

MANAGER ALTRUISM AND WORKPLACE SPONTANEITY IN THE NIGERIA PUBLIC HEALTH SECTOR

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Abstract

Despite the employee behaviour predictors identified as stimulants of functional and pro-social behaviour, there is yet empirically assertive position on what manager selfless postures are likely to attract extra-role behaviour among work members in the Nigerian public health sector. This study therefore investigate the empirical relationship between manager altruism and workplace spontaneity in the public health sector. The study had through a questionnaire instrument generated data from a sample of 118 respondents. The data were analyzed using multiple regression which indicated that 38% of the variation in workplace spontaneity is explained by the manager altruism behaviour. The study concluded that manager altruism predicts significantly employee spontaneity behaviour in the public health sector. It recommends that managers should be rather altruistic than rely on structural niceties of work as behaviour predicting instrument.

Keywords: Altruism, Oneness, Selflessness, Regards, Spontaneity

Introduction

Getting employees to take extra roles in the high of the environmental circumstance of firms has shown up consistently as a strategic action that managers contend with. Contemporary organizational context is a far cry from the prehistoric and classical thoughts that viewed employees as mere factors of production, therefore, showed conceptual neglect for the psycho-behavioural dynamics that define largely human behaviour in work organizations (Hammond, Keeney & Raiffa, 2006; Mathieum, Maynard, Rapp & Gilson, 2008; Judge & Telz, 2013; Hanson, 2015). The intensity of competition among firms, which is often stemmed from a change in production processes targeted at prompt and quality service delivery, can be strategically driven by a committed workforce showing a capacity to undertake roles that might not be formally assigned or venturing beyond formal work hours in order to achieve goals. The strategic focus reiterates the concept or workplace spontaneity. It is simply defined as employee commitment to voluntarily undertaking extra roles in order to attain targeted organizational goals. Workplace spontaneity is a non-compelled behaviour that ensures dedication to work goals by employees without pecuniary expectations (Razzag & Asif, 2012; Nadeem, Anwar & Khawaja, 2012; Griffen & Moorhedd, 2014). Employees while showing spontaneity exhibit passionate concern for the attainment of work goals. Achieving spontaneity behaviour among employees no doubt results from a variety of work experience, climate and incentive practices argued Kanungo (2001). Scholars of organizational theory have also reflected on the structure of work organizations as a determinant of employee

behaviour that compels formal involvement. This notwithstanding, while most of these positions are hitherto intuitive, there is a renewed effort at exploring other manager subordinate relationship experiences and how they influence employee behaviour, specifically manager altruism behaviour. The concept of manager altruism behaviour stresses managers demonstrating selfless leadership to the extent that it evolves a climate of support for work members and ensures that operational hiccups are not experienced. Altruism requires selfless responsibility on behalf of other individuals or group members. It evokes a long-term social relationship with reciprocal behaviour from beneficiaries. The literature on altruism shows empirical evidence of its relationship with job satisfaction, transformational leadership and normative commitment (Winter, 2000; Lee & Persson, 2011; Non, 2012). These pieces of empirical evidence reiterate manager altruism behaviour as that which attracts in turn a positive behavioural pattern that is likely to support commitment to work goals. This position though assertively conceptualized based on empirical evidence, there is a contextual gap resulting from the fact that previous studies on altruism and work outcomes have not been conducted in the health sector whose workforce behaviour is likely stimulated by manager psycho-social learning towards subordinates. This study, therefore, is aimed at investigating the empirical link between manager altruism and employee workplace spontaneity in the health sector in South-South Nigeria.

