the ethical judgments play mediating role on the interaction between their perceptions and the behaviors. Cullen et al. [82] posited that moral issues are the most influential factors for employee behaviors, therefore, employees’ perceptions of the organizations’ morally accepted conducts, values, and principles can determine their decisions and behaviors. Trevino [83] indicated that collective norms which imply the correct and incorrect behaviors effect and shape employee behaviors. In sum, situational characteristics of the organizational ethical climate effect the perceptions and evaluations of the employees, which later guide their course of actions.

Furthermore, past research studies have indicated that situational opportunities in the workplace and perceived ethics in the work environment can increase employees’ antisocial and deviant behaviors [84] [85]. Wimbush and Shepard [67] argued that organizational ethical climate could determine counterproductive behaviors, such as it predicts unethical behaviors. Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly [84] implied that the work groups’

antisocial behaviors were significant determinants of the individual antisocial behaviors. Because of this view, the authors denoted that a focus on the group-level will be worthwhile for understanding and explaining such behaviors. In a correspondent research studying theft as a component of organizational deviance, McClurg and Butler [86] also confirmed that the ethical climate of work group was a significant predictor of workplace theft. Vardi [53] studied the impact of ethical climate on organizational misbehavior through a research in a metal-products company, and reported that there was a strong negative relationship between the organizational ethical climate and the employee misbehaviors. Peterson [87] performed a research to find out whether deviant behavior could be determined by the workplace ethical climate and the findings showed significant correlations between the workplace deviance and the types of ethical climates. Further, conducting a research study on a sample of 1,525 employees in various sectors, Mayer et al. [80] found support for their hypothesized model proposing the impact of ethical climate on employee misconduct. Additionally, Yüksel [55] demonstrated that there were negative correlations between organizational ethical climate and employee deviance. In separate studies, it was found that when employees' perceptions of organizational ethical climate were low, the theft in the workplace and organizational unethical behaviors were higher [88],[86]. It has been demonstrated that caring, law and code, and rules dimensions has positive impacts on positive outcomes, whereas instrumental and independence climates have positive impacts on negative outcomes in the organizations [89],[90],[91],[92],[93],[94]. In particular, significant correlations between the dimensions of EC and employee deviance and counterproductive work behaviors have been revealed in previous studies [55],[54],[87],[95].

Next, as being an organizational factor, the existence of code of ethics has been argued as influential on employee deviant behaviors. It is suggested that formal code of ethics that was established and executed in the organization would encourage ethical behaviors of the individuals. Code of ethics is a formal statement that specifies how an organization expects its employees to behave while on the job. The ethical code of an organization is the formal description of its standards and rules which would be applied to every member of the organization, from top to bottom level [2]. Solomon and Hanson [96], indicated that a code of ethics presents visible guidelines, establishes the expected code of conduct, and gives stability to an organization. Therefore, successful codes will provide a standard for organizational members to strive for as well as articulating a special sense of responsibility because of the professional and ethical standards. Additionally, the existence of code of ethics increases the awareness of ethical and

unethical conducts and may serve as reinforcement mechanism for ethical acts among individuals. As Social Learning Theory [97] suggests, through the establishment and implementation of code of ethics, individuals learn, observe and adopt ethically accepted or unaccepted behaviors in the organization. On the other side, the value of ethical codes comes from its sanctions and judgment mechanisms which can be important to avoid from unaccepted behaviors and to motivate for ethical and moral behaviors. This situation can also be explained with Cognitive Processing Theory [98]. Furthermore, the literature studies suggested that existence of ethical codes have positive influence on employee positive behavioral outcomes, whereas lack of ethical codes has positive influence on employees' deviant behaviors towards the organization [99],[100],[2],[101],[102],[103].

4. Research Question and the Hypotheses

Based on the large conceptual and empirical supports for the influence of ethical climate on the occurrence of employees' deviant behaviors, ethical work climate and code of ethics are taken as the independent variables of the study. Thereby, due to the problem statement of the study, the research question for this study is stated as; "Is employee deviance in the organization the outcome of the perceived organizational ethical climate and existence of code of ethics?. Based on the previous evidences, it is suggested that specific types of ethical climate will lead to different types of employee deviance. In sum, it is expected that organizational ethical climate and code of ethics to serve as antecedent factors of employee deviant behaviors. The conceptualization of ethical climate suggests different impacts of climate dimensions on employee behavioral outcomes. Thus, it is proposed that forms of ethical climates may have separate impacts on employee deviant behaviors. In support to the previous conceptual arguments and research findings, the first hypothesis of this study is suggested as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived ethical climate has significant impact on employee deviant behaviors.

