

# Exploratory Study of Job Insecurity and Entrepreneurial Intention as Correlates of Counterproductive Work Behaviour

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## Abstract

*In this study, job insecurity and entrepreneurial intention were explored to determine their relationships with counterproductive work behavior. A total of 257 bankers from 23 banks in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria served as respondents in the study. The participants were selected using stratified sampling method. Out of the 257 participants 142 (55.3%) were males while 115 (44.7%) were females. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 50 years with a mean age of 29.41 years and standard deviation of 7.08. Counterproductive work behaviour was measured using a 10-item scale. Job insecurity was measured with a 7- item scale. 4-item scale was used to measure entrepreneurial intentions. Pearson product moment correlation was adopted as a statistical tool for data analysis. The result showed that job insecurity had significant positive relationship with counterproductive work behavior,  $r(257) = .66, P < .05$ . Therefore, hypothesis one which states that there will be a significant relationship between job insecurity and counterproductive work behavior was accepted. The result also indicated that entrepreneurial intention had significant positive relationship with counter productive work behavior,  $r(257) = .33, P < .05$ . Therefore, hypothesis two which stated that there will be a significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behaviour was accepted.*

**Key words:** Job Insecurity, Entrepreneurial Intention and Counter Productive Work Behaviour

## Introduction

Counterproductive work behaviour among bankers is one of the factors that are suspected to be among the major cause of poor performance by bank employees. It is like a hydra-headed monster which, if left uncontrolled in an organization, has the potentials to bring such organization to a defunct state. As a result of its pervasive nature, the concept (counterproductive work behaviour), in recent years has generated high interest among organizational researchers and practitioners. To buttress this, Muafi (2011) stated that counterproductive work behaviour has always been an interesting topic to be observed by both academicians and practitioners. He added that the behaviour is a very serious problem in

manufacturing organizations. For instance, billions of dollars have been wasted on counterproductive work behaviour (Omar, 2011). Due to its costly and harmful consequences, Vardi and Weitz (2004), suggested that more studies are needed to understand the determinants of counterproductive work behaviour at the workplace. Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) refers to willful behaviors by employees that have the potential to harm an organization, its members, or both (Spector & Fox, 2005). CWB has been investigated under various labels, including workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2003) and antisocial behaviour (Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997). However, the link between counterproductive work behaviour and some organizational factors such as job insecurity and entrepreneurial intention is yet to be fully explored among bankers in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Counterproductive work 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 (Kwok, Au & Ho, 2005). It is also seen as an element of job performance and includes phenomena such as theft, property destruction, misuse of information, unsafe behaviour, poor attendance, and poor quality work (Idiakheua, & Obetoh, 2012). Also, an act can be a workplace deviance if it violates the major rules of organizational life (Spector & Fox, 2005). 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).

Workplace counterproductive behaviour violates organizational norms and threatens the organization (Bennett and Robinson, 2000). In banks every bank employee is expected to observe specified institutional rules and regulations. If a banker does not observe these specified behaviours (which are seen as the basic expected bank norms) such as bank timings, good relationship with customers and desired behavior with colleagues, it shows counterproductive work behaviour. Robinson and Kelly (1998), highlighted that individuals' counterproductive work behaviours are shaped by the influence of their co-workers, as they found significant relationship between the level of anti-social behavior exhibited by newly inducted individuals, and that which was exhibited by their co-workers. They visualized that the newly recruited bankers usually work honestly in the beginning of their career but after some time they also indulge in the same type of deviant behaviour.

Counterproductive work behaviour is harmful for the bank and customers in all its forms, whether it is overt or covert. Therefore, for such behaviour to be controlled, its antecedents need to be known and shared. This can be achieved through empirical investigation. When this is done, the problem of counter productive work behaviour will be ameliorated because problem known and shared is problem half solved.

Job insecurity is a condition wherein employees lack the assurance that their jobs will remain stable from day to day, week to week and year to year (Sweets, 2006). According to the two dimensions theory of job insecurity (Hellgren, Sverke & Issakson, 1999), quantitative job

insecurity refers to concerns about the future existence of the present job, while qualitative job insecurity refers to perceived threats of impaired quality in the employment relationship. As organizations no longer guarantee lifetime employment, the job security of ordinary workers became more and more endangered (Jeon, 2009). Currently, part-time work is increasing as a result of a decrease in the number of full-time jobs (Booth, Francesconi, & Frank, 2002). Because of the logic that mass production by workers with part-time jobs is cost-effective compared with the cost of hiring full-time employees, jobs have become increasingly insecure, simultaneously intensifying competitiveness in the market (Booth, Francesconi, & Frank, 2002). Based on this premise, this present study is aimed at examining some factors (job insecurity and age) that are likely to predispose employees to counterproductive work behavior.

