

The effect of broken windows theory on workplace deviant behavior: the mediating role of organizational neglect in Iraqi telecommunications companies

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Received Sep. 3, 2025

Revised Mar. 9, 2026

Accepted Aug. 25, 2026

Online Sep. 8, 2026

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the impact of the broken windows theory on the occurrence of deviant behavior in the workplace, while using organizational neglect as a mediator, and to identify the implications that these behaviors have on organizations' sustainability in the context of the telecommunications industry in Iraq. Deviant workplace behaviors pose a risk to organizational sustainability by undermining values, leveling trust, and reducing resources, all of which will impact the economic, social and organizational aspects of continuity. Though this is a key connection, the research around direct causes of deviance has been predominantly focused without considering the cumulative organizational signals that create deviance or linking these signals to sustainability outcomes. A stratified random sampling of 180 employees at Asiacell Telecommunications Company was used to collect the data using an explanatory quantitative design and a structured questionnaire, which was based on validated scales. The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) by Smart PLS 4. The findings indicated that organizational broken windows had a significant impact on the organizational neglect $\beta = 0.746$, $R^2 = 0.622$ and deviant behavior in the workplace $\beta = 0.659$, $R^2 = 0.439$. Organizational neglect also was a strong predictor of workplace deviant behavior ($\beta = 0.845$, $R^2 = 0.646$). The indirect effect was confirmed (0.584), while the direct effect was insignificant ($\beta = 0.075$, $p = 0.294$) and supported by the Sobel test ($Z = 8.847$, $p < 0.05$). The study suggests that deviant behavior in the workplace is a gradual process that stems from organizational neglect as a transitional state and that its escalation is a cumulative threat to an organization's sustainability as it impedes learning, undermines trust and consumes resources. The findings go beyond the criminological context of the broken windows theory, view organizational neglect as a fundamental explanatory factor, and offer empirical evidence that connects dynamic behavior of organizations to sustainability in a developing Arab context.

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Published by ARDA.

Keywords: Broken windows theory, Organizational neglect, Workplace deviance, Organizational sustainability, EVLN model

1. Introduction

In today's organizational settings, the task of behavior control and ensuring compliance with organizational norms is more complex, especially in settings with weak institutional elements and inconsistent administrative procedures. Deviant behavior in the workplace is any voluntary act which goes against the rules and standards set by the organization and which causes direct or indirect damage to the organization or its members. This kind of behavior has become an object of increasing scholarly interests in light of its negative effects that go beyond the dimensions of organizational performance and institutional stability to include the economic, social and organizational dimensions of long term continuity, all of which involve a loss of organizational values, a decrease in trust, and a depletion of resources.

The broken windows theory is one of the more prominent theories that have attempted to explain the genesis of such behavior [1]. The theory suggests that the acceptance of minor offenses also communicates an implicit message that undermines social control and leads to an increase in more serious offenses. Although it is widely used in criminology and in urban studies, the use of it in organizational settings is more limited. Recent research suggests that weak rule enforcement, no accountability and toleration of undisciplined behavior in the work place might foster a context for deviant behavior to develop. But the cues of organizational disorder do not work independently of employees' psychological and behavioral mechanisms; they affect perceptions and responses by way of mediating mechanisms. One of the most obvious is organizational neglect. It is a type of passive withdrawal response in the exit–voice–loyalty–neglect model, and is manifested in decreased effort, diminished commitment, and lack of interest in performance standards. Although organizational neglect has been recognized as a symptom of job dissatisfaction, most previous research has paid little attention to it as a causal mediating factor between organizational factors and behavioral outcomes.

Theoretically, combining the principles of broken windows theory and organizational behavior literature provides a helpful analytical framework for the study of how slight organizational cues can over time evolve into problematic behavior. Small infractions might result in erosion of norm, resulting in employees practicing neglectful behavior which could be the gateway to escalation of workplace deviance. However, there has been limited research testing this integrated causal pathway, especially with the inclusion of the mediating factor of organizational neglect. The lack of integrative explanatory models which connect organizational disorder, the intermediate behavioral reactions, and the ultimate deviant outcome, thus highlighting a gap in research. This gap is even greater because most of the literature has been developed in stable and advanced institutional contexts, and so generalizability of its findings to developing contexts is limited. In the context of Iraq, which has been troubled not just by structural and administrative problems, but a host of other issues, organizational dysfunction, neglect and deviance may be more apparent and more powerful and need to be studied within a particular context. The telecommunications industry is a good arena for testing these relationships because it is highly organized and demands a high degree of service discipline and quality. So, the purpose of this study is to construct and test an integrative model of the relationship between broken windows theory and workplace deviant behavior, mediated by organizational neglect and contextualized by the impacts on organizational sustainability. The study adds to the literature in three ways: First, it applies broken windows theory to the field of organizational behavior; second, it suggests organizational neglect as an explanatory mechanism that potentially links organizational disorder to behavioral deviance; and third, it introduces empirical evidence from the Iraqi telecommunications sector which enriches the understanding of how institutional context influences organizational behavior in emerging economies.

1.1. Problem statement

Although much research has been conducted into workplace deviant behaviors, the vast majority of research has concentrated on the direct determinants of workplace deviant behaviors (e.g., leadership, job pressures and organizational justice), rather than the cumulative processes and organizational signals that give rise to these behaviors. Although Broken Windows Theory presents a useful explanation that suggests that allowing deviant behavior at the bottom of the hierarchy will lead to higher rates of deviant behavior in the organization, little

use has been made of the theory in the organizational context, and most of the available research has focused solely on direct relationships. Indirect relationships have been examined, but not the mechanisms by which the effects are transmitted.

The same applies to the concept of organizational neglect, although organizational literature has discussed it in the context of the Exit–Voice–Loyalty–Neglect (EVLN) model, it has mostly been considered as a result of job dissatisfaction, and not as a mediating variable between the organizational environment and deviant behavior. Unfortunately, this divide between the two streams of literature (Broken Windows and Organizational Neglect) has led to the lack of a single integrative model linking signals of organizational chaos to intermediate behavioral responses to organizational chaos and the resulting deviant behaviors. The worsening of these behaviors further comes at a direct cost of the organizational sustainability because they lead to the deterioration of values, loss of trust and depletion of organizational resources. The problem is even more acute in organizational contexts like that of Iraq, where the organizational control is weaker than in other contexts and the lack of accountability is greater, which require more contextualization of these relationships. Thus, the purpose of this research is to build and test an integrative explanatory model to connect these variables in a single analytical model, specifically for the implications of organizational sustainability.

1.2. Specific objectives

Given the theoretical issue described above, the following objectives are taken for this research:

1. Elaborating an integrative theoretical framework to link Broken Windows Theory with the organizational behavior literature, clarifying Broken Windows Theory and deviant behaviors in terms of organizational neglect.
2. Mechanistic explanation by analyzing the mediating mechanism of organizational neglect between organizational chaos signals and deviant behavioral responses.
3. Testing an integrated causal model that is tested empirically, testing the relationships among Broken Windows practices, organizational neglect and workplace deviant behaviors within a single analytical framework.
4. Promoting the Broken Windows Theory to the organizational context, moving it from the criminological context.

Applied evidence from the Iraqi telecommunications sector, enhancing the understanding of the influence of institutional context on organizational behavior in developing economies, which has implications for organizational sustainability.

