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**THE EFFECT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH  
ON COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR  
MEDIATED BY JOB SATISFACTION AND MODERATED  
BY ISLAMIC WORK ETHICS**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study provides empirical evidence on the mediating effects of job satisfaction (JS) and the moderating role of Islamic work ethics (IWE) when counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) is predicted by psychological contract breach (PCB) in the context of the public ministries of the Gaza Strip, Palestine. The researchers used self-administered questionnaires to collect data from 256 managers. The data gathered was analysed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The results confirmed IWE as a moderator between PCB and JS as well as JS being a positive mediator in the PCB–CWB relationship. However, the direct relationship

between PCB and CWB was insignificant. Based on these results, we point out the theoretical and practical implications of the study as well as its limitations and our recommendations for further studies.

**Keywords:** Islamic work ethics, psychological contract breach, job satisfaction, counterproductive work behaviour.

## INTRODUCTION

There is growing interest by managers and researchers on the important role employees play and are still playing within an organisation. According to Guest (2002), employees are considered the core of an organisation and the most crucial assets. Dannhauser (2007) pointed out that supportive organisational disposition of employees depends on positive mindset and vice versa. As a form of negative behaviour, counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) currently at the heart of organisational research, refers to intentional deviant behaviour, potentially hurting the organisation and employees (Levy & Tziner, 2011). CWB is the action of employees that damage the workplace setting (Spector & Fox, 2002). Devonish (2013) revealed that employees who experience negative emotions or dissatisfaction respond through CWB towards the organisation.

Most of the previous studies have been conducted in the U.S. and Western European countries, while not many researchers have investigated employees' positive psychology in a Palestinian work context. This oversight is surprising seeing that Palestine offers a unique situation not found anywhere due to its unstable and uncontrollable political and socio-economic challenges (Thabet, 2015). The Palestinian public service has been hard-pressed in its effort to deliver services to the people amidst constant blockage and bombardment. The ongoing 8-year blockage of the Gaza Strip by Israeli occupying forces has put the people of Palestine in dire economic, social, mental and health conditions (Hammad & Tribe, 2021; Marie & Battat, 2021), making one feel like living in one huge open-air prison (Iqtait, 2021). The future is bleak (Charrett, 2021).

The continuous blockade and constant bombardment have severely curtailed the capacity of the Gaza Strip administration to provide employees' basic expectations. Even salaries have not been

forthcoming for years. However, the government and the people of Gaza have shown remarkable resilience in the face of an unequal conflict. The uncommon resilience shown by Palestinians has been attributed to the Islamic government which now controls Palestine since its victory at the polls in 2007 (Tannira, 2021). The government follows Islamic teachings and implements Islamic philosophy in all facets of Palestinian life. Sayigh (2010) drew attention to the Islamic orientation of the Gaza government as its philosophical mainstay. This serves to cushion the otherwise adverse reactions that follows the non-provision of expectations in the social contract between the government and the people. Thus, Palestinian workers continue to offer their services despite non-payment of salaries and other employment benefits as they understand the conditions under which the government operates. Rousseau (1990) stressed the focal role that staff emolument plays in the shaping of employees' psychological contract. Similarly, Turnley and Feldman (1999) emphasised the central role of the amount of pay and merit pay as core elements whereby non-fulfilment leads to psychological contract breach (PCB).

However, the peculiar situation in which employees of the Gaza Strip administration operates justify this study to examine the direct effects of perceived PCB on CWB among managers at the Palestinian ministries. While researchers such as Manzoor et al. (2015) affirm the positive linkage between PCB and CWB, others contend that the linkage is negative. Again, some other researchers reported a lack of clarity in the relationship. The inconsistencies in the results of the direct relation between PCB and CWB suggests a moderating influence that has been overlooked in previous studies. Therefore, this work investigated not only the effects of PCB on CWB but also identify the possible moderating influence and assess its interaction in the direct relationship.

