Leadership Styles, Employee Turnover Intentions and Counterproductive Work Behaviours

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Abstract:
We have examined the relationship between leadership style, employee turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behaviours using a cross sectional survey design by purposively sampling eight (8) branches of one of Ghana's premier banks and conveniently selecting 170 respondents. Data was solicited by means of questionnaire adapted from Simon and Oates (2009) measured on five (5) point Likert- scale and analysed using inter-correlation matrix to establish the relationship between the study variables. The result showed a significant positive association between autocratic leadership style, employee turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behaviour but exposed significant negative connection between democratic leadership styles, employee turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behaviours. Laissez faire leadership style indicated significant negative relationship with turnover intentions but significant positive correlation with CWB implying that subordinates under laissez faire leaders will show less turnover intentions but more CWBs due to the apathetic attitude showed by the leader. Employee under autocratic leaders are more prone to CWBs and intentions to quit job mainly as a result of the leaders over emphasis on production than people. Workers under democratic leadership style are less likely to involve in turnover intentions and CWBs due to the collective decision-making approach of the leader. The study recommends leadership training in team building and participatory decision making competence of leaders to minimize employee turnover intentions and CWBs.

Keywords: Leadership styles, employee turnover, counterproductive work behaviours

1. Introduction

Leadership shape organizations strategies, their execution and effectiveness by inspiring employees to execute task beyond expected organizational targets thereby achieving organizational stated objectives. In the same vein, poor leadership style shape employee loyalty to stay or quit the job or even engage in Counterproductive Work Behaviours (CWBs). Outcomes such as employee turnover intentions and CWBs resulting from poor leadership style carry negative connotations on the ability of leadership to motivate and retain employees resulting in abysmal organizational performance (Bruursema, 2004).

In retrospect, employee turnover refers to the rotation of workers around the labor market between organizations, jobs and occupations; and between states of employment and unemployment (Abassi and Hollman, 2000). Excessive employee turnover cause organizations to incur significant direct and indirect costs. These costs are most often related to recruiting, selecting, placing, inducting training, developing replacement staff and damage control resulting from brands damage. High turnover rates have been associated with decreased customer satisfaction, productivity, future revenue growth and profitability. Staff turnovers also affected quality of work, administrative costs, and staff morale due to increased workload and resentment among remaining employees who must assume additional duties and disaffection cause to customer and organizational members as a result employee turnover (Simons, 2009).Many companies are concern about the costs of employee turnover resulting from leadership failures and how it affects the bottom line particularly job loss among the older and experience work force. Experienced workers at any age can cost 50% or more of the individual's annual salary in turnover related cost with increased costs for jobs requiring specialized skills, advanced training or extensive experience, which are qualifications often possessed by 50-plus workers.

Similarly, CWBs are deliberate violations of organizations internal rules and policies by an individual or a group that may jeopardize the well-being of the organization or its citizens (Robinson and Bennett 1995). CWBs are a set of distinct acts that share the characteristics that they are volitional as opposed to accidental or mandated and harm or intend to harm organizations and/or organization stakeholders, such as clients, co-workers', customers, and supervisors (Fox, Spector and Miles, 2001).Examples of

CWBs are fidgeting with phones instead of working, abuse of the organization's internet by the downloading of Mexican soap operas, pornographic videos, and pictures. Others include physical assault, substance use, fraud, lateness, refusing to co-operate, lying, withholding of effort, verbal abuse, sabotage, giving away of company property, embezzling money, taking kickbacks, taking unauthorized long break, absenteeism and stealing or theft (Bennett, and Robinson, 2000; Gruys, and Sackett, 2003).Reports have it that CWBs cost US businesses approximately $50 billion annually and may account for as many as 20% of failed businesses (American Management Association, 2002).Further, according to a recent survey, approximately25% of companies have fired employees for misuse of the Internet (American Management Association, 2002).