H1a: Caring dimension has negative impact on employee deviant behaviors.

H1b: Law and codes dimension has negative impact on employee deviant behaviors.

H1c: Rules dimension has negative impact on employee deviant behaviors.

H1d: The instrumental dimension has positive impact on employee deviant behaviors.

H1e: The independence dimension has positive impact on employee deviant behaviors.

In the case of code of ethics, it is expected that code of ethics is one of the factors which is related to employee deviant behaviors. Previous conceptual and empirical studies lend support to the suggestion that existence of code of ethics in the organizations should have an impact on employees' deviant behaviors. Besides, drawing on previous conceptual and empirical works on code of ethics, and the work on workplace deviance, code of ethics is suggested to be negatively related to employee deviant behavior.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived code of ethics has significant negative impact on employee deviant behaviors.

5. Research Methods

5.1. Participants and Procedure

In the study, a quantitative survey was performed between June, 2018 and February, 2019 and participants (including the employees from managerial and non-managerial positions) from departments in various public and private organizations in Turkey-Istanbul were recruited. Industry types included education, health, insurance, banking, telecommunication, and retailing organizations. In order to get valid self-reports for the questionnaires, the forms were not delivered directly to the participants by hand. Alternatively, the questionnaire survey was applied by means of electronic database which permits blind responds and evaluations. This procedure is supposed to be eliminating the social desirability bias. In addition, the respondents were guaranteed that the overall research and analyses processes would be confidential and the findings of the overall research would be send to the respondents upon any request. Subsequently, data from a total of 230 respondents were obtained. Thus, the final sample size was 230 employees. The descriptive statistics for demographics showed that 64% of the participants were female, and the mean of the age was 37.3 years (SD = 8.5). The mean of organizational tenure was yielded as 8.4 years (SD = 4.8), and the average total work experience was seen as 15.2 years (SD = 4.2). In terms of education level, 17% were having master degree, 1% was having doctorate degree, 82% were having bachelor degree. 34% of the respondents were holding non-managerial positions, while the remaining of the respondents was having managerial titles. The manager respondents had a mean organizational tenure of 7.2 years (SD = 9.2), and the employees' (in non-managerial positions) organizational tenure mean was 7.5 years (SD = 7.6).

5.2. Measures

All ratings for totally 48 items were made on a six-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree) and the overall questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes when responded on computer setting.

Employee Deviant Behavior: For evaluating deviant behaviors, the scale of Bennett and Robinson [4] has been utilized. The scale was composed of two dimensions with totally 19 items. Interpersonal deviance dimension was measured with 7 items and 12 items measured the dimension of organizational deviance. An introduction was provided for the respondents and asked to rate the items by considering their last 6 months. “Said something hurtful to someone at work”, “Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at your workplace”, “Neglected to follow your boss’s instructions”, “Come in late to work without permission” were among the items of the scale.

Organizational Ethical Climate: Ethical climate was evaluated through 26-item global ethical climate scale developed by Victor and Cullen [59]. 26 items measured five ethical climate types; caring (7 items), law and code (4 items), rules (4 items), instrumental (7 items), and independence (4 items). Sample item is “In this organization, people are mostly out for themselves”.

Code of Ethics: In this research, subjective measuring has been utilized through employee perceptions in order to determine the presence or absence of a formal organizational code of ethics. The perception regarding the established formal code of ethics was measured with 3-items. The first item asked the respondents whether their organization had a “published code of ethics for its employees”. The second item asked about the familiarity level of the employees about the code of ethics within the organization, and the third item asked about the direct applicability of the standards specified in the code of ethics.

