DETERMINANTS OF COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR AMONG LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKERS IN IBADAN

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Abstract
Employees have various reasons for engaging in Counterproductive work behaviour (CWBs) and the means of expressing them differ from one person to the other, this, somewhat makes it difficult for organizations to pinpoint the exact predictors of CWBs. This study examined the determinants of CWB among local government workers by establishing the prevalence of sabotage, theft, withdrawal, production deviance and abuse against others at the workplace and the impact they have on organizational performance. Data was collected from 263 employees in five urban local governments in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. These employees were selected through accidental sampling and responded to organizational politics scale, organizational justice scale, leader member relationship scale and counterproductive work behaviour scale. The checklist (CWB-C) with the 32-item Counterproductive Work Behaviour Checklist by Spector et al., 2006 was used for the study. The results of the analysis showed significant influence of organizational justice ($\beta=-0.21; t=-3.2; p<0.05$) and leader member relationship ($\beta=-0.18; t=-2.78; p<0.05$) on CWB and no significant influence of organizational politics on CWB. Specifically, organizational justice significantly predicted sabotage, theft, abuse against others, production deviance but did not significantly predicted withdrawal behaviour while leader member relationship significantly predicted sabotage, withdrawal, theft, abuse against others and production deviance. The findings concluded that negative perception of organizational justice and leader member relationship lead to higher tendency of engaging in counterproductive work behaviour.

Keywords: dimensions of CWB, gender, organizational politics, leader-member relationship

1.0 Introduction

The Nigerian Civil Service is a body of employees of government agency and also a branch of governmental service in which individuals are employed on the basis of their professional merit as proven by competitive examinations. This body has experienced decades of decadence and neglect literally for a long time and this can be attributed to unworkable reforms of government and the general belief that the civil service is a no man’s business therefore civil servants can do what they like at will. It is true that no nation develops beyond the capacity of its public service, and there is broad consensus amongst Nigerians that our public service is broken and dysfunctional. The quality of public servants and the services they provide to our nation are both below expectations. From the glorious days at independence when the best and brightest graduates competed to join the administrative service up until 1970s, our public service is now seen as employer of the dull, the lazy and the venal (El-Rufai, 2011).
The local government commission which is a part of the Nigerian Civil service commission is a good example of dysfunctional service in Nigeria. The local government which is the third tier of government, the closest to the people and is laden with the function of construction and maintenance of roads, street lightings, drains and other public highways; provision and maintenance of public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal; collection of rates, radio and television licences; assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying and provides and maintain primary, adult and vocational education, and health services has failed in many ramification. The local government offices are overstaffed with little or no record of achievement so far. The reason for this inefficiency and ineffectiveness in performance has always been attributed to the inefficiency of government but I think is high time we look inwards and stop blaming the government for the misfortune in the country but look at individuals contribution to the problem at hand.

It is evident that the public servants do engage in some behaviour that are unproductive, affects the organisations adversely and have negative influence on other staffs and stakeholders. Some of such behaviours include; stealing of office materials, gossip during office hours, coming to work late or not coming at all without permission of superior, verbal and physical fight, playing and watching movies during office hours, expect customers or stakeholders to bribe them before attending to files; just to mention a few. This counterproductive behaviour of public servants that leads to low performance is further enhanced by the perception of the employees of their working environment. Furthermore, perception of inequity, bad leadership, and embezzlement by leaders, unhealthy working environment, discrimination and unfair judgment further escalates this deviant behaviour of workers.

Performance is an extremely important criterion that relates to organizational outcomes and success. Coming from a psychological perspective, Campbell (1990) defines job performance in terms of individuals’ actions and behaviours that are under their control and that contribute to the goals of the organization. Job performance is multidimensional and includes task behaviour, organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) and counterproductive work behaviours (CWB). Many researchers have taken CWB and OCB as separate constructs but Kelloway et al, (2002) argued that these two dimensions simply reflect the opposite ends of the same continuum, namely role performance within the Organization. Citizenship behaviours are defined as behaviours which contribute to the goals of the organization through their effect on the social and psychological conditions (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002) while Counterproductive behaviours, on the other hand, are intentional actions by employees which circumvent the aims of the organization (Sackett & DeVore, 2001).