Empirically, the extant literature shows that several variables could potentially moderate the PCB–CWB relationship. Indeed, several researchers have used individual level workplace variables to moderate the interactions between key workplace outcomes and their respective antecedents. For example, Agarwal and Bhargava (2013) used the educational level of respondents to moderate the interaction between PCB and employee affective attachment to their workplace. Two other researchers (Shih & Chuang, 2013) reported that the direct connection

between PCB and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) could be explained by the presence or absence of the respondents' self-esteem. Besides, Bavik and Bavik (2014) identified some ethical factor (moral identity) as a moderating influence between PCB and worker incivility at the workplace. Finally, employees' ability to control their behaviour (self-control) was used as a moderator in the PCB–CWB association (Bordia et al., 2008). While these examples show that several variables could and have been used to moderate relationships involving PCB and other individual behaviour variable including CWB, yet none has addressed the variables in question from the Islamic viewpoint. In other words, the literature has neglected the power of Islamic perspective and its variables such as work ethics (IWE) as a strong influence on the behaviour of respondents working especially within an Islamic work setting. Therefore, this study investigates this overlooked research niche within the unique context of the Palestinian public service.

Contextually, our literature analysis also showed that most of the research on CWB and its antecedents were carried out in the US and Western European countries where the Christian outlook on life has historically shaped the characteristics of the workplace in those contexts. Indeed, the prevailing work ethic in the US and most Western countries is driven by economic considerations and the paramountcy of the individual's self-interest (Schilpzand & de Jong, 2021). Concomitantly, research in behavioural sciences emanating from such contexts were developed based on assumptions deeply informed by the prevailing socio-economic realities. However, unlike the Western based literature results, the workplaces of Palestine reflect the collectivist Islamic culture of the region and the uniqueness of the Palestinian state. Therefore, the uniqueness of the Palestinian context is considered as an excellent opportunity to conduct this research and bridge the contextual gap.

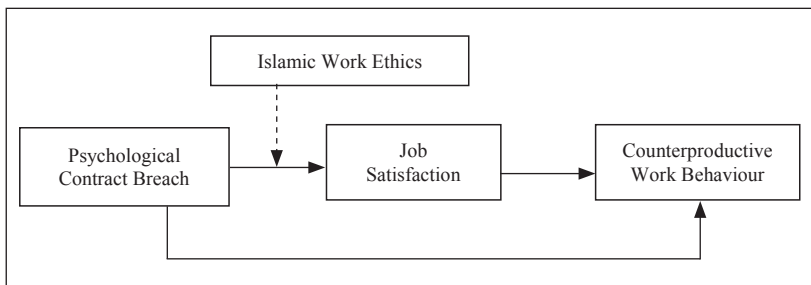
Theoretically, the social exchange theory (SET) is the theory researchers frequently use in explaining the relational antecedents of employee workplace behaviours including PCB (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). SET envisages a mutual interchange of benefits in the economic relationship called work where an employee offers value to the employer in consideration of some desirable benefits (Blau, 1964). Thus, SET offers a suitable framework for making

meaning of the nature and nuances in the relational dynamics of the workplace, including such matters like the psychological contract between an employer and an employee (Lester et al., 2002; Turnley et al., 2003). Hence, the relationships suggested in this work can be examined by way of social exchange theory. This theory has been selected because it is considered most suitable to explain the formation and maintenance of the psychological contract between employee-organisation relationships. Further, it is regarded a suitable means to understand employees' reaction when they perceive that the organisation has breached its psychological contract.

Thus, drawing from the postulation of the SET as guided by the current status of the empirical literature on the antecedents of CWB including the literature's insufficient coverage of the Palestinian workplace context, the researchers used the research model depicted in Figure 1 and investigated the mediating effects of job satisfaction (JS) and the moderating role of Islamic work ethics (IWE) in the PCB–CWB relationship in a sample of managers drawn from the public ministries in the Gaza Strip, Palestine.

