An Assessment of Workplace Deviant Behaviours and Its Implication on Organisational Performance in a Growing Economy

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Deviant behaviours of employees in organisations have become serious concern in human resources management. The objective of this study is to examine the scope, causes, consequences and managerial strategic approach to various forms of behaviours and attitudes intentionally exhibited by the employees in workplace. The idea is to find out the reasons why employees engage such behaviours. The study extensively reviewed current literature on existing body of empirically-based studies of the construct. It was discovered that workplace deviant behaviours had adverse effects on job performance. Therefore, effort must be intensified to prevent these behaviours.

INTRODUCTION

Employees' behaviour and attitudes towards work is key for any organisation to achieve its goals and objectives. However, employers of labour must recognise the fact that not all employees embrace good behaviour; some may consciously or unconsciously exhibit unethical and unruly behaviours in the course of work; this regarded as workplace deviant behaviour (Robbins & Judge, 2007). Workplace deviant behaviour has gained a growing attention among scholars and practitioners of human resource management and related disciplines. This is because the steady increase in deviant behaviours in many organisation today is becoming a concern, especially in relation to human resource management practices in the workplace. Hence, scholars have paid attention to an examination of the contributing factors and the analysis of the causes of deviant behaviours (Arthur, 2011, Akikibofori, 2008).

Behaviour is considered deviant when employees are non-conforming to an organisation's policies, core values, culture etc., and such behaviour impede the vision, welfare and organisational standards (Jawad, Tabassum, Raja & Abraiz, 2013; Bennett and Robinson, 2003; Robbins & Judge, 2007); in addition deviant behaviours are believed to be detrimental to the goals and interests of other members of

the organisation (Lawal and Babalola, 2008; Greenbag, 2002). Deviant behaviour is counterproductive and whether such behaviour is noticeable or not, it does not only has adverse effects on organizational productivity (Appelbaum and Shapiro, 2006), but may escalate to high profile embarrassments and affect organisations' drive for professionalism and institutionalised standards if not strategically managed (Chirasha and Mahapa, 2012).

Deviant behaviour in the workplace entails some basic features that tend to affect the effectiveness of the organisation and her ability to achieve objectives. Some of these features include absenteeism, late-coming, poor quality of work, destruction of property, sabotage, theft of property, misuse of time and resources, abuse against others, unethical verbal/physical actions, intentionally working slow, or taking long breaks, favouritism, gossiping, harassment and the likes (Muafi, 201; Raja & Abraiz, 2013; Bennett and Robinson, 2003). As already stated, all these affect organisation efficiency and performance.

This study became necessary because of the worrying increase in the rate of employees' deviant behaviours in the world of work. This study hypothesises that these behaviours can undermine the level of organisational performance and its competitive strength. The study helps identify the causes, challenges and consequently proffer suggestions that will help the management or decision makers effectively guide against counterproductive behaviour in the workplace which will invariably help them to be better positioned and productive toward the actualization of their goals. The significance of this work stemmed from its objectives is as follows:

i.   Assess the causes of deviant behaviours in workplace
ii. Evaluate the impact of counterproductive behaviours on organisations' effectiveness and efficiency
iii. Analyse the consequences of deviant workplace behaviours on organisations' performance.
iv. Analyse the effectiveness of the managerial strategic approach to curb deviant behaviour in the world of work

LITERATURE REVIEW

Deviant Behaviour

Employees in organisations comprise people who come together from different socio-cultural backgrounds with different beliefs, attitudes, values and expressions of different behaviour. Thus, these behaviours have different consequences on the individuals working in the organisation and on the organisation itself (Windsperger, 2009). Ideally, workplace behaviours must coincide with the norms of organisations and employees must naturally embrace the culture and value of such organisation. In this contemporary world, the reverse is the case; some employees tend to disregard organisational culture and practices, and are not willing to conform to their organisations' rules. This is becoming a serious issue in human resource management.