In organisations today, counterproductive behaviour at work is a huge issue which can have severe consequences. All it takes is one employee engaging in serious counterproductive work behaviour to have detrimental effects on an organisation. Studies have shown that between 35% and 75% of employees have admitted to stealing from their employer (McGurn, 1988, Boye & Wasserman, 1996) which resulted in over $50 billion of losses to organisations in the USA each year. Due to the large potential losses to an organisation from counterproductive behaviour, it is important that counterproductive behaviours in the workplace are not over looked. Steps need to be taken to reduce the risk of potential loss due to counterproductive behaviours occurring within the workplace.

Furthermore, CWB is employee behaviour that goes against the goals of an organization (Sackett, et.al, 2006). Counterproductive behaviours include: abusive behaviour, physical and verbal aggression, making intention improper work, sabotage, theft, absenteeism, delays etc. These
behaviours are a set of distinct acts that have common characteristics: are intentional (not accidental) and intend to harm or harm the organization and/or their stakeholders - customers, colleagues and supervisors (Spector and Fox, 2005). This growing interest in CWB is due to the common CWB occurrences in organizations which had posed adverse effects on both organizations in terms of low productivity, increased insurance costs, lost or damage property and increased turnover (Leblanc and Kelloway, 2002); Penney and Spector, 2002) and the people in terms of increased dissatisfaction (Keashly et al., 1994) and expressed job stress. Idiakhua and Obetoh (2012) have argued that counterproductive behavior of employees in Nigeria is a response to escape from felt and actual poverty hence employees result to behaviour that are of immediate benefit, self-gratification, to seek self enhancement and esteem. The effects of CWB on the organization and the people (employees and customers) will reflect in the overall organizational performance.

Factors that motivates CWB among workers may include organizational politics, organizational justice, relationship in the organization, just to mention a few. The perceptions individuals hold about the political nature of their work environment influence the way they do their jobs. These perceptions affect how employees feel about their company, boss, and co-workers, and they impact the productivity, satisfaction, and intent to turnover of the workers (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). Most of the important decisions in organizations involve allocation of scarce resources which are decisions about who gets what. Organizational politics is the use of power within an organization for the pursuit of agendas and self-interest without regard to their effect on the organization’s efforts to achieve its goals. It involves behaviours that occur on an informal basis within an organization and involve intentional acts of influence that are designed to protect or enhance individuals’ professional careers when conflicting courses of action are possible (Drory, 1993; Porter, Allen, & Angel, 1981).

Leadership–member relationship suggests that leader’s relationship is not the same towards all subordinates. These relationships range from those which are based on exchanges directly specified by the employment contract (low LMX relationships) to those which include the exchange of both material and non-material goods which extend beyond what is required by the employment contract (high LMX relationships) (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). The leader has a close nit relationship with a group of employees termed the ‘in group’ and a not close relationship with the other group named the ‘out group’. This relationship among leaders and subordinates may be as a result of personality, likeness, religion, alma-mater, ethnic affiliation. The discrimination of subordinates leads to conflict in the organisation because the leader favours the in-group with unmerited advantages at the expense of the out group which subsequently leads to unhealthy jealousy and aggression from the out-group towards the in-group. Dienesch and Liden (1986) noted that, out-group members, who generally perceive poor LMX relations, experience fewer interactions and less trust, rewards, and support from their leaders. It is logical to conclude that, over time, because out-group individuals perceive that they are treated more poorly than in-group members, they are also more likely than in-group members to feel that they are the targets of abuse.

