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Workplace Deviance: A Predictive study of Occupational Stress and Emotional Intelligence among Secondary School teachers

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Abstract

The study investigated workplace deviance:A predictive study of Occupational stress and Emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers. A total number of 198 teachers from Nigeria served as participants with the mean age of 32.98,standarddeviation 0f 9.26 and age range of 22 to 54years. Three instruments were used in the study: Workplace deviance scale, Occupational stress inventory and Emotional intelligence scale. The study adopted a correlational design with Pearson Product Moment correlation as statistical tool for data analysis. The findings indicated a significant relationship between occupational stress and workplace deviance of secondary school teachers at $p<.05$ level of significance. This indicated that teachers' occupational stress was related to their workplace deviance. Furthermore, the findings also indicated a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance at $P<.05$ level of significance. Hence, findings were discussed and recommendations were made accordingly based on the findings.

Keywords. Workplace Deviance, Occupational Stress, Emotional Intelligence.

Introduction
Background of the study

The hallmark of nation's economic sustainability relies heavily on the harmonious work environment, efficient workforce and the strength of organisations to meet with its set goals and objectives. In Nigeria, work environments are characterised with a host of deviant behaviours that inhibits the growth and development of any society. Workplace deviance (also known as counter productive work behavior) is one of the organizational factors that are antithetical to organizational progress. According to Benneth and Robinson (2000) workplace deviant behaviour is an occupational crime that may vary along a continuum of severity, from minor acts such as embarrassing co-workers and leaving early, to serious acts, such as sabotage and theft. Victims of workplace deviant behaviour include employers, employees or both. An

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act can be a workplace deviant if it violates the major rules of organizational life (Spector & Fox, 2002). This includes absenteeism, abusing sick day privileges, abusing drugs and alcohol, filing fake accident claims, sabotaging, breaking organizations' rules, withholding effort, stealing, taking long breaks, working slowly, harassing other employees and hiding needed resources (Abdul,2008). Robinson and Bennett (1995) defined workplace deviance as voluntary behavior of organizational members that violates significant organizational norms, and in so doing, threatens the well-being of the organization and/or its members at the work place. The workplace is a forum where a variety of different behaviors are expressed, each with a different consequence to the individuals within the organization as well as the entire organization. These behaviors usually fall within the constructs of the norms of the organization (Appelbaum,Iaconi & Matousek 2007). Organizational norms are a grouping of expected behaviors, languages, principles and postulations that allow the workplace to perform at a suitable pace. However, when normal work behavior goes outside the norms of the organization, its consequences are far-reaching and affect all levels of the organization including its decision-making processes, productivity and financsial costs (Coccia, 1998). Researchers have given these behaviours many different names including workplace deviance (Bennett and Robinson, 2000), counterproductive behavior (Mangione and Quinn, 1975), and antisocial behavior (Giacolone and Greenberg, 1997).

In essence, behavior is deemed deviant when an organization's customs, policies, or internal regulations are violated by an individual or a group that may jeopardize the well-being of the organization or its citizens (Bennett and Robinson 2003). The management of deviant behavior in the workplace is of growing concern in organizations globally since such behaviors can be detrimental to their financial well-being. Whether the deviance is explicit or subconscious, whether it involves sexual harassment, vandalism, rumour spreading, and corporate sabotage or otherwise, unauthorized organizational behavior has negative consequences for the entity. Such factor can subject any organization to a defunct state if not checkmated. For instance, Omar,Halim,Zainab,Farhadi,Nasir & Khairudi (2011) noted that billions of dollars have been wasted on workplace deviance nationwide. He maintained that deviant behavior is of exorbitant cost when it comes to the deviance toward an organisation. Due to its costly and harmful consequences, Vardi and Weitz (2004), suggested that more studies are needed to understand the determinants and occurrences of deviant behaviour at the workplace. To this end, this present study is aimed at examining some organizational factors like emotional intelligence and occupational stress as predictors of workplace deviant behaviours.

Whether the deviance is explicit or subconscious, whether it involves sexual harassment, vandalism, rumour spreading, and corporate sabotage or otherwise, unauthorized organizational behavior has negative consequences for the entity. The exhibition of such ugly behaviour may be as a result of some factors like lack of emotional intelligence and occupational stress.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is viewed as a person's capacity to appropriately regulate his/her emotions, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and action (Ofoegbu and Ayobami, 2013). The construct of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been found to be an important predictor of various enviable organizational outcomes, such as job performance, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational commitment (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008). In addition, the neurological science

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literature suggests that there is a positive   relation   between emotional intelligence and performance (Bechara, Tranel, & Damasio, 2000). The construct of emotional intelligence was initially proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990), but it was Goleman (1995) who has popularized the concept. Goleman (1998) defined El as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in us and in our relationships.

Cote and Miner (2006) argued that emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence interact to influence performance. It is a fact that it takes more than traditional cognitive intelligence to be successful at work. It also, takes emotional intelligence; the ability to restrain negative feelings such as anger and self-doubt, and rather focus on positive ones such as confidence to be successful at work.