Workplace deviant behaviour is any intentional act or voluntary behaviour exhibited by groups of workers or individual workers in an organisation that violates significant organisational policies and practices (Muafi, 2011; Robbins & Judge, 2007; Appelbaum, Iaconi, & Matousek, 2007). It is also described as employees' misbehaviour, counterproductive behaviour, antisocial mechanism and dysfunctional behaviour in the workplace which are capable of threatening and debilitating the well-being and effectiveness of the organisation (Rogojan, 2009). In other words, it is unethical behaviour employees engage in that go beyond what is explicitly required by the organisation, and that are within the organisation's interest (Venkataramani & Dalal, 2007; Qiu. & Peschek, 2013). Besides, it is any unprincipled and dissipated conduct that aims to intimidate and undermine the organisation's quest for professionalism and good practices. As noted by Mitchel & Ambrose, (2002), workplace deviant behaviour may be regarded as a negative reciprocity orientation where an individual returns a negative treatment with a negative treatment. Lawrence and Robinson (2007) found that the increasing pressure in organisations as a result of increasing competition and economic challenges that may call for restructuring and downsizing may result into employees' misconduct in organisations.

Other scholars posit that, workplace deviance is the use of organisational means or instrumentality to promote aspirations or goals different from those of the organisation (Onyeonoru, 2002; Onuoha & Ezeribe, 2011). It is a deliberate or intentional desire to cause harm to an organization or workplace (Griffin & O'leary-Kelly, 2004). In another study, it is reported that deviance may arise when employees perceive that they have been mistreated and as such want to retaliate against the organization (Onuoha & Ezeribe, 2011), or when they are deprived of some rights or benefits, and they perceive that the organisation fails to meet certain expectations of the society (Jawad, Tabassum. Raja & Abraiz, 2013). Behaviour is deemed deviant when an organisation's customs, policies, or internal regulations are violated by an individual or a group that may jeopardise the wellbeing of the organisation or its citizens (Bennett and Robinson, 2003), as well as impede the welfare of the organisation (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, (2006).
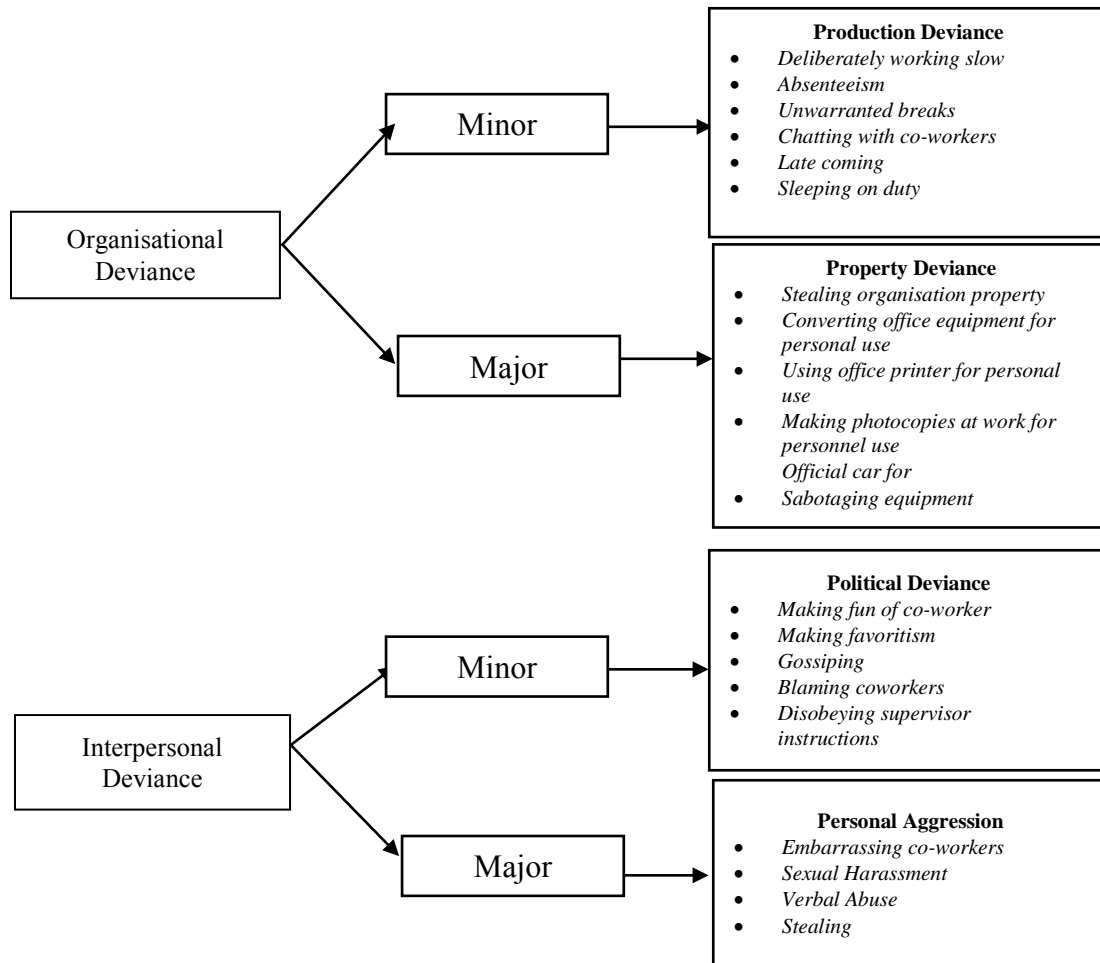
Types of Deviant Behaviour in Workplace

