Deviance as Organizational Resistance- Lit Review

Inciting deviance	Types of deviance	Impact on workplace	Power	Resistance
Although organizational control and power are often designed to diminish workplace deviance, they also have the capacity to incite it (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, abstract).	In an earlier survey, it was found that 33% to 75% of workers have engaged in behaviors such as vandalism, sabotage, unwarranted absenteeism and theft (Harper, 1990 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 378).	The negative impact of workplace deviance on productivity and performance has been found to be substantial (Dunlop & Lee, 2004 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	First, we discuss how power in general leads to frustration, which in turn affects workplace deviance as resistance to that power (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).	Deviant behaviour is only one of many forms of resistance identified in the literature (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).
This is because enactments of power that confront organizational members in their daily work lives can create frustration that is expressed in acts of deviance (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, abstract).	Deviance has often been recognized as a reaction to frustrating organizational stressors, such as financial, social, and working conditions (Robinson & Bennett, 1997 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	Although deviant actions may be perceived as dysfunctional by the organization itself, they may be functional to those engaging in them because, as we will argue, they serve to maintain and protect their needs for autonomy and sense of self-respect and fairness (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	Organizational power reflects actions of any individual or organizational system that controls the behavior or beliefs of an organizational member (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).	Reactance theory argues that the enactment of power can create a feeling of reduced autonomy on the part of employees, and this threat in turn motivates those employees to restore it by engaging in restricted behaviours or behaviours similar to them (Brehm, 1966; Brehm & Brehm, 1981, Wicklund, 1974 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).
In this article, the authors examine why power provokes	Literature on power and resistance in organizations have	A long history of agency theory (cf Eisenhardt, 1989)	When power provokes workplace deviance, it is a form of	Such a threatened or damaged identity potentially provides the

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workplace deviance in organizations and, specifically, how types of power affect the form that workplace deviance takes (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, abstract).	developed in relative isolation from one another, despite their shared foci (…) and yet the cross-fertilization between these research areas have been relatively modest. (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	suggests that organizations can and should increase managerial control to ensure employees act in the interest of the firm. In contrast, our theory would suggest that managerial attempts to control and limit dysfunctional workplace behaviour may increase such behavior, rather than reduce it (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).	organizational resistance: Resistance involves an action, inaction, or process whereby individuals within a power structure engage in behaviours stemming from their opposition to, or frustration with, enactments of power (Collinson, 1999; Knights & McCabe, 1999 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).	frustration that can lead to deviant behavior (Averil, 1982; Berkowitz, 1993; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994) : When individuals' identities or social face are threatened, they tend to engage in defensive self-presentation (Schlenker, 1980) and are more likely to act with aggression (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994; Morrill, 1992) or seek revenge (Bies & Tripp, 1995; Bies, Tripp & Kramer, 1997 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).
In this article, we examine workplace deviance as a form of resistance to organizational power (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	Workplace deviance is defined here as voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and thus is perceived as threatening the well-being of the organization or its members (Robinson &	Our theory may provide a useful counterbalance to the accepted but untested causal relationship between managerial actions and employee deviance (Robinson & Greenberg, 1999 as cited by Lawrence &	Within cultures and structures, organizational actors regularly enact power in attempts to influence, persuade or otherwise motivate organizational members to act in particular ways (Yukl & Falbe, 1990 as cited by	As Andersson and Pearson (1999) argued, revenge is a way for individuals to demonstrate that they have socially valued attributes and are deserving of respectful behaviour (Lawrence &

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The episodes and systems of power used by organizational members to control, motivate, organize, and direct others, however, have not yet been systematically examined as a potential and important cause of workplace deviance (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	Workplace deviance is driven by provocations (Hollinger & Clark, 1982; Robinson & Bennett, 1997 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).	*Social identity*. A second psychological mechanism through which power can lead to frustration and thus to deviant behavior involves the potential threat to an employee's social face, or desired identity (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).	We argue that organizational power has the potential to create at least three forms of perceived disparity that produce frustration: • Disparity between the need for autonomy and an experienced loss of freedom • Disparity between one's social identity and threats to that identity • Disparity between a need for justice and experiences of unfairness (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 380).	When opportunities for alternative responses are available, the likelihood of frustration in response to instances of power is decreased (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382). One opportunity is afforded by the availability of channels through which individuals can gain voice, such as through complaint channels, unions, or other mechanisms to constructively resolve disputes (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382). Other opportunities for alternative responses may include the attractiveness and availability of