Recently, a survey conducted in Korea investigated changes in national consciousness ten years after International Monetary Fund (IMF). When asked to answer questions about the considerations used in selecting jobs, participants selected job security (55.7%) as the most important consideration among all factors. Pay level (14%) while aptitude and interest in job (12.5%) followed (Dong-A Newspaper, 2007). This result shows that job security was the most important job consideration because the status of jobs has fallen into the most insecure state since the IMF crisis.

According to Ashford, Lee, and Bobko (1989), lack of job security (i.e job insecurity) leads to attitudinal reactions, such as intention to quit, reduced dedication, and reduced satisfaction. Workers in the 1950s may have sold their soul to the corporation, but the recompense for self-denial was lifetime employment and a guaranteed standard of living (Roskies & Louis-Guerin, 1990). Ashford et al. (1989) proposed that job insecurity would be positively related to both employees' dedication and their trust in a firm. These relationships occur primarily because insecure employees lose faith in the dependability of their organizations, and their attachment to these firms may diminish accordingly. Yousef (1998) found that satisfaction with job security affects dedication to the organization in his study of expatriates. Organizations might exchange short-term performance of their employees at the expense of losing trust and employees' dedication if it leads to the long-term success of the organization (Tyler, 2003).

Job security plays an important role in both social and working life because it helps individuals not to worry about their future, contributes to maintaining labor peace, increasing organizations' productivity and protecting social balance and values (Senol, 2011). For this very reason, in order not to cause employee's prestige loss in society, employees should not be dismissed from the organizations without reasonable grounds, because job security has political and social dimensions. Therefore, if in a country employees are dismissed without a reason, it is difficult to talk about social order, peace and stability (Guzel, 2001).

Today, job security is perceived as an indispensable right of an employee which guarantees that the employee and his/her family will not be deprived of their income and thus maintain an honorable life (Senol, 2011). Thus, employees consider the condition of job security just at the beginning of their careers so as to feel confident about the future. They oppose governments' privatization policies in order not to lose this warranty or prefer to work in public sector though they may earn less as compared to those working in the private sector due to public sector's offer job security. A secure job is an employees' requirement and wish. When an employee feels that he or she is secured in the work organization, the employee is likely to be committed or dedicated to the organization. This may be one of the reasons Abdullah, (2012) stated that

job insecurity affects an employee's commitment or dedication to the organization and as such can lead to counterproductive work behaviour.

Apart from job insecurity, entrepreneurial intention is another factor that is likely to predispose employees to counterproductive work behaviour. Entrepreneurial intention is the process of exploring the opportunities in the market place and arranging resources required to exploit these opportunities for long term gain. It is also the pursuit of opportunity without regard to resources currently controlled (Stevenson, 1983). In addition, job displacement, limited advancement opportunities, frustration with current employers, management policies and practices, and changes in market have also been found to be strong motivational factor for why individual start their own business (Kickul & Zaper, 2000). When an employee has the interest of establishing a particular business, there is every tendency that the employee may be less committed to his or her present job. When such behaviour ensured, the employee may be predisposed to counterproductive work behaviour.

In Nigeria, counterproductive work behaviour is economically debilitating. For instance, billions of naira have been wasted on workplace deviance in most Nigerian organisations (Omar, 2011). However, adequate scientific energy is yet to be channeled to unveil the factors determining the ugly situation among bankers. The few available research on the concept (counterproductive work behaviour) has not established the link between job insecurity, entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behaviour among bankers. Based on these problems, this study is structured to answer the following research questions:

- Will there be any significant relationship between job insecurity and counterproductive work behaviour among bankers?
- Will there be any significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behaviour among bankers?

This study is of great significance for it will help to increase the volume of current literature materials on the areas of counterproductive work behaviour and its antecedents, thereby making research easy for subsequent researcher in terms of having access to literature materials.

Finally, this research is of relevance for it will help policy makers in terms of formulating policies that will help to curb the excesses of counterproductive work behaviour among Nigerian employees. This may bring about reduction in deviant acts in our society.