As noted by Chirasha & Mahapa, (2012), there are two types of deviance; deviance may be either constructive or destructive. Appelbaum, Iaconi & Matousek (2007) classified workplace deviance as positive and negative. Behaviour is said to be constructive or positive if employees actively engage in innovative and idealistic behaviour that can enhance and provide the organisation with necessary creativity (Spreitzer & Sonenshein, 2004, Appelbaum, ec tal, 2007). Constructive deviance also include non -compliance with dysfunctional directives and criticising incompetent superiors, hence contributing to an organisation's competitive advantage (Mazni & Roziah 2011). On the other hand, destructive or negative behaviour is when employees deliberately, intentionally and willfully cause harm in an organisation which may include but not limited to vandalism, theft, aggressive behaviour, sexual harassment, sabotage, embezzlement, insubordination, withholding effort, taking unauthorised work breaks, insulting others, hitting a co-worker, yelling at others. This negative impact of workplace deviance on productivity and performance has been found to be substantial (Dunlop & Lee, 2004, Gor 2007).

According to Muafi, 2011; Robbins & Judge, 2007; Appelbaum, Iaconi, & Matousek, 2007; Lawrence and Robinson, 2007, typology of workplace deviance, varies along two dimensions, namely 'interpersonal versus organisational' and 'minor versus serious', and there are four broad categories of organizational workplace deviance. They are production deviance, political deviance, property deviance and personal aggression, which is depicted in 'figure 1' below. Production deviance manifests when employees violate quality and quantity standards while producing goods and services which may be quite costly to an organisation while political deviance takes place when employees exhibit favouritism towards certain stakeholders (e.g. friends and family members, on ethnic ground, on religious grounds, or to customers, and co-workers), thus placing others at a disadvantage. Political deviance may include undercharging preferred customers, employing unsuitable hands due to ethnic cleavages, awarding contracts to wrong service providers, compromising official secrets and gossiping. Such favouritism may generate costs to the organisation that result from inconsistent service quality, dissatisfaction and perception of unfairness. Property deviance involves the acquisition or destruction of company property without approval.

Employees may engage in property deviance by outright stealing, extortion, inflating costs or trading official support for personal gains. It may also include selling organisational property to oneself at very low rates at the expense of the organization. This attitude has obvious negative effects on an organisation or the state as the case may be. Personal aggression however involves hostile or aggressive behaviour. This form of deviance can harm an organisation's reputation and has serious negative consequences on the targeted individuals. Personal aggression includes various types of intimidation tactics such as sexual harassment (of both sexes), verbal abuses, threats of physical harm and threats of promotion denials.

