Workplace Deviant Behaviours in Nigeria: A Case Study of Intels Nigeria Limited

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ABSTRACT

Deviant Behaviours are the measured form of human conducts which are capable of creating antisocial atmosphere in a group setting. It is against this background that this paper sets to evaluate the effects of such human attitudes on work productivity within the private corporate entities, especially in Intels Nigeria Limited. The model of study is by longitudinal observations within a two-year time lag. The support data are derived from secondary sources. The analysis shows that, lateness to work, work-skipping, and unauthorized sick leave are the topmost contributors of low human resources productivity capacity in Nigeria.

Keywords: Deviance, Productivity, Anti-social, Corporate Management.

1.INTRODUCTION

Deviance as a concept in relation to workplace behaviour encompasses various types of conduct that are inconsistent with the rules, regulations and expected behaviour of persons within an organizational setup. Workplace deviant behaviours do often start from how the employees perceive the organisation weakness, especially where the organization fails to create discipline through deterrence. Staff resort to misbehaviour more often where the possibility of punishment is low. This anti-social attitudes may arise as aspect of negative interchange where employees intentional adopt deviance as a way of revenge towards corporate treatment.[1]

"A negative reciprocity orientation is the tendency for an individual to return negative treatment for negative treatment. In other words, the maxim "an eye for an eye" is a concept that some employees strongly feel is a suitable approach to their problem. However, what is critical in understanding employee deviance is that

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[1] "Employees often create a set of expectations about their workplace; people tend to make psychological contracts with their organizations. When his or her expectations are not met, the employee may "perceive a psychological contract breach by their employers. This "breach" of the psychological contract then presents potential problems, particularly in the workplace"(adapted from From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

the employee perceives being wronged, whether or not mistreatment actually occurred."[2]

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Rogojan [3] argues that: "Many executives, administrators, and social scientists see unethical behaviour as a cancer working on the fabric of society in too many of today's organizations." He went further to assert that "we have a crisis of ethics which can undermine our competitive strength. Unethical behaviour of employees at all levels of the organization is very alarming. Primarily, those who are interested in issues of deviant workplace behaviour are managers, who want to prevent it, and scientists, who are interested in the phenomenon."[4]

By the same token, Peterson [5] suggests that the pervasiveness of non-standard conduct such as scam, stealing, suppression effort, hostile behaviour, and voluptuous aggravation in the workplace is a gigantic challenge for organizations. The widespread nature of deviant conducts in the workplace has prompted several empirical research for example, Rogojan [6] gathered evidence from various sources and concluded that: "It is increasingly important to executives and to researchers to prevent deviant workplace behaviour for good reasons."[7] In essence, he asserted that "employees accounted for a higher percentage of retail thefts than did customers"[8]. Hence, "one in every fifteen employees steals from his or her employer... 33% to 75% of all employees have engaged in some deviant action, and as many as 42% of women have been sexually harassed at work."[9]

Appelbaum,et. al.,[10] suggests the existence of two major segments of deviant conduct in the workplace inter alia: positive and negative deviant workplace behaviour. Negative deviant conducts includes but not limited to absenteeism, withdrawal, withholding effort, sexual harassment and unethical decision making. Positive deviant conducts includes: all wilful

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[2] Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005) cited in Mitchell, Ambrose (2012) Abusive Supervision, Workplace Deviance & the Moderating Effects of Negative Reciprocity Beliefs. Online at: *doi.apa.org/journals/apl/92/4/1159.html*

[3] Paul-Titus Rogojan (2009) Deviant Workplace Behavior in Organizations: Antecedents, Influences, and Remedies, 157 Internationale Betriebswirtschaft

[4] ibid

[5] Peterson, D.K. (2002), "Deviant Workplace Behavior and the Organization's Ethical Climate", *Journal of Business and Psychology*, Vol. 7, pp. 47-61

[6] ibid

[7] ibid

[8] ibid

[9] ibid

[10] Appelbaum, S.H; Iaconi, G.D and Matousek, A. (2007) Positive and negative deviant workplace behaviors: causes, impact, and solutions, Corporate Governance, Vol. 7, No. 5, p. 586-598

conducts that are not in tandem with the norms of the anti-agency/anti-organisation segment of the workforce.

Schnake[11] explains that "the types of negative behavior which have not received much research attention include those which are often more subtle such as sabotage, vandalism, wasting organizational resources, passive aggression…" Citing evidence from the United States, Schnake[12] went further to stress that, negative employee behaviours is damaging to the growth of industries of all sizes. It is thus, estimated the deviant conducts inflicts losses of $6 to $200 billion every year. The study by Harper[13] discovered that not less than 33% of all United Sates employees routinely engage in various degree of negative organizational behaviour.