Reviewing past empirical works, Reisel, Probst, Chia, Maloles & Konig (2010) examined the effects of job insecurity on three outcomes: job attitudes (satisfaction), work behaviors (organizational citizenship behavior and deviant behavior), and negative emotions (anxiety, anger, and burnout). A total of 320 U.S. managers responded to a self-report electronic survey. Additionally, two independent referees analyzed and rated a subset of the sample of managers' (N = 97) comments over an electronic discussion group about their job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and deviant behavior. Analyses of both sets of data showed that job insecurity is negatively related to satisfaction and that job insecurity has both direct and indirect effects on work behaviors and emotions.

Fagbohunge, Akinbode, & Ayodeji,(2012) examined the relationship between employee's organizational reactions and deviant behaviours in the workplace. Drawing on the organizational climate and workplace deviance literatures, they hypothesize that deviant workplace behaviours of males will be significantly different from that of their female counterpart and that there will be a significant positive relationship between employees organisational reactions and various facets of deviant behaviour in the workplace. The study was anchored on Affective Events Theory, Agency Theory and Robinson & Bennett Typology of Deviance behaviour Theory. Six hundred and ninety six (696) employees completed the surveys. The results supported our hypotheses. First, male participants were significantly different from their female counterparts on production deviance, personal aggression, political deviance and property deviance respectively. Specifically, production deviance, personal aggression and political deviance were higher among females than males. Second, multiple regression analysis revealed that organisational reaction variables (supervision, company identification, kinds of work, amount of work, co-workers, physical work conditions and financial rewards) are significant predictors of different facets of workplace deviant behaviours among workers. Finally, mean deviant behaviours of males at both controlled work environment and less controlled work environment was higher and significantly different from that of their female counterparts. Interaction between gender and work environment control was not significant as expected.

Gbadamosi & Nwosu (2011), examined the effect of entrepreneurial intention, organizational justice, and job satisfaction on the organizational commitment of Babcock University Staff. Participants were 180 employees (male= 99, female= 81) randomly selected from 4 faculties and the registry unit of the University. Measures of entrepreneurial intention, organizational justice, job satisfaction and organizational commitment were administered on the sample. Three (3) research hypotheses were formulated and tested using t-test, Multiple Regression Analysis and correlation analysis. Findings revealed that job satisfaction and organizational justice are the potent predictors of organizational commitment while entrepreneurial intentions will lead to turnover intentions among employees. Also, gender has no moderating effect on the relationship between the criterion and the predictor variables.

Having looked at all this, the study then intends to see if job insecurity and entrepreneurial intention engender counterproductive work behavior among bankers. To address this, the following hypotheses were formulated;

- **H1** - There will be a significant relationship between job insecurity and counterproductive work behaviour among bankers.
- **H2** - There will be a significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behaviour among bankers.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

A total of 257 bankers from 23 banks in Awka, Anambra State served as respondents in the study. The participants were selected through convenience sampling (volunteer method). Out of the 257 participants 142 (55.3%) were males while 115 (44.7%) were females. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 50 years with a mean age of 29.41 years and standard deviation of 7.08.

### **Instruments**

Counterproductive work behaviour was measured using a 10-item scale by Bennett, and Robinson (2000), while Job insecurity was measured with 7-item scale by a group of Swedish scholars (Hellgren, Sverke, & Issakson, 1999). The response options of the two instruments were based on five point likert format; (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neutral, (4) strongly disagree, (5) disagree. Two items from Crant (1996) were used to measure entrepreneurial intentions; "I will probably own my own business one day" and "It is likely that I will personal own a small business in the relatively near future" Also, two additional items from Kickul & Zaper (2000) were added; "Being 'my own boss' is an important goal of mine", and "I often hi of having my own business". Responses to these items were indicated on a seven – point likert scale.

### **Validity/ Reliability**

The validity of the instruments were determined by psycho-metricians who are versed in the areas of psychometric properties. After thorough examination of the instruments; the face and content validity of the instruments were approved by the psychometricians.

However, the instruments were also subjected to pilot test by the researcher in order to obtain their reliabilities using alpha reliability test. An alpha co-efficient of 0.62, was obtained under the counter productive work behavior scale. This indicated that the instrument has high internal consistency. On that premise; it was adopted as suitable instrument for the study.

Job insecurity scale was also revalidated in the context of this research through pilot test. An alpha reliability of 0.72 was obtained. While for entrepreneurial intention scale, the pilot study indicated a cronbach alpha reliability of 0.63.