FIGURE 1
CATEGORIZATION OF WORKPLACE DEVIANCE

Organisational Deviance

Minor →

Production Deviance
- *Deliberately working slow*
- *Absenteeism*
- *Unwarranted breaks*
- *Chatting with co-workers*
- *Late coming*
- *Sleeping on duty*

Major →

Property Deviance
- *Stealing organisation property*
- *Converting office equipment for personal use*
- *Using office printer for personal use*
- *Making photocopies at work for personnel use*
  Official car for
- *Sabotaging equipment*

Interpersonal Deviance

Minor →

Political Deviance
- *Making fun of co-worker*
- *Making favoritism*
- *Gossiping*
- *Blaming coworkers*
- *Disobeying supervisor instructions*

Major →

Personal Aggression
- *Embarrassing co-workers*
- *Sexual Harassment*
- *Verbal Abuse*
- *Stealing*

Adapted from Brown, (2008); Bennett, & Robison, (2003); Muafi, (2011)

Causes of Work Place Deviance

Robbins & Judge, (2007) posit that it may be ineffective to manage workplace behaviours if the underlying causes of counter-productive behaviours exhibited by members of staff of an organisation are not examined by the management of organisations. Efforts should therefore be made to deal underlying factors that may result in deviance. As noted by Mazni & Roziah (2011), the causes could be individual, organisational or work-related factors. It is imperative to succinctly discuss some causes of deviant behaviour in the workplace.

Unfair Treatment

Deviant behaviour usually takes place when an employee perceives unfair treatment and inequality within the organisation. Employees evaluate organisational fairness based on outcomes, procedures, personal interactions and what they think is better done elsewhere and the management is not willing to embrace (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998). The moment employees perceive their work environment as unfair, they may develop negative attitudes and emotions such as job dissatisfaction, anger, frustration, and mistrust, leading to deviant acts against the organisation and other members of staff (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Greenberg & Alge, 1998). Folger and Cropanzano (1998) opine that employees' resentment, anger, or

frustration will be most intense if they perceive inequality in compensation administration and unfair treatment.

Job Dissatisfaction

It has been discovered that an organisation's culture and policies have significant effects on its workers and some of its effects are reflected in workers' perceptions of their jobs (Diaz-Serrano and Vieira, 2005; Souza-Poza and Souza-Poza, 2007). Job dissatisfaction is described as the extent to which employees dislike their work (Ellickson and Logsdon (2002). Therefore, an employee who is not satisfied with his/her work may become less productive (Bolin and Heatherly (2001), and if such dissatisfied employee remains in the organisation, he may likely engage in counterproductive behaviours such as poor service, destructive rumours, theft and sabotage of equipment, absenteeism (Knights & Kennedy, 2005). Moreover, job dissatisfaction also deters employees' commitment to work exhibited by spending less time and effort on the job, and gradual withdrawal from the job (Cohen & Golan, 2007). The withdrawals either from the job or organisation could be reflected via poor performance or increased absenteeism, working slowly or taking extended/frequent breaks (Firth, Mellor, Moore, & Loquet, 2004). Besides, employees who are serving bonds also tend to deliberately engage in deviant behaviours that can induce the management to force them out of the system if they are no longer satisfied with the organisation.

Intention to Quit the Organisation

Intention to quit was first introduced as the proximal step in the chain of variables that links negative attitudes towards the job and the decision to willingly leave one's job. (Mobley, 1977) This is a manifestation of dissatisfaction with the organisation and if it is not properly managed, can cause high employee turnover (Makhbul, Radzuan, & Hasun, 2011). Employees' intention to quit an organisation could be as a result of unfair treatment, management insincerity, unconducive working environment, organisation policies and politics, inequality in compensation administration among others (Cohen & Golan, 2007; Carmeli, 2005). However, Scott, Bishop, & Chen, (2003); Appelbaum et al. (2007); McClurg, Butler, (2006), posit that employees' intention to quit an organisation can lead to unethical and unprofessional behaviour such as absenteeism, substance abuse, privilege abuse and theft that are counterproductive.