People are naturally attentive to the justice of events and situations in their everyday lives, across a variety of contexts (Tabibnia, Satpute, & Lieberman, 2008). Fairness is often of central interest to organizations because the implications of perceptions of injustice can impact job attitudes and behaviours at work. Justice in organizations can include issues related to perceptions of fair play, equal opportunities for promotion, and personnel selection procedures. Specifically, organizational justice is concerned with the ways in which employees determine if they have been treated fairly in their jobs and the ways in which those determinations influence other work-related
variables (Moorman, 1991). Organizational justice can help explain why employees retaliate against inequitable outcomes or inappropriate processes and interactions (Alsalem and Alhaiani, 2007). The retaliation to injustice comes in form of counterproductive work behaviour such as stealing, absenteeism, lateness which are engaged in to reduce the level of stress felt towards the perception of injustice. There are three main components of organizational justice and they are distributive, procedural, and interactional justice.

Distributive justice is conceptualized as the fairness associated with decision outcomes and distribution of resources; it is fostered when outcomes are perceived to be equally applied (Adams, 1965). Procedural justice on the other hand is the processes that lead to outcomes when individuals feel that they have a voice in the process or that the process involves characteristics such as consistency, accuracy, ethicality, and lack of bias then procedural justice is enhanced (Leventhal, 1980). Interactional justice refers to the treatment that an individual receives as decisions are made and can be promoted by providing explanations for decisions and delivering the news with sensitivity and respect (Bies & Moag, 1986). The impact of organizational justice perceptions on performance is believed to stem from equity theory. This would suggest that when people perceive injustice they seek to restore justice. One way that employees restore justice is by altering their level of job performance.

There is neglect of research on the influence of organizational politics and leader-member relationship on counterproductive work behaviour among local government workers in Nigeria. The local government have long been an important part of the Nigerian Civil Service which was supposedly enacted to meet the economic, social, and psychological needs of the people in accordance with the constitution. However, the researcher has observed that the tier of government has failed to meet up with the task laden on it due to human behaviour such as stealing, lateness, power tussle, bureaucracy, bribery and so on as evident in our daily newspaper. It is a fact that no nation can develop beyond the capacity of its public service (El-Rufai, 2011) this is why counterproductive work behaviour is a problem that needs to be tackled. In view of this, there is need to identify what motivates counterproductive work behaviour among local government workers having in mind that people are different and behave differently when faced with the same situation.

1.1 Literature Review

Briggs (2012) in his study investigated the mediating role of attitude in the relationship between Individualism/Collectivism and intention to tolerate nepotism in organizations. The result shows that I-C did not significantly impact attitude towards nepotism and that there is significant positive relationship between attitude towards nepotism and intention to tolerate nepotism. Similarly, previous research on corruption has also linked I-C to behavioural intention (Davis and Ruhe, 2003). This suggests that culture plays an important role when making decisions about tolerating nepotism in organizations.

Owolabi (2012) in his study investigated the effect of organizational justice and organizational environment on turn-over intention of health workers in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The results revealed that organizational justice has a significant effect on turnover intention while organizational environment has no significant effect on turnover intention. There were no gender differences in justice perception, organizational environment and turn-over intention but there was a significant difference in justice perception and turn-over intention among the various categories of health workers; with a higher perceived injustice and turn-over intention among the nurses. The
study shows that workers perception of justice is a great determinant of their decision to either stay or leave the organizations.

In their study of justice, Skarlicki and Folger (1997) had incumbents report perceptions of distributive, interactive, and procedural justice. Co-workers were asked to complete a CWB measure on the incumbents. They found that all three measures of justice correlated significantly to CWB. What is interesting is that these correlations, ranging from -.44 to -.54 are larger than those found in studies where justice and CWB were assessed via incumbent reports. In a subsequent paper with the same dataset, Skarlicki et al. (1999) found a correlation of .19 between NA and CWB. Penney and Spector (2003) found the same correlation between NA and co-worker-assessed CWB.