Empirically, critical studies involving CWBs have analyze its influence or effect on productivity, organizational citizen behavior, work stressors, emotions, and personality traits and sometimes the relationships between these variables (Bruursema, 2004, Bennett, and Robinson, 2000).Scarcely has the issue of leadership style which starts the culture formation process by imposing leadership assumptions and expectations on followers been considered in the discussion. Additionally, though leadership style and employee turnover have been extensively researched, barely has leadership style been considered with employee turnover and CWBs together in the literatures reviewed so far. To bridge the gap in the literature this paper aims at providing an empirical examination between these variables to ascertain their relationship.

2. Objective of Study
The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between leadership style, employee turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behaviours in one of Ghana's premier banks.

3. Literature Review
Leadership is a process of having remarkable influence on subordinates in which they are motivated to achieve specified targets beyond what is expected and group maintain cooperation for sustainable development Yukl (1994). Fry (2003) emphasized that leadership is a strategic process of offering inspiration to enhance the employee's potential for growth and development by the leader. Similarly, Northouse (2004) asserts that leadership is where any individual influences a group of people to achieve common goals. The contribution by these researchers to the concept of leadership points to the fact that leadership is a positive but persuasive (influential) action which generates inspiration among followers and directs effort towards accomplishing specified individual, team, and organizational objectives. Leadership is indispensable in business, political, educational, and social organizations for the attainment of goals. Several views have been expressed on leadership but most leadership theorist agrees that the traits, style, and contingency theories dominate the leadership literature (House and Aditya, 1971). The interest in leadership research by organizational researchers particularly in leadership style since it started in 1945 among researchers of the Ohio University has gained tremendous momentum with increasing need for leaders who will exhibit the appropriate style toward organizational success.

3.1. Leadership Style
Autocratic leadership style, also called coercive or dictatorship, involves the manager retaining as much power and decision-making authority as possible. The focus of power is with the leader and all interactions within the group move towards the leader (Mullins, 1999, Puni, Ofei and Okoe, 2013). The leader unilaterally exercises all decision-making authority by determining policies, procedures for achieving goals, work task, relationships, control of reward, and punishment (Mullins, 1999). The autocratic leaders believe mainly in the rules and regulations, rewards and punishment as motivation. The subordinates carry out the leader's directives without question(s) and there are no groups inspired decisions. The leader centralizes authority indecisions making and supervises work in close detailed manner than in general form. The autocratic leadership style is useful for new untrained employees who do not know which tasks to perform or which procedures to follow and effective supervision can be provided only through detailed orders and instructions. Also, in situations of short-term projects with a highly technical, complex or risky element which must be completed in exact specifications, when there are work environments where spans of control are wide and hence the manager has little time to devote to each employee. Finally, it is useful in industries where employees need to perform low skilled, monotonous and repetitive tasks with generally low levels of motivation (Currivan, 1999).The basic assumption underlying autocratic leadership style is based on the premise that people are naturally lazy, irresponsible and untrustworthy therefore leaving the functions of planning, organizing, and controlling to subordinate would yield fruitless results (Puni, Ofei and Okoe, 2013). The leader without the involvement of people should accomplish such functions.

Democratic leadership style emphasizes group and leader participation in the formulation of the policies that serve as guidelines for the organizational operation. In democratic leadership style, the leader takes into consideration the wishes and suggestion of members as well as those of the leader (Hackman and Johnson, 1996). It is a human relation approach where all members of the group are seen as important contributors to final decision and to improve the quality of the decision. In this type of leadership style, power and authority are derived from the governed. The democratic leadership does not only increase job satisfaction by involving team members, but it also helps to develop people's skills and promotes teamwork. Mullins (1999) is of the view that democratic leadership style focuses more on people and there is greater interaction within the group. The leadership functions are shared with members of the group and the leader is part of the team (Mullins, 1999). Similarly, Luthar (1996) and Wilson, George, Wellins and Byham (1994) concurred that the principles of democratic leadership is friendliness, helpfulness, and the encouragement of participation. In the same vein, McGregor (1960) also described this leadership style as benevolent, participative, and believing in people. The philosophical assumption underlying democratic leadership style is that naturally all people are trustworthy, self-motivated, like responsibility and

challenging work and so encourages organizational conditions to foster teamwork, high performance and satisfaction. The emphasis of this leadership style is on performance and people.