> "Clearly, whatever the term chosen for these behaviours, negative employee
> behaviours are not uncommon and may take a variety of forms. A single
> classification scheme which covers them all may prove to be unwieldy.
> Further, a single model may not be appropriate for all forms of negative
> employee behaviour because of different sets of antecedents and
> outcomes"[14]

Robinson and Bennett[15] suggested "a two-dimensional typology of deviant workplace behaviours namely, minor-serious and interpersonal – organizational. This implies that:

> "Workplace deviance falls into one of four categories: production deviance
> (minor organizational deviance including leaving early, taking excessive
> breaks, wasting resources, intentionally working slowly), property
> deviance (serious organizational deviance including sabotaging equipment,
> lying about hours worked, stealing from organization), political deviance
> (minor interpersonal deviance including gossiping about co-workers,
> blaming co-workers), and personal aggression (serious interpersonal
> deviance including verbal abuse, endangering co-workers)."[16]

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[11] Schnake, Mel E. (2011) Anti-Citizenship Behavior, Employee Deviant Behavior, Organizational Misbehavior, Dysfunctional Organizational Behavior, and Counterproductive Work Behavior: A Review, Synthesis and Research Suggestions

[12] ibid

[13] Harper, D. (1990) Spotlight abuse – Save profits. *Industrial Distribution*, 79: 47-51.

[14] Schnake, ibid, op. cit

[15] Robinson, S. L. & R.J. Bennett (2001) A typology of deviant workplace behaviors: A multidimensional scaling study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38: 555-572.

[16] See: Schnake, ibid, op. cit p.7

Schnake[17] criticised the two typologies as lacking much substance as it seems to have failed to take into account, the "deviant or dysfunctional behaviours directed at organizational outsiders, such as customers." However, he affirmed that, employee deviance are the voluntary behaviours that could violate substantial organizational norms and thereby threatening the welfare "of an organization, its members, or both." Vardi and Wiener[18] coined the term "organizational misbehaviour" which tends to distinguish workplace deviance with other forms of public anti-social behaviours. They thus, explained that organizational misbehaviour constitutes "any intentional action by members of organizations that violates core organizational and/or societal norms." Therefore, three subgroup of organizational misbehaviour are perennial inter alia:

(a) Type S which is misbehaviour to profit the perpetrator "oneself".
(b) Type O which is misbehaviour for the benefit of the organization,
(c) Type D which is misbehaviour projected to perpetrate harm to the organization.

Perhaps the most comprehensive work so far on the subject matter was the Spector, et. al[19] categorisation and development of "45-item Counterproductive Work Behaviour Checklist (CWB-C). This has been widely described as model for measuring employees' deliberate behaviours that are detrimental to organizations. It also provided the psychometric attributes of the scale of the model. However, the researchers stressed that the items in the model can be joined into a solitary total score, "a two-dimension scheme (organization versus person target) and a five-dimension scheme (abuse toward others, production deviance, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal)." This is against the backdrop of the assertion by Spector and Fox[20] that, "Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) has emerged as a major area of concern among both researchers and the general public. These behaviours are a set of distinct acts that share the characteristics that they are volitional (as opposed to accidental or mandated) and harm organizations and/or organization stakeholders (e.g., clients, coworkers, customers, and supervisors). CWB results from an employees' choice or decision to behave in such a way that is either intended specifically to harm, or harms by purposeful action even if unintentionally."

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[17] ibid

[18] Vardi, Y. & Y. Wiener (1996) Misbehavior in organizations: A motivational framework. *Organizational Science*, 7: 151-165.

[19] Paul E. Spector; Suzy Fox; Lisa M. Penney; Kari Bruursema; Angeline Goh; and Stacey Kessler (2012) Development of the Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist (CWB-C). Online working paper series, Development of the CWB-C1.

[20] Spector, P. E. & Fox, S. (2003, November). Emotional experience at work: Assessing emotions with the Job-related Affective Well-being Scale (JAWS). Paper presented at the meeting of the Southern Management Association, Clearwater Beach, FL. Cited in Spector, et al, ibid

In a very recent study, Kennedy[21] used a mixed-methods process of data collection, which required the collection and examination of quantitative and qualitative data obtained from a sample of small business owners and managers within the greater Cincinnati, Ohio metropolitan area with focus on how elements of guardianship within the business influence opportunity structures for employee theft. He found that: "the influence of personality traits on the likelihood of employee theft and CWBs also suggest that personality factors interact with workplace factors. Workplace factors include the employee's assessment of the climate/culture of the business, the role of owners and managers in the operation of the business, and events occurring within the business that affect the employee."[22]