He further expatiated that emotional facilitation of thought means the ability to incorporate feelings, and potential of feelings to guide the individual.

Of recent, in Nigeria, research attention on emotional intelligence has proliferated across disciplines and among researchers (Adeyemo & Ogunyemi, 2005). Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) corroborated this by asserting that social scientists are just beginning to uncover the relationship of El to other phenomena. The general contention of these researchers is that emotional intelligence as a construct of interest is germane to the wellbeing of man, organization and his society.

By definition, Emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in us and in our relationships. It describes abilities in distinct form but complementary to academic intelligence or the purely cognitive capacities measured by intelligence quotient (Goleman, 1995). It is also the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotion and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Emotional intelligence reflects one's ability to deal with daily environmental challenges and helps predict one's success in life, including professional and personal pursuits.

The above indicate the dynamism and relevance of emotional intelligence in human endeavours (including work place and organization). Goleman (1995) lent a support to this by asserting that emotional intelligence involves the skills that help people harmonize; and what has become increasingly valued as a work place asset in the years to come. This again underscores the importance of emotional intelligence.

Occupational stress as another predictor variable of interest in this study is usually defined in terms of the internal and external conditions that lead to a situation "that threatens to exceed the person's capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he expects a substantial differential in the rewards and costs from meeting the demand versus not meeting it" (McGrath, 1982). This definition implies that the degree of stress is correlated with a person's perceived inability to deal with the organizational and/or personal demand. This would lead to the conclusion that a person's level of stress depends on their self-perceived abilities and self-confidence in dealing with challenges that they face in their organizational life. Williams and Huber (1986) defined stress as "a psychological and physical reaction to prolonged internal and/or environmental conditions in which an individual's adaptive

capabilities are overextended." Like McGrath, they point out that stress is a result of a "perceived" threat, and is not necessarily related to actual environmental conditions. The amount of stress that is produced by a given situation is dependent upon one's perception of the situation, but not the actual nature of the situation itself. It should be noted that from an individual perspective not all stress is negative. Pleasant stress, called "Eustress" by some researchers, describes the feelings of stress felt when one is experiencing happy events such as marriage, moving to a favourite home, promotions, travelling and others.

In terms of eustress perspective, occupational stress occurs when employees' knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes can cope or match with their work demands and pressures in organizations. In this situation, it may increase the ability of employees to manage their physiological and psychological stress. Conversely, in a distress perspective, work stress presents when employees knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes cannot cope with or do not match to their work demands and pressures in organizations. Consequently, it may decrease the ability of employees to control and manage physiological and psychological stress, such as disturb their self-regulatory bodies, and cannot meet their duties and responsibilities as a member of an organization and good citizen of a country (Basowitz,Persky,Korchin & Grinker 1995).

From an organizational perspective, stress can be constructive if it can motivate employees to solve problems (Beilock 2008). As long as a person appraises potentially stressful events as challenging, stress can actually expand a person's abilities and capabilities. By stretching people to their individual limits, they will experience professional and personal growth and development.

In organizational context, job stress has two major dimensions: physiological stress and psychological stress. Physiological stress is often viewed as a physiological reaction of the body (headache, migraine, abdominal pain, lethargic, backache, chest-pain, fatigue, heart palpitation, sleep disturbance and muscle ache) to various stressful triggers at the work place. Conversely, psychological stress is often seen as an emotional reaction (anxiety and depression, job alienation, hostility, tension, anger, nervousness, irritability, and frustration) experienced by an individual at the work place.

Based on these outlined obvious impacts of work place deviance in the society, this study is structured to answer the following research questions:

i.   Will occupational stress significantly predict workplace deviant behaviour among secondary school teachers?
ii.   Will emotional intelligence significantly predict workplace deviant behaviour among secondary school teachers?

Purpose of the study

- To determine if occupational stress will significantly relate to workplace deviant behaviour among secondary school teachers?
- To determine if emotional intelligence will significantly relate to workplace deviant behaviour among secondary school teachers?

Relevance of the study

This research is of relevance for it will help the management of secondary schools and other organizations to understand the roles of occupational stress and emotional intelligence on work

place deviance. It will also help them to map out means of controlling work related stress to alleviate the menace of work place deviance that are associated with it.

Hypotheses

Based on the questions the study is set to answer, the following hypotheses will be tested in the course of the study:

I.   Occupational stress will significantly and positively relate to work place deviance among secondary school teachers.
II. Emotional intelligence will significantly and positively relate to workplace deviance among secondary school teachers.

METHOD

Participants

One hundred and ninety eight (198) secondary school teachers from Awka, Anambra State Nigeria served as participants in this study. The participants were selected through simple random sampling technique. The ages of the participants ranged from 22 to 54 years, with a mean age of 32.98 years and standard deviation of 9.26.

