



The Causes Of Productive Deviant Behaviours: A Survey Of Workers Perspective

Yeboah Asuamah Samuel

Marketing Department, Sunyani Polytechnic, Ghana

Peter Ansu-Mensah

Marketing Department, Sunyani Polytechnic, Ghana

Kwabena Adjei

Commercial Studies Department, Sunyani Polytechnic, Ghana

Abstract:

The paper aimed at contributing to the body of knowledge in the area of production deviant behaviour or counterproductive deviant behaviours (CWB) by assessing respondents understanding of CWB and the reasons that influence the occurrence of CWB. The paper is based on quantitative descriptive survey of workers in Sunyani Township. A sample of 174 was selected using convenient sample method and primary data collected through using self-designed questionnaire administered at the work place. Results indicate that respondents do not support CWB, and will report the occurrence to management. Respondents have seen co-workers engaged in CWB at their job places with majority of the respondents not engaged in CWB. The three most important reasons workers indulge in CWB are dissatisfaction with the job; type of person and because deviant behaviours are not punished. Management of organisations should focus on both personal and organisational factors in trying to prevent CWB in an organisation. They should strengthen internal control systems in order to detect and prevent these behaviours. Future studies should focus on causal studies and also increase sample size.

Keywords: *Counterproductive deviant behaviours; Dissatisfaction; leaving work early; wasting resources;*

1.Introduction

Many employees indulge in various behaviours at the work place which are considered as deleterious to the survival of the organisations they work in and the members in the organisation (Spector & Fox, 2002). These behaviours are called production deviant behaviours (CWB) or counterproductive deviant behaviours (CWB). According to Robinson and Bennett (1995) a behaviour is considered deviant if 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”

Some of these behaviours according to various researchers (Marcus et al., 2002; Hollinger et al., 1992; Kamp & Brooks, 1991; Caudill, 1988; Taylor, 1986) are stealing or theft; absenteeism; taking unauthorised long break; taking kickbacks; embezzling money; and giving away of company property to others, either at no charge or at a substantial discount; sabotage; verbal abuse; withholding of effort; lying; refusing to cooperate; lateness; fraud; substance use and physical assault.

Due to the negative effects of production deviance on the survival and growth of organisations many researchers (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Bies & Tripp, 1998; Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; O’Leary-Kelly, et al., 1996; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Baron & Neuman, 1996; Hogan & Hogan, 1989) have spent a lot of resources to study the causes and the appropriate solution strategies under different topics or concepts.

Various researchers (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Vigoda, 2002; Baron & Neuman, 1996; Keashly, 1994; Benminson, 1994) have identified negative effects of production deviance on organisations. Among the identified effects are lost productivity, increased insurance costs, lost or damaged property, increased turnover, increased dissatisfaction, and experience of job stress.

The causes of various production deviances have been investigated in research by researchers (Kulas et.al., 2007; Appalbaum et al., 2005; Fox et al. 2001; Huiras et.al., 2000; Aquino et al. 1999; Skarlicki et al. 1999; Boye & Jones, 1997; Schein, 1985) and have identified determinants of production deviance as environmental antecedents (job stressors) and personality traits (negative affectivity).

1.2.Problem Statement/Justification/Significance

Studies have established significant cost to organisations in which production deviant behaviours occur (Peterson, 2002). In the United States of America there is considerable

cost to organisations and many organisations have collapsed due to production deviant behaviours such as theft.

Almost all companies have experienced these bad behaviours which threaten their survival and that in the U.S. the cost of theft to Companies is around \$50 billion annually on the economy (Henle et al., 2005).

According to Robinson and Bennett (1995) up to 75 percent of employees have engaged in one form or another of the following deviant behaviors: theft, computer fraud, embezzlement, vandalism, sabotage or absenteeism and that the estimated cost to companies is around \$6 to \$200 billion annually.

In addition to these, there are cost to members in the organisations these bad behaviour occur (Henle et al., 2005). Among the effects are stress-related problems which may lead to decreased productivity, lost work time and high turnover rate among other employees.

According to Appelbaum et al. (2007) there is “great incentive, financial and otherwise, for organizations to prevent and discourage any negative workplace deviance within their walls”. In view of these the researchers explore and describe counterproductive deviant behaviours among employees in SMEs in Ghana in order to provide solutions to address the problem. In the knowledge of the researchers no such empirical works have been done in the study area. Hence, the paper fills the literature gap by adding to literature.

The findings are expected to provide answers to the research questions raised in order to provide further understanding on the theories of counterproductive deviant behaviours. Managers are also provided with policy guide on the solutions and causes of counterproductive deviant behaviours. Future researchers in similar areas will also find the findings relevant.