Fox, Spector and Miles (2001) investigated the relations among job stressors, perceived justice, negative emotional reactions to work, counterproductive work behaviour (CWB), autonomy, and affective traits. They reported that job stressors, including perceived injustice related to both negative emotions and CWB; negative emotions related to CWB; there was at least partial mediation of emotions in the relations between job stressors and CWB. Organizational stressors (such as constraints and injustice) were more closely associated with organizational than personal types of CWB, and interpersonal conflict was more closely associated with personal than organizational CWB. Yet, the results of post hoc $z$ tests showed these differences to be significant only in the cases of autonomy and procedural justice being more strongly associated with organizational CWB and conflict being more strongly associated with personal CWB. Similarly, support for mediation was somewhat stronger for organization targeted than person-targeted CWB. Justice also was correlated significantly with both of the other job stressors (interpersonal conflict and organizational constraints). These findings lend further support to the idea that perceptions of injustice can be conceptualized as a form of perceived job stress.

Maureen, Ambrose, Mark, et al., (2002) examined the relationship between injustice and workplace sabotage. Drawing on the organizational justice and workplace deviance literatures, they hypothesize that injustice will be the most common cause of sabotage, and that the source of injustice will influence the goal, target, and severity of sabotage behaviour. The results generally supported their hypotheses. First, injustice was the most common cause of sabotage. Second, when the source of injustice was interactional, individuals were more likely to engage in retaliation, and when the source of injustice was distributive, individuals were more likely to engage in equity restoration. Third, the source of injustice and the target of sabotage were generally the same, although this relationship was stronger for organizational targets than for individual targets. They concluded that there was an additive effect of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice on the severity of sabotage.

Zarbakhsh, Shariatzadeh and Hosseinian (2013) conducted a study on the relationship of work environment variables and job satisfaction of employees with counterproductive work behaviours on university employees in West Mazandaran. The findings of the study revealed that significant relationship exist between CWB of the employees and the environmental variables (organizational justice, interpersonal conflict and organizational constraints). Ladebo, Awotunde and AbdulSalaam-Saghir (2008) examined the effects of coworkers and supervisor interactional fairness on employees’ job satisfaction, distress, and aggressive behaviour. Surveys were employed to elicit data from 270 extension personnel from two Agricultural Development Programs in Nigeria. Hierarchical regression analyses indicated that fairness from both supervisors and coworkers were negatively related to job distress and aggressive behaviours and employees would respond with dissatisfaction to unfair treatments from their supervisors. Zellars et al. (2002)
reported that subordinates who worked with abusive supervisors’ performed less organizational citizenship behaviours than their non-abused counterparts.

Shoss, et al., (2013) investigated into the reason employees who experience abusive supervision retaliate against the organization. The researchers applied organizational support theory to propose that employees hold the organization partly responsible for abusive supervision. Depending on the extent to which employees identify the supervisor with the organization (i.e., supervisor's organizational embodiment), they expected abusive supervision to be associated with low perceived organizational support (POS) and consequently with retribution against the organization. The result revealed across 3 samples, that abusive supervision was associated with decreased POS as moderated by supervisor's organizational embodiment. In turn, reduced POS was related to heightened counterproductive work behaviour directed against the organization and lowered in-role and extra-role performance. These findings suggest that employees partly attribute abusive supervision to negative valuation by the organization and, consequently, behave negatively toward and withhold positive contributions to it.

Very recently, researchers Liu, Yang and Nauta (2013) conducted a study on the relationships between supervisor conflict, procedural injustice and job strain. According to the process model of conflict, (Liu et. al., 2013) conflict typically starts when one person perceives that another has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something the first person cares about. This is often seen in the workplace and is common in the relationships held between a supervisor and an employee. The result is a strain in the equity shared between the two. Thus, because employees usually attribute procedural injustice to supervisors, Liu, Yang and Nauta's (2013) first goal was to investigate procedural injustice as a possible predictor of supervisor conflict, not just a cause. Procedural injustice, as portrayed in this study, refers to perceived unfairness with respect to the procedures used to determine outcome distributions (Liu et. al., 2013). The questions on these packets centred on supervisor conflict, procedural injustice, power distance, anxiety and depression. It was found that procedural injustice could in fact be identified as a possible predictor for supervisor conflict. Based on employee–co-worker dyad data, Liu and her colleagues (2013) found that perceived procedural injustice was positively related to reported conflict with supervisors. Second, power distance moderated procedural injustice in relation to supervisor conflict, as reported by both employees and their co-workers. Finally, supervisor conflict (self-reported) mediated the relations between procedural injustice and job strains (i.e., anxiety and depression) for employees with low to moderate power distance orientations but not for employees with high power distance orientation (Liu et. al, 2013).