Literature Review

The Concept of Manager Altruism

There is no shortage of conceptual effort in psychology, organizational behaviour and sociology literature on the concept of altruism (Waldman et al, 2001; O'Shea, 2004; van Knippenberg, 2005; Brown & Trevino, 2006; Niti & Venkat, 2008). Interestingly they have shared common conceptual fervour that clearly indicates altruism as phenomenally behavioural and pro-social conduct with positive outcomes. Singh and Krishnan (2008) posit that altruism primarily considers others' objectives above self which indicates a considerable degree of selflessness. Individuals exhibit behaviourally, the feeling for others thereby considerably conducting themselves in an empathic manner that shows concern for others. Kanungo and Mendoca (1996) are of the view that altruism is a practical reflection of behaviour that benefits others, the advantages and gains for the beneficiaries notwithstanding. van Emmerik et al (2005) advanced that altruism is lasting to be interested in others' well-being and rights. It is the premise for continued support for other work members which implies co-worker support (Halverson et al, 2004). Altruism enhances the empathic feeling that ensures regard for members of some community noted Niti & Venkat (2008). Smith et al (1988) posit that altruism is a lead character that promotes commitment to pro-social behaviour, supporting subordinates to achieve goals and showing regard for their feeling and right at work. They had further noted that altruism instils a sense of co-worker support perhaps for absentee workers, orienting new employees and assisting others with beyond capacity work tasks. Kidwell & Bennett (2015) have prescribed a devoted workforce as having the potential to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of firms and this is associated with the manager's altruism behaviour. Altruistic managers according to Kalanyo (2012) through their behaviour promote oneness and a sense of collectivism in handling organizational tasks to the benefit of all. In conceptualizing oneness as manager altruism provides a common template that guides action since the manager believes that they have a common goal.

Concept of Workplace Spontaneity

The concept of workplace spontaneity has its roots in the works of Katz (1964) and had enjoyed huge contributions from organizational behaviour scholars (Motowildo, 1984; Organ & Konovsky, 1989; George, 1991). Katz had advanced lucidly that as organization stretches through the spectrum of formalization and rigidities, there is the unintended consequence of a fragile social system that lacks the capacity to attract commitment and impede goal attainment. However, the author believes that on the other hand, there exists a non-formal role in prescribed behaviour referred to as organizational spontaneity considered central to goal attainment. George & Brief (2000) defined workplace spontaneity as extra-role behaviour voluntarily embarked upon by employees to ensure organizational effectiveness. Li, Kim and Zhao (2017) posit that spontaneity behaviour is that which is formally recognized by the reward system of an organization but has a huge impact on ensuring that goals are attained by the organization and emphasized that they are voluntarily offered by employees. Barley (2013) explored the conceptual content of spontaneity behaviour and mentioned behaviour that represents the concept of punctuality, self-development, co-worker support and showing goodwill. While acknowledging Barley's conceptual content of the concept, Anglem, Nichole and Mansi (2015) added two behaviour that is viewed as manifesting of spontaneity behaviour that is viewed as manifesting spontaneity behaviour and include whistleblowing and obedience. For the different forms expressed in literature, punctuality is the strict readiness of employees to

promptly meet expectations beyond the organization's planned schedule. It will involve giving-up extra-curricular times for the sake of the organization (Kim, Neill & Cho, 2010). Self-development involves employee voluntary behaviour to enrich their work skills and competencies for efficient and effective service delivery. The acquisition of new knowledge and sharing of same among work members ensure the availability of skills for routine operations. Co-worker support spontaneity form entails covering up gaps for co-workers and helping absent employees to achieve desired targets and accomplish tasks (Ferguson & Berry, 2011; Leiter, 2013). Finally, showing goodwill involves creating the functional impression of the organization to friends showing how many benefits are accruable to them. They create in the mind of customers the qualities of their products and service to enjoy sustained patronage.