**Figure 1**

*Research Framework*



Therefore, the main thrust of this research is to address the question: What is the effect of the interaction between perceived PCB with IWE on JS as one of work-related attitudes and CWB as one of behavioural work outcomes for managers in Palestinian ministries? Furthermore, the overarching aim of this study is to bring greater clarity to our understanding of the interrelationships between PCB, IWE, JS and CWB.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The significance of psychological contracts as it reflects moving from using people to developing people in the management of human resources (Rousseau & Schalk, 2000). The researchers also point out that efforts at stimulating trust between employees and the employers require understanding the expectations, promises, and obligations associated with the employment relationship. According to Levinson et al. (1962), the expectations in psychological contract are mutual, meaning that, the employee expects a competitive and fair salary from the supervisor while, the supervisor expects in-role performance and extra-role performance from the employee. Unlike the previous definitions, (Rousseau, 1990) pointed out that the psychological contract is an employee's perception rather than the perspective of the employee and the supervisor (Anderson & Schalk, 1998). Freese and Schalk (2008) differentiated between two perspectives of psychological contract: a unilateral and a bilateral perspective. In the unilateral view, the psychological contract is an individual belief of mutual expectations and obligations in the context of a relationship. The unilateral view mainly refers to the employee perspective on employee and organisational expectations and obligations, limiting the psychological contract to an intra-individual perception. While the bilateral view considers the contract to be the whole of the employer as well as employee perceptions of exchanged obligations. A bilateral approach is useful in organisational settings, for example, by clarifying differences in perspectives between employees and supervisors, which could resolve organisational conflicts and improve organisational performance (Rousseau, 1990).

To assess the psychological contract, Freese and Schalk (2008) preferred to use, a unilateral perspective because of two reasons. Firstly, the psychological contract by definition is an individual perception referring to individual evaluation of the fulfilment of promises and obligations. Furthermore, methodologically the bilateral perspective is problematic because the side of the organisation consists of many actors (top management, supervisors, HR managers), which make it difficult to know who among the actors will represent the side of the organisation. Secondly, one of the characteristics of psychological contracts is that it can influence behaviour, it is hard to imagine, how employee behaviour can be affected by the whole employee, and employer perceptions of obligations to each other (Freese & Schalk, 2008). Therefore, this study used the unilateral perspective to assess

the PCB from the employees' perspectives. The reason behind this is that the occurrence of PCB is expected as the government could not meet its obligations toward employees.

### **The PCB–CWB Relationship**

Understanding the personality of the employee means appreciating their behaviours; this appreciation, in turn, produces an in-depth understanding of workplace dynamics (Barsky, 2011). This understanding is imperative where the issues appertain to deviant behaviours employees often exhibit at the workplace. CWB is a variant of deviant workplace behaviour. CWB is a set of adverse behaviours employees exhibit because of their interaction with organisational processes, policies, and conditions of work (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). A common trigger to CWB is the employee's perception of the employer's unwillingness or inability to meet the former's legitimate or expected benefits (Tomprou & Nikolaou, 2011). These relational dynamics are reflected in the SET which posits that in an employer–employee relationship, the responses of the latter are defined by their perception of the fairness of the contract with which the former has treated the relationship. Empirically, the study of Arshad and Nurmaya (2020) indicated that there is a significant relationship between PCB and workplace deviance. Thus, when the employee perceives that PCB has occurred, they respond with CWB. Such behaviour is logical to be associated with managers at the Palestinian ministries of the Gaza Strip. Hence, the following hypothesis is advanced:

H<sub>1</sub> : PCB will significantly and positively affect CWB of managers at the Palestinian ministries of the Gaza Strip.

### **The Relationship between PCB and JS**

The attitude versus behaviour debate in the behavioural sciences often crop up in consideration of workplace behaviour (Conway & Briner, 2009). The question is: When PCB occurs, is it behaviour that gets affected or attitude? Whatever the position taken on this issue, researchers tend to agree that PCB has an adverse consequence on JS (Bal et al., 2008; Orvis et al., 2008; Suazo, 2009; Zhao et al., 2007). In a review study, Agarwal (2014) reviewed the literature on psychological contract research and provided a comprehensive review of the antecedents and outcomes of the psychological contract. The study reviewed 702 articles conducted in the period from 1972 to

2013. This review study indicated strong empirical evidence in favour of a negative influence of PCB on JS.

Although the PCB–JS relationship was examined extensively in different contexts, it was neither examined using any sample of managers from the Palestinian context nor in developing Muslim country. Therefore, consistent with previous research findings, the researcher expects the perception of JS of managers in the Palestinian ministries to turn negative when PCB occurs. Hence, the researchers hypothesise on the negative consequences of PCB on JS as follows:

H<sub>2</sub> : PCB will significantly and negatively affect managers' JS at the Palestinian ministries of the Gaza Strip.

