



## Designing and Evaluating a Model for Precedents and Outcomes of Organizational Cynicism (Maron Company, Ahvaz, 2019)

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### Abstract

**Background:** Organizational cynicism is one of the important behavioral issues affecting employee performance, thereby reducing organizational efficiency. This study aims to design and evaluate a model for antecedents and consequences of organizational cynicism in employees of an industrial company in Iran.

**Materials and Methods:** In this applied descriptive-correlational study, the statistical population included all employees of Maron Company in Ahvaz in 2019. A sample of 210 employees of the company was selected through random sampling. The instruments used in the study included questionnaires of Dean et al.'s Organizational Cynicism, Niehoff and Moorman's Perceived Organizational Justice, Rhoades and Eisenberger's Perceived Organizational Support, Judge et al.'s Core Self-Evaluations, Kauffman et al.'s Job Satisfaction, Organ et al.'s Citizenship Behavior, as well as Bennett and Robinson's Workplace Deviance. The proposed model was investigated through structural making use of SPSS-23 and AMOS-23 software.

**Results:** Results showed that the proposed model fit the data well. In addition, according to the results, among all direct paths, only the perceived organizational path coefficient of organizational cynicism was not significant. The findings showed that organizational cynicism had a mediating role between perceived organizational justice and core self-evaluations with job satisfaction, citizenship behavior, and workplace deviance ( $p = 0.000$ ). In addition, role of organizational cynicism was not significant in the mediating paths of perceived organizational support for organizational citizenship behavior, perceived organizational support for job satisfaction, and perceived organizational support for anti-production behaviors.

**Conclusions:** The findings showed that organizational cynicism had a mediating role in perceived organizational justice, core self-evaluations, job satisfaction, citizenship behavior, and workplace deviance.

**Keywords:** Organizational, Job Satisfaction, Workplace.

### Introduction

A healthy organization is one in which physical and mental health of employees is as important as organizational productivity. In addition, the responsibility of managers is not limited to focusing on greater productivity and profitability [1]. Organizational cynicism is one of the important

behavioral issues affecting employee performance, thereby affecting organizational efficiency. Psychologists define cynicism as one's pessimistic thoughts about the future and unreasonable expectations of oneself and others [2]. Organizational cynicism, as a negative attitude towards the organization, involves three dimensions of believing in the organization's lack

of loyalty, having negative feelings about the organization, and displaying humiliating and malicious behaviors consistent with these negative beliefs and feelings about the organization [3]. Cynical employees affect the whole organization, thereby preventing the organization from achieving its goals [4]. Moreover, employee cynicism about the organization makes them get engaged in negative verbal statements against the organization, which harms organizational reputation. Ultimately, cynicism about the organization will force employees to leave the organization if they find a suitable job [5].

Chiaburu et al [6] examined 32 studies on organizational cynicism. Accordingly, they classified factors affecting organizational cynicism, which included demographic characteristics (age, level of education, gender, and service experience), individual tendencies (positive thinking, negative attitude, and pessimistic traits), positive work experiences (organizational justice and organizational support), and negative work experiences (organizational policies and psychological pressure) [7]. Therefore, it is important for organizational managers to study ways of dealing with this reality so as to prevent its negative consequences in the workplace.

Perceived organizational justice is one of the variables considered as an antecedent of organizational cynicism. Organizational justice refers to the fair and equitable behavior of organizations towards their employees [8]. One of the ways of responding to perceived inequality by employees within an organization is reducing staff input. This could be done by some strategies directly related to the reduction of the input. Absenteeism at work is an example of these strategies. Other strategies for challenging injustice have an indirect defensive nature. One of the most prevalent indirect defensive strategies is having a negative attitude towards the organization [9]. James, cited in Nejati Hatamian et al, when employees feel that their behavior is not their own choice (organizational policies), they believe there is a breach of regulations and a conflict between the organization and employees, so their cynicism about the organization increases. Regardless of the type of injustice, cynicism about the organization increases when there is a high perception of injustice in the organization [10].

Numerous studies have reported perceived organizational support as an antecedent of organizational cynicism. Chandrakar defined perceived organizational support as the extent to which an organization generally values employees' efforts and partnerships, being concerned about their wellbeing and comfort [11]. Blau's social

exchange theory suggests that employees' attitudes towards the organization could be influenced by their general beliefs about the extent to which the organization values their attempts and considers their health [5].