Managerial Altruism and Workplace Spontaneity

There is an obvious dearth of research evidence that has scrutinized the empirical relationship between manager altruism and employee spontaneity behaviour. However, literature presents stark evidence of manager altruism and transformational leadership. Evidently, manager altruism inspires a transformational attitude that commits managers to employees closely (Niti & Venkat, 2008). Altruism behaviour according to Groves and LaRocca (2011) distils the character of selflessness to either individual or group beneficiaries thereby facilitating functional and positive work behaviour. Their study correlates manager altruism with affective commitment. Kalgari (2015) also established a relationship between manager altruism and employee retention. Employees from his findings will show a willingness to be steadfast with their job and further be satisfied hence, will be interested in retaining their jobs. Manager altruism behaviour is a virtuous expression that is targeted at enlisting the support of all work members ultimately creating a climate of belongingness and a bond link between manager and subordinates. An interesting highlight of altruism according to Niti and Venkat (2008) is an utter show of regard and oneness and demonstrating an inner reflection of having feelings for subordinates' plight at work. Altruism in Parksons (2016) thinking, fosters commitment and pro-social actions that are disposed to goal attainment. Giacalone (2016) argues that as managers demonstrate altruistic behaviour, which involves sacrificing for subordinates willingly, it should expectedly elicit wholesomely a transformed attitude of showing more than commitment and be willing to undertake extra roles that are goal-oriented for the organization. This means altruism behaviour by managers is driven by social exchange expectation, which in this case should transcend mere involvement in tasks but being involved in spontaneity behaviour that is characteristic involvement in extra-roles voluntarily. While this seems conceptually plausible, it is important to develop an empirical position thus, we hypothesise that:

Methodology

This study focused on public health care delivery facilities of four (4) states in South-South Nigeria. The choice of these public health care facilities was made owing to incessant complaints about the poor level of pro-social behaviour amongst work members and evidence of managerial willingness to orient work practices that guarantee quality health care service delivery. From 9 hospitals, a sample of 204 personnel which includes medical officers (Departmental Heads) nurses, pharmaceutical staff and laboratory heads and other allied staff was used for the study. Phone calls and electronic mails were made to all of them and were encouraged to participate. Through this process, we got 168 of them who were keenly interested in participating in the study. The survey instrument was mailed to 114 of them while the remaining 54 were

served with the instrument directly due to proximity. Considering the dispersed nature of the facilities geographically we appointed 6 research support persons who visited the participants to encourage and remind them and perhaps help to access their e-mails of the 168 questionnaires served, 118 of them were retrieved and properly responded to representing 70.2% response rate this served the study purpose.

Measures

Manager altruism was measured using 16 items, 5 points Likert scale. These items were developed specifically for this study. Manager altruism has been defined as consideration of other

members’ feelings above self. The item developed measures whether the manager exhibits selflessness devotedness, regard and oneness to other work members. The high Cronbach alpha values of 0.73; 0.89; 0.81; 0.70; and 0.77 indicates reliability. Spontaneity behaviour was measured using Kalango’s (2012) 6 items scale which requires respondents to show the extent to which manager altruism has resulted in extra-role voluntary behaviour. A sample question passed is “employee voluntarily work extra hour because their manager shows deep feelings of respect for their input”. From the factor analysis concluded, a factor was extracted and aggregated Cronbach alpha of 0.81 was obtained

Results

Table 1.0: Descriptive and Correlation Results for Manager Altruisms and Spontaneity

	Constructs	Mean	Std	1	2	3	4	5
1	Selflessness	4.332	1.2202	1.000				
2	Devotedness	3.912	1.1879	.284**	1.000			
3	Regards	4.183	0.0288	.371**	.443**	1.000		
4	Oneness	4.503	0.9555	.682*	.513*	.393**	1.00	
5	Spontaneity	4.119	0.8154	.713**	.662*	.377**	.529**	1.000

** correlation sig @ 0.01
 * correlation sig @ 0.05

Table 1.0 shows the correlation results on the dimensions of manager altruism and workplace spontaneity. The result shows a high correlation (r = .713) on the relationship between the selfness dimension and workplace spontaneity and this is also significant @ p < 0.01. the devotedness dimension also shows a positive and significant relationship with spontaneity having r = .662 and p < 0.05. In the case of regards dimension, a weak positive and significant relationship exists between it and spontaneity with r = .377 @ p < 0.01. Finally oneness dimension with r=.529 @ p < 0.01 showed a moderate positive and significant relationship with workplace spontaneity in the studied sector.