### **The Relationship between JS and CWB**

According to previous studies, although the relationship between JS and positive aspects of organisational behaviour has been extensively examined, only few studies (e.g., Greenidge et al., 2014; Judge et al., 2006) examined the relationship between JS and employees' adverse reactions, such as CWB. Furthermore, the literature is dominated by output from the Western world that are incongruous with the worldview of common employees in Arab Middle East. In view of these gaps, the current study investigated the JS–CWB in Palestine's public service. We expect that, guided by the postulated SET that a negative association will characterise JS–CWB link. Accordingly, we put forward the following hypothesis:

H<sub>3</sub> : JS will significantly and negatively affect CWB of managers at the Palestinian ministries of the Gaza strip.

### **Mediation Hypothesis**

The linkage between PCB and behavioural and attitudinal work outcomes remains debatable. While some scholars argue that psychological contract has a direct influence on some behavioural outcomes, others found that there are attitudinal variables that could indirectly influence the relationship. For example, the work of Van Knippenberg and Sleebos (2006) suggests the need to consider more intermediate variables between psychological contract and behavioural work outcomes. Conway and Briner (2009) indicated



that PCB is strongly related to job satisfaction and commitment, however, it is weakly related to actual behaviours such as CWB. This shows that there are unresolved issues in the process. Additionally, the weak relationship between PCB and behavioural outcomes provides an opportunity to introduce an intermediate variable. Therefore, this study also investigated the mediating role of JS as one of the work-related attitudes in the relationship between PCB and CWB as one of behavioural work outcomes.

We expect JS to enhance the PCB–CWB relationship by diminishing the adverse effects of PCB when employees are most satisfied or accentuating the effect when they are least satisfied. For instance, several studies (e.g., Devonish, 2013; Van Dick et al., 2006) indicated that IWE positively influences JS. Besides that, Van Dick et al. (2006) showed that work attitudes, such as JS play an important role in predicting work behaviour. Devonish (2013) revealed that employees who are dissatisfied intend to respond through CWB towards the organisation. Despite the importance of JS in predicting behaviour within organisations, the mediating effects of JS on the relationship between PCB and CWB is still quite limited. Thus, we address this lacuna through the mediating impact of JS in the PCB–CWB relationship. Therefore, the researchers hypothesise that:

H<sub>4</sub> : JS will significantly mediate the relationship between PCB and CWB.

### **Moderation Hypothesis**

Several studies (e.g., Ajmal & Irfan, 2014; El-Ghorra & Panatik 2021, Rokhman, 2010; Salem & Agil, 2012; Yousef, 2001) have exemplified the use of IWE as a moderating factor. The presence of IWE seems to strengthen the relationship between the predictor and outcome variables, and its absence suggests a weakening of the relationship. With regards to this study, we have shown that the literature on the PCB–JS relationship is inconsistent. The literature showed three groups of results: the first group claimed a positive PCB–JS relationship; the second group of results apparently supported a negative PCB–JS association; and the third group of results affirmed neither of the first two conclusions. In fact, there is widespread inconsistencies in the empirical results. This suggest that a moderating factor could have been missing in the association. Hence, the researchers hypothesise the following:

H<sub>5</sub> : IWE moderates the PCB–JS relationship whereby a high level of IWE will weaken the impact of PCB on JS.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Respondents**

In the context of the current study, the researchers used probability sampling as it could more relevant because the subject is more representative. Furthermore, in probability sampling, each respondent from the whole population has an equal chance to be included in the sample. This is consistent with the recommendations by Saunders et al. (2012). However, when the researcher is not able to collect data from all the elements of the target population and provide a complete list of groups of the population available, then stratified sampling technique is more relevant to use. In stratified random sampling, the population is divided into two or more relevant strata. This means that the target population is divided into a number of subsets, then a random sample is selected from each stratum. The advantage of stratification is that the sample selected from each stratum is on a proportional basis, which will increase the rate of representation of each element in the population (Saunders et al., 2012).

The study examined relationships between variables and tested hypotheses using the quantitative research paradigm (Saunders et al., 2012). From the target population of 900 public sector managers working in 15 ministries of the Gaza Strip administration, a total of 270 strong sample was first determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) random sample table. This figure was then rounded up to 300 and a research instrument was administered to an equivalent number of managers. A 93 percent return rate (280) was achieved. From this respondents' pool, a total of seven cases of missing data were removed and a further 17 cases were removed after the 273 responses were screened for outliers (Hair et al., 2010). Thus, 256 cases were used in the data analysis.