1.3. Research gap

The literature review shows that there is a clear gap in the literature. Classical studies, like Vardi and Wiener [2] and Bennett and Robinson [3] have concentrated on specifying and quantifying deviant acts and analyzing their mechanisms of development, but have not examined how they slowly come about. Later studies investigated direct factors like organizational justice [4] leadership style [5] and work stresses [5] but were mainly based on direct causal relationships, without testing the steps one needs to take to get from relative discipline to repeated behavioral deviance in an organization. While broken windows theory [1] provides an important explanatory framework by suggesting that a lack of tolerance for minor violations lowers standards and leads to more serious deviant behavior, the use of this concept in organizational research is uncoordinated, and there is no integration of the concept. This is also suggested by Schein [6] who argues that organizational culture is not formed by what an organization states its values are, but rather by what behaviors are allowed. Similarly, the literature on organizational neglect, based on the exit–voice–loyalty–neglect model [7], [8] has largely focused on neglect as an end point of job dissatisfaction, rather than as an intervening process between low organizational control and behavioral deviance. While Naus et al. [9] have shown that managers' slack in enforcing the standards are a root cause of neglect, this perception is not directly connected to the logic of the broken windows theory.

This is especially true in the telecommunications industry, where there is a high level of customer contact and fast-paced operations, and employees must work quickly in order to keep up with the demands of the job. In such a context, tolerance will be particularly likely in the event of minor operational violations, and there is a dearth of empirical support from the Arab context and more particularly from the context in which the telecommunications sector operates in Iraq. Thus the research gap is the lack of an integrative explanatory model linking the broken windows theory and workplace deviant behavior with organizational neglect as a mediating factor, especially in the context of development in the Arab region. This study helps to fill in that void with both theoretical and applied approaches that broaden the application of the broken windows theory in organizational behavior and enhance the understanding of the development of organizational deviant behavior.

1.4. Theoretical background

1.4.1. Broken windows theory and the reproduction of deviance in organizations

The Broken Windows Theory has its theoretical foundations in Wilson and Kelling [1] who suggested that failing to act on minor incidents conveys signals that the rules are not enforced, which leads to a decline in standards and allows for the progression of deviance. While the theory was created in an urban and security setting, the behavioral-normative logic is very transferable to organizations, which are also a normative system, in which signals play a role just as important as rules in their daily functioning. Empirical support comes from Keizer et al. [10] who found that, in their experience, more than one norm is not enforced, the more likely it is that other norms will be broken, a phenomenon they termed norm violation spillover; that is, the more often one norm is violated, the more likely other norms will be violated. This approach has been systematically applied in an organizational context in the last decade with the term Organizational Broken Windows. Biçer [11] reported that the lower the level of tolerance of minor operational violations, the higher the dimension of counterproductive work behaviors; Ay and Karatepe [12] demonstrated that broken windows in an organization create a permissibility culture that increases the level of burnout and turnover. This argument dovetails into the sense-making and organizational culture literature: Schein [6] contends that behaviors that management allows are a more powerful determinant of organizational culture than are its stated values, and Weick [13] claims that employees' perceptions of managerial behavior as semantic signals affect how acceptable behavior is redefined. When minor violations are ignored, then they become a "broken window" at the organizational level and they begin to impact collective behavior.

1.4.2. Organizational neglect as a mediating behavioral response

Organizational Neglect is a dimension of Exit Voice Loyalty Neglect (EVLN) that was introduced by Farrell [7] and developed by Rusbult et al. [8] as passive withdrawal, which involves less effort and conscious refusal to do things. Classical approaches to neglect viewed it simply as a natural outcome of being job dissatisfied, whereas more recent studies increasingly cast it as a stepping-stone from an organizational dysfunction to deviant behavior. Withey and Cooper [14] found that neglect increases with inconsistent application of rules, and in subsequent studies, neglect was found to be a rational response to perceived managerial laxity and poor administrative communication [15], [16]. Thus, organizational neglect can be seen as the behavior that connects the broken windows from the normative perception to the actual deviant conduct, a stage that is before the explicit deviant conduct.

1.4.3. Workplace deviant behaviors

A theoretical definition of workplace deviant behavior was first set forth by Vardi and Wiener [2] as behavior that was voluntary and deviant from organizational norms, and later operationalized by Bennett and Robinson [3] into an operational two-dimensional scale that differentiated organization-directed from interpersonal deviant behavior. Instead of viewing deviance as a personal problem, recent theory and research has focused on how deviance can be a response to the messages of the organization, and meta-analysis has found a robust link between deviance and perceptions of justice, control, and factors related to leadership [17], [18]. A study published in the Journal of Management Development has also found that leadership styles of negativity and

authoritarianism foster deviant behavior [19] and [20]. Combined, these results paint a picture of workplace deviance as a process of buildup that can be attributed to an organizational climate that condones dysfunction, which aligns with the broken windows perspective and is the theoretical merging that will be explored in this study.

1.4.4. Theoretical integration, and location of current research

Although there is much literature, it has been mostly focused on direct relationships between variables, neglecting the explanatory mechanisms in between. The Broken Windows Theory has received little use in organizational research, especially when it comes to understanding and explaining the mediation of organizational variables such as organizational neglect. To fill this gap, the present study proposes an integrative model that connects organizational broken windows, organizational neglect as a mediation mechanism, and workplace deviant behaviors as the ultimate behavioral output, in the context of Iraqi telecommunication companies, and thus puts these dynamics in the light of implications for organizational sustainability.

1.5. Literature review

The literature for the present study can be grouped under three headings: broken windows theory, organizational neglect and deviant behavior in the workplace. These streams give the theoretical basis to understand that the organizational disorder may take time to develop into deviant behavior through neglect as a mediating factor. Next, the most important previous studies in each stream are summarized in the following tables, and their main findings are explained, while the research gaps that justify building the proposed integrative model are explained. Table 1 is shown below.

Table 1. Summary of previous studies on broken windows theory and the research gap

Researcher / Year	Context	Variables Studied	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gap
Wilson & Kelling [1]	Urban context	Chaos → Crime	Theoretical	Minor violations lead to larger deviances	Not applied organizationally
Skogan [21]	Urban communities	Disorder → Crime	Quantitative	Chaos weakens social control	Absence of organizational context
Kelling & Coles [22]	Social	Social system	Theoretical	Reinforces the logic of the theory	Limited organizational application
Keizer et al. [10]	Field experiments	Norm violation spillover	Experimental	Contagion of norm-breaking	Not tested in the workplace
O'Brien [23]	Reassessment	Disorder	Analytical	Partial support for the theory	Absence of organizations
Lim & Moon) [24]	Organizational context	Organizational disorder	Quantitative	Chaos increases negative behavior	Mediation is absent
Chen et al. [25]	Institutions	Signals → Behavior	Quantitative	Organizational signals shape behavior	Broken Windows is indirect
Biçer [11]	Service organizations	Broken Windows → CWB	Quantitative	Organizational chaos predicts deviance	Organizational neglect is absent
Ay & Karatepe [12]	Service sector	Broken Windows → Burnout/CWB	Quantitative	Broken Windows increases deviance	Neglect is untested

Researcher / Year	Context	Variables Studied	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gap
Liu et al. [26]	Institutional context	Normative disorder	Quantitative	Weak control reinforces deviance	Integrative model is absent

The reviewed studies demonstrate initial explanatory strength for broken windows theory by establishing a direct link between normative chaos and deviant behavior, yet they remain limited in their capacity to explain sequential behavioral pathways. Most treat chaos as a direct independent variable without into actual behavior, revealing a theoretical deficiency in the application of the theory within organizational contexts. Table 2 is shown below.