Table 2.0 Showing regression results on Manager Altruism and Workplace Spontaneity

Dimension	β	Std error	t-value	Sig
Selflessness	0.786	0.040	1.836	0.000
Devotedness	0.222	0.211	0.756	0.032
Regards	0.349	0.036	1.473	0.000
Oneness	0.182	0.044	0.072	0.141
R	0.568			
R ²	0.380			
Adj R ²	0.290			
F	23.877 @ .p<0.000			
KMO	.844			
Std Error of Estimates	0.484			

Dependent Variable: Workplace Spontaneity

The model tested for best fit using an F-test with the f-value of 23.877 and significant @ p < 0.000, it means a high fit. The Kaiser-Meyer. Olkin measure of sampling adequacy value of 0.844 indicates that the sample was adequate which means normal distribution of data. The regression result indicates a moderate relationship between the examined variables. This is shown with the R = 0.568. the extent to which the variance in workplace spontaneity is explained by manager altruism behaviour in 38% as shown by R2 by = 0.380. It was also indicated that selflessness and regards dimensions of manager altruism with Beta results of 0.786 and 0.349 respectively have a greater impact on the workplace spontaneity behaviour.

Discussion

The findings of the study extensively substantiate extant literature on leader behaviour and positive organizational behaviour (Leiter, 2013). It examined the relationship between manager altruism and workplace spontaneity. Manager altruism according to Niti and Venkat (2008) induces long-term oneness resulting from an innate willingness to be vicariously responsible on behalf of others. The results of this study show a positive and significant relationship between manager altruism and employee workplace spontaneity. The in-depth concern for others (subordinates) by managers places a premium on employees. The employees are put ahead of self hence precipitate amongst employees voluntary and extra-role behaviour that is required for effective and efficient operations. Altruism behaviour reinforces willingness to provide support for one another which leverages skills and competencies gaps. Aside from providing additional support for earlier studies on the strength of manager altruism in influencing positive work outcomes, the study findings are a strong indication of its ability to trigger voluntary psycho-social behaviour that is not founded on pecuniary expectations. Again, the study stands as pioneering the need to provide empirical evidence on manager altruism behaviour in propelling workplace spontaneity which is a receipt for altruism organizational goals.

Conclusion/Practical Implications

This study is aimed at emphasizing empirically emerging thoughts on influencing employee voluntary and pro-social behaviour in work organizations through manager psycho-social behaviour. Manager altruism constructs in this study are correlated with workplace spontaneity behaviour amongst employees. From the questionnaire instrument and data obtained based on the components of the constructs, it is specifically shown that manager altruism behaviour correlates with employee spontaneity behaviour. This it does by eliciting oneness, selflessness and regard among all work members thereby ensuring the extra-role behaviour that accelerates efforts at organizational goals. Manager altruism instigates care and devoted work climate which is reciprocated by employee willingness to do more for the organization. The results of the study, in simple terms, conclude that manager altruism behaviour enhances employee workplace spontaneity behaviour. This study result has essentially initiated the need for appreciating the manager's perspective in ensuring a workforce that voluntarily charts path to goals through positive work behaviour. As managers promote oneness, and selflessness and show devotedness and regard to subordinates they expectedly show functional attitudes that are value-added to the organization. Particularly the strategic responsibilities of the health sector in terms of health care service delivery require a workforce that is committed to robust functional and spontaneity behaviour that will ensure quality service delivery.

Suggested for Further Studies

This study though has been conducted within rigorous scientific procedures; we are concerned about external validity with recourse to other sectors. The prevailing environmental milieu is diverse across sectors that one study might not cover for all therefore, we recommend further works on the constructs in other sectors especially the emerging hi-tech sector with unique knowledge requirements. All the same, in doing this, there can be methodological transplants perhaps with little modification since the approaches adopted here have been properly validated.

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