### **Measurement**

A structured questionnaire which included close-ended questions were utilized. According to Saunders et al. (2012), the key benefit of a structured questionnaire is that all respondents will be subjected to

the same questions in the same order to ensure a degree of uniformity. In the current study, two main points were considered when selecting the items. Firstly, the researcher selected the scales with the highest internal reliability based on previous researches. Secondly, the researcher chose the most common scales used in previous researches in measuring the same constructs and variables as these scales have already been tested and validated. The researcher adopted Robinson and Morrison's (2000) 5-item scale with  $\alpha = 0.92$  to measure PCB. Our psychometric analysis showed a robust:  $\alpha = 0.788$ ; CR = 0.855; AVE = 0.543. The managers' IWE was assessed using Ali's (2005) 17-item scale with  $\alpha = 0.89$ . Our psychometric analysis showed acceptable reliability indices:  $\alpha = 0.861$ ; CR = 0.886; AVE = 0.531. The study employed Warr et al.'s (1979) 15-item scale in measuring JS. The scale noted robust psychometrics:  $\alpha = 0.767$ ; CR = 0.843; AVE = 0.518. Lastly, the 12 items of Bennett and Robinson's (2000) organisational deviance scale was used. The scale clearly indicated good reliability metrics:  $\alpha = 0.8$ ; CR = 0.858; AVE = 0.503.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

This study sought to investigate the effects of PCB on JS moderated by IWE. We used SPSS version 24 for data cleaning, and PLS-SEM for data analysis and tests of hypotheses. PLS-SEM is frequently used in psychological contract studies (Kutaula, 2014; Turnley et al., 2003; Zhang et al., 2010), and several experts including Hair et al. (2010) recommend its robustness in handling complex models. By using SEM, the researcher could test a series of interdependent "mediation and moderation" relationships between variables, concurrently (Hair et al., 2010).

PLS-SEM is an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression-based method that uses available data to estimate the path relationships in the model with the objective of minimizing error i.e., the residual variance. The selection of PLS-SEM as a tool of analysis was due to the reason that, the data in this study was reflective in nature, therefore using PLS was more appropriate. Furthermore, PLS-SEM is known to perform better in the case of non-normal data. The assessment of the research model was based on a two-step process proposed by Hair et al. (2010). This process involved separate assessments, for the measurement model first followed by assessment of the structural model.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Demographic Profile of Respondents

This section describes the demographic profile of the remaining 256 respondents. The following demographic information was included in the survey (age, gender, educational level, grade, and tenure).

**Table 1**

*Demographic Profile of Respondents*

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency ( <i>f</i> )	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	196	76.6%
Female	60	23.4%
Age		
20 - 30	23	9%
31 - 40	122	47.7%
41 - 50	71	27.7%
51 and above	40	15.6%
Educational level		
High school	5	2%
Diploma	15	5.9%
Bachelor's degree	168	65.6%
Master's or above	68	26.6%
Position		
Head of department	78	30.5%
Deputy head of department	117	45.7%
General manager	27	10.5%
Deputy manager	34	13.3%
Tenure		
Less than 5 years	13	5.1%
6-10 years	101	39.5%
11-15 years	61	23.8%
16 years and more	81	31.6%

The results of frequency descriptive analysis showed that the majority of the respondents were male (n=196; 76.6%). The average age of

the respondents was grouped into four categories, the results showed that the largest category came from respondents within the age range of between 31 and 40 years; n=122; 47.7 percent followed by the category with the age group between 41 and 50 years; n=71; 27.7 percent. Table 1 presents a summary of the demographic distribution.

**Table 2**

*The Results of Hypotheses Testing*

H	Path	( $\beta$ )	t-statistics	p-values	Results
H <sub>1</sub>	PCB --> CWB	0.042	0.471	0.638	Not upheld
H <sub>2</sub>	PCB --> JS	-0.476	7.701	0.000	Upheld
H <sub>3</sub>	JS --> CWB	-0.198	2.082	0.038	Upheld
H <sub>4</sub>	PCB --> JS --> CWB	-0.094	2.076	0.038	Upheld
H <sub>5</sub>	IWEs*PCB/JS --> JS	0.291	2.513	0.012	Upheld