Table 2. Summary of previous studies on organizational neglect and the research gap

Researcher / Year	Context	Variables Studied	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gap
Hirschman [27]	Economic / Political	Exit–Voice	Theoretical	Foundation of the model	Neglect has not yet been included
Farrell [7]	Employees	EVLN	Quantitative	Formally introducing neglect	Not linked to deviance
Rusbult et al. [8]	Employees	EVLN responses	Quantitative	Neglect as a withdrawal response	Broken windows theory is absent
Withey & Cooper [14]	Organizations	EVLN	Quantitative	Neglect is associated with weak satisfaction	Mediation is not proposed
Leck & Saunders [28]	Measurement development	Neglect	Quantitative	Establishing measurement tools	Contextual causes are insufficiently examined
Turnley & Feldman [29]	Psychological contract	Contract breach → Neglect	Quantitative	Breach increases neglect	Broken Windows is untested
Naus et al. [9]	Organizational cynicism	Cynicism → Neglect	Quantitative	Cynicism reinforces neglect	Relationship to deviance is incomplete
Hagedoorn et al. [30]	Work relations	Dissatisfaction	Quantitative	Neglect as a negative response	Normative mechanisms are absent
Akhtar et al. [15]	Employee Relations (Emerald)	EVLN → Sense making	Quantitative	Organizational signals shape neglect	Broken Windows is absent
McLarty et al. [31]	Organizational context	Hindrane stressors and LMX → job neglect → performance	Quantitative	Neglect reduces performance	Its mediating role remains untested

The reviewed studies have traditionally framed organizational neglect as a withdrawal response to dissatisfaction, yet this treatment overlooks the normative as well as contextual dimensions that produce the behavior. Literature has neither modeled neglect as a transitional mechanism within the norm erosion chain nor explicitly linked it to Broken Windows logic, leaving its explanatory role in the emergence of deviant behavior theoretically incomplete. Table 3 is shown below.

Table 3. Summary of previous studies on workplace deviant behavior and the research gap

Researcher / Year	Context	Variables Studied	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gap
Robinson & Bennett [5]	Employees	Typology of deviance	Theoretical / Quantitative	Classification of deviance	Underlying mechanisms are insufficiently explained
Vardi & Wiener [2]	Organizational	Misbehavior framework	Theoretical	Deviance is a voluntary behavior	Gradual normative escalation is not examined
Bennett & Robinson [3]	Multiple samples	Deviance scale	Scale development	Establishing the most well-known scale	Causes are not thoroughly investigated
Greenberg [4]	Organizational justice	Justice → Deviance	Quantitative	Injustice increases deviance	Broken Windows is absent
Tepper [32]	Abusive leadership	Abusive supervision → Deviance	Quantitative	Abusive leadership increases deviance	Mediation is limited
Dalal [17]	Meta-analysis	OCB ↔ CWB	Meta	Deviance is a contextual behavior	Sources of signals are absent
Berry et al. [18]	Meta-analysis	Deviance predictors	Meta	Strong situational determinants	Broken Windows is not addressed
Hershcovis [33]	Aggressiveness	Aggression → Deviance	Meta	Context matters	Normative deterioration is untested
Wulani [19]	JMD (Emerald)	Passive leadership → Deviance	Quantitative	Passive leadership increases deviance	Neglect is absent
Elsaied [20]	JMD (Emerald)	Authoritarian leadership → Deviance	Quantitative	Authoritarian leadership reinforces deviance	Broken Windows is absent

The above-mentioned studies have focused on measurement and classification of deviant but have not discussed the interpretation of deviant behaviors except in the context of direct relationships with other variables such as leadership and organizational justice. This indicates a lack of dynamic explanatory models that explain how deviance can emerge in an organization as a function of the "accumulated organizational signals".

1.6. Integrated synthesis

The review of the three axes is an illustration of the three types of approaches that have been taken to the phenomenon; the first is the Broken Windows approach that has studied the process of norms and the emergence of normative chaos, but without examining the mediating process of behaviors; the second is the organizational neglect approach that has studied the process of the withdrawal response but not integrated it within a wider framework of explanation; and the third is the deviant behavior approach, which has examined the measurement of and direct relationships between behaviors, but not the process of the emergence of deviant behavior. This literature thus paints a picture of a basic theoretical gap, as an integrated explanatory model that bridges the gap between:

- Organizational signals
- Norm erosion

Organizational neglect as a passing process. Theme: Outputs (deviant behavior)

Based on this, the current research comes up with a theoretical reframing of this relationship by developing an integrative model that integrates organizational broken windows, organizational neglect and deviant behaviors in a way that explains the gradual process of changes in behaviors in organizations, especially in the Iraqi telecommunications sector.

1.7. Hypotheses development

The broken windows theory has a negative effect on workplace deviant behavior.

H1: broken windows theory has a detrimental impact on workplace deviant behavior.

The first hypothesis follows the central premise of the broken windows theory: that the tolerance of lesser violations leads to the erosion of norms and increases the likelihood of escalation of behavior [1]. Empirical evidence is provided by Keizer, Lindenberg and Steg [10] that the risk of further violations, due to norm violation contagion, enhances if a single violation is not sanctioned. If applied to the organization, the lack of rule enforcement and inconsistent accountability will provide implicit signals that alter meanings of what is proper and acceptable, reducing behavioral control and driving deviance, as seen with the perspective that deviance is a reaction to the signals sent by the organization, not only a reflection of the individual [2]. The null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that organization broken windows practices have a statistically significant positive effect on workplace deviant behaviors.

Organizational neglect is a moveable threshold between commitment and deviance, which is defined by decreased effort, conscious neglect, and diminished commitment. In the EVLN model, it serves as a low-cost negative response to the exit, and intensifies when employees feel that the efforts toward reform are in vain [8]. Behavioral deviance usually does not occur all at once but rather builds gradually starting with withdrawal and increasing to overt violations of rules [2], [3]. Neglect, therefore, is not only a consequence but a preparatory setting for escalation of behavior.

H2: Organizational neglect positively affects workplace deviant behaviors ($p < .05$).

Sense making logic can be used to explain the relationship between the broken windows and organizational neglect; when violations are tolerated employees' cues are that the standards are not being valued and they slowly move away. Weick [13] asserts that managerial behaviors provide employees with semantic cues that determine what is acceptable, and Schein [6] points out that behaviors that management actually allows to occur help shape culture. In line with the EVLN model, neglect is a form of adaptive withdrawal behavior when the reduced perceived usefulness of voice, along with the perceived weakness of reform opportunities, are present [7], [8]. A climate of unchecked transgressions then engenders withdrawal instead of commitment.

H3: Organizational broken windows practices have a statistically significant positive effect on organizational neglect.

The fourth hypothesis is an integrative causal logic, that is, that organizational broken windows do not necessarily directly cause deviant behavior, but rather facilitate the gradual development of norm erosion as an initial step, followed by organizational neglect as an intermediate step, and culminating in explicit deviant behavior. When negative signals are prevalent and control is weak, employees switch from behavioral withdrawal to greater overt rule violations. This pathway is connected to norm erosion logic of the broken windows [1] and concept of norm violation spillover [10] as well as the EVLN model's embedding of norm erosion as a behavioral reaction to undisciplined environments. Organizational neglect is therefore the central mediating process by which organizational cues, in turn, become deviant.

H4: Organization neglect has a statistically significant mediating effect between organization broken windows practices and workplace deviant behavior.

2. Research method

The study is designed in an explanatory quantitative design with descriptive analytical approach that aims to test the causal relationship between organizational broken windows, organizational neglect and workplace deviant behavior in an integrated theoretical model. As the main analysis method, structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized, which has the advantage of being able to test direct and indirect (mediated) relationships and evaluate the overall goodness of fit of the theoretical model.

The study sample includes employees of Iraqi telecommunication companies. The high work intensity, the fast rate of changes in operating environment, the high level of customer interaction, and the high level of sensitivity to norms and procedures are conditions that set the sector in a favorable setting to test the model as it is more conducive to the emergence of organizational signals and norm erosion.

This was achieved through stratified random sampling to ensure a balanced sample across senior, middle and executive management to minimize the sampling bias in this multi-level organizational setting. The final sample consisted of 180 employees from Asiacell Telecommunications Company. In PLS-SEM, the literature suggests a minimum sample size of 200 [35], while in SEM it is suggested to be 150–200. In SEM, the minimum sample size is suggested to be 150–200 whereas for PLS-SEM, it is suggested to be 150–200 as it is robust even for smaller sample sizes and can tolerate non-normal distribution of data [35].