Another variable that is an antecedent of organizational cynicism is core self-evaluations. Core self-evaluations include evaluations that individuals have of themselves, the world, and others. They encompass one's beliefs about their abilities (life control) and competencies (performance, the coping process, and success) [12]. Scott and Zweig have shown that core self-evaluations have a significant negative relationship with organizational cynicism [13]. This relationship, at least in part, is well demonstrated when employees with appropriate self-evaluations are willing to consider a challenge as an opportunity.

Citizenship behavior is one of the consequences of organizational cynicism. Organ argued that citizenship behavior is an individual voluntary behavior not directly designed by formal reward systems in the organization; however, it enhances effectiveness and efficiency of the organizational performance [cited in 14]. Since people with organizational cynicism have negative views and emotions about the organization, they are unlikely to have high-quality interactional relationships with the organization; thus, they are unlikely to show behaviors that promote such relationships.

Organizational cynicism affects job satisfaction that refers to an individual's overall attitude towards their job. Job satisfaction enhances the success level of an organization qualitatively. Besides, it increases employee productivity and organizational commitment, as well as the ability to acquire job skills. However, lack of job satisfaction reduces employee motivation and organizational productivity [15]. Job satisfaction decreases as a result of organizational cynicism.

Anti-production behaviors, being emotion-based and cognition-based responses to workplace experiences, are other consequences of organizational cynicism. Workplace deviant behaviors could be exhibited by employees to reduce perceived imbalances in social exchange relationships. Thus, organizational cynicism has a positive relationship with workplace deviant behaviors [10].

Kim et al [16] concluded that a reduction in perceived organizational justice is a consequence of organizational cynicism. Shaharruddin et al [17] reported a significant relationship between perceived organizational justice and organizational cynicism. Similarly, Simha et al [18] found out that perceived organizational justice reduces organizational cynicism. Scott and Zweig [13]

showed that core self-evaluations are an antecedent of organizational cynicism. In their study, Rubin et al [19] found out that cynicism has a significant negative impact on organizational and individual effectiveness; besides, it reduces citizenship behavior. Aziz et al [20] showed that there is a negative relationship between organizational cynicism and citizenship behavior. Mortazavi and Faghehe [21] showed that perceived organizational justice has a significant effect on organizational cynicism, and that organizational cynicism negatively affects citizenship behavior. Choi [22] concluded that a decrease in perceived organizational justice leads to organizational cynicism, and that organizational cynicism has a significant relationship with citizenship behavior and workplace deviant behaviors. Grama [23] reported a negative relationship between organizational cynicism and job satisfaction. In the same vein, Treadway et al [24] showed that perceived organizational support is one of the factors affecting organizational cynicism, and that organizational cynicism is significantly related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Nafei [25] concluded that there is a negative relationship between organizational cynicism, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and citizenship behavior. Byrne and Hochwarter [26] reported that organizational cynicism is associated with frustration, poor performance, low motivation, high absenteeism, transfer job, lack of job satisfaction, less frequent citizenship behavior, and lack of trust among those who have the ability to break rewards and punishments. Abbasikhah et al [27] concluded that organizational cynicism has a significant positive relationship with destructive deviant behaviors. Moghaddam and Mahmoudi Meymand [28] found out that organizational cynicism has a significant positive relationship with the tendency

to exhibit deviant behaviors. In addition, the exchange leadership style moderates this relationship. Nair and Kamalanabhan [29] concluded that organizational cynicism sets immoral goals for individuals so that they exhibit workplace deviant behaviors with negative organizational consequences. Moradi and Jalilian [30] found out that organizational cynicism has a positive relationship with immoral behaviors, emotional exhaustion, and the tendency to abandon the job. However, perceived organizational support and the psychological breach of contracts have no significant relationships with organizational cynicism.