*Note:* JS = Job satisfaction; AC= Affective commitment; OID = Organizational identification, OCB = Organizational citizenship behaviour; CWB = CWB

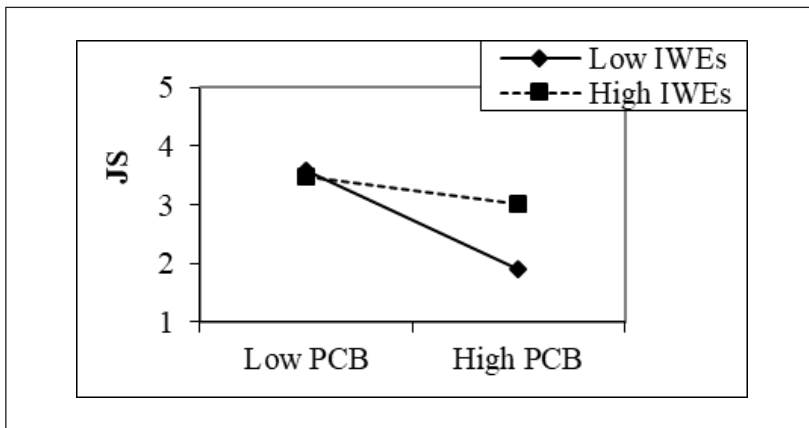
H<sub>1</sub> states that PCB will significantly and positively affect CWB. The results showed an insignificant relationship between PCB with CWB ( $\beta = 0.042$ ,  $t = 0.471$ ,  $p = 0.638$ , i.e.,  $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, the results indicated that H<sub>1</sub> was not supported. H<sub>2</sub> assumed that PCB will affect JS in a significant and negative way and the outcome ( $\beta = -0.476$ ,  $t = 7.701$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) upheld the assumption of H<sub>2</sub>. H<sub>3</sub> states that JS will significantly and negatively affect CWB. The findings revealed that JS was significantly and negatively correlated with CWB ( $\beta = -0.198$ ,  $t = 2.082$ ,  $p = 0.038$ , i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting H<sub>3</sub>. H<sub>4</sub> regards JS as a mediator between PCB and CWB. The results ( $\beta = -0.094$ ,  $t = 2.076$ ,  $p = 0.038$ , i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ) upheld the assumption as true. Finally, H<sub>5</sub> posits a moderating role for IWE in the PCB–JS linkage. The results ( $\beta = 0.291$ ,  $t = 2.513$ ;  $p = 0.012$ , i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ) showed that p-value < significance level, which was evidence supporting H<sub>5</sub>. It can be said that the interaction between IWE and PCB can increase JS. Table 1 summarises the results of this study. Figure 2 illustrates the moderating interaction effect.

H<sub>1</sub> states that PCB will significantly and positively affect CWB. However, our results contradicted both the hypothesis and the position

of previous studies (Manzoor et al., 2015) as there was no association between PCB and CWB. This was surprising, as according to SET and the norm of reciprocity (Blau, 1964) when PCB takes place, it will positively correlate with negative behaviour like CWB. The views of Conway and Briner (2009) and Raeder et al. (2012) elucidate these findings. They draw attention to the possibility that PCB is more of an attitudinal variable than a behavioural disposition.

**Figure 2**

*Interaction effect of IWEs with PCB on JS*



Again, Morrison and Robinson (1997) surmised that breach falls within the domain of mental/cognitive process while violation is a mental priming for action and therefore closer to being a behavioural antecedent. Thus, despite the prevalence of what could be termed manifestation of PCB (non-payment of salaries for years), the managers in Palestine ministries were already privy to the government's inability to meet its contractual obligation because of the 8-year blockade (a factor outside the control of the government) and thus have decided to side in sympathy with their government fighting for their emancipation. It is also noteworthy that the managers surveyed are practising Muslims who hold and cherish Islamic values (IWE). Thus, their sense of responsibility to themselves and to their government predisposed them to obey the constituted authorities which is also Islamic in its orientation. This attitude is captured in the Prophetic statement (*Sahih al-Bukhari hadith no. 10*) that a Muslim

should not do anything wilfully that could harm their brothers and sisters. It is also a reflection of their response to the sacred Islamic duty of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is bad. The Qur'an (9:71) states: "The believers, both men and women, are guardians of one another. They encourage good and forbid evil". Therefore, the managers surveyed abstained from giving expression to their perception of PCB at their respective workplaces. The outcome of H<sub>2</sub> test is, therefore, evidence that Islamic values predispose employees to positive behaviour at the workplace and eschewing unwholesome behaviour such as CWB.