The data was collected by using a structured questionnaire that was developed from scientifically validated scales used in the organizational behavior literature to measure three constructs: (1) organizational broken windows practices, (2) organizational neglect, and (3) deviant behaviors in the workplace. Linguistic and context adaptation were made to the Iraqi telecommunications environment without changing the conceptual structure of the original scales, and the reaction was collected on a 5-point Likert scale. Face validity, content validity, internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha), and construct validity (confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)) were used to test the quality of the instrument.

As shown in Table 4, the operational structure of the variables used in this study was made up of measurable sub-dimensions, reflecting the multidimensional nature of each of the variables of organizational broken windows, organizational neglect and deviant behaviors in the workplace. This decomposition follows from recent theoretical work on these concepts, which all stress that such concepts are not measured as such components, but as constructs that are made up of multiple behavioral indicators.

The variables were all coded with standard symbols to help the data to be entered and analyzed in the structural equation model (SEM) and also to ensure the consistency of the theoretical structure and the measurement model.

Table 4. Variable coding and research dimensions

Variable / Dimension	Symbol	Number of Items
Tolerance for minor violations	TMV	3
Inconsistent rule enforcement	IRE	3
Weak organizational control	WOC	3
Organizational broken windows	OBW	9
Low work effort	LWE	3
Ignoring organizational problems	IOP	3
Behavioral withdrawal	BW	3
Organizational neglect	ON	9
Organizational deviance	OD	3
Interpersonal deviance	ID	3
Workplace deviant behavior	WDB	6

The measurement structure was designed hierarchically with each main variable as a second-order construct consisting of first-order sub-dimensions. Three dimensions were used to assess organizational broken windows practices, representing ways that norms break down: tolerance of minor violations, an inconsistent application of rules, and weak organizational control. Three behavioral dimensions of organizational neglect were represented by gradual employee withdrawal, e.g., low work effort, ignorance of organizational problems, and behavioral withdrawal. Workplace deviant behavior was assessed using two components of Bennett and Robinson [3] – organizational deviance and interpersonal deviance. It facilitates the testing of relationships at the level of the latent dimensions and the estimation of total and indirect effects in the framework of SEM.

2.1. Measurement model assessment

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the suitability of the measurement model for representing the latent variables and construct validity was assessed in two main aspects: convergent validity and discriminant validity. In order to assess convergent validity, four standard criteria were used, namely average variance extracted ($AVE \geq 0.50$), composite reliability ($CR \geq 0.70$) and Cronbach's alpha (standardized and unstandardized ≥ 0.70). These indicators reflect the power of the explanation of each latent variable, the internal consistency of the scale and the reliability of the measurement.

To test discriminant validity, which is to verify that each latent variable measures a concept that is different from the others, and is neither conceptually nor statistically related to them, two complementary criteria were used according to Hair et al. [34]. The first criterion applied was the Fornell and Larcker criterion [35] which states that the square root of AVE for each construct must be greater than the correlations between the constructs. Second, for each item, a cross-loadings analysis was performed by comparing the loading on the item's dimension with the other dimensions. Discriminant validity is achieved when all items have a high factor loading on the dimension they were intended to measure and low factor loadings on all other factors, demonstrating a clear factor structure. Measurement model of organizational broken windows (OBW) variable estimated in SmartPLS 4 and the relationships between items and three sub-dimensions (inconsistent rule enforcement (IRE), tolerance of minor violations (TMV), and weak organizational control (WOC)) are presented in Figure 1. The results of the confirmatory factor Analysis (CFA) indicated a good convergent validity with all the item loadings above 0.70, the AVE values between 0.697 and 0.745 (all > 0.50), and the Composite Reliability (CR) values between 0.873 and 0.897 (all > 0.70), and the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were also above 0.70. The results suggest that OBW had good measurement properties and can be confidently used in the structural model as an integrated latent construct that represents organizational norm erosion.

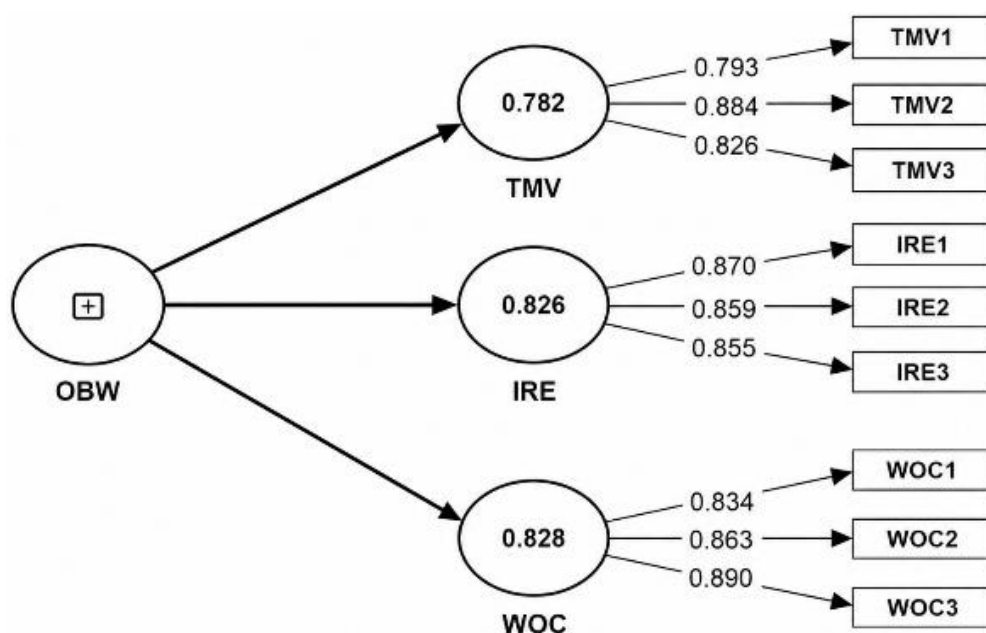


Figure 1. Measurement model of the organizational broken windows variable

Table 5. Convergent validity results for the organizational broken windows scale

Dimension	Item	Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
IRE	IRE1	0.870	0.826	0.896	0.742
	IRE2	0.859			
	IRE3	0.855			
TMV	TMV1	0.793	0.782	0.873	0.697
	TMV2	0.884			
	TMV3	0.826			
WOC	WOC1	0.834	0.828	0.897	0.745
	WOC2	0.863			
	WOC3	0.890			

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

The factor loadings of the items under the three dimensions of the OBW variable (IRE, TMV, and WOC) were found to be high as shown in Table 5 and are more than the recommended value of 0.70. This validates the representativeness of this latent construct and the consistency with the theoretical dimensions. However, the average variance extracted (AVE) for all dimensions was also higher than 0.50, thus proving convergent validity of the dimensions in explaining variance in their indicators. In terms of reliability indicators the composite reliability (CR) values were above 0.70, and the Cronbach's alpha was also acceptable in terms of internal consistency. The results collectively suggest that the organizational broken windows variable has good measurement characteristics and can be implemented in the structural model as a comprehensive latent variable for organizational norm erosion.

Data analysis employed discriminant validities which included Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loadings analysis. Construct distinctiveness was confirmed by square root of AVE values (Table 6), with the IRE (0.861), TMV (0.835), and WOC (0.863) inter-construct correlations all being greater than the square root of their AVE values. The cross-loadings reported in Table 7 also suggest that there were no significant cross loadings, which further indicates a clear factor structure.

Table 6. Fornell–Larcker criterion for OBW dimensions

Dimension	IRE	TMV	WOC
IRE	0.861		
TMV	0.787	0.835	
WOC	0.800	0.734	0.863

Note: Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of AVE; off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations.