True laissez-faire is in fact "non-leadership" because the leader has almost no influence over the group(Bass, 1999). This makes it difficult to distinguish the leader from the followers. According to Yukl (1994)laissez-faire leadership style is probably a descriptive ideal that does not really exist. This is an effective style to use when employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated or when employees have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own. Also in situations where outside experts such as staff specialists or consultants are being used, and finally when employees are trustworthy and experienced. The philosophical assumption underlying laissez-faire style is that naturally human beings are unpredictable and uncontrollable and trying to understand people is a waste of time and energy. Under the style, the leader tries to maintain a low profile, respects all divisions within the organization, tries not to create waves of disturbance, and relies on the few available loyalists to get the job done (Northouse, 2007).Laissez-Laissez-faire leader lives and work with whatever structure put in place without any suggestions or criticisms. Goals and objectives are established only when necessary and required. Such leader shuns decision-making as much as possible, and would like to avoid communication but communicates only when needed. Thus, the business of employee development is not a concern to the laissez faire leader, who believes that employees can take care of themselves. The main emphasis of this leadership style is neither on performance nor people. Goals and objectives are established only when necessary and required. The leader is not control-frisk and abdicates controlling to employees. He or she shuns decision-making as much as possible and would like to avoid communication but communicates only when needed.

3.2. Employee Turnover Intentions
Employee turnover refers to the rate of movement of employees in and out of an organization (Armstrong, 2006). Salaries and conditions of service, job performance, career growth, work environment, job satisfaction, supervisory style, promotional opportunities, employee commitment and many other factors play a significant role in shaping employee turnover. Employee turnover is the outcomes of a number of push and pull factors that come into play during the course of employment relationship. As noted by Jafari (2011) "in the turnover process everyone usually points out one factor for their turnover choice, but there are always more factors that works as push-cart or driving force for turnover intentions". Moyinhan and Pandey (2008) have revealed that the gamut of factors that influence turnover intentions in organizations can be categorized into three distinct categories; a) External environmental factors –this is where economic conditions are responsible for driving and shaping employee turnover across the labour industry; b) Individual factors – employee specific factors that shape turnover decisions. Examples include age, length of service with the organization, gender, race, family responsibilities, education, personality, and other personal considerations; c) Organizational factors - these refers to organizational policies and practices suchas opportunities for progress, supportive management, supportive human resource policies, organizational culture and other factors.

3.3. Counterproductive Work Behaviour
CWBs can be described as voluntary behaviours, because individuals choose to engage in these deviant behaviours consciously. Hackman and Johnson (1996) assert that CWBs are more likely to be influence by individual's personality traits than by ability factors, which has been supported by several previous researches (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Douglas & Martinko, 2001). Again, Hackman and Johnson (1996) distinguished between interpersonal and organizational CWBs. Interpersonal CWBs are behaviors directed at others in the organization such as bosses, coworkers, or customers that are intended to provide emotional or physical discomfort or harm. Organizational CWBs are actions directed toward the organization that are harmful to its legitimate interests.

According to the Social Exchange Theory (SET) individuals form relationships with others and maintain it only because they want to increase their benefits (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1972). The theory predicts that individuals who perceive that they are receiving unfavourable treatment are more likely to feel angry, vengeful, and dissatisfied. Consistent with the norms of reciprocity, when individuals are dissatisfied with the organization or their boss, they may reciprocate with negative work behaviours such as withholding effort, arriving late at work, taking longer break times, and leaving early. Additionally, individuals may exchange their dissatisfaction with co-workers by engaging in counterproductive behaviours directed at them, such as playing mean pranks, cursing at them, or even sabotaging their work.