H<sub>2</sub> assumed a significantly negative PCB–JS correlation. Our results of the test upheld this assumption. It is therefore a confirmation of what is widely reported in Western literature (e.g., Agarwal, 2014; Bal et al., 2008; Orvis et al., 2008; Shen, 2010; Suazo, 2009; Zhao et al., 2007) that PCB and JS are negatively associated. This concurrence of Western and Eastern (so to say) assumptions concerning the PCB–JS relationship provides a credible basis for the generalisability of the results to other contexts and cultural domains different from the two mentioned here. Besides that, the findings could be taken as a further confirmation of the proposition of the SET theory about employees' possible response trajectory when they experience PCB (Lester et al., 2002; Turnley et al., 2003). Blau (1964) stated that employees are supposed to keep a reciprocal and balanced relationship with their organisation regarding inducements and contributions. In the current study, it can be said that when managers perceive that the ministry has breached the psychological contract, this will negatively affect their satisfaction towards work.

H<sub>3</sub> states that JS will significantly and negatively affect CWB. The results affirmed the significant and negative relationship between JS and CWB. As hypothesised, and expected this finding has confirmed that when managers are satisfied with their jobs, they tend to reduce negative behaviours that may harm the ministry, such as CWB. This result is in line with the findings of Greenidge et al. (2014) and Judge et al. (2006), which confirmed the negative effects of JS on CWB. Furthermore, this result is consistent with the SET, suggesting that positive social exchange relationships engender positive employee attitudes and behaviours. Dasgupta et al. (2012) and Harrison et al. (2006) averred that good attitudes predispose employees to work-

friendly behaviours and vice versa. A possible explanation of the results here could be that the managers surveyed are acutely aware of the difficulties faced by their employers and the Gaza authorities in general and therefore willingly and voluntarily make sacrifices in support of their ministries and for the good of all, no matter the degree of dissatisfaction the situation warrants.

H<sub>4</sub> hypothesises a significant mediating function for JS in the PCB–CWB relationship. The results from the tests supports the hypothesis. This finding is similar to Devonish's (2013) findings where he established the mediating role of JS between psychological well-being and CWB. Similarly, findings by Greenidge et al. (2014) also revealed the significant mediating function of JS in the association of emotional intelligence with CWB. This result is congruent with previous research results which provides strong support that JS is considered as a strong predictor of CWB. This finding indicates that JS could clarify the nature of the association between contract breach and CWB.

H<sub>5</sub> assumes that IWE will moderate the PCB–JS connection. The study shows that IWE interacts with PCB to moderate the latter's effects on JS. To be more specific, this research found that the negative relationship between PCB and JS is weaker for managers who have high IWE than those who have low IWE. As expected, managers with high IWE tend to display more patience and will be more forgiving toward their ministries than those with low IWE when PCB occurs. Furthermore, the managers with high IWE will be more satisfied with their jobs than those with low IWE even when they perceive that their ministries could not fulfil their promises and PCB takes place. This result is not consistent with the findings of EL-Ghorra and Panatik (2021) which showed that IWE insignificantly moderated the effects of PCB on organisational identification. However, Ibn Taimiyah stated that Islamic ethics is the science that seeks to determine which behaviour should be done and which should be avoided (Samee Ullah, 2017). It further promotes keeping virtues at the optimum level. Furthermore, it concerns humans and God, humans and other people, humans and other creatures, and humans with their innermost self. According to Al-Gazali, Islamic ethics is a value that keeps the well-being of the human soul and guards it against vices (Samee Ullah, 2017).



## **IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study, while supporting most of the postulates making up the SET, clarifies that some of the relationships assumed to subsist between PCB and CWB are indeed a function of contextual factors. Therefore, a caveat may be included in the discussion of SET and how it guides research and decision-making in human resource management. Additionally, this study has added to the corpus of PCB knowledge by engrafting JS as a suppressor of the adverse impacts of PCB in causing CWB. Additionally, the study has pushed back the frontiers of the antecedents of JS by pointing out the interactive function of IWE as a moderator in the equation. It presents an interesting insight in explaining the interaction effects between IWE and PCB on JS. According to the literature search, the interaction effects of IWE and PCB on work-related attitudes have not been empirically investigated, and this study has provided the first test of the moderating role of IWE.

