

Global Journal of Arts Humanity and Social Sciences
ISSN: 2583-2034
Abbreviated key title: Glob.J.Arts.Humanit.Soc.Sci
Frequency: Monthly
Published By GSAR Publishers
Journal Homepage Link: <https://gsarpublishers.com/journal-gjahss-home/>

Volume - 5 | Issue - 2 | Feb 2025 | Total pages 243-249 | DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.14951124

WORKFORCE DEDICATEDNESS AND COUNTER PRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR IN BAYELSA STATE CIVIL SERVICE

By

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Abstract

The research study examined workforce dedicatedness and counterproductive work behaviour in Bayelsa State civil service. Dedicatedness has a big impact on how well public sector organisations, like the Bayelsa State Civil Service, function. Yet, a significant obstacle to organisational performance is the prevalence of counterproductive work behaviours (CWBs). In order to determine the relationship between workforce dedicatedness and counterproductive work behaviour using metrics of theft and absenteeism, the study uses a correlational inquiry. A population of 1978 civil servants from each ministry in Bayelsa State was ascertained for this research. A sample size of 332 was determined by using the Krejcie and Morgan (1980) sample size determination table. The Cronbach's alpha statistical approach was used to evaluate the study's reliability. Both descriptive and inferential analyses were performed on the collected data. The statistical method utilised to analyse the hypothesised statements and the findings was the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient, which was aided by the SPSS software. From the results it was revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between workforce dedicatedness and the measures of counterproductive behavior. From the findings, it was suggested that government organisations in Bayelsa State should implement incentive programs such as performance-based rewards, integrity awards, and career growth opportunities to encourage employee dedication. This will also enhance their dedicatedness towards their workplace thereby reducing tendencies towards absenteeism and workplace theft.

Keywords: *workforce dedicatedness, theft, absenteeism, counter productive work behaviour, civil service.*

Article History

Received: 15- 02- 2025
Accepted: 26- 02- 2025
Published: 28- 02- 2025

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important factors in evaluating an organisation is how well it performs in terms of survival, growth, and success as well as how effectively its employees contribute to the firm's aims and objectives. Performance is seen as an essential precondition for organisational sustainability in a dynamic and fast-paced landscape of competition and change. The performance of an organisation becomes crucial as lagging firms are more probable to encounter early chaos (Mills & Kanaakia, 2019). The positive psychological workplace variables that enable employees to perform in their employment are now of a captivating subject for researchers in the domains of organisational behaviour and human resource management (Chan et al., 2017; Musenze et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the performance of public sector organizations, such as the Bayelsa State Civil Service, is significantly influenced by the dedication of their workforce.

Workforce dedicatedness encompasses employees' commitment, engagement, and loyalty, which are essential for enhancing productivity and service delivery. Organisational behaviour literature has shown that devoted employees put in much more personal time in their job as well as go extra mile to see that the organisation succeed. People in the workplace follow a common approach to achieving predetermined objectives. The performance of the civil service is a cornerstone for a nation's sustained growth and progress.. Through the Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), the government carries out policies, programs, and



services to promote economic growth, encourage growth at all levels, and strengthen the relationship and trust between the public and state administration (Imhonopi & Urim, 2013). Asamaoewei and Sylva (2023) emphasize that a dedicated workforce is crucial for the smooth operation of government services and public administration. However, the prevalence of counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) poses a substantial challenge to organizational efficiency.

Counterproductive behaviours refers to employee behaviours such as absenteeism, workplace deviance, fraud, negligence, and sabotage that are harmful to the objectives of the organisation. These actions have the potential to seriously impair service quality and productivity. Research indicates that a high proportion of unproductive behaviour has been valued in the public sector, which has resulted in a human resource crisis (Costantini et al., 2017). Employees that lack dedication, motivation, and efficiency are the root cause of this issue (Berman et al., 2019; Jacobson, 2011).