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				alternative jobs and organizations, enabling some to exit the organization rather than engage in workplace deviance (<mark>Withey & Cooper, 1989</mark> as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382). Together, these and other opportunities for alternative responses to enactments of power may decrease the frustration experiences by individuals in response to instances of power (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).
We argue that the enactment of power in organizations, regardless of purpose or intent, can be perceived negatively by those it affects (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 379).	As <mark>Andersson and Pearson (1999)</mark> argued, revenge is a way for individuals to demonstrate that they have socially valued attributes and are deserving of respectful behaviour (Lawrence &	Social face refers to an interplay of attributes and social identities that the employee would like to project in a given social environment (<mark>Erez & Earley, 1993</mark> as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).	We posit that enactments of power reduce autonomy, and the ensuing frustration can lead to deviant behaviours that are intended to resist that loss of autonomy (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).	

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Such a threatened or damaged identity potentially provides the frustration that can lead to deviant behavior (Averil, 1982; Berkowitz, 1993; Tedeschi & Felson, 1994) : When individuals' identities or social face are threatened, they tend to engage in defensive self-presentation (Schlenker, 1980) and are more likely to act with aggression (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994; Morrill, 1992) or seek revenge (Bies & Tripp, 1995; Bies, Tripp & Kramer, 1997 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).	Revengeful behaviour may help to reestablish one's lowered sense of self or build up one's identity (Kim & Smith, 1993 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).	Consequently, feelings of injustice generated by organizational power can lead to the frustration that underpins workplace deviance intended to release those feelings or achieve some sort of retribution (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).	Enactments of power in organizations can undermine or threaten one's identity in the organization as a strong, independent, equal individual (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).	
Following our general model, acts of power undermine one's social	We have argued that enactments of organizational power have the potential to	Thus far, we have shown the general relationship between organizational power	*Justice*. Organizational power may also create disparity between desires for justice and	

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identity, which in turn causes frustration and leads to a variety of deviant behaviour intended to either seek revenge or restore the threatened loss of social face (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381-382).	create disparities between individuals' needs for autonomy and their experienced loss of freedom, their social identity and threats to that identity, and between a need for justice and experiences of unfairness (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).	and workplace deviance, as mediated by frustration of fundamental needs. In so doing, we have treated enactments of power and workplace deviance as unitary constructs (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 383). Particular types of power may produce particular types of workplace deviance (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 383).	perceptions of unfair treatment. Employees who are equity sensitive or who possess a high need for justice will be more likely to sense such disparities. The enactment of power may produce a sense of unfairness by those who are the recipients of it (Collinson, 1992 as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).	
Proposition 1: Instances of organizational power are more likely to lead to the frustration that underpins workplace deviance as resistance either when it significantly reduces the autonomy of individuals and/or when the targets of that power have a high need for autonomy (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 381).			Although organizational members are often affected by decisions, systems, and processes that are counter to their self-interest (Mintzberg, 1983) research on procedural justice shows that individuals are more likely to consider acts of power as legitimate when they perceive the underlying processes as fair (Tyler,	

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			<mark>2000</mark> as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).	
Proposition 2: Instances of organizational power are more likely to lead to the frustration that under pins workplace deviance as resistance either when it significantly threatens the identities of targeted individuals and/or when the target of that power have a high need to protect their identities (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).				
Thus, when organizational members perceive processes as unfair, such perceptions can engender frustration and motivate them to seek retribution, potentially by reciprocating the perceived unfair act (<mark>Ambrose, Seabright & Schminke, 2002; Skarlicki & Folger,</mark>				

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<mark>1997</mark> as cited by Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).				
Proposition 3: Instances of organizational power are more likely to lead to the frustration that underpins workplace deviance as resistance either when it significantly undermines perceptions of justice on the part of targeted individuals and/or when the targets of that power have a high need for organizational justice (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 382).				
Proposition 4: Opportunities for alternative responses will moderate the relationship between enactments of power and the frustration that underpins workplace deviance, such that the presence of those opportunities weakens				

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the relationship (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007, p. 383).				