This study explicates several relationships that researchers have investigated among the variables within the domain of individual differences psychology. These include the rejection of the PCB–CWB hypothesis, the acceptance of the PCB–JS and JS–CWB hypotheses, confirmation of the mediating influence of JS between PCB and CWB, and establishment of the moderating function of IWE in the PCB–JS relationship. The findings of this study have revealed the negative effects of PCB on JS, while the effects of PCB on CWB was insignificant. Three interesting results of this study include the rejection of the PCB–CWB hypothesis (despite its robust theoretical base), the confirmation of the Western-originated notion concerning the PCB–JS association within an entirely different socio-cultural context (i.e., the Arab-Islamic context), and the introduction of IWE as an explanatory moderating influence in the PCB–JS relationship.

While the influence of the Islamic work context contributes significantly to the outcomes reported in this study, it is worth noting that the criterion variable, CWB was treated from the general mainstream perspective and not from an Islamic perspective. Would the results have been different if CWB was treated from an Islamic perspective? Perhaps the research model could be even richer and the

results more nuanced where related variables like in-role performance is factored in as part of a multi-criterion study. This question opens an interesting window for further research. Researchers may also work backwards by making PCB a criterion and then set about identifying its antecedents. Finally, a different methodological approach could be used (i. e. causative longitudinal rather than correlational as in this study; or qualitative instead of quantitative as in this study; or a different conflict zone rather than Palestine) to compare outcomes.

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## APPENDIX A

### Questionnaire Items

**Table 1**

*Psychological Contract Breach Scale*

No.	The Original Items
1	Almost all the promises made by my employer during recruitment have been kept so far (R).
2	I feel that my employer has come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired (R).
3	So far, my employer has done an excellent job of fulfilling his promises to me (R).
4	I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions.
5	My employer has broken many of his promises to me even though I have upheld my side of the deal.

*Note:* (R) means that the item has a reverse meaning.

**Table 2**

*Job Satisfaction Scale*

No.	Original Items
1	The physical work conditions.
2	The freedom to choose your own method of working.
3	Your fellow workers.
4	The recognition you get for good work.
5	Your immediate boss.
6	The amount of responsibility you are given.

(continued)



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No.	Original Items
7	Your rate of pay.
8	Your opportunity to use your abilities.
9	Relationship between management and workers in your organisation.
10	Your chance of promotion.
11	The way your firm is managed.
12	The attention paid to suggestions you make.
13	Your hours of work.
14	The amount of variety in your job.
15	Your job security.

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**Table 3**

*Counterproductive Work Behaviour towards Organisation Scale*

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No.	Original Items
1	Taken property from work without permission.
2	Spent too much time fantasizing or daydreaming instead of working.
3	Falsified a receipt to get reimbursement for more money than you spent on business expenses.
4	Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at your workplace.
5	Came in late to work without permission.
6	Littered your work environment.
7	Neglected to follow your boss's instructions.
8	Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked.
9	Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorised person.
10	Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job.
11	Put little effort into your work.
12	Dragged out work in order to get paid overtime.

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**Table 4**

*Islamic Work Ethics Scale*

No.	Original Items
1	Laziness is a vice.
2	Dedication to work is a virtue.
3	Good work benefits both one's self and others.
4	Justice and generosity at the workplace are necessary conditions for society's welfare.
5	Producing more than enough to meet one's needs contributes to the prosperity of society as a whole.
6	One should carry out work to the best of one's ability.
7	Work is not an end in itself but a means to foster personal growth and social relations.
8	Life has no meaning without work.
9	More leisure time is good for society <b>(R)</b> .
10	Human relations should be emphasised and encouraged.
11	Work enables man to control nature.
12	Creative work is a source of happiness and accomplishment.
13	Any person who works is more likely to get ahead in life.
14	Work gives one the chance to be independent.
15	A successful person is the one who meets deadlines at work.
16	One should constantly work hard to fulfil responsibilities.
17	The value of work is derived from the accompanying intention rather than its result.

*Note:* (R) indicates the item has a reverse meaning.