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

Table 7. Cross-loadings for OBW items

Item	IRE	TMV	WOC
IRE1	0.870	0.756	0.676
IRE2	0.859	0.676	0.713
IRE3	0.855	0.597	0.679
TMV1	0.633	0.793	0.652
TMV2	0.653	0.884	0.572
TMV3	0.683	0.826	0.615
WOC1	0.736	0.643	0.834
WOC2	0.645	0.631	0.863
WOC3	0.686	0.626	0.890

Note: Bold values are the highest loading of each item for its corresponding construct. Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

The measurement model of organizational neglect (ON) is presented in Figure 2 and estimates the relationship between the items and their three sub-dimensions, namely in terms of behavioral withdrawal (BW), ignoring organizational problems (IOP), and low work effort (LWE). All items had a loading of more than 0.70 (see Table 8), the AVE varied between 0.713 and 0.769 (all > 0.50), and the composite reliability (CR) ranged from 0.881 to 0.909 (all > 0.70), and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were all above the 0.70 criterion, across all dimensions. The findings support the view that ON is a valid behavioral construct that can be internalized as a latent variable in the structural model and is reliable for use.

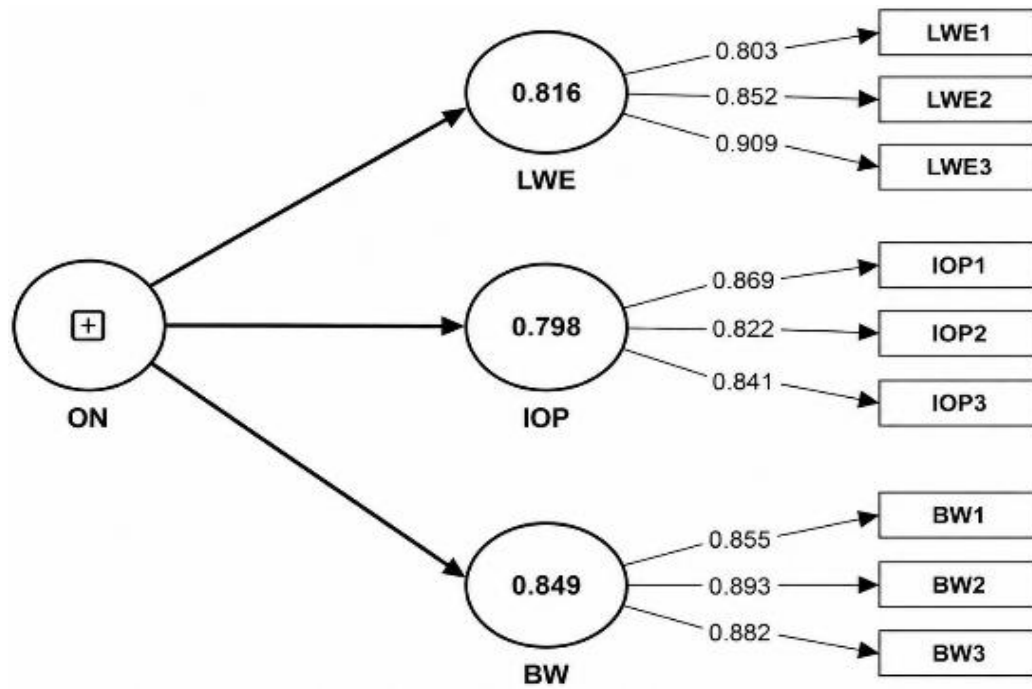


Figure 2. Measurement model of the organizational neglect variable

Table 8. Convergent validity results for the organizational neglect scale

Dimension	Item	Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
BW	BW1	0.855	0.849	0.909	0.769
	BW2	0.893			
	BW3	0.882			
IOP	IOP1	0.869	0.798	0.881	0.713
	IOP2	0.822			
	IOP3	0.841			
LWE	LWE1	0.803	0.816	0.891	0.732
	LWE2	0.852			
	LWE3	0.909			

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

Discriminant validity was assessed through the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loadings analysis. As shown in Table 9, the square root of AVE values for BW (0.877), IOP (0.844), and LWE (0.856) all exceeded their respective inter-construct correlations, confirming construct distinctiveness. The cross-loadings reported in Table 10 further demonstrate that every item loaded most strongly on its designated dimension, with no substantial cross-loadings — reinforcing the independence of the three behavioral sub-dimensions. Together, these results confirm that organizational neglect operates as a multidimensional behavioral construct that develops gradually in response to negative organizational signals, consistent with the EVLN model, and can be confidently adopted as the mediating variable in the structural model.

Table 9. Fornell–Larcker criterion for ON dimensions

Dimension	BW	IOP	LWE
BW	0.877		
IOP	0.761	0.844	
LWE	0.604	0.794	0.856

Note: Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of AVE; off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations.

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

Table 10. Cross-loadings for ON items

Item	BW	IOP	LWE
BW1	0.855	0.658	0.558
BW2	0.893	0.651	0.450
BW3	0.882	0.691	0.579
IOP1	0.655	0.869	0.671
IOP2	0.577	0.822	0.627
IOP3	0.691	0.841	0.712
LWE1	0.539	0.635	0.803
LWE2	0.455	0.631	0.852
LWE3	0.550	0.762	0.909

Note: Bold values indicate the highest loading of each item on its intended construct.

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

Figure 3 presents the measurement model of the workplace deviant behaviors (WDB) variable as estimated using SmartPLS 4, showing the relationships between items and the two dimensions constituting this variable: Interpersonal deviance (ID) and organization-directed deviance (OD). As reported in Table 11, all items exceeded the 0.70 loading threshold, AVE values were 0.688 (ID) and 0.753 (OD) both above the 0.50 benchmark and composite reliability (CR) values reached 0.869 and 0.901, respectively, with Cronbach's alpha above 0.70 for both dimensions. These results confirm that WDB possesses a coherent measurement structure aligned with the binary classification of Bennett and Robinson [3] and can be reliably adopted as the dependent variable within the structural model.

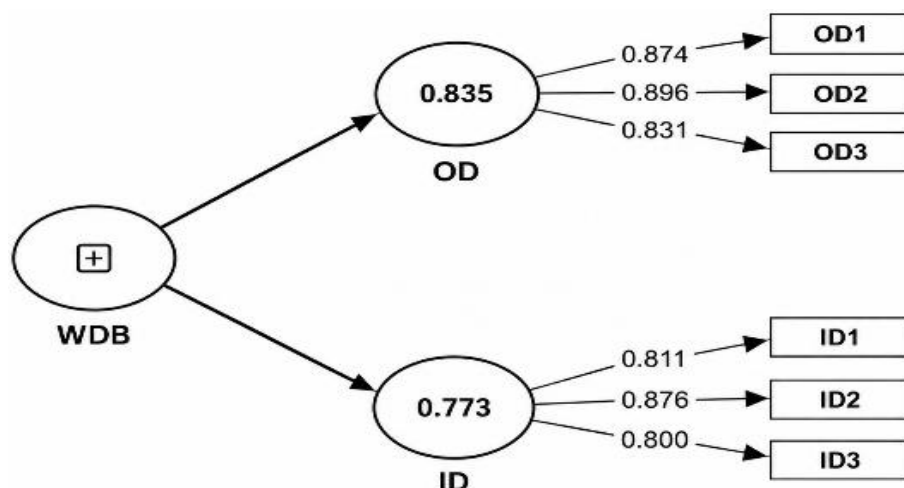


Figure 3. Measurement model of the workplace deviant behavior variable

Table 11. Convergent validity results for the workplace deviant behavior scale

Dimension	Item	Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
ID	ID1	0.811	0.773	0.869	0.688
	ID2	0.876			

Dimension	Item	Loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
OD	ID3	0.800	0.835	0.901	0.753
	OD1	0.874			
	OD2	0.896			
	OD3	0.831			

Both of the above criteria were met. The construct distinctiveness was confirmed as the square root of AVE values for ID (0.830) and OD (0.867) were higher than the inter-construct correlative value (0.751) as shown in Table 12. Again, the cross-loadings in Table 13 indicate that each item had the strongest loading on the dimension it was meant to measure, and that no significant cross-loadings suggest that the instrument is able to separate interpersonal deviance from organization-directed deviance, as is consistent in the current organizational behavior literature.