3. WORKPLACE DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR AT INTELS NIGERIA

Workplace deviance observed and recorded for the purpose of this study shows that abusive supervision contributes to staff misbehaviours. Abusive supervision is the minions' insights of the degree to which their managers participate in the continual display of intimidating oral and non-oral behaviours.[23] This frequently occur in

circumstances where superiors adopts harsh and intimidating admonishment including their failure to reward staff for excellence. Most of the anti-social behaviours are borne out of anxiety.[24] This is consistent with Schnake;[25] and Robinson and Bennett[26] which summed up that whether the behaviour violates society's norms, and whether the behaviour disrupts organizational norms, creates four relatively general categories. Behaviours which are well-matched with both social norms and organizational norms are undoubtedly fruitful and positive behaviours, and would include both in-role job performance and extra-role performance (i.e., organizational citizenship behaviors). Behaviours which violate social norms but which are compatible with organizational norms would include both illegal and unethical behaviours viewed unsuitable by society, but somehow overlooked or even embolden by the organization. Behaviours, such as over-charging customers, shipping sub-standard products, or sexual

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[21] Kennedy, Jay P. (2014) A View from the Top: Managers' Perspectives on the Problem of Employee Theft in Small Businesses. A Dissertation submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Criminal Justice of the College of Education, Criminal Justice and Human Services.

[22] Ibid, p. 33

[23] Bruursema, K., Kessler, S., Fox, S., & Spector, P. E. (2004). The connection between counterproductive work behavior and organizational citizenship performance. Unpublished data set.

[24] Anderson, C. A., Deuser, W. E., & DeNeve, K. M. (1995). Hot temperatures, hostile affect, hostile cognition, and arousal: Tests of a general model of affective aggression. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 21, 434-448.

[25] Schnake, op. cit, p. 9

[26] Robinson, S. L. & R.J. Bennett (2001) A typology of deviant workplace behaviors: A multidimensional scaling study. Academy of Management Journal, 38: 555-572.

aggravation or discernment may become part of an organization's culture and be subtly encouraged. Behaviors which are compatible with social norms, but which violate organizational norms are dysfunctional only within the organization. Examples of such behaviours include passive hostility actions such as withholding effort, and whistle-blowing. Behaviours which are incompatible with both social norms and organizational norms are generally extreme and blatantly illegal actions such as theft and even murder in the workplace.[27]

In certain instances, staff may wish to resign their appointment rather than resist abusive attitudes but, some may wish to remain and develop anti-organisational attitudes. In Intels Ltd employees are in control of many of the organization's working facilities hence, the deviance attitude often reflect in the reckless use and abuse of company facilities. The recklessness does "come in the form of time, office supplies, raw materials, finished products or the services that they provide. This usually occurs in two steps. First step is that commitment is destroyed and employees stop caring about the welfare of the employer. The second step is that the abused employee will get approval (normally implied) of their coworkers to commit deviant acts."[28] This reinforces Berkowitz[29] Frustration-aggression hypothesis and Bies, *et. al's*[30] concept of cognitive and social dynamics of revenge in organizations.

The situation at Intels Ltd is that deviance behaviour are not being checked and dealt with as the organisation may not have considered the gravity on its productivity. Some of the deviance are mainly expressed in non-violent form, which may lead to organization's productivity decline.[31] This study also found that interpersonal deviance do occur within subgroups of employee mainly in the forms of gossiping and conveying blame to them which affects working time and relationship among staff. This finding is consistent with Neuman and Baron[32] which suggests that workplace violence and workplace aggression gathers momentum from subtle aggressive tendencies to hatred. The present study also found that, deviant behaviour typically directed at the organization or organizational deviance comprises of bad

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[27] ibid

[28] Adapted from wikipaedia.com

[29] Berkowitz, L. (1989). Frustration-aggression hypothesis: Examination and reformulation. Psychological Bulletin, 106, 59-73.

[30] Bies, R. J., Tripp, T. M., & Kramer, R. M. (1997). At the breaking point: Cognitive and social dynamics of revenge in organizations. In R. A. Giacalone & J. Greenberg (eds.) Antisocial behavior in organizations (pp. 18-36). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[31] Spector, P.E. (1978) Organizational frustration: A model and review of the literature. *Personnel Psychology*, 31: 815-829.

[32] Neuman, J.H. & R.A. Baron (1998) Workplace violence and workplace aggression: Evidence concerning specific forms, potential causes, and preferred targets. *Journal of Management*, 24: 391-419.

attitude to work in general and to fellow staff. These are reflected in unpunctuality, undue malingering.[33]

4. CONCLUSION

By taking into account adopting an insider's analytical approach, the issues of abusive supervision and subordinates' workplace deviance is found to be less perennial at intels Nigeria limited rather there are evidence of employees' consistent deviance behaviours which may be negligible but may lead to extensive harm to the company in the long run. Hence, there is obviously more in-depth research to be carried out in this subject-matter, however, the study takes a much-needed step towards evaluating the effects of deviant and abusive behaviours in organisation.

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