Sharkawi, Abdul Rahim and Azura Dahalan, (2013) examined the relationship between person organization fit, psychological contract violation on counterproductive work behaviour in the context of manufacturing industry. Results revealed two dimensions of CWB, namely interpersonal CWB (CWB–I) and organizational CWB (CWB–O). Only PCV (Autonomy & Control) has positive relationship, and there is no significant relationship between PCV (Growth & Development), PCV (Organizational Support) with dimensions of CWB. This shows that when the employer violated the psychological contract with regards to, ‘autonomy and control’, employees would reciprocate by displaying CWB. Meanwhile, the PO Fit has negative relationship with CWB which concludes that when employees are fit with their organization, their tendency to act counterproductively will be low. Research shows the in-group members usually receive higher performance evaluations from the leader, higher satisfaction, and faster promotions than out-group members (Howell, 2012). Wang et al. (2005) suggest that subordinates have role expectations of
their leaders and that they are not passive role recipients, as they may reject, embrace, or renegotiate roles prescribed by their leaders.

In addition to situational factors, psychologists have also over time established that the environment is a very significant factor influencing behaviour across situations. The Nigerian environment is noted for its dynamism in the economic sector, political space and diverse cultural leanings across the country. Thus, it is hypothesized that organizational politics, organizational justice and leader-member relationship will significantly independently and jointly predict counterproductive work behavior among local government workers in Ibadan.

2.0 Methodology
Research Design
This is a cross-sectional survey design using ex post facto method. There was no active manipulation of the variables in the study; questionnaires were only administered on the participants to tap information on existing tendencies and behaviours. Organizational politics, organizational justice and leader-member relationship are the independent variables while counterproductive work behaviour is the dependent variable.

Participants
The participants in this study comprised of 263 local government workers in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. The age range was between 18 years to 55 years a mean age of 31.24 and standard deviation of 8.36. Males were 135 (51.3%) while females were 128 (48.7%). On marital status, 32.6% were single, 63.2% were married, while 4.2 % represents other categories. With regards to levels of education attained, 29.0% had OND, 33.2% had HND, 24.3% had B.Sc 12% had M.Sc while 1.5% had Ph.D.

Sampling Procedure
The data for this study was gathered from five different local governments in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria through personal administration of questionnaires using accidental sampling technique. Participation in the survey was strictly voluntary and anonymous. The permission for administering the questionnaires to the staffs of the local government was sought verbally at each of the administrative offices of the five local government offices used for the study and permission was fully granted verbally by the department heads. The participants were given explanations as to the purpose and nature of the research, specifically, they were told that the research is purely for academic purpose and thereby the result will not be used for any other purpose. Confidentiality was assured, verbal consent sought while they were also informed that they were not under obligation to participate and actually reserved the right to disengage at any point they felt like. Those who consented were given the questionnaires with a plea that they be as truthful as possible in their responses and that there was no right or wrong answer. Questionnaire administration and retrieval took 6 weeks with the help of three research assistants.

Instruments
A structured questionnaire, made up of 5 sections was used in data collection. Section A tapped the socio-demographic information of the participants while Section B – E were self-report validated scales measuring the variables of interest. Specifically, Section B is the Perceived Organizational Politics authored by Hochwarter, Kacmar, Perrewé, and Johnson (2003). It is a five-point response format with strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5) as endpoints is utilized. The coefficient alpha for this scale is .92. Section C is the Neihoff and Moorman (1993)
organizational justice scale, it is a Likert scale format measuring 3 domains of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional justice), the Reliability Alpha for the 3 subscales are .90, .91, and .90 respectively. Section D is the Liden and Maslyn, (1998) LMX-MDM, it is a Likert scale format measuring 4 domains of LXM (affect, loyalty, contribution and professional respect), the Alpha Coefficients for the 4 subscales are .90, .84, .75, and .93 respectively. Section E of the questionnaire contained the Spector et al., 2006 Counterproductive Work Behaviour Checklist, it is a Likert scale format measuring 5 domains (abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal), an overall Alpha Coefficient of the scale is .97.