The results of this study could help organizational policymakers and managers consider the role of organizational cynicism in reducing the probability of job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior, and also in increasing anti-reproduction behaviors. Thus, the designing of a model like the one proposed in this study could present a clear picture of the relationships among important variables affecting job satisfaction, the organizational civic behavior, and anti-production behaviors. Against this background, this research could play a key role in enriching the literature on organizational cynicism. Accordingly, this study was conducted to design and evaluate a model of the antecedents and consequences of organizational cynicism among employees of an industrial company. Therefore, the present study intends to figure out if the proposed model designed and evaluated as a model of antecedents (perceived organizational justice, perceived organizational support, and core self-evaluations) as well as consequences of organizational cynicism (job satisfaction, citizenship behavior, and anti-production behaviors) fits the research data. Fig. 1 illustrates the proposed model of the study.

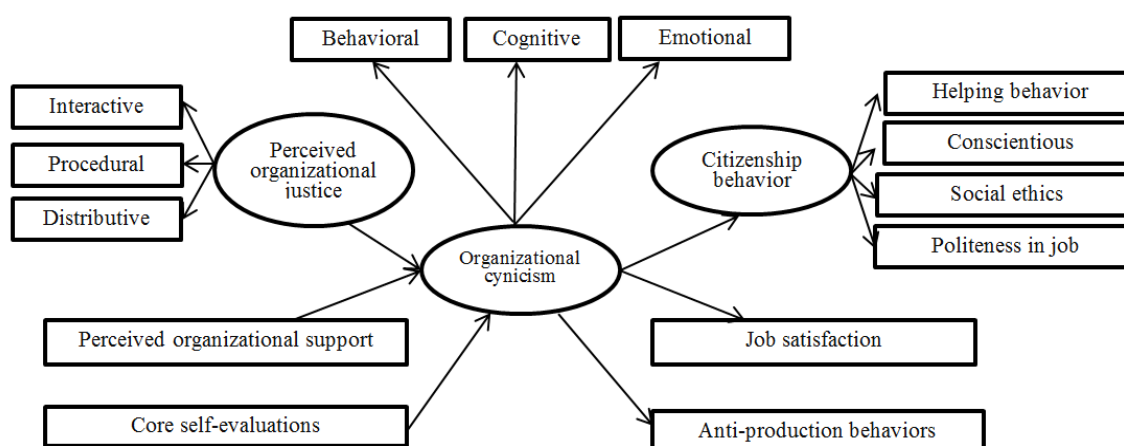


Fig. 1. The proposed model of the study



## Materials and Methods

This applied descriptive-correlational study was conducted based on structural equation modeling. The statistical population included all employees of Maron Company, Ahvaz City, in 2019. A sample of 220 employees was selected by random sampling from different organizational units of administrative services, technical services, operations, repairs, warehousing, security, training, and quality assurance. All participants answered the questionnaires, yet the final sample size was 210 due to the elimination of incomplete questionnaires (the response rate of 95.45%). According to the number of direct paths ( $n=6$ ), exogenous variables ( $n=3$ ), covariance ( $n=3$ ), and error variances ( $n=4$ ), 16 parameters were calculated. Considering Klein's (1988) proposal, at least 10 subjects are needed to test the model for each parameter calculated (cited by Bashlideh, 2014). According to the sample size of the present study ( $n=220$ ), about 13 subjects were considered for each parameter, which indicates adequacy of the samples for testing the model. Among the 210 participants, 184 and 26 participants were male and female, respectively. The participants' educational levels included high school diplomas and lower (13.33%), associate degrees (11.43%), bachelor degrees (49.52%), as well as master's degrees and higher (25.72%). Furthermore, 3.81% of the participants were within the age range of 20-25, 17.15% were within the age range of 26-30, 40.95% were within the age range of 31-35, and 38.09% were within the age range of 35 and higher. In addition, 16.19% of the participants had a work experience of less than 5 years, 18.09% had a work experience of 6-10 years, 39.05% had a work experience of 11-15 years, and 26.67% had a work experience of over 15 years.

**Organizational Cynicism Questionnaire:** Dean et al.'s [31] Organizational Cynicism Questionnaire, consisting of 13 items and three dimensions, was used to measure organizational cynicism. Items 1 to 4 are related to the emotional dimension, items 5 to 9 to the cognitive dimension, and items 10 to 13 to the behavioral dimension. The answers were evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Dean et al [31] found out that reliability of this questionnaire, using Cronbach's alpha, was 0.82. In the present study, reliability coefficients of the behavioral dimension, cognitive dimension, emotional dimension, and total organizational cynicism of the questionnaire were examined through Cronbach's alpha, which yielded values 0.78, 0.93, 0.94, and 0.95, respectively. In addition, indices of confirmatory factor analysis

were calculated through software AMOS 23.0 with the results of which having been  $IFI = 0.95$ ,  $CFI = 0.95$ , and  $RMSEA = 0.08$ , indicating proper reliability and validity.