3.4. Leadership style, Employee Turnover Intentions and CWB
The nature of leadership influences individuals' intention to leave or stay in an organization or engage in CWBs. Mbah and Ikemefuna (2011) assert that poor relationship leadership style; a product of autocratic leadership style or production centred leadership flair serves as one of the main important reasons why employees leave their jobs or resort to deviant behaviours. Similarly, antagonistic relationship between leaders and subordinates can cause employees to lose commitment and satisfaction with their jobs. Morrow et al. (2005) are of the view that the number one reason people quit job is that their bosses treat them poorly. Those who remain in their jobs working for poor bosses have lower job satisfaction, lower commitment, psychological distress and subsequently high turnover intentions.

Additionally, strict employee supervision act as an extrinsic factor and a "dissatisfier" as well as a "demotivator" to employee retention and satisfaction. Gwavuya (2011) affirms that incompetent leadership results in poor performance, high levels of stress, low commitment, low job satisfaction, high turnover intentions, CWBs. Consistently, leadership in organizations plays significant roles in employee motivation and retention especially if employees "receive regular positive feedback and recognition". A supervisor's

positive attitude toward subordinate employees improves the employees' attitudes toward work, their leader, and the organization. In turn, the employees develop intrinsic motivation and a good match between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation results in job satisfaction and a stronger propensity to stay with the employer. Callier (2011) is of the view that participatory decision making is one of the measures by which management can minimize employee turnover intentions and CWBs. Participation is a process in which decision-making is shared among individuals who are not generally considered to have equal status in the organization and it is a function of democratic leadership style (Wagner, 1995). The outcomes of participatory leadership style are numerous but notably are employee motivation and reduction in turnover intentions and CWBs (Wagner, 1995).

Job satisfaction, which is a factor of quality management in organizations, is yet another critical factor in shaping employee turnover intentions and CWBs (Liden & Maslyn, 1994). As noted by Callier (2011) in the United States alone, 77% of employees are unhappy with their current jobs and are considering leaving for better alternatives. Numerous research results show that job satisfaction is found to be significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions on a consistent basis (Callier, 2011). Closely tied to the concept of commitment is the influence of employee-organization fit in shaping turnover intentions. Research has revealed that the extent to which employees identify themselves with their organization has a positive impact on their level of satisfaction and thereby their organizational attachment and intention. The fit between an employee's values and the values of the organization might provide the employees with a certain degree of comfort and identification with the organization thereby minimizing stress and the desire to leave (Zeffane, 1994; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1992). Base on the linkages between leadership style indicators, employee turnover intentions and CWBs, the researchers proposed the following hypothesis;

- H_0 :Autocratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with turnover intentions
- H_1 :Democratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with turnover intentions
- H_2:Laissez faire leadership style will not correlate significantly with turnover intentions
- H_3 :Autocratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with CWB
- H_4 :Democratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with CWB
- H_5 :Laissez faire leadership style will not correlate significantly with CWB

4. Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional survey method was employed in this study to investigate the relationship between leadership style, employee turnover intentions and CWBs. This method was suitable because it enabled the researchers collect data at a single point in time from individuals with different characteristics to establish connections between leadership styles indicators (autocratic, democratic and laissez faire leadership), employee turnover intentions and CWBs. The study therefore adopted a quantitative research approach.

The research targeted employees of one of Ghana's premier banks (Access Bank Ghana Limited) ranging from first-line supervisors to corporate officers. Non-probability sampling methods were used to select 8 branches out twenty-six (26) branches of the bank in Accra and Tema Metropolis. The study area was selected because about 70% of the bank's branches reside in this two metropolis (www.daisnet.com). Convenience sampling strategy was then employed to select participants for the study since the researchers were interested in both leaders and subordinates of the bank. Data was then collected by administering questionnaires to 175 employees in the eight (8) selected branches. The research recorded a 97% response rate of respondents surveyed since 170 questionnaires were retrieved.