In the Bayelsa State civil service, in particular, a poor level of job engagement has been noted. This is demonstrated by employees' declining productivity, tardiness, absenteeism, and overall lack of dedication and devotion towards responsibilities. Furthermore, it seems that many employees lack commitment to their work because files go weeks without being addressed, and some receive query letters for failing to do their duties. Additionally, employees no longer feel the same sense of pride, excitement, and motivation to enter the civil service as they did in the past (Ebini & Waribugo, 2023).

There is a significant knowledge vacuum on the relationship between worker dedicatedness and counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) in the Bayelsa State Civil Service. Even though a lot of research has been done on several facets of employee behaviour in the Nigerian public sector, little is known about how dedicatedness of the workforce affects the kind and frequency of CWBs, especially in the Bayelsa State Civil Service. Given this experienced, the research is poised to examine the relationship between workforce dedicatedness and counterproductive behaviour in Bayelsa State civil service.

AIM OF THE PAPER

This paper seeks to explore the empirical connection between workforce dedication and counterproductive work behavior. The specific objectives are to;

1. Examine the relationship between workforce dedicatedness and theft in the civil service in Bayelsa State.
2. Find out the relationship between workforce dedicatedness and absenteeism in the civil service in Bayelsa State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research is guided by the following research questions.

1. Is there a relationship between workforce dedicatedness and theft in the civil service in Bayelsa State in the civil service in Bayelsa State?

2. Is there a relationship between workforce dedicatedness and absenteeism in the civil service in Bayelsa State?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between workforce dedicatedness and theft in the civil service in Bayelsa State
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between workforce dedicatedness and absenteeism in the civil service in Bayelsa State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workforce Dedicatedness

Workforce dedicatedness is the term used to describe workers' significant commitment, trustworthiness, and readiness to go further than the call of duty in order to accomplish organisations objectives. Motivation, accountability, and moral conduct are its defining traits, which boost output and effectiveness. Devoted workers create a healthy work culture by being enthusiastic, persistent, and purposeful in their job. Dedication of the workforce is essential in public service, like the Bayelsa State Civil Service, to minimise inefficiencies and unproductive practices. In order to promote dedication, one needs just remuneration, chances for professional advancement, acknowledgement, and moral leadership. A committed staff improves service delivery, builds institutional resilience, and fosters long-term success for the company (Mbabazi, 2021).

As defined by Song et al. (2012), a person is considered to be highly dedicated if they believe that their work has meaning, that they are proud and excited about the work, and that their job is challenging and exciting. A strong, extraordinary sense of devotion and support for someone or something is what Mbabazi (2021) describes as dedicatedness. Sadovaya and Korchagina (2016) defined it as a person's emotionally stable and upbeat attitude towards work with the goal of reaching personally meaningful outcomes (identity and professional needs).

Organisational behaviour literature has shown that devoted employees put in much more personal time in their job as well as go extra mile to see that the organisation succeed. This is manifested in their positive attitude to work such as working overtime, early resumption, staying late, volunteering and assisting their colleagues to accomplish their tasks as well as exhibiting organisational citizenship behaviour. Moreover, dedicated employees are trustworthy, work as a team, train other colleagues and also work consistently at the workplace. Furthermore, dedicated employees are honest, proactive, creative, collaborative, speedy accomplishment of tasks, and produce high quality with minimal errors. This aligns with the view of Indeed Career guide (2023) that dedicated employees at the work place display the following characteristics: (i) adaptable ;(ii) passionate;(iii) motivated, and goal oriented among others.

Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB)



Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB) is "any intentional behaviour on the part of an organisational member viewed by the organisation as opposite to its legitimate interests," (Sackett & DeVore, 2001). Among these unproductive behaviours are drug use, sabotage, theft, withdrawal, and harassment (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Sackett & DeVore, 2001; Spector et al., 2006). Unproductive work habits cost individuals and companies money (Bennett & Robinson, 2003).