**Perceived Organizational Justice Questionnaire:** Niehoff and Moorman's Organizational Justice Questionnaire [32] was used to measure perceived organizational justice. This questionnaire consists of 20 items with three subscales of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactive justice. Items 1 to 5 are related to distributive justice, items 6 to 11 to procedural justice, and items 12 to 20 to interactive justice. The answers were evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Niehoff and Moorman [32] used Cronbach's alpha to examine the construct validity and reliability coefficients, with the results of which having been 0.42 and 0.82 for total organizational justice, 0.46 and 0.78 for distributive justice, 0.57 and 0.82 for procedural justice, and 0.40 and 0.64 for interactive justice, respectively. Shakkon and Naami [33] translated and used this questionnaire in Iran and confirmed its validity and reliability. In the present study, the reliability coefficients of the distributive justice subscale, procedural justice subscale, distributive justice subscale, and the total organizational cynicism questionnaire were obtained using Cronbach's alpha, with the values of which being 0.95, 0.90, 0.87, and 0.96, respectively. The indices of confirmatory factor analysis were calculated using software AMOS 23.0 ( $IFI = 0.90$ ,  $CFI = 0.90$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.08$ ), which indicated proper reliability and validity of this questionnaire.

**Core Self-Evaluation Questionnaire:** This questionnaire, consisted of 12 items, was designed by Judge et al [34] to operationalize a core self-evaluation model. The questionnaire was scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicated more positive self-evaluations, with values 12 and 60 indicating the minimum and maximum self-evaluations, respectively. On this scale, items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 are scored reversely. Judge et al [34] reported reliability of this questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha at 0.84 and its convergent validity at 0.64. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.93. In addition, the indices of confirmatory factor analysis were calculated using software AMOS 23.0 ( $IFI = 0.96$ ,  $CFI = 0.96$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.07$ ), which indicated proper reliability and validity of this questionnaire.

**Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire:** Rhoades and Eisenberger's [35] Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire was used to

measure perceived organizational support. The questionnaire consists of 8 items, and the answers are scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Rhoades and Eisenberger [35] reported the reliability coefficient of this questionnaire at 0.81 using Cronbach's alpha. In the present study, the reliability coefficient of perceived organizational support using Cronbach's alpha was 0.92. Besides, the indices of confirmatory factor analysis were calculated using software AMOS 23.0 (IFI = 0.98, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.07), which indicated proper validity and reliability of this questionnaire.

**Job Satisfaction Questionnaire:** Kauffman et al.'s General Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, cited in Javedan [36], was used to measure job satisfaction. The questionnaire consists of 3 items, with its responses scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In Heydari and Shokouhi Targhi's [37] study, reliability of this questionnaire calculated through Cronbach's alpha was 0.71, and its validity was confirmed by professors and experts in this field. In the present study, the job satisfaction reliability coefficient using Cronbach's alpha was 0.92. Moreover, criterion validity was established by calculating the correlation between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Citizenship Behavior, which was significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

**Organizational Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire:** Smith et al.'s Organizational Citizenship Behavior Questionnaire [38] was used to measure organizational citizenship behavior. This scale consists of 16 items and 4 subscales. The responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In this questionnaire, items 1 to 4 are related to the subscale of helping behavior, items 5 to 8 to the subscale of conscientiousness, items 9

to 13 to the subscale of social ethics, and items 14 to 16 to the subscale of politeness at work. In Heydari and Shokouhi Targhi's [37] study, reliability of this questionnaire calculated through Cronbach's alpha was 0.85, and its validity was confirmed by professors and experts in this field. In the present study, reliability coefficients of the subscales of the helping behavior, conscientiousness, social ethics, politeness at work, and total organizational citizenship behavior of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha were determined to be 0.66, 0.68, 0.78, 0.77, and 0.91, respectively.