Statistical Analysis
The data collected was analyzed using multiple regression analysis from the statistical programme for the social sciences (SPSS). Specifically, counterproductive work behaviour was regressed against the organizational politics, organizational justice and leader-member relationship.

Results
Table 1 shows the summary of multiple regression showing the independent and joint prediction of organizational politics, organizational justice and leader-member relationship on counterproductive work behaviour.

Table 1 shows that the organizational politics, organizational justice and leader-member relationship jointly predicted sabotage dimension of CWB (R = .20; R² = .04; p<.05); withdrawal dimension of CWB (R = .17; R² = .03; p < .05); theft dimension of CWB (R = .19; R² = .04; p<.05); product deviance dimension of CWB (R = .21; R² = .04; p<.05); they jointly accounted for 4% of the variance. Meanwhile, organizational justice and leader-member relationship significantly independently predicted sabotage (β = -.16, t = -2.51, p < .05; β = -.15, t = -2.39, p < .05), theft (β = -.19, t = -2.92, p < .05; β = -.13, t = -2.04, p < .05), abuse (β = -.23, t = -3.51, p < .05; β = -.16, t = -2.54, p < .05) and production deviance (β = -.14, t = -2.15, p < .05; β = -.20, t = -3.16, p < .05) dimension of CWB, and leader-member relationship significantly independently predicted withdrawal dimension of CWB (β = -.17, t = -2.65, p < .05), while organizational politics did not significantly predicted counterproductive work behaviour dimensions.

Table 4.1: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the independent and joint prediction of organizational politics, organizational justice and leader member relationship on counterproductive work behaviour

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Source: (Author’s Field Survey)

**Discussion**

The findings in this study indicated that organizational politics, organizational justice and leader-member relationship jointly predicted dimensions of CWB significantly among local government workers and individually; organizational justice and leader-member relationship negatively and independently determined CWB among local government workers. This finding corroborates the assertion of Maureen, Ambrose, Mark, Seabright and Schminke (2002) that sabotage or acts of retaliation are motivated by perceptions of organizational injustice and that injustice will influence the goal, target, and severity of sabotage behaviour. Also they find out that when injustice was interactional, people become more likely to engage in retaliation, and when the source of injustice was distributive, individuals will be more likely to engage in equity restoration. Similar result was also reported by Owolabi (2012) who found that workers perception of justice is a great determinant of their decision to either stay or leave the organizations. Also, Moorthy, et al, (2011) assert that individual variables such as need and opportunity and organizational variables such as compensation and justice served as predictors for the workplace theft behaviour of the employees. Hemdi and Nasurdin (2006) reported that procedural justice has a significant negative impact on employees’ deviant behaviours towards their organisations and towards their co-workers.

Earlier researches have also indicated significant influence of perceived organizational justice on counterproductive work behavior, specifically, Lim (2002) reports that employees who are disgruntled because they perceive that there is an imbalance in the employment relationship as a result of unjust treatment would be inclined to reinstate a sense of justice into the relationship through cyber loafing (production deviance). Greenberg and Barling (1999) found that CWB directed toward supervisors related to distributive justice, but CWB targeting co-workers or subordinates did not. The result also conforms to the study of Newton (2007) that reported that poor leader-member relations lead to CWB because individuals with detached relations tend to experience more negative emotions. The research demonstrates that detached leader-member relations lead to negative consequences for organizations, in the form of increased subordinate negative affectivity and CWB.

**3. Conclusion**

Considering the findings in this study, it becomes obvious that containing or curtailing CWB in the civil service to maintain and boost employee performance go beyond putting in place rules. Rather, the government must ensure that all employees no matter the grade are treated fairly and justly both in distribution of resources and in the procedures in making decisions about the shared resources and also ensure positive relationship between leaders and.
References