6. Findings

For testing the content validity, the questionnaire was given to 5 academicians to evaluate and revise it if needed. Face validity was also confirmed through the participation of 5 people from different fields/industries. Further, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed for seeing the factorial structure of the variables and for reliability evaluation. The findings of the factor loadings showed that the Eigen-values recorded were between 0.581-0.898. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of all 3 variables were more than 0.7, which indicates acceptable and high reliability

(Table 1). Additionally, the descriptive statistics of the variables and sub dimension of the variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The summary statistics of survey

	Mean(M)	Std. Dev.(SD)	CronbachAlpha
Employee Deviant Behaviors	3,639	,750	,846
Interpersonal Deviance	3,848	1,085	,853
Organizational Deviance	3,318	1,170	,852
Ethical Climate	4,052	,804	,839
Caring	3,963	1,238	,850
Law and Codes & Rules	3,313	1,137	,849
Instrumental	3,922	1,241	,840
Independence	3,668	1,211	,832
Code of Ethics	2,101	,916	,922

Correlation analysis and regression analysis were performed to see the associations among the research concepts (Table 2, Table 3).

Table 2. Correlation analysis

Variables	Emp.Devi.Beh	Ethical Climate	Code of Ethics
1. Emp.Dev.Beh	1	-.415*	.523*
2. Ethical Climate	-.415*	1	.488*
3. Code of Ethics	-.523*	.488*	1

The documented results indicated that there was significant negative and moderate relationship between ethical climate perceptions and employee deviant behaviors ($r=-0.415$; $p=0.02$; $p < 0.05$). In addition, there was significant negative and moderate relationship between perceived code of ethics and employee deviant behaviors ($r=-0.523$; $p=0.02$; $p < 0.05$). Finally, a positive and moderate relationship between perceived code of ethics and ethical climate ($r=0.488$; $p=0.02$; $p < 0.05$) was reported.

Table 3. Findings of regression analysis

Dep.Var.: Employee Deviant Behaviors			
Indep. Var.s	Beta	t Value	P Value
Constant		1.766	0.02
Ethical Climate	-		
	0.415	1.969	0.03
Code of Ethics	-		
	0.523	3.622	0.01
R=0.705; R ² =0.617; F Value=43.541; p<0.05			

Table 4. Findings of regression analysis

Dep.Var.: Employee Deviant Behaviors			
Indep.Var.s	Beta	t Value	P Value
Constant		1.883	0.02
Caring	-0.413	1.757	0.03
Law and Codes&Rules	-0.451	3.587	0.01
Instrumental	0.408	3.293	0.00
Independence	0.368	4.336	0.02
R=0.466; R ² =0.393; F Value=42.551; p<0.05			

The regression model was found to be significant for the research model. As seen in Table 3, the organizational-contextual variables of ethical climate and code of ethics explained 62% of the change in employee deviant behaviors. The perceived ethical climate with 4 dimensions explained 39% of the change in employee deviant behaviors (Table 4). The perceived code of ethics explained 46% of the change in employee deviant behaviors. It is seen that instrumental dimension of ethical climate has stronger impact on deviant behaviors than independence dimension. On the other side, it was reported that law, codes and rules dimension has negative and moderate impact on deviant behaviors. This result can be an indicator of the importance of perceived rules and laws for decreasing the amount or severity of employee deviance in the organizations.

7. Discussions

Given the prevalence of deviant behaviors in organizations [27],[23], we sought to investigate the relationship between ethical work climate and employee deviant behaviors. Moreover, we attempted to examine the relation of perceived code of ethics with employee deviance. Consistent with the hypotheses, it was seen that ethical climate was negatively related to employee deviant behaviors and perceived code of ethics was negatively related to employee deviant behaviors. Next, it is confirmed that forms of ethical climates may have separate impacts on employee deviant behaviors. This can be inferred due to the negative impacts of law, code, rules and caring dimensions and positive impacts of independence and instrumental dimensions on employee deviance. Based on the study findings, some theoretical and practical implications of this research can be presented. First of all, this study has some theoretical implications. We found a support for the significant effects of organizational work environment on employee behaviors. Although a number of empirical researches [53], [54], [80], [69], [101] have examined the relationship between organizational environment and employee deviance, we currently do not have a solid understanding of the impacts of perceived ethical climate dimensions and existence of structured code of ethics on employee deviant behaviors. Underlying the relations of ethical climate and code of ethics with employee deviant behaviors, this study may provide solid insights for explaining workplace deviance. Thus, it is suggested that when employees feel that they are working under conditions of specified rules, codes, law, and interpersonal caring and when they have awareness of structured code of conduct in the organization, they are less engaging in deviant behaviors. Further, these findings also support the Cognitive Moral (Dis)engagement Theory [78] and Social Information Processing Theory [79], [80] as implied in theoretical part of the study. In sum, it is suggested that the ethical climate and establishment of code of ethics may create employees' awareness of ethical conducts, efforts to expose high ethical standards, and avoidance from misbehaviors that will harm the welfare of the organization. Thus, it is concluded that when employees work in an ethical climate and when they adopt the code of ethics in the organization, they are then less likely to engage in deviant behaviors. Additionally, the findings of this study contribute to the rare empirical study of the code of ethics and deviant behavior notions in the organization and provides evidence on both its synthesis and its effect on understanding the antecedents of employee deviance. This paper has taken a step forward as it amalgamates the two major approaches of the concept of employee deviance. Interpersonal and