Table 12. Fornell–Larcker criterion for WDB dimensions

Dimension	ID	OD
ID	0.830	
OD	0.751	0.867

Note: Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of AVE; off-diagonal values represent inter-construct correlations.

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

Table 13. Cross-loadings for WDB items

Item	ID	OD
ID1	0.811	0.571
ID 2	0.876	0.672
ID 3	0.800	0.623
OD 1	0.682	0.874
OD 2	0.690	0.896
OD 3	0.576	0.831

Note: Bold values indicate the highest loading of each item on its intended construct.

Source: SmartPLS 4 output.

3. Results and discussion

Table 14 shows the descriptive statistics of the three research variables based on the replies of 180 employees of Asiacelel Telecommunications Company. The organizational broken windows variable had a significantly high total level ($M = 3.780$, $SD = 0.825$, $RI = 75.6\%$, $CV = 21.81\%$), indicating a common perceptual pattern across employees instead of isolated occurrences. The first was weak organizational control (WOC) ($M = 3.822$, $RI = 76.4\%$), which is the underlying logic of broken windows theory: poor control transmits implicit messages that rule compliance is not required. Second was Tolerance for Minor transgressions (TMV) ($M = 3.817$, $RI = 76.3\%$), showing normalization of deviance, when minor transgressions become normalized practices in the absence of administrative deterrence. Third, was inconsistent rule enforcement (IRE) ($M = 3.702$, $RI = 74.0\%$) which means that inconsistency lowers perceived organizational fairness, and increases employees' perception of regulations as flexible or able to be circumvented. Collectively, these dimensions suggest a norm erosion state as a precursor of probable behavioral escalation inside the organization.

The variable of organizational neglect also showed a relatively high overall level ($M = 3.778$, $SD = 0.780$, $RI = 75.6\%$, $CV = 20.66\%$), suggesting that neglect is not an isolated behavior, but a prevalent pattern as employees perceive an organizational environment that does not promote effective engagement. Low work effort (LWE) was ranked highest ($M = 3.844$, $RI = 76.9\%$), indicating that intrinsic motivation decreases as performance switches from engagement to minimum compliance. The second was ignoring organizational problems (IOP) ($M = 3.772$, $RI = 75.4\%$) which shows the tendency of organizational avoidance in the absence of incentives or sufficient administrative assistance. Behavioral withdrawal (BW) was rated third ($M = 3.717$, $RI = 74.3\%$), the

psychological disengagement that sometimes precedes more explicit negative behaviors. Together, these data corroborate the EVLN model's conceptualization of neglect as a low-cost withdrawal reaction, and also place neglect as the behavioral transmission mechanism linking broken windows to later deviance. The Workplace deviant behavior variable resulted in a moderate-to-high level overall ($M = 3.668$, $SD = 0.820$, $RI = 73.4\%$, $CV = 22.36\%$). This suggests that deviant behaviors are not exceptional or isolated behaviors but a fairly present pattern that could escalate in the presence of sustained dysfunctional settings. First, organization-directed deviance (OD) was ranked at an $M = 3.728$ ($RI = 74.6\%$). This deviance is known as production deviance behaviors such as tardiness, misuse of work time, and deliberate slowdowns, which influence organizational performance and resource efficiency. The second most common form of ID ($M = 3.607$, $RI = 72.1\%$) was interpersonal friction, which included unfavorable comments directed at colleagues, aggressive exchanges, and needless disagreements, all of which eroded organizational coherence. These results are consistent with the notion that deviation at work is a cumulative behavioral outcome, the culminating point in a chain of decay that begins with weak signals from the organization, progresses through neglect and concludes with explicit deviance.

Table 14. Descriptive statistics of research variables and their dimensions

Variable / Dimension	M	SD	CV (%)	RI (%)	Rank	Level
Tolerance of minor violations (TMV)	3.817	0.870	22.79	76.3	2	High
Inconsistent rule enforcement (IRE)	3.702	0.942	25.44	74.0	3	High
Weak organizational control (WOC)	3.822	0.872	22.81	76.4	1	High
Organizational broken windows (OBW)	3.780	0.825	21.81	75.6	2nd	High
Low work effort (LWE)	3.844	0.861	22.40	76.9	1	High
Ignoring organizational problems (IOP)	3.772	0.824	21.86	75.4	2	High
Behavioral withdrawal (BW)	3.717	0.920	24.75	74.3	3	High
Organizational neglect (ON)	3.778	0.780	20.66	75.6	1st	High
Organization-directed deviance (OD)	3.728	0.852	22.85	74.6	1	High
Interpersonal deviance (ID)	3.607	0.903	25.02	72.1	2	High
Workplace deviant behavior (WDB)	3.668	0.820	22.36	73.4	3rd	Moderate-High

Note: M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation; CV = Coefficient of variation; RI = Relative importance. Bold rows indicate the main research variables. Source: SPSS v.28 output.

The first hypothesis shows a positive statistically significant influence of the organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behaviors. As shown in Table 15 and Figure 4, the regression model was highly significant ($F = 139.253$, $p < 0.001$) and the correlation was strongly positive ($R = 0.663$) with an explanatory power of $R^2 = 0.439$. This means that OBW explains 43.9% of the variance in WDB, which is a substantial amount by organizational behavior standards. The standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.659$, $t = 11.801$, $p < 0.001$) supported the presence of a strong positive direct impact, where a one-unit increase in OBW causes an increase of 0.659 in WDB. These results suggest that broken windows practices, weak control, tolerance of breaches, and uneven enforcement—function as normative signals that modify employees' perceptions of what is acceptable. Following Wilson and Kelling [1] and later empirical studies, when tiny violations are tolerated, the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable behavior becomes fuzzy, gradually but surely, which results in norm erosion and norm violation spillover. This influence thus goes beyond the creation of an undisciplined workplace, to reshape collective behavior through the cumulative effect of negative organizational signals. This supports H1. These findings imply that the reduction of deviant behaviors in organizations is not only a matter of suppressing major transgressions, but also requires greater organizational control, consistent enforcement of rules and intolerance of minor deviations from these rules, which constitute the first level of behavioral escalation.

Table 15. Regression results for effect of organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behavior

Path	α	β	t	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig	Decision
OBW → WDB	1.177	0.659	11.801	0.663	0.439	0.436	139.253	0.000	H1 supported

Note: N = 180; Tabulated F = 3.94; Tabulated t = 1.984. Source: SPSS V.28 output.

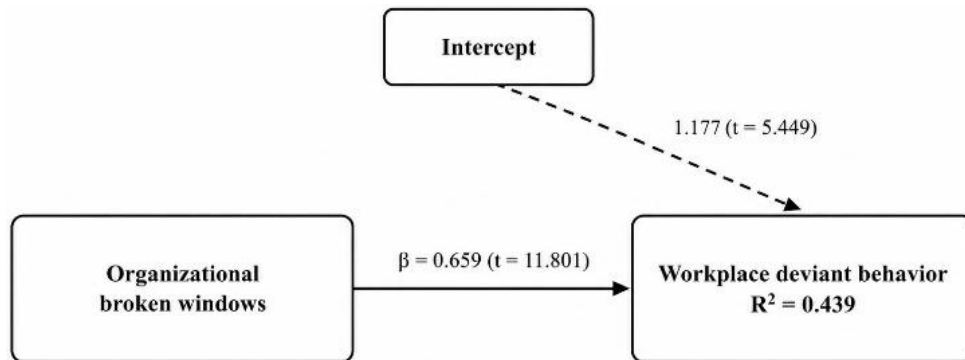


Figure 4. The effect of organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behavior

Hypothesis 2: The second hypothesis is that organizational neglect has a statistically significant favorable effect on workplace deviant behavior. The regression model was highly significant ($F = 325.157$, $p < 0.001$) and showed a very strong positive correlation ($R = 0.804$) with an explanatory power of $R^2 = 0.646$, meaning that ON alone explains 64.6% of the variance in WDB (Table 16 and Figure 5). This is a remarkably high proportion which places neglect as one of the strongest direct predictors of workplace deviance. The standardized regression coefficient ($\beta=0.845$, $t=18.032$, $p<0.001$) shows the very substantial positive direct effect. This means that for every one-unit rise in ON, there is an increase of 0.845 in WDB.