Job Stress

Job stress occurs when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker and thus, detrimental to physical and emotional responses. If employees are excessively loaded, it can trigger deviant behaviour in response to increase in job stressors (Penny & Spector, 2005). It has been discovered that employees who experience negative emotions such as frustration due to work-related stress are more prone to engage in some counterproductive behaviors (Omar, Halim, Zainah, Farhadi, Nasir& Khairudin, 2011). Management should ensure that their employees are not overloaded with responsibilities in order to reduce the occurrence of deviant behaviour (Agervold, 2009, Stouten, Baillien, Broeck, Camps, Witte, & Euwema, 2011).

Poor Remuneration

Employees expected to get paid for the efforts and energies they have put into their jobs (Osibanjo, Adeniji, Falola and Heirsmac, 2014). If the remuneration and reward system is very poor, it is likely to give room for some employees to indulge in deviant behaviours such as stealing, using official things for personal use, sabotaging and other counterproductive behaviours. However, competition for better pay and low wages can induce deviant behaviours among employees (Kidwell, 2005, Falola, Ibidunni and Olokundun, 2014).

Social Pressure to Conform

Aronson, Wilson & Akert, (2005) opined that group norm conformity is influenced by an individual's desire for acceptance, cohesiveness among the group members, rewards associated with conformity and

alternatively, punishments associated with non-conformity. Hence, workplace deviance may occur when employers engage in, or tolerate deviant behaviour or create organisational climates that allow employees to conform to group norms. When members of a workgroup deem deviant behaviour acceptable, new employees are socialised to conduct business in a way that perpetuates the deviant but accepted behaviour (Mazni & Roziah, 2011; Gor, 2007)

Abusive Supervision

Workplace deviance is closely related to employees' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal or non-verbal behaviours (Litzky, 2000). It must be noted that if abusive supervision is practiced, revenge can occur. Employees who perceive their bosses as caring and supportive have been shown to have reduced incidence of workplace deviant behaviour (Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008).

Conflict

Workplace conflict of one sort or another is inevitable and universal. Some people may clash with coworkers; others may become upset by the behaviour of their supervisors or subordinates. There are also occasions when people will disagree with organisational policies, strategies, or governance. Whatever the basis for their frustrations, in most instances, individuals react in conventional, socially acceptable ways (Sagie, Stashevsky, Koslowsky & Macmillan, 2003). However, this must be put under control so that it will not escalate into a situation too complex for the organisation to handle.

Related Theories

A theory is a body of an idea specifically designed in a form of statements to give explanation to a particular concept or phenomenon. Some theories have been developed to give insight into what workplace deviance is all about. For instance, the Affective Events Theory (AET) was propounded by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) to identify how employees' emotions and moods influence job performance and job satisfaction. If the employees are not satisfied with organisational unfair practices, employees' emotions are affected and this is likely to influence their actions which are often reactionary in nature. Employees tend to react to unfair treatment, inequality, stress, role congruency, poor remuneration, abusive supervision among other perceived unfair practices. This emotional response intensity consequently affects job performance and satisfaction.

There is also the Agency theory which holds that employees as agents and employers as principals are utility maximisers and the relationship between them are best explained by the agency theory. The Agency theory postulates that both employer and employees are prone to opportunism (Shapiro, 2005). Employees (agents) will behave opportunistically (deviance) if given the chance. Nonetheless, employers (principals) can reduce deviant behaviours if proper monitoring and control mechanisms are in place (Kidder, 2005). Since the control environment has been previously found to influence employee fraud, it is therefore believed that the control environment may also have significant influence towards counter-productive behaviours.

The Social-Strain Typology Theory propounded by Merton proposes a typology of deviant behavior. According to him, typology is a classification scheme designed to facilitate understanding of reason for which employees' exhibit deviant behaviour in workplace. The typology of deviance is based on employees' motivation to adhere to organisational cultural goals and workers' beliefs on how to attain the goals. Merton also posits that there are four types of deviance: conformity, innovation, retreatism, rebellion. Interestingly, Merton's typology explains that employees can turn to deviance in response to their perceived inequality, unfair treatment, conflict of interest, work related stress through role overload, poor remuneration etc. which invariably will make some employees to sabotage organisation property, stealing, coming late to work, deliberately working slowly and taking frequent unnecessary breaks.