organizational deviance have been incorporated into one operationalized construct in order to measure the employee deviance notion based on a framework introduced by Robinson and Bennett [9] within service (public and private organizations) context in Turkey-Istanbul. One of the purposes of this study was to empirically investigate the operationalization of the employee deviant behaviors and organizational ethical climate in terms of measurement; and the other purpose was to reveal the impacts of perceived ethical climate and presence of organizational code of ethics on employees' deviant behaviors.

Furthermore, the current findings of the study have practical implications. Firstly, practical implication for organizations is the value of maintaining an ethical climate and establishing a formal code of ethics. Indeed, this study indicated that ethical climate is a critical antecedent to employee deviant behavior. It is suggested that an ethical climate serves as a sensemaking function for employees that helps them to react to ethical issues in the workplace. Second, as being a formal statement specifying the expectations of the organization about how the employees should behave, code of ethics has critical influence on reducing employee deviant behaviors. It is suggested that formal code of ethics would encourage ethical behaviors and serve as a prevention mechanism for employee misconduct. Thereby, it is important for human resource (HR) practices, policies, and procedures to emphasize the value of establishing code of ethics and training the employees about its specifications. These codes of ethics standards should be highly visible and be applicable so that employees learn, apply and sustain the relevant ethical standards.

As a limitation, it is suggested that the number of respondents should be higher for more relevant and generalizable results. Further researches can be conducted on large-scale organizations, sectors, public, private organizations etc. and, also in different cities or countries for generalizing findings. In addition, the same respondents evaluated all items of the variables in the questionnaire and this can create self-report problem and social desirability bias. For eliminating these problems, multiple sourcing methods is recommended for future studies.

8. Conclusions

Since the prevalence of unethical behavior in organizations is staggering, this study may contribute to understanding of the critical role of ethical climate and establishment of ethical codes for organizations. For financial and ethical reasons, it is important for organizations create an ethical work climate and to establish a structured code of conduct to reduce

employee unethical behaviors. The results of this study showed that both of the hypothesis of the study were supported (H1-H2). Along with the statistical results of the study, it was seen that certain ethical climate types can lead to reduce workplace deviance. Some hints were found regarding the potential associates of organizational-contextual factors of organizational deviance. In sum, it can be indicted that organizational ethical climate and code of ethics may serve as antecedent factors of employee deviant behaviors. Thereby, based on the problem statement of the study, an answer has been provided for the research question of this study and it is suggested that the employee deviant behavior in the workplace can be an outcome of the perceived organizational ethical climate and existence of code of ethics. As consequence, the findings from this study demonstrate the critical role managers carry in creating an ethical climate and establishing code of ethics for reducing the level of deviant behaviors among their employees.

Furthermore, as seen in the descriptive statistics findings, the magnitude of deviant behaviors ($M= 3,63$) is relatively high. This is a question for relevant occupations and organizations and a problem for personal development and for today's organizations. These results may provide implication for educational, health and service institutions in the current research context. Further, the climate model provides a comprehensive model of ethical climate and code of ethics that involve the layers of factors that affect employee deviant behaviors. In the organizations the climate factors should be understood and improved for developing more healthy workplaces, quality of work life and individual positive and negative behaviors. It is seen that the existence of code of ethics serves for reducing negative behaviors and promote ethical acts. Creating a climate of ethics and prescribed code of ethics can be seen as important tools since they have reflections for both organizations and employees.

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