1.3.General Objectives/Specific Objectives

The paper contributes to the body of knowledge in the area of counterproductive deviant behaviour by exploring its existence and frequencies of its occurrence and also examine its effect on the organisation from the perspectives of the employees. Specifically, the researchers examine

- Employees knowledge level of CWB,
- Causes of CWB,
- Workers attitude towards CWB in relation to reporting to management.

1.4. Research Questions/Hypotheses

The research provides answers to the following research questions in order to solve the research problem the paper addresses. These questions are

- How does a respondent consider CWB?
- What are the causes of CWB?

1.5. Assumptions

The paper is based on these assumptions.

- Demographic and social variables significantly affect the mean responses on deviant behaviours, reasons of deviant behaviour and attitude towards deviant behaviour.
- Workers engage in CWB.

1.6. Limitations/Scope

The study is based on self-reported responses of employees; hence issues such as respondent's bias may affect the results. Also, some respondents felt reluctant to answer the questions for fear of been identified by management. The use of convenience sample does not also allow the findings to be generalised to the larger population.

On the issue of scope the study does not focus on the occurrence of positive CWB and also on the estimation of cost of CWB to the organisations in the study. The study does not also consider the views of management or owners of organisation.

2. Research Methodology

The paper is an exploratory, descriptive, quantitative and cross section survey research using 174 employees of SMEs selected by the use of convenience sample method. Primary data for analysis was collected using self-designed questionnaire administered at the work places of the respondents with the help of research assistants who were students. Data was analysed using frequencies, percentages, ANOVA, Chi-Square and were presented in tables and with charts. The SPSS version of 16.0 was used.

3. Discussion Of Results

3.1. Demographic Profile Of Respondents

The survey comprises 105(60.3%) males and 67(38.5%) females with 2(1.1%) missing responses. Majority 92(52.9%) belong to the age group of 20-30years, followed by 51(29.3%) in the age group of 31-40years, then 20(11.5%) in the age group of 41-50years with 10(5.7%) above 51years and 1(0.6%) missing response. Of the 174 respondents 68(39.1%) were married followed by those who were single 104(59.8%) and 2(1.1%) missing responses.

On educational level, majority 57(32.8%) have attained Higher National Diploma (HND) followed by Diploma holders 36(20.7%), then those with degree 26(14.9%) followed by Senior High School (SHS) 24(13.8%) then Junior High School (JHS) 17(9.8%) with 13(7.5%) having masters degree with 1(0.6%) missing response.

The working status of respondents was examined. Most 69(39.7%) respondents are administrators followed by casual workers 58(33.3%) then technicians 21(12.1%); those who are waitress 12(6.9%); waiter 8(4.6%) and 6(3.4%) missing response.

Most 89(51.1%) respondents have worked less than 5years followed by those who have worked for 5-10years; 11-15years 25(14.4%) with 6(3.4%) having worked above 20years and those who have worked between 16-20years 5(2.9%) and 4(2.3%) missing responses. The personality type of the respondents were in two groups which are Type 'A' 62(35.6%) And Type 'B' 34(19.5%) and those who played neutral 72(41.4%) with 6(3.5%) missing respondents.

3.2. Respondent Understanding Of Deviant Behaviour

Using Likert scale respondents were asked if they consider fourteen behaviours as bad in a rank order. The three most ranked bad behaviour according to the respondents are 'wasting resources' 119(68.4%); 'leaving work early' 116(66.7%) and 'taking excessive breaks' 113(65%). The results are shown in Table 1. The results indicate that workers consider some behaviour as not right and bad.

| Statements | Frequency(Percentage) |
|--|-----------------------|
| Wasting resources | 119(68.4%) |
| Leaving work early | 116(66.7%) |
| Taking excessive breaks | 113(65%) |
| Intentionally destroying equipment | 110(63.8%) |
| Intentionally working slow | 110(63.2%) |
| Stealing from co-workers | 110(63.2%) |
| Verbal abuse | 107(61.5%) |
| Gossiping about co-workers showing favouritism | 105(60.4%) |
| Lying about hours work | 104(59.8%) |
| Stealing from the company | 103(59.2%) |
| Harming co-workers | 100(57.5%) |
| Substance abuse | 100(57.5%) |
| Blaming co-workers | 96(55.2%) |
| Accepting kickbacks | 95(54.6%) |

*Table 1: Ranking of responses on deviant behaviour
(Source: Researchers field survey, November, 2012)*