**Anti-Production Behavior Questionnaire:** Bennett and Robinson's standard Anti-Production Behavior Questionnaire [39] was used to measure anti-production behaviors. The questionnaire consists of 11 items measured on a five-point Likert scale (never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always). Content validity of this questionnaire was verified by experts and professors. In addition, reliability of this questionnaire in Chehrizi et al.'s [40] study was determined to be 0.89 using Cronbach's alpha. In the present study, the reliability coefficient measured using Cronbach's alpha was 0.91. In addition, the indices of confirmatory factor analysis were calculated using software AMOS 23.0 (IFI = 0.97, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.07), which indicated proper reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

## Results

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation, and Table 2 presents the matrix of correlation coefficients of the research variables. Table 2 shows the matrix of correlation coefficients for the variables in the model proposed by the present study.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of the research variables

Variables		Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Organizational cynicism	Emotional	9.16	4.96	0.447	-0.634
	Cognitive	13.44	5.56		
	Behavioral	11.07	3.65		
Perceived organizational justice	Distributive	16.57	4.82	-0.179	-0.557
	Procedural	18.92	5.83		
	Interactive	29.19	8.25		
Perceived organizational justice		26.34	7.06	-0.454	-0.352
Core self-evaluations		41.47	11.22	-0.083	-1.095
Citizenship behavior	Helping behavior	13.78	2.83	-0.367	-0.911
	Conscientiousness	12.39	3.12		
	Social ethics	15.16	3.21		
	Politeness at work	13.93	3.33		
Job satisfaction		10.61	3.11	-0.620	-0.372
Anti-production behaviors		15.30	5.91	1.709	2.978

**Table 2.** The matrix of correlation coefficients for the variables in the proposed model

Variables no.		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Organizational cynicism	–						
2	Organizational justice	-0.89**	–					
3	Organizational support	-0.89**	-0.92**	–				
4	Core self-evaluations	-0.87**	0.78**	0.83**	–			
5	Citizenship behavior	-0.82**	0.81**	0.78**	-0.84**	–		
6	Job satisfaction	-0.82**	0.81**	0.85**	0.79**	0.79**	–	
7	Anti-production behaviors	0.79**	-0.75**	-0.76**	-0.76**	-0.81**	-0.73**	–

\*\*p < 0.01

As Table 1 shows, concerning the criterion of normality, the research variables had an absolute skewness value of less than 3 and a kurtosis value of less than 10. Therefore, the assumption of normality is confirmed. In addition, as Table 2 shows, all relationships between the variables were significant at the 0.01 level. These correlational analyses provide an insight into the two-way relationships between the research variables. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to evaluate the proposed model.

Moreover, a combination of fit indices were used to determine adequacy of the proposed model. It is worth noting that if the chi-square value is not statistically significant, it will imply that the model fits the data. However, since the chi-squared formula considers the sample size, the chi-square is usually swollen and statistically significant for samples of a large size. Therefore, the use of another index called 'relative chi-square' is suggested instead of the use of the chi-square

index. The smaller this ratio is, the more proper it will be, with the accepted value being less than or equal to 3. The accepted values of the incremental fit index (IFI), the comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness of fit index (GFI), the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) are equal to or greater than 0.90. In addition, the value of the Bentler-Bonnet index or the normed fit index (NFI) should be equal to or greater than 0.90, yet it should be 0.80 according to some studies. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was another index used in this study. Although the RMSEA value of zero indicates a perfect fit, Browne and Cudeck [41] stated that such a value could not be obtained. They argued that values greater than 0.1 indicate a poor fit, values between 0.05 and 0.08 are reasonable, and values less than 0.05 indicate an acceptable fit. Table 3 shows the results of the proposed model and the final model-data fit based on the fitness indices.

**Table 3.** The proposed model fit and final model fit indices

The model-data fit indices	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	IFI	TLI	RMSEA
The proposed model	146.57	71	2.03	0.83	0.75	0.92	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.10
The final model	117.70	72	1.65	0.95	0.90	0.93	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.08

As Table 3 shows, the goodness of fit indices, including relative chi-square ( $\chi^2= 1.65$ ), the incremental fit index (IFI = 0.97), the comparative fit index (CFI= 0.97), the goodness of fit index (GFI= 0.95), the adjusted goodness index (AGFI= 0.90), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI= 0.96), the Bentler-Bonnet index or the adjusted fit index

(NFI= 0.93), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA= 0.08) index indicate a reasonable fit to the data for the proposed model. Therefore, the modified or the final model has a good fit.