### **Procedure**

The researcher went to the bank managements to obtain permission to conduct the research. The nature of the research was explained to the management, after which permission was granted to the researcher to conduct the research. On the agreed date, the researcher went to the various banks to conduct the research. With the help of the branch manager(operations) of each bank and some staff, the researcher was able to meet the bankers during their working hours for the distribution of the questionnaires. Due to the nature of their work, the participants were allowed to go home with the questionnaires and return them the next day. They were also given instructions on how to answer/fill the questionnaires and were advised to do so honestly. The next day, the researcher went to the banks and collected the questionnaires. A total of 272 questionnaires were administered out of which 261 were returned giving a return rate of 96.0% and 257 representing 98.5% were found useable, and as such utilized in the study.



**Design/ Statistics**

The study has job insecurity and entrepreneurial intention as its predictor variable, while counterproductive work behavior is the criterion variable. Correlation design was adopted for the study while Pearson product moment correlation statistics was used in testing the hypotheses.

**RESULTS**

The results of the statistical analysis of the data obtained in the study are presented in the tables below.

**Table 1:** Presented the summary of correlation between job insecurity and counterproductive work behaviour.

		Job Insecurity	Counterproductive work behavior
Job Insecurity	Pearson Correlation	1	.66(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	257	257

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

Result from table one showed that job insecurity had a significant positive relationship with counterproductive work behavior,  $r(257) = .66, P < .05$ . Therefore, hypothesis one which states that there will be a significant relationship between job insecurity and counterproductive work behavior was accepted.

**Table 2:** Presented the summary of correlation between entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behavior.

		Entrepreneurial Intention	Counterproductive work behavior
Entrepreneurial Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.33(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.00
	N	257	257

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

Results from table two indicated that entrepreneurial intention had a significant positive relationship with counterproductive work behavior,  $r(257) = .33, P < .05$ . Therefore, hypothesis two which stated that there will be a significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behaviour was accepted.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of the study showed that the first hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant relationship between job insecurity and counterproductive work behaviour was accepted. This shows that bankers are more likely to exhibit counter productive work behaviour as a result of job insecurity. For instance, some bankers, due to the antagonistic behaviour they may be receiving from their boss may heighten the stress associated with their work. Such stress may instigate the employees to start seeing their work environment to be unsecured and as such, they may start exhibiting counterproductive work behaviour that will help them to cope with the stress. According to Lazarus' stress theory (1984), the interpretation of a stressor goes through two evaluation processes: primary and secondary. At first, individuals evaluate whether a stressor will be threatening or not. Then, individuals evaluate whether they can control the stressor with available resources. If the stressor proves to be controllable, individuals decide to change the situation by confronting the problem. If the stressor proves to be uncontrollable, individuals strive to alleviate the stress-related problem through a coping strategy which may be a counterproductive behaviour in the work organization. Such counter productive work behavior includes absenteeism, lateness to work, lack of work commitment and so on.

Also the second hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant relationship between entrepreneurial intention and counterproductive work behaviour was accepted. This shows that entrepreneurial intention can predispose employees to counterproductive work behavior. The above finding is in line with that of Gbadamosi and Nwosu (2011). They examined the effect of entrepreneurial intention, organizational justice, and job satisfaction on the organizational commitment of Babcock University Staff. The result revealed that entrepreneurial intention affects workers behaviour. Cloward (1959) suggests that differential opportunity structures exist in society that lead to differences between classes in the level of opportunity to attain desired goals. It is suggested that if more opportunities, that is, employment options, were available to lower class individuals their likelihood of exhibiting counterproductive behaviour will be reduced. Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that entrepreneurial intention and job insecurity are significant correlates of counterproductive work behavior.

Thus, it is recommended that bank management and employers should not ignore the role of job insecurity and entrepreneurial intention on counterproductive workplace behaviour among its employees or workers.

## **Conclusion**

Although generalization of this study is limited by its scope, the study is nonetheless a major contribution to existing literature on the extent job insecurity and entrepreneurial intention influences counterproductive behavior. It is also of relevance, for it will help Policy makers in terms of formulating policies that will help to curb the excesses of workplace counterproductive behaviour among employees. This may bring about reduction in deviant acts/behaviours in our society. Further study is advocated in this area, so as to close gaps that have not been covered by the present study, such as x-raying more factors that will influence counterproductive work behaviour.



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