Findings show that organizational neglect is a significant behavioral mechanism behind the onset of deviant behaviors, representing employees' movement from involvement to gradual retreat. Reduced effort, ignoring issues, and withdrawal from active participation are all manifestations that weaken behavioral commitment and generate settings conducive to deviance (Goffman, 1961). Consistent with the EVLN model, neglect serves as a low-cost reaction in discouraging environments initially, but eventually progresses into more explicit deviant conduct, indicating that neglect is not an end point but a step prior to overt deviance. This effect is significantly stronger ($\beta=0.845$) than the corresponding one for OBW in H_1 ($\beta=0.659$), lending support to the notion that deviance is not a direct outcome of dysfunctional settings but rather is manifested through the behavioral phase of neglect. So H2 is supported. From a managerial perspective, the findings show that organizational control alone cannot control workplace deviance. In fact, it implies increasing employee engagement, stimulating initiative in problem-solving and reducing behavioral withdrawal because neglect is the main portal through which a dysfunctional environment becomes overt deviance.

Table 16. Regression results for effect of organizational neglect on workplace deviant behavior

Path	α	β	t	R	R ²	Adj R ²	F	Sig	Decision
ON → WDB	0.477	0.845	18.032	0.804	0.646	0.644	325.157	0.000	H ₂ supported

Note: N = 180; Tabulated F = 3.94; Tabulated t = 1.984. Source: SPSS V.28 output.

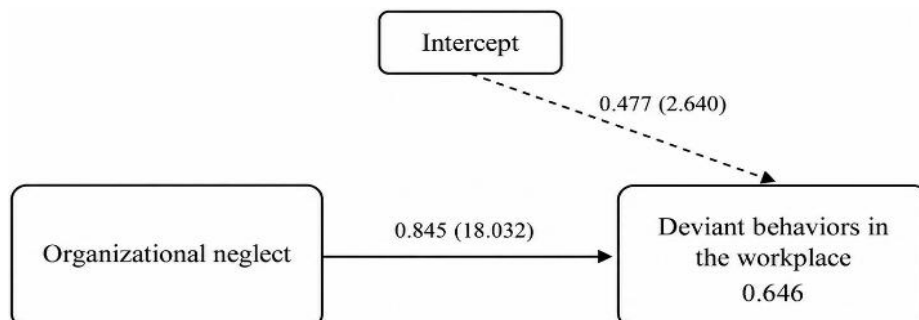


Figure 5. The effect of organizational neglect on deviant workplace behavior

The third hypothesis predicts that organizational broken windows will exert a positive and statistically significant influence on organizational neglect. Table 17 and Figure 6 show the high significance of the regression model ($F = 292.695$, $p < 0.001$), a strong positive correlation ($R = 0.789$), and an explanatory power of $R^2 = 0.622$, indicating that OBW explains 62.2% of the variance in ON, which is a large proportion, and highlights the important role of broken windows practices in influencing withdrawal behavior. The standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.746$, $t = 17.108$, $p < 0.001$) reveals a considerable favorable direct impact on the mediator. The findings imply that organizational broken windows provide a system of signals that co-shape employees' perceptions of loyalty to the business. However, when employees see lax control, the acceptance of transgressions, and inconsistent application of rules, the perception of the seriousness of the organization is damaged and the perceived value of commitment is lost. Organizational neglect, in reaction, is a reasonable, adaptive withdrawal behavior; employees move from engagement to gradual disengagement. This approach coincides with sense making theory [13] and the EVLN model, both of which conceptualize managerial action as a signal that determines the level of effort required from employees. Therefore H_3 is supported. Importantly, this finding demonstrates that dysfunctional organizational environments do not directly lead to deviance but instead to withdrawal behaviors expressed in neglect, which in turn, pave the way for overt deviance – a pattern that underpins the empirical basis for testing the mediation hypothesis (H_4). In managerial terms, organizational neglect cannot be solved by direct interventions alone; rather, organizational discipline should be reinforced and rules should be applied in a consistent and fair manner and zero tolerance should be adopted for minor violations, since neglect is a direct reflection of negative organizational signals, not an isolated individual behavior.

Table 17. Regression results for effect of organizational broken windows on organizational neglect

Path	α	β	t	R	R^2	Adj R^2	F	Sig	Decision
OBW $\rightarrow$ ON	0.956	0.746	17.108	0.789	0.622	0.620	292.695	0.000	H_3 supported

Note: N = 180; Tabulated F = 3.94; Tabulated t = 1.984. Source: SPSS V.28 output.

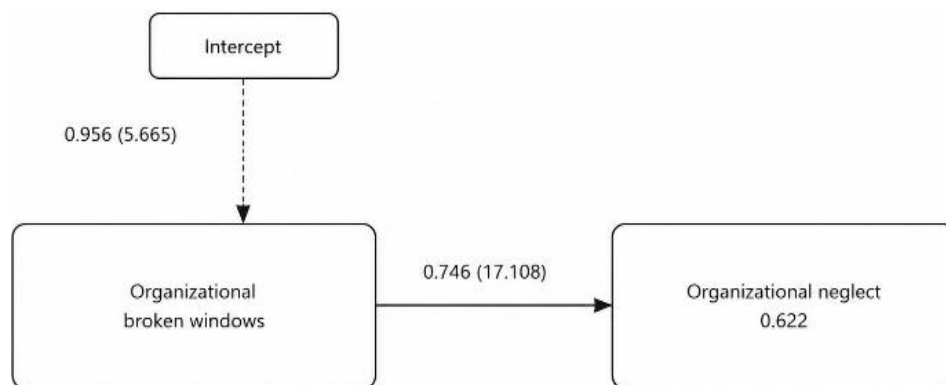


Figure 6. The effect of organizational broken windows on organizational neglect

The fourth hypothesis states that organizational neglect mediates the association between organizational broken windows and workplace deviant conduct. Mediation was investigated by simultaneous testing of direct, indirect and total effects, in line with normal SEM protocols. Results of the mediation analysis are shown in Table 18, and Figures 7, 8 and 9 show the direct-effect model, the mediation model, and the final supported mediation pathway, respectively. Straight roads. Of the mediation model, two routes were statistically significant. The path from OBW to ON ($\beta = 0.746$, $t = 17.108$, $p < 0.001$) demonstrates that broken windows practices directly reinforce organizational neglect, and the line from ON to WDB ($\beta = 0.782$, $t = 10.327$, $p < 0.001$) confirms that organizational neglect functions as a direct driver of workplace deviance. Together, these approaches create the structural basis for mediation. Direct and indirect impacts after the mediator was incorporated into the model, the indirect effect of OBW on WDB via ON was 0.584, suggesting a significant mediating route. In contrast, the direct effect of OBW on WDB was $\beta = 0.075$ ($t = 1.049$, $p = 0.294$), which was no longer statistically significant, demonstrating that the effect of OBW on WDB is mediated through organizational neglect.