Fig. 2 shows standard path coefficients of the final model of the research.

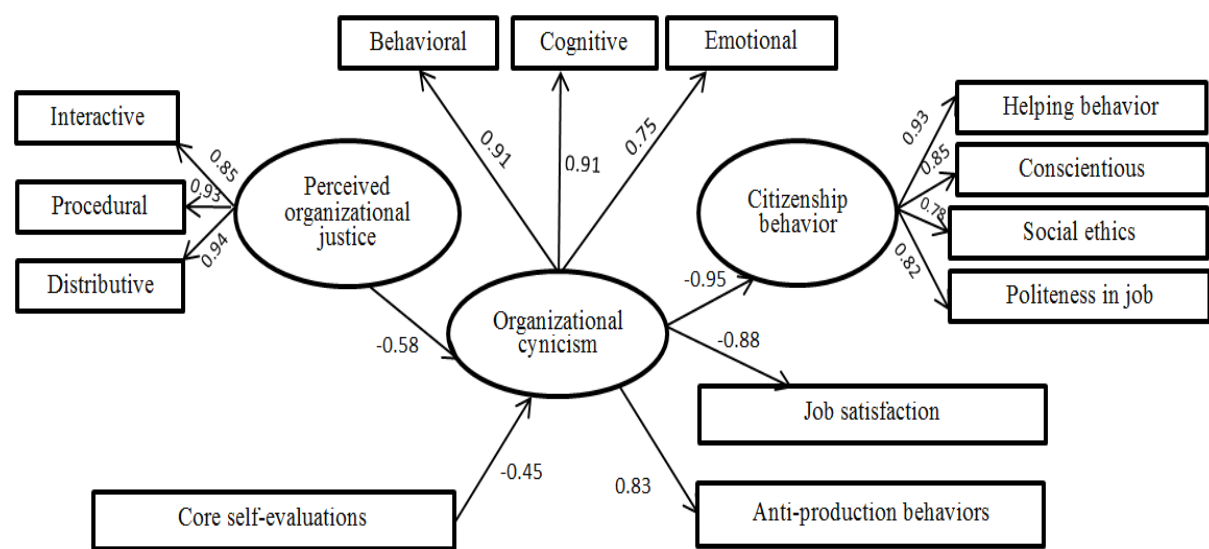


Fig. 2. The final research model and standard path coefficients

According to the research results, among the total direct paths, only the coefficient of the perceived organizational support path to the organizational cynicism was not significant. Thus, after eliminating the perceived organizational support path to organizational cynicism, all direct paths were significant.

An underlying assumption of the model proposed in the present study was the existence of mediation pathways. Accordingly, the bootstrap method was used to determine significance of these mediational relationships. Table 4 shows the results of the bootstrap method for mediating relationships.

Table 4. Results of the bootstrap method for mediation paths

Paths	Value	Sig	Confidence interval 95%	
			Min	Max
Organizational justice → Organizational cynicism → Citizenship behavior	0.514	0.001	0.315	0.759
Perceived organizational justice → Organizational cynicism → Job satisfaction	0.473	0.001	0.292	0.703
Perceived organizational justice → Organizational cynicism → Anti-production behavior	-0.453	0.001	-0.672	-0.278
Perceived organizational support → Organizational cynicism → Citizenship behavior	0.030	0.767	-0.217	0.235
Perceived organizational support → Organizational cynicism → Job satisfaction	0.027	0.761	-0.197	0.221
Perceived organizational support → Organizational cynicism → Anti-production behaviors	-0.026	0.765	-0.209	0.191
Core self-evaluations → Organizational cynicism → Citizenship behavior	0.447	0.000	0.352	0.539
Core self-evaluations → Organizational cynicism → Job satisfaction	0.412	0.000	0.330	0.497
Core self-evaluations → Organizational cynicism → Anti-production behaviors	-0.394	0.000	-0.478	-0.309

As Table 4 shows, the confidence interval for indirect routes indicates that number 0 is not within this distance. Accordingly, organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between perceived organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior, perceived organizational justice and job satisfaction, perceived organizational justice and anti-production behaviors, core self-evaluations and organizational citizenship behavior, core self-evaluations and job satisfaction, as well as self-evaluations and self-

evaluation behavior. However, the level of confidence for the mediating role of organizational cynicism in the mediated pathways of perceived organizational support and organizational citizenship behavior, perceived organizational support and job satisfaction, as well as perceived organizational support and anti-production behaviors was insignificant. The confidence level for this confidence interval was 95, and the number of bootstrap re-sampling was 5000.