Instruments

Three instruments were used in this study. The first is an Occupational stress inventory which consisted of 13 items adopted from Seaward's (2005) physiological stress scale. The second scale was work place deviance scale which was measured using 10-item scale by Bennett, and Robinson (2000), while the third instrument was emotional intelligence scale which consisted of 11 items by Goleman (1998).

Reliability

Seaward(2005) reported an alpha co-efficient of 0.91 for the occupational stress scale, while Goleman (1998) reported an alpha coefficient reliability coefficient of 0.74 on emotional intelligence scale. Also, the researchers subjected the three instruments to pilot study to determine their reliability in Nigerian setting using 50 teachers that were different from the ones used in the main study. Using split half reliability, the researcher obtained an alpha co-efficient of 0.89 under occupational stress, and 0.94 under work place deviance scale. Under emotional intelligence scale, an alpha coefficient reliability of 0.68 was obtained. These scores indicated that the three instruments have high internal consistency and on that ground, they were adopted for the study.

Procedure

The researchers employed simple random sampling technique to select some teachers from Awka the state capital of Anambra state for the conduct of the research.

The researchers went to different schools on different occasions to obtain permission to conduct the research. The nature of the research was also explained to the management of the schools. Permission was granted to conduct the research and a date was given to the researchers to conduct the research. On the agreed date, the researchers went to the schools for the research. With the help of some teachers, the researchers were able to administer the questionnaire. A total of 220 copies of the questionnaires were administered but 198 were properly filled and returned, hence were used for the study.

Design/ Statistics

The research design was correlational design. Based on the design, Pearson product moment correlation was adopted as the statistical tool to analyze the data.

RESULT

The study made use of pearson product moment correlation statistics. Based on this analysis, the following findings were made:

Hypothesis 1: Occupational stress will significantly and positively relate to work place deviance among secondary school teachers.

Table 1: Correlation between occupational stress and workplace deviance among teachers.

		Occupational Stress	Workplace Deviance
occupational stress	Pearson Correlation	1	.32(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	198	198
work place deviance	Pearson Correlation	.32(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	198	198

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the table, Occupational stress had a significant positive correlation with workplace deviance at r (1, 198)= . 32, P<.05. Therefore, hypothesis one was accepted.

Hypothesis 2: Emotional intelligence will significantly and positively relate to workplace deviance among secondary school teachers.

Table 2: Correlation between emotional intelligence and workplace-deviance.

		Emotional Intelligence	Workplace Deviance
emotional intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	-.53(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	198	198
work place deviance	Pearson Correlation	-.53(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00	
	N	198	198

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the table, Emotional intelligence had significant correlation with workplace deviance at r (1, 198)= -.53, P<.05. Therefore, hypothesis two was accepted.

DISCUSSION

In this study, two different hypotheses were tested. The first hypothesis which stated that there will be a positive relationship between occupational stress and work place deviance was accepted. This shows that occupational stress can significantly predict work place deviance among teachers. The findings of the study is in agreement with the work of Salami(2010) who investigated the relationship between job stress and counterproductive work behaviour(CWB) and the moderating effect of negative affectivity on the relationship. The data analysed using hierarchical multiple regression indicated job stress and negative affectivity to be positively correlated with CWB. Negative affectivity moderated the relationship between job stress and CWB such that high levels of CWB occurred when job stress and negative affectivity were both high. The findings is also in support of the findings of Omar,Halim,Zainab,Farhadi,Nadir & Khairudin(2011) whose study investigated stress and job satisfaction as antecedents of workplace deviance behaviour using civil servants in Malaysia. The findings indicated a positive relationship between stress and workplace deviance.

In addition, the second hypothesis which stated that there will be a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace deviance was confirmed. The finding showed that emotional intelligence contributes to employee's workplace deviance among teachers. This may be as a result of the fact that teaching as a profession needs emotional intelligence or interpersonal relationship skill for proficiency reduction of deviance in the work place to be assured. However,This findings of this study is not in support with that of Siu(2009) who found emotional intelligence to be inversely related to counterproductive work behaviour.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researchers concludes that occupational stress is positively related to work place deviance. Secondly, emotional intelligence is also positively related to work place deviance.

Implication of the study

The findings implied that emotional intelligence and occupational stress should not be ignored on the course of finding a way of reducing work place deviance among teachers or organisational members.

Recommendations

More research energy should be channelled towards unravelling other factors that are related to deviance among teachers other than emotional intelligence and job stress. Government should invest more on research, workshops and seminars on the means of boosting teachers' emotional intelligence and also means of positively reducing their work stress in other to ensure proficiency in the profession.

Limitations

Most prospective participants were reluctant to fill the questionnaire because of the number of the items in the questionnaire.

Suggestions for further studies

Any research of this nature should be conducted in different locations by subsequent researchers. This will help to increase the generalization of their findings.

Subsequent researchers should learn how to employ adequate rapport creation on the course of looking for participants.

More research should be conducted on the areas of emotional intelligence, job stress, and work place deviance. This will help to increase the availability of literature materials with respect to the aforementioned constructs within Nigerian context.

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