3.3. Whether Respondents Have Ever Committed These Behaviours Before

Workers behaviour in relation to deviant behaviour was examined to determine if workers indulged in deviant behaviour at the job place. On leaving work early 75(43.1%) agreed/strongly agreed that they have committed this behaviour before whereas another 75(43.1%) disagreed/strongly disagreed that they have committed this behaviour. Majority of the respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed that they have committed the other thirteen behaviours at the job place. The results are shown in Table 2.

| Statements | Strongly Agreed/ Agreed Freq (%) | Neutral Freq (%) | Strongly Disagreed/ Disagreed Freq (%) | Missing Response Freq (%) | Total Freq (%) |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------|--|---------------------------|----------------|
| Leaving work early | 75(43.1%) | 24(13.8%) | 75(43.1%) | n. a | 174(100%) |
| Taking excessive breaks | 51(29.3%) | 35(20.1%) | 86(49.5%) | 2(1.1%) | 174(100%) |
| Intentionally working slowly | 35(20.1%) | 37(21.3%) | 102(58.7%) | n. a | 174(100%) |
| Intentionally destroying equipment | 29(16.7%) | 25(14.4%) | 113(64.9%) | 7(4%) | 174(100%) |
| Wasting resources | 30(17.3%) | 31(17.8%) | 110(63.3%) | 3(1.7%) | 174(100%) |
| Accepting kickbacks | 45(25.8%) | 43(24.7%) | 84(48.2%) | 2(1.1%) | 174(100%) |
| Lying about hours work | 34(19.6%) | 50(28.7%) | 88(50.5%) | 2(1.1%) | 174(100%) |
| Stealing from the company | 35(28.7%) | 24(13.8%) | 111(63.8%) | 4(2.3%) | 174(100%) |
| Gossiping about co-workers showing favouritism | 43(24.7%) | 35(20.1%) | 94(54%) | 2(1.1%) | 174(100%) |
| Blaming co-workers | 48(27.6%) | 41(23.6%) | 86(48.9%) | n. a | 174(100%) |
| Verbal abuse | 43(24.7%) | 40(23%) | 90(51.8%) | 1(0.6%) | 174(100%) |
| Stealing from co-workers | 20(11.5%) | 26(14.9%) | 124(71.3%) | 3(1.7%) | 174(100%) |
| Harming co-workers | 23(13.2%) | 29(16.7%) | 120(69%) | 2(1.1%) | 174(100%) |
| Substance abuse | 20(11.5%) | 39(22.4%) | 115(66.1%) | n. a | 174(100%) |

Table 2: Distribution of responses on whether respondents have committed Deviant behaviours at the job place

(Source: Researchers field survey, November, 2012)

3.4. Whether Respondents Have Seen Co-Workers Indulging In Deviant Behaviours

Respondents were asked using Likert scale whether they have seen co-workers indulging in any of the deviant behaviours investigated in the study. This is an indirect way of assessing if workers indulge in deviant behaviours as most workers when asked directly of their deviant behaviours are more likely to deny.

Most respondents indicated having seen co-workers indulging in seven of the fourteen deviant behaviours. The order of ranking of the behaviours are 'leaving work early' 100(57.5%); 'Taking excessive breaks' 97(55.7%); 'intentionally working slowly' 82(47.2%); 'blaming' 80(46%); 'gossiping about co-workers showing favouritism' 76(43.7%); 'verbal abuse' 71(40.8%) and 'lying about hours work' 66(37.9%). These

results indicate that workers indulge in deviant behaviours at the job place to the detriment of the growth of the organisations in which they work.

3.5.Reasons Why Workers Engage In Deviant Behaviours

The reasons why workers indulge in deviant behaviour at the job place was investigated. The reasons provided by respondents were ranked using Likert scale. Respondents identified nine reasons why workers indulge in deviant behaviours. The three most ranked reasons are 'low wage' 111(63.8%); 'dissatisfaction with job' 110(63.2%) and 'because of the type of person they are' 106(60.9%). The results are shown in Table 2.

| Statements | Frequency(Percentage) |
|--|------------------------------|
| Dissatisfaction with the job | 110(63.2%) |
| Type of person | 106(60.9%) |
| Because deviant behaviours are not punished | 87(50%) |
| Unfair treatment at work place | 101(58%) |
| Low wage | 111(63.8%) |
| Weak supervisory behaviour of supervisors | 99(56.9%) |
| Frustration | 83(47.7%) |
| The manager is immoral | 66(37.9%) |
| Because other workers commit deviant behaviour | 65(37.4%) |

Table 2: Ranking of responses on the reasons of engaging in deviant behaviour

(Source: Researchers field survey, Number 2012)