These actions are categorised as "dysfunctional" since they almost always (though not always; see below) violate major organisational norms and negatively affect organisations in a variety of ways that are relevant to their objectives, personnel, processes, productivity, and profitability (Aubé et al., 2009; Dalal, 2005; Lanyon & Goodstein, 2004; Pearson et al., 2005; Robinson, 2008; Spector & Fox, 2005; Spector et al., 2006; Vardi & Weitz, 2004). Counterproductive workplace activities increase the chance of stress-related disorders, resignation (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 1996), low self-esteem, higher insecurity at work, and physical and psychological suffering (Griffin et al., 1998). We could be better able to access the psychological antecedents of CWB in order to reveal the driving underpinnings of such conduct.

Previous studies have pointed out a number of factors that could be predictors of ineffective workplace conduct. For instance, unhappy employees are more likely to steal (Kulas et al., 2007); abusive supervision is likely to affect workers's inclination to engage in negative employee behaviour that aims to harm the abuser as well as the company; and workplace stressors are likely associated with sabotage, interpersonal aggression, hostility, and complaints (Chen & Spector, 1992). We primarily look at absenteeism and theft as markers of unproductive conduct for the sake of this research.

Theft at work means taking company property without permission. This can include small items like office supplies or larger items like money or equipment. Studies show that staff theft is a common problem caused by several different reasons. A study by Hollinger and Clark (1983) found that how employees feel about their work environment and their job can affect employee theft. A recent study by Harris and Ogbonna (2006) looked at how company culture affects employee theft. It pointed out that having a good ethical work environment can help reduce this kind of behaviour.

Absenteeism means being away from work often without good reasons. This affects how available the team is and lowers productivity. Absenteeism can be caused by low employee involvement, rigid work hours, mental health problems, and workplace abuse. A study by Johns (2008) emphasises the complex nature of absence, noting that both personal and organisational factors play important roles. Furthermore, research by Hausknecht, Hiller, and Vance (2008) shows that job happiness and organisational commitment are inversely linked to absence rates, suggesting that improving these aspects can reduce absenteeism. It is important to deal with theft and absence to keep the workplace productive and fair. Implementing complete strategies that include

creating a positive organisational atmosphere, ensuring fair treatment, and improving job happiness can mitigate these issues.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The Employee Fraud Triangle Theory (Cressey, 1973)

The "Employee Fraud Triangle" idea was developed by Cressey (1973) at DePaul University in Chicago. It provides a logical explanation for why workers engage in illegal and deviant behaviour at work. The employee's attitudes are a major emphasis of the employee fraud triangle hypothesis. Crucially, the theory highlighted three forces—needs, possibilities, and rationalisation—that impact an employee's propensity to do unethical acts, including theft, abuse, effort withdrawal, and other counterproductive behaviours.

According to the hypothesis, an employee's likelihood of participating in deviant behaviours increases significantly when they are faced with these three pressures. The need or motive, sometimes known as an incentive, is the first component of the employee fraud triangle. It refers to the pressure or financial need of the individual who commits fraud (such as indebtedness or the failure to satisfy fundamental necessities, among other things) that motivates him or her to commit fraud. Then, when an employee has access to resources and data that enable them to perpetrate and hide the fraud, the opportunity to conduct fraud arises.

The theory's last component, the rationalisation of fraudulent behaviour, governs the justifications offered by those who do deviant behaviours, such as not getting paid or having their pay reduced, among other things. Given the lethargic attitude of civil service personnel, who see work as a means to a goal rather than as a core life interest, this hypothesis is especially pertinent to our research. There is a greater propensity in this situation to participate in deviant behaviour at work in order to make money.

Similarly, among emerging and declining nations, job insecurity, elimination of jobs, and unpaid wages are now out of control. When these rights and benefits are taken away, employees could be more likely to steal or act dishonestly while working.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

For this study, the predictor variable; workforce dedicatedness is correlated with the criterion – counterproductive work behavior adapted from Motowildo (2004).