## Discussion

The present study was conducted to design and evaluate a model of some antecedents and consequences of organizational cynicism. The data analysis results showed that perceived organizational justice had a negative effect on organizational cynicism. These findings are consistent with those of Nejati Hatamian et al [10], Simha et al [18], Kim et al [16], Choi [22], Pelit and Pelit [42], and Shaharruddin et al [17]. In fact, employees' perceptions of organizational justice negatively affect their cynicism about the organization. The more the employees perceive an organization's performance in distributing rewards as fair and equitable, the less cynical they will be about the organization and its future performance. Likewise, if the rewarding procedures and systems are fair so that rewards are devoted to all employees equally, organizational cynicism will be reduced among employees. Moreover, if supervisors treat their employees respectfully and fairly, employees will be less cynical about the organization.

One of the paths that was not confirmed in this study was the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism. This finding is inconsistent with those of Treadway et al [24] and Chiaburu et al [6], but it is consistent with those of Mortazavi et al [21], Moradi and Jalilian [30], and Byrne and Hochwarter [26]. In a study conducted on faculty members, Mortazavi and Faghehe [21] attributed the lack of a relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism to the nature of the statistical population. In fact, university professors are academic staff with a great deal of autonomy and privileges in their academic duties; thus, they are more dependent on support from their students than their organization. Byrne and Hochwarter [26] found a positive relationship between organizational cynicism and organizational support. In their views, cynical individuals consider high levels of organizational support artificial and unrealistic, which do not promote social exchange [21]. The rejection of this relationship could be attributed to the high correlation between perceived organizational justice and perceived organizational support, which leads to an insignificant relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism.

Furthermore, the data analysis results showed that core self-evaluations had a negative effect on organizational cynicism. This finding is in line with that of Scott and Zweig [13]. In fact, if self-esteem and overall self-efficacy are high among

employees, they will not have feelings of fear, anxiety, insecurity, and guilt; thus, they will be less cynical about their organization. However, if the staff's core self-evaluations are low, they will experience more organizational cynicism.

In addition, the results showed that organizational cynicism had a negative effect on citizenship behavior. This finding is in line with those of Dean et al [31], Nejati Hatamian et al [10], Byrne and Hochwarter [26], Rubin et al [19], Nafei [25], Mortazavi and Faghehe [21], and Aziz et al [20]. An individual with organizational cynicism does not fulfill beyond formal requirements of the organization. Cynical individuals behave in a way consistent with their beliefs. In other words, they tend to show less citizenship behavior, pay less attention to extrinsic activities, and pay more attention to intrinsic activities. When employees are not cynical about their organization, they feel more attached to the organization; therefore, they perform their role so as to achieve organizational goals [42].

Moreover, the results showed that organizational cynicism had a negative effect on job satisfaction. This finding is in line with those of Treadway et al [24], Byrne and Hochwarter [26], Pelit and Pelit [42], as well as Grama [23]. People with organizational cynicism have a negative attitude towards their organization, so they are less interested in their jobs.

However, the results showed that organizational cynicism had a direct relationship with anti-production behaviors. This finding is consistent with those of Choi [22], Haghighi et al [14], Pelit and Pelit [42], Abbasikhah et al [27], as well as Moghaddam and Mahmoudi Meymand [28]. Increased organizational cynicism results in increased anti-production behaviors among employees. Cynical individuals exhibit anti-production behaviors to reduce the perceived imbalance in social exchange relationships. In this regard, the results of the present study showed that organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between perceived organizational justice and citizenship behavior. If employees perceive that justice is not practiced in the organization, they will become stressed and suspicious of their organization. Therefore, they will attempt to reduce their input and participation in organizational affairs. Under such circumstances, citizenship behavior will be reduced.

