




Investigating the Relationship Between Prosocial Rule Breaking and Quality of Life with the Mediating Role of Psychological Safety Among Women Employed in Government Offices in Ahvaz

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction section, the paragraph beginning with “In contemporary organizational environments, employees’ quality of life has become one of the most important indicators...” would benefit from a more explicit theoretical framework integrating the three central constructs. Although the literature review is comprehensive, the manuscript lacks a clearly articulated conceptual theory explaining why prosocial rule breaking should influence quality of life through psychological safety. The authors are encouraged to integrate a stronger theoretical lens such as Social Exchange Theory, Conservation of Resources Theory, or Self-Determination Theory to justify the hypothesized mediation model.

The paragraph discussing Morrison’s definition of prosocial rule breaking states that such behavior is “motivated by constructive intentions” and “often occurs when employees perceive that strict adherence to organizational regulations may hinder efficiency.” This conceptualization requires more nuance because prosocial rule breaking may simultaneously produce ethical ambiguity and organizational inconsistency. The manuscript should discuss the potential negative organizational consequences of prosocial rule breaking and explain why its outcomes are expected to remain positive in governmental settings characterized by bureaucratic accountability.

The psychological safety measure is introduced appropriately; however, the manuscript should clarify whether the scale was translated, culturally adapted, or validated specifically for governmental female employees in Iran. The authors should also report whether confirmatory factor analysis was re-estimated in the current sample rather than relying solely on previous studies.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The section reviewing psychological safety relies heavily on supportive outcomes but insufficiently addresses the boundary conditions of psychological safety. For example, the paragraph beginning with “The concept of psychological safety has become increasingly important...” should incorporate critical perspectives indicating that excessive psychological safety without accountability may reduce organizational discipline or encourage procedural deviation. This discussion is particularly important given that the study examines rule-breaking behavior within public institutions.

The literature review demonstrates extensive citation coverage; however, the transition between paragraphs is occasionally mechanical and descriptive rather than analytical. For example, the paragraph beginning “Studies examining antecedents of prosocial rule breaking...” lists prior findings without synthesizing inconsistencies, methodological differences, or unresolved debates in the literature. The authors should strengthen the critical synthesis component and explicitly identify how the present study addresses a unique theoretical or empirical gap.

The rationale for focusing exclusively on women employed in governmental organizations in Ahvaz remains underdeveloped. The paragraph beginning “Quality of life among employees has become especially significant for women...” provides general statements regarding occupational pressures faced by women, but it does not adequately explain why gender-specific analysis is theoretically necessary for the proposed mediation model. The manuscript would benefit from a gender-based organizational psychology discussion supported by theories of occupational stress, gender-role expectations, or workplace inequality.

The study design section identifies the research as “descriptive-correlational” using SEM; however, the authors should more precisely justify why SEM was selected instead of regression-based mediation analysis. The manuscript should explain whether latent variables or observed composite scores were used in the model estimation. Additionally, there is insufficient reporting regarding assumptions of SEM, including normality, multicollinearity, outlier analysis, and sample adequacy diagnostics.

The sampling strategy presents a serious methodological limitation. The manuscript states that convenience sampling was used among women employed in governmental offices in Ahvaz, but it does not specify the number or types of governmental offices included. Without organizational diversity information, it is impossible to evaluate sampling representativeness or contextual variability. The authors should report the participating institutions, administrative sectors, response rates, and participant recruitment procedures in greater detail.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria require further clarification. The sentence stating that participants with “distorted responses or unrealistic response patterns” were excluded is ambiguous because no operational criteria or screening procedures are reported. The authors should explain whether attention-check items, Mahalanobis distance, response time analysis, or statistical outlier screening techniques were used to identify invalid responses.

The psychometric reporting for the Prosocial Rule Breaking Questionnaire is insufficiently rigorous. Although the manuscript reports Cronbach’s alpha values and CFA indices from previous studies, it does not provide reliability or validity evidence obtained from the current sample. The authors should report internal consistency coefficients, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), discriminant validity statistics, and factor loadings based on the present dataset.

The WHOQOL-BREF description lacks adequate methodological detail. The manuscript does not explain the scoring structure, reverse-scored items, domain calculation procedures, or whether domain scores or total quality-of-life scores were entered into SEM analyses. Given the multidimensional nature of WHOQOL-BREF, the use of a single aggregate quality-of-life score requires stronger conceptual and statistical justification.



Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.