Contrary to the findings of previous studies most respondents indulge in deviant behaviour not as a results of 'wanting to quit their job' 81(46.6%); 'management supporting such behaviour' 82(47.2%); 'not respecting the company' 76(43.7%); 'because workers are young' 106(60.9%); 'because they are new to the job' 93(53.5%); 'because they are part-time workers' 101(58.1%); 'because they are men' 109(62.7%); 'because they are women' 106(60.9%); 'because they have low educational background' 89(51.2%) and 'because of their tribe' 103(59.2%). The results are shown in Table 3.

| Statements | Strongly Agreed/ Agreed Freq (%) | Neutral Freq (%) | Strongly Disagreed/ Disagreed Freq (%) | Missing Response Freq (%) | Total Freq (%) |
|--|--|---------------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Wanting to quit their job' | 42(24.1%) | 47(27) | 81(46.6%) | 4(2.3%) | 174(100%) |
| Management supporting such behaviour' | 43(24.7%) | 42(24.1%) | 82(47.2%) | 6(3.4%) | 174(100%) |
| not respecting the company' | 47(27) | 44(25.3%) | 76(43.7%) | 7(4%) | 174(100%) |
| Because workers are young' | 106(60.9%) | 31(17.8%) | 32(18.4%) | 5(2.9%) | 174(100%) |
| Because they are new to the job' | 93(53.5%) | 42(24.1%) | 36(20.7%) | 3(1.7%) | 174(100%) |
| Because they are part-time workers' | 101(58.1%) | 44(25.3%) | 24(13.8%) | 5(2.9%) | 174(100%) |
| Because they are men | 109(62.7%) | 35(20.1%) | 27(15.5%) | 3(1.7%) | 174(100%) |
| Because they are women' | 106(60.9%) | 39(22.4%) | 26(14.9%) | 3(1.7%) | 174(100%) |
| Because they have low educational background' | 89(51.2%) | 40(23%) | 43(24.7%) | 43(24.7%) | 174(100%) |
| Because of their tribe' | 103(59.2%) | 39(22.4%) | 29(16.7%) | 3(1.7%) | 174(100%) |

*Table 3: Distribution of responses on why workers indulge in deviant behaviour
(Source: Researchers field survey, Number 2012)*

3.6. Respondents Attitude Towards Deviant Behaviour

The attitude of respondents towards deviant behaviour was investigated. Respondents were asked if they will report to management when workers indulge in deviant behaviour. Most respondents 112(64.4%) will report to management. Most respondents 87(50%) have never reported to management of any deviant behaviour though they have seen some workers who have engaged in deviant behaviour.

Most respondents 88(50.6%) indicated that they will not report to management of deviant behaviour but will advise the co-worker engaging in such behaviour. Most respondents 74(42.5%) also indicated that they will mind their personal issue and not involve themselves in dealing with deviant behaviour in an organisation. The results are shown in Table 4.

| STATEMENTS | Yes Freq (%) | No Freq (%) | I don't know Freq (%) | Missing response Freq (%) | Total Freq (%) |
|---|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| I will report of deviant behaviour | 112(64.4%) | 31(17.8%) | 27(15.5%) | 4(2.3%) | 174(100%) |
| I have ever reported of deviant behaviour to management | 70(40.2%) | 87(50%) | 13(7.5%) | 4(2.3%) | 174(100%) |
| I will not report but advise the worker engaging in the behaviour | 88(50.6%) | 55(31.6%) | 27(15.5%) | 4(2.3%) | 174(100%) |
| I will not report to management | 58(33.3%) | 77(44.3%) | 34(19.5%) | 5(2.9%) | 174(100%) |
| I will mind my business | 74(42.5%) | 62(53.6%) | 34(19.5%) | 4(2.3%) | 174(100%) |

*Table 4: Distribution of responses on respondent's attitude towards Deviant behaviour
(Source: Researchers field survey, Number 2012)*

3.7. Results on Analysis of One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

One Way analysis was used to investigate the relationship between demographic/social variables and the responses on various statements on deviant behaviour and reasons of engaging in deviant behaviour. This analysis allows the hypotheses stated in the paper to be tested. These variables are age; gender; marital status; educational level; tenure of work; scheme of work and personality type.