The questionnaires were adapted from Simon and Oates (2009) which the measures were assessed using Likert–type scales. The study instrument recorded alpha Cronbach coefficient of 0.79. The questionnaire was divided into section A-D with section A constituting items on demographic, section B leadership style, section C turnover intentions, and section D counterproductive work behaviours. Ethical considerations were adhered since respondent's voluntary participation in the research was stated on the questionnaire. Respondents were made aware that there were no foreseeable risks, discomfort or adverse effect in participating in the research.

5. Results and Discussions

In examining the relationship between leadership style, turnover intentions and counterproductive work behaviours, a descriptive statistics and a Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were performed. Table 1 below shows a summary of mean and standard deviation of indicators of leadership styles, turnover intentions, and CWBs. Overall, the descriptive statistics indicates a mean between 14.21 and 10.79 and a standard deviation between 5.68 and 1.96 for all variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	N
Autocratic leadership	14.21	1.96	170
Democratic leadership	12.06	2.11	170
Laissez faire leadership	10.79	3.27	170
Turnover intentions	14.23	4.15	170
Counterproductive work behaviour	12.55	5.68	170

Table 1: Summary of Means and Standard Deviation
Source: Survey Data 2015

Table 2 also indicates summary of inter-correlation matrix among components of leadership style, turnover intentions and CWBs.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Autocratic leadership	-	-	-	-	-
2. Democratic leadership	-0.60**	-	-	-	-
3. Laissez faire leadership	-0.24**	0.21*	-	-	-
4. Turnover intentions	0.66**	-0.59**	-0.52**	-	-
5. Counterproductive work Behaviour	0.24**	-0.18*	0.14	0.25**	-

Table 2: Inter-correlation Matrix among the Study Variables
$**p < .01, *p < .05, N = 17$
Source: Survey Data 2015

5.1. Autocratic Leadership Style and Employee Turnover Intentions

The results from the Pearson r test as presented in Table 2 above indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between autocratic leadership style and turnover intentions [$r_{(170)} = 0.66$, p< .01]. The outcome implies that the higher the perception of autocratic leadership styles by employees, the higher their intentions to quit. Hence, the prediction that $H_{0:}$ Autocratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with turnover intentions, is rejected, rather the alternative hypothesis that 'Autocratic leadership style will correlate significantly with turnover intentions' is supported. The outcome is not surprising because autocratic leadership style places more emphasis on performance and low emphasis on people. The focus of control is with the leader and all interactions within the group move towards the leader (Mullins, 1999). The leader unilaterally exercises all decision-making authority by determining policies, procedures for achieving goals, work task, relationships, control of reward, and punishment (Mullins, 1999). Wilson et al (1994) concurs that autocratic leader relies heavily on authority, control, power, manipulation and hard work to get the job done. In the autocratic leadership system, formal centralized structures, procedures, processes and mechanism are clearly defined and are enforced to ensure that subordinates do their jobs efficiently within the rules. The finding is consistent with Callier (2011) and Mbah and Ikemefuna (2011) who pointed out that employee consider alternatives and leave an organisation if they are not typically considered in decision-making processes (a component of autocratic leadership). Similarly, the outcome is in support of the Social Exchange Theory (Gould, 1979; Levinson, 1965) which predicts that individuals who perceive that they are receiving unfavourable treatment are more likely to feel angry, vengeful, dissatisfied and have the intention of leaving the organisation for another.

5.2. Democratic Leadership Style and Employee Turnover Intentions

In the case of democratic leadership style the Pearson r test in Table 2 show a significant negative relationship between democratic leadership style and turnover intentions [$r_{(170)} = -0.59$, p< .01]. The relationship was negative meaning that the more employees perceive their leaders to be democratic, the less they have the intention to quit. The hypothesis that 'Democratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with turnover intentions' is accepted. Implicitly, decision-making in a democratic system is decentralized and flexible with clearly defined responsibilities and an open participative work environment. Punishments as a form of reprimand are the last option and high performance is recognized and rewarded. Conflicts are openly confronted by addressing the causative factors and not personalities (Puni et al, 2013).This finding corroborates other studies like Zeffane (1994) Hrebiniak and Alutto (1992) and Gwavuya (2011) who all agreed that employees are willing to stay with a particular organisation if they are consistently given feedbacks on their performances and also their inputs are considered in the process of decision making.

5.3. Laissez Faire Leadership Style and Turnover Intentions

With regards to laissez leadership style and turnover intentions the Pearson r test indicates that there is a significant negative correlation between the two variables [$r_{(170)} = -0.52$, *p*< .01]. This implies that subordinates under a laissez leadership style will have less turnover intentions due to the fact that this particular leadership style has less influence on subordinates in terms of how decisions of the leader affect employees' turnover intentions. Since the laissez leadership style does not involve excessive controlling of subordinates it makes it easy for employees to have discretion over their jobs hence engage in less turnover intensions. Hence the null hypothesis that laissez faire leadership style will not correlate significantly with turnover intensions is accepted.

5.4. Autocratic Leadership Style and CWB

For autocratic leadership style and CWBs the Pearson r test revealed a significant positive relationship between the variables [$r_{(170)} = 0.24$, p< .01]. The hypothesis that H_3: Autocratic leadership style will not correlate significantly with CWBs, is rejected. This means that the higher the perception of autocratic leadership style by employee, the higher they engage in CWBs. Hence the alternative hypothesis that 'There will be a significant correlation between autocratic leadership style and CWBs' is supported. The outcome is consistent with Marrs (2000) who found that verbal aggression from supervisors is associated with higher levels of deviant acts (CWBs) on the part of organizational members and is associated with higher levels of intentions to leave the organization. Further support of the link between autocratic leadership style and CWBs was the study of Penney (2003) who found a correlation of .468 between self-reports of experienced incivility and self-reports of CWBs. The finding also supports the Norm of Reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) which explains that when individuals are dissatisfied with the organization or their boss, they are likely to reciprocate with negative work behaviours such as withholding effort, arriving late at work, taking longer break times, leaving early, and so on.

5.5. Democratic Leadership Style and CWB

In the case of democratic leadership style and CWBs the Pearson r test showed a significant negative relationship exists between democratic leadership style and counterproductive work behaviours [$r_{(170)} = -.18$, $p< .05$]. The relationship was negative indicating that the more workers perceive their leaders to engage in democratic leadership style, the less they engage in counterproductive work behaviours. Therefore, the alternatives hypothesis that H_4There will be a significant correlation between democratic leadership style and counterproductive work behaviour of employees' is supported. The finding concurs with Rishipal (2011) who discovered that democratic leadership style fosters high productivity, good worker attitudes, punctuality and better work quality. Also other researches have confirmed that because democratic leadership relates positively with subordinate satisfaction, motivation, and performance it reduces CWBs (Bass, 1999; Wofford, Whittington, & Goodwin, 2001).

5.6. Laissez Faire Leadership Style and CWB

With regards to laissez leadership style and CWBs the Pearson r test indicates that there is significant positive correlation between laissez faire leadership style and CWBs [$r_{(170)} = 0.14$, $p< .05$]. The result implies that subordinates under a laissez leadership style are more likely to engage in CWBs. Thus the null hypothesis that H_5: Laissez faire leadership style will not correlate significantly with CWB is rejected. The study result is consistent with Skogstad et al, (2007) who confirmed that laissez faire leadership was positively correlated with role conflict, role ambiguity, and conflicts among co-workers resulting in employee disaffection and causing subordinate to reciprocate with CWBs.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study settles that autocratic leadership style induces turnover intentions and counterproductive behaviours among employees than democratic and laissez faire because of the over reliance on production instead of people. In the case of democratic leadership style, employees were found to have less turnover intentions and counterproductive work behaviours because of the co-operative flair of the leader whiles laissez faire leadership style produced less turnover intentions but more counterproductive behaviours due to apathetic nature of the leadership style. The researchers therefore recommend the adoption of democratic decision-making practices in organizations by including subordinates in decision making process thereby increasing self-belonging drive and commitment of employees towards organizations objectives. The above can be achieved by training leaders in team building and participatory decision making exercises.

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