Type of intervention. These results suggest a thorough mediation: the direct effect was significant in bivariate analysis (H1: $\beta = 0.659$, $p < 0.001$), but became non-significant after adding the mediator and the indirect effect was still strong and significant. Hence, organizational neglect is a full mediator of the relationship between organizational broken windows and workplace deviant conduct. H4 is therefore supported. Sobel test for additional analysis, the Sobel test was undertaken to examine the significance of the indirect effect. The test results produced $Z = 8.847$ ($p < .001$), greatly above the crucial value of 1.984, suggesting that the mediating pathway via organizational neglect is statistically significant and substantively powerful. Contributions to theory. Together, these findings give empirical support for the gradual causal pathway described in this study. Dysfunctional organizational signals initially produce norm erosion, which may be observed behaviorally in the form of organizational neglect and finally leads to explicit workplace misbehavior. This sequence unifies Broken Windows Theory [1], norm violation spillover [10] and the EVLN model [7], [8] into a unified explanatory framework, putting organizational neglect as the central mechanism of behavioral transmission rather than another variable.

Managerial implications. These findings indicate that workplace deviance cannot be reduced by targeting deviation per se. Instead, it is necessary to influence the mediating mechanism itself, lowering the signs of organizational neglect, increasing employee engagement, inspiring initiatives in solving problems, increasing the level of responsibility. Neglect is the tipping point that turns conduct from withdrawal to deviation.

Table 18. Direct, indirect, and total effects in the mediation analysis

Path	β	SE	t	p	Effect Type
OBW $\rightarrow$ ON	0.746	0.044	17.156	0.000	Direct
ON $\rightarrow$ WDB	0.782	0.076	10.327	0.000	Direct
OBW $\rightarrow$ WDB (without mediator)	0.659	—	11.801	0.000	Total effect
OBW $\rightarrow$ WDB (with mediator)	0.075	0.072	1.049	0.294	Direct (insignificant)
OBW $\rightarrow$ ON $\rightarrow$ WDB	0.584	—	Sobel $Z = 8.847$	< 0.001	Indirect (Full Mediation)

Note: N = 180; SE = standard error. Source: SmartPLS 4 output and Sobel test.

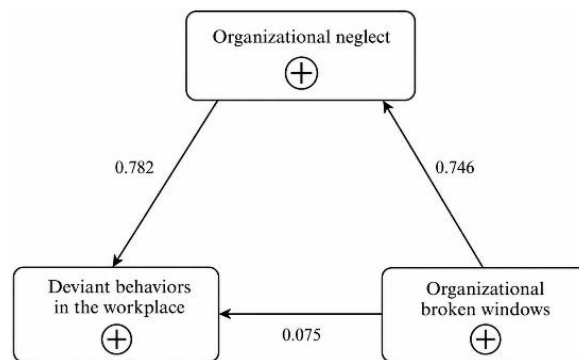


Figure 7. Effect values of organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behavior mediated by organizational neglect

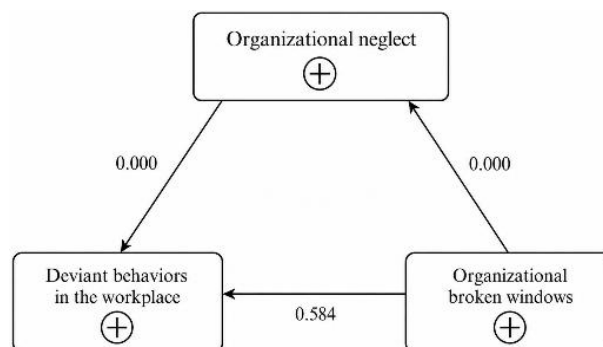


Figure 8. Indirect effect values of organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behavior through organizational neglect

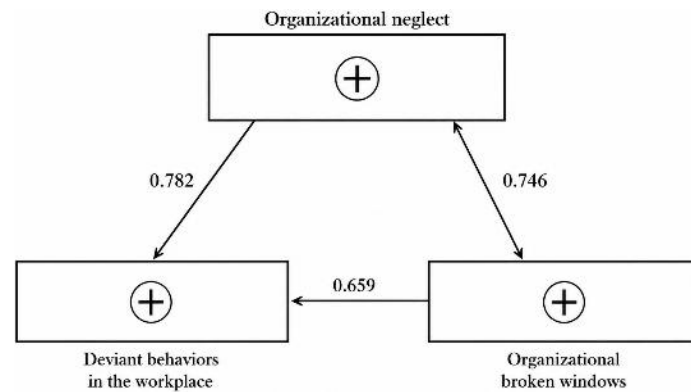


Figure 9. Full mediation model of organizational neglect in the relationship between organizational broken windows and workplace deviant behavior

Sobel test was utilized to verify the significance of the indirect effect of organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behavior through organizational neglect as the supporting statistical approach for the mediation study. The results show that the Sobel test statistic was $Z = 8.847$ which is greater than the critical value of 1.984 at 0.05 significance level. Furthermore, the p-value was less than 0.001, which confirmed that the indirect effect is statistically significant. This result confirms that the mediating path via organizational neglect is not only statistically significant, but also substantively meaningful, suggesting that organizational neglect plays a central role in explaining how organizational broken windows translate into workplace deviant behavior.

The inclusion of organizational neglect in the model changed the effect of organizational broken windows from a direct pathway to an indirect pathway, thus enhancing the credibility of the mediation findings obtained using SEM. Thus, the Sobel test provides additional statistical support for full mediation, confirming that the effect of organizational broken windows on workplace deviant behavior is conveyed through organizational neglect as the major explanatory mechanism. In this view, organizational neglect functions as the behavioral link that translates unfavorable organizational signals into a gradual withdrawal response that eventually results in workplace deviance. Table 10 is shown below.

Input:		Test statistic:	p-value:
t_a	17.156	Sobel test: 8.84772108	0
t_b	10.327	Aroian test: 8.83670892	0
		Goodman test: 8.85877451	0
Reset all		Calculate	

Figure 10. Sobel test statistic for the indirect effect

4. Conclusions

This study's findings lead to six primary conclusions on the linkages between organizational broken windows, organizational neglect and workplace deviant behavior and have direct implications for organizational sustainability.

1. Organizational broken windows is a present organizational style characterized by inadequate organizational control, tolerance of minor transgressions, and inconsistent enforcement of rules. These acts establish a situation of norm erosion when little infractions are slowly transformed into habitual practices that modify collective behavior. Among the three sub-dimensions, weak organizational control was determined to be the most effective one, and it reduced the effectiveness of organizational systems as a tool to regulate the behavior. Tolerance of minor violations paves the way for normalization of deviance, while inconsistent

enforcement undermines the perception of organizational fairness and fosters implicit rationalizations to circumvent norms.

2. Organizational neglect is a transitional behavioral condition that is characterized by a decline in work effort, ignoring organizational problems, and behavioral retreat indicating a movement of employees from commitment to organizational indifference. The most obvious symptom was reduced work effort, indicative of a decline in intrinsic motivation, followed by problem avoidance, which exacerbates organizational dysfunction, and behavioral withdrawal, the most advanced stage of disengagement.
3. Workplace deviant behavior occurs along two parallel dimensions: organization-directed deviance that compromises performance and resource efficiency and interpersonal deviance that deteriorates relational coherence. This supports the multidimensionality of workplace misbehavior.
4. At the level of causal linkages, organizational broken windows appeared as a key source of organizational neglect, since negative organizational signals create an environment that legitimizes withdrawal and justifies lower effort.
5. Most importantly, organizational neglect is the most important explanatory mechanism by which the impacts of organizational broken window are communicated to workplace aberrant behavior. Results of full mediation indicate that deviant behaviors do not merely result from dysfunctional surroundings but rather evolve progressively through a process that starts with organizational neglect and ends with overt deviance.
6. Workplace deviance is a collective behavioral result of the interaction between organizational signals and employee responses. The dynamic and incremental development of workplace deviance and workplace civility are highlighted. This cumulative escalation poses a direct challenge to the sustainability of organizations through the erosion of institutional values, the erosion of trust, the depletion of resources, and the sabotage of the economic, social, and organizational components of long-term continuity.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known financial or non-financial competing interests in any material discussed in this paper.

Funding information

No funding was received from any financial organization to conduct this research.

Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that their responses would be used only for academic research purposes and treated anonymously.

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