The Conflict perspective opines that employees are constantly in conflict over resources and other benefits captured under the terms and conditions of employment. In Mills' view, structures are created through conflict between people with differing interests and resources. Individuals and resources, in turn,

are influenced by these structures and by the unequal distribution of power and resources in the organisation (Knapp, 1994). A clear example of a reflection of power imbalances through deviance is observed in the reporting and tracking of crimes such as stealing, bribery, corruption, embezzlement, theft, counterfeiting, tax evasion etc., which are typically committed by individuals in higher authority.

As obtained in the literature reviewed above, many studies have been carried out to examine the effect of workplace deviant behaviours in the manufacturing industry, service industry among others in developed counties. Nevertheless, limited research has been done on the impact of workplace deviant behaviours on organisational effectiveness in a growing economy like Nigeria. Therefore, we propose the following model depicted in figure 2 to help to determine the impact of workplace deviant behaviours on organisational effectiveness in Nigeria.

FIGURE 2
PROPOSED STUDY MODEL
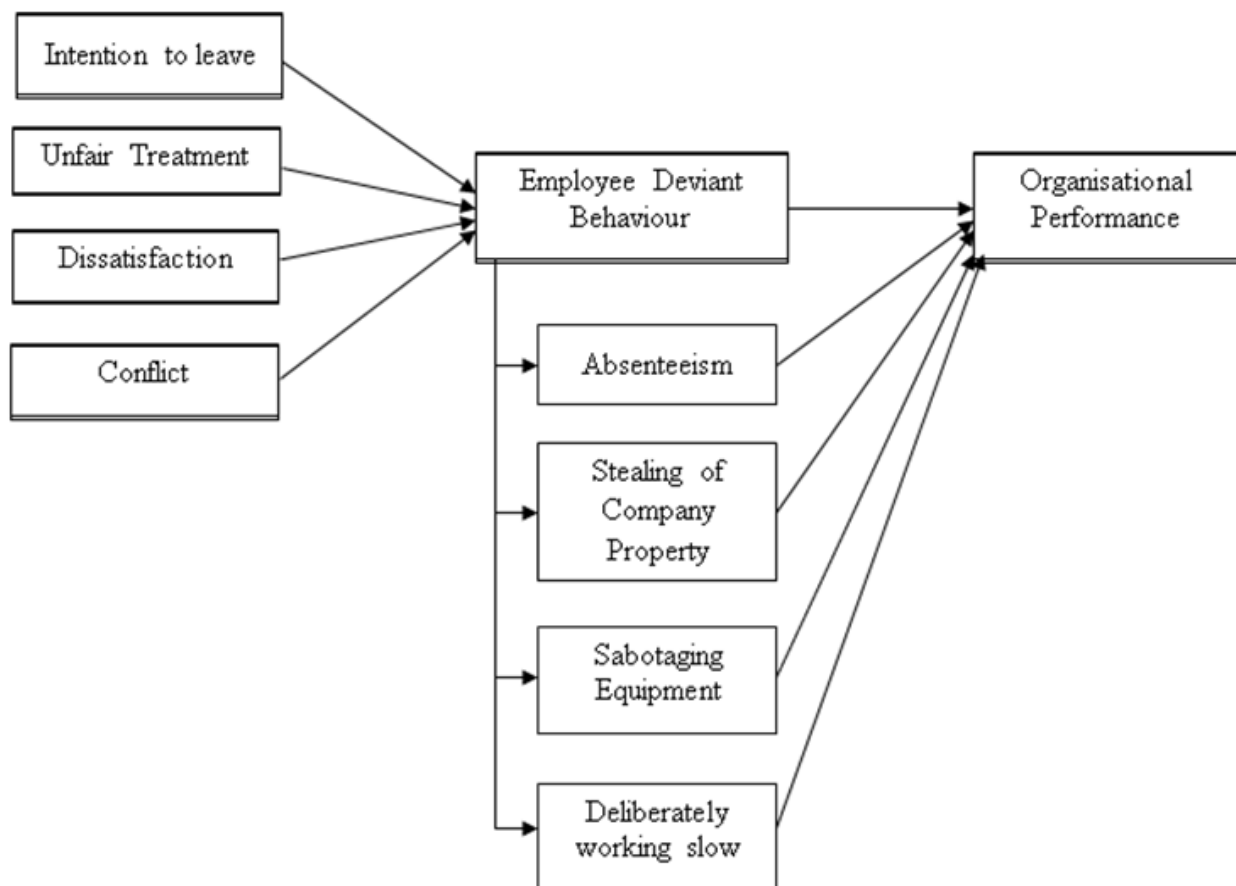
MANAGERIAL STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING DEVIANT BEHAVIOURS IN THE WORKPLACE