According to the results of the present study, organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between perceived organizational justice and job satisfaction. If employees consider their payment, tasks, and promotion criteria fair, they will have a



greater perception of organizational justice. Thus, they will not be pessimistic about the organization and more satisfied with the promotion and payment practice. Moreover, if officials of an organization treat employees respectfully and let them participate in the executive process, employee trust in the organization will increase, and organizational cynicism will decrease, thereby leading to an increase in job satisfaction [43].

Moreover, the results showed that organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between perceived organizational justice and anti-production behaviors. Accordingly, the perception of any injustice in the distribution of rights, practices, and interactions in the organization causes a tension and cynicism about the organization [44]. In addition, it motivates employees to show anti-production behaviors to balance the ratio of their output to their input so as to mitigate negative emotions felt as a result of the injustice.

In addition, the results showed that organizational cynicism does not play a mediating role between perceived organizational support and citizenship behavior. Accordingly, perceived organizational support was expected to reduce employee cynicism about the organization and encourage citizenship behavior. In other words, the perception of organizational support by employees was expected to lead to a positive attitude towards the organization and their performance beyond their role. However, the mediating role of organizational cynicism between perceived organizational support and citizenship behavior was rejected. By way of explanation, since perceived organizational support did not reduce employee cynicism about the organization, there was no increase in their performance beyond their role. Furthermore, the results showed that organizational cynicism does not mediate between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Accordingly, perceived organizational support was expected to reduce employee cynicism and increase their job satisfaction. As an explanation, since perceived organizational support did not reduce employee cynicism about the organization, there was no increase in their job satisfaction.

Moreover, the results showed that organizational cynicism does not play a mediating role between perceived organizational support and anti-production behaviors. Perceived organizational support was expected to reduce employee belief about being exploited and viewed instrumentally. Thus, they would be more optimistic about the organization and refrain from exhibiting anti-production behaviors. However, the results of this study did not confirm the mediating role of organizational cynicism between perceived

organizational support and anti-production behaviors. As an explanation, since perceived organizational support did not reduce employee cynicism about the organization, there was no increase in their anti-production behaviors [45]. In addition, it was shown that organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between core self-evaluations and citizenship behavior. Individuals with high core self-evaluations are able to perceive different aspects of work and life positively, view life events more optimistically, look for more positive situations, and avoid negative ones [46]. These individuals are not cynical about their organization, and positive events they see in their organization trigger citizenship behavior.

According to the results, organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between core self-evaluations and job satisfaction. Individuals who are prone to feeling anxious (those who are neurotic as a component of low self-esteem) tend to be afraid of new situations and feel helpless, dependent, and stressed when they think about their organization. As a result, this negative attitude affects their satisfaction with their jobs [47]. In the end, the results showed that organizational cynicism plays a mediating role between core self-evaluations and anti-production behaviors. Self-evaluations and high self-esteem, being among the major components of high core self-evaluations, help individuals consider themselves highly valuable, derive more job satisfaction, focus more on positive aspects of their job [48], and refrain from being cynical about the organization. In addition, they increase desirable job behaviors and reduce anti-production behaviors.

Based on the results of the present study on the importance of perceived organizational justice in reducing organizational cynicism, it is suggested that managers of organizations devise a plan according to which employees are enabled to understand various dimensions of organizational justice. For this purpose, (1) it is recommended the processes by which people are rewarded be revised; (2) service compensation policies of organizations be formulated as open policies so that each employee is convinced that the service compensation system of the organization functions as accurately as possible without prejudice; (3) the employee evaluation system be designed accurately and scientifically; (4) managers receive specialized training in the field of communication; (5) discriminations be eliminated by amending regulations and orientations of the organization. Accordingly, it is suggested that managers and supervisors, who are the main factors in creating and transferring a sense of interactive justice in employees, receive specialized trainings in the

field of communication and the way of establishing it properly.

## Conclusion

The present study was conducted in a petrochemical company, so extreme caution should be exercised when generalizing the results of this study to other industrial and administrative organizations that may be structurally different from the company studied in the present one. Against this background, organizational cynicism plays a key role in reducing job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior, as well as in increasing anti-production behaviors. Accordingly, the control of organizational skepticism can play a significant role in increasing job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior, as well as in reducing anti-production behaviors among employees.

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