Age significantly affect mean responses on 'whether lying about work is a bad behaviour' ($F=2.610$; $p=0.053$). Gender has significant effect on four statements on deviant behaviour and reason of engaging in deviant behaviour. The results are shown in table 5.

| Statements | F | P-Value |
|--|-------|---------|
| Leaving work early | 2.848 | 0.093 |
| Blaming Co-workers | 2.921 | 0.089 |
| Verbal abuse | 4.295 | 0.040 |
| because deviant behaviors are not punished by management | 3.451 | 0.065 |

Table 5: One Way ANOVA results on Gender and means responses on deviant behaviour and causes of deviant behaviour

Marital status significantly affects the mean responses on deviant behaviour, reasons workers engage in deviant behaviour and worker attitude towards deviant behaviour. The results are shown in Table 6.

| STATEMENTS | F | P-Value |
|--|-------|---------|
| Leaving work early | 2.907 | 0.090 |
| Taking excessive breaks | 4.264 | 0.040 |
| Wasting resources | 3.305 | 0.071 |
| Lying about hours work | 4.098 | 0.045 |
| Blaming Co-workers | 2.758 | 0.099 |
| unfair treatment at work place | 3.097 | 0.080 |
| Low wage | 4.745 | 0.031 |
| weak supervisory behavior of supervisor | 4.082 | 0.045 |
| management support such behavior | 2.842 | 0.094 |
| Because they are young | 3.196 | 0.076 |
| Because they are women | 6.528 | 0.012 |
| I have ever reported any of these behaviour to management before | 4.295 | 0.040 |

Table 6: One Way ANOVA results on marital status and mean responses on deviant behaviour, reasons workers engage in deviant behaviour and attitude towards deviant behaviour

Educational level significantly influences the mean responses on deviant behaviour, reasons workers engage in deviant behaviour and worker attitude towards deviant behaviour.

| Statements | F | P-Value |
|--|-------|---------|
| Taking excessive breaks | 2.295 | 0.048 |
| Intentionally working slow | 1.940 | 0.090 |
| Lying about hours work | 2.180 | 0.059 |
| Steeling from companies | 3.181 | 0.009 |
| Gossiping about co-workers showing favouritism | 2.128 | 0.065 |
| Blaming Co-workers | 2.088 | 0.069 |
| Substance abuse | 2.275 | 0.049 |

| Statements | F | P-Value |
|---|-------|---------|
| Unfair treatment at work place | 3.511 | 0.005 |
| Low wage | 3.091 | 0.011 |
| Weak supervisory behavior of supervisor | 3.916 | 0.002 |
| Frustration | 1.941 | 0.090 |
| Because other workers commit these behaviours | 2.659 | 0.024 |
| Because they are part-time workers | 2.082 | 0.070 |

Table 7: One Way Anova Results On Educational Level And Mean Responses On Deviant Behaviour, Reasons Workers Engage In Deviant Behaviour

Tenure of work statistically affects the mean responses on deviant behaviour, reasons workers engage in deviant behaviour and worker attitude towards deviant behaviour.

| Statements | F | P-Value |
|---|-------|---------|
| Leaving work early | 2.824 | 0.027 |
| Taking excessive breaks | 2.788 | 0.028 |
| Because they are dissatisfied with the job | 2.481 | 0.046 |
| Because they are new to the job | 2.287 | 0.062 |
| I have ever reported any of these behaviours to management before | 3.129 | 0.016 |
| I will not report | 2.842 | 0.026 |

Table 8: One Way ANOVA results on Tenure of work and mean responses on deviant behaviour, reasons workers engage in deviant behaviour and attitude towards deviant behaviour

Scheme of work significantly affect the mean responses on deviant behaviour, reasons workers engage in deviant behaviour and worker attitude towards deviant behaviour.

| STATEMENTS | F | P-Value |
|---|-------|---------|
| Blaming Co-workers | 2.292 | 0.048 |
| Substance abuse | 2.997 | 0.013 |
| Because these behaviors are not punished by mgt | 2.323 | 0.045 |
| Weak supervisory behavior of supervisor | 2.377 | 0.041 |

Table 9

Personality type significantly affects the mean responses on two reasons of deviant behaviour which are 'because they do not respect the company' ($F=2.615$; $p=0.053$) and 'the manager is immoral' ($F=2.181$; $p=0.092$). The ANOVA results indicate that demographic and social variables significantly influence responses given by respondents on the various questions asked in the survey.

4. Conclusion And Policy Implication

The objectives of the paper have been established. Workers indulged in CWB and are prepared to report to management of any CWB. Workers consider CWB as bad and do not support or approve of them. Workers who commit these behaviours do so for various reasons such as dissatisfaction with job and as results of their personality. Measures to prevent the occurrence of CWB should consider all the different factors identified as the reasons of CWB. Future studies should be done from the perspective of employers and workers to determine if these findings will be replicated. Causal studies should be done in future studies with increase sample size.

5.Reference

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