Deviant behaviour has become an issue of concern in human resource management in organisations, therefore it requires a managerial strategy to reduce its menace if total eradication is not achieved. It is obvious that workplace deviant behaviours is a function of the norm of the workplace and managerial leadership (Peterson, 2002, Onyeonoru, 2002). The consequences of workplace deviant behaviours on organisations are enormous and if not properly and strategically managed will ruin the organisation. The

effect of workplace deviance requires that management and stakeholders find the root cause(s) of deviant behaviours exhibited by their employees and work towards eliminating these or reducing them to barest minimum. The following are therefore suggested as strategic tools to reduce the incidence of workplace deviance in various organisations in line with global best practices:

Deviant behaviour will reduce if employees' motivation is not taken for granted, considering that workers come to work with expectations and needs they want to satisfy via their work efforts. Obisi (2003), opines that adequate salary, good working atmosphere, job security, recognition of achievement, opportunity for growth, positive and supportive environment and supportive organisational culture as well as industrial harmony influence employees' satisfaction. Therefore, managers must ensure everything humanly possible is done to motivate their employees in order to earn their commitment and support; this will serve as a strategy towards reducing deviant behaviour.

It is obvious that employees usually react to perception; managers must clearly communicate reward systems to employees and explain that as it is attached to each performance target. This will invariably give each employee insight into the benefits they will get in exchange for inputs or efforts at every level of performance. Managers must ensure that rewards are matched to employees' needs and preferences.

Managers must also ensure that their employees are not overloaded with roles and responsibilities which may lead to decrease in quality of work, employee productivity and as well give rise to physical and emotional problems. Fear of layoffs and excessively high workloads, alongside unrealistic deadlines which put people under undue pressure and make them overwhelmed, must be wholly addressed by the management.

Employees place great value on the different incentives given to them by their employers. Hence, when these incentives are not given, workers tend to express their displeasure through poor performance and non-commitment to their job. It is therefore expedient for the managers to consider the needs and feelings of its work force and not just overlook them. This will safeguard industrial harmony.

Achieving a good organisational climate is dependent on fostering relationships based upon mutual respect and trust. Managers must ensure that they build a trusting and good relationship with their employees. The relationship developed by the managers with their employees will influence the attitudes and behaviours of their employees. As long as employees view their employers' trust as reciprocal and relational, they are likely to generate high levels of involvement and commitment toward the realisation of the organisations' objectives. Therefore, the management must as a matter of necessity exhibit high levels of employee trust through better communication, open dialogue and serious commitment by the management to address workplace deviance. Furthermore, managers must be wary of excessive monitoring as it connotes low trust and can foster deviance which will be counterproductive to an organization.

In addition, managers must put in place policies of ethical conduct which must be made clear, precise and properly disseminated to every member of staff in the organisation. Disciplinary actions taken against deviant behaviour must be in line with the policy and the degree of punishment must be equal to offence committed. Employees who commit the same offence should have the same punishment meted on them; as perceived lack of equity or inconsistency in this may prompt or generate more deviance. Employees ought to be made to understand the expectations of conduct in the organisation and what constitutes deviant behaviours. If employees are to be disciplined, the management should be fair, consistent and timely as failure to do these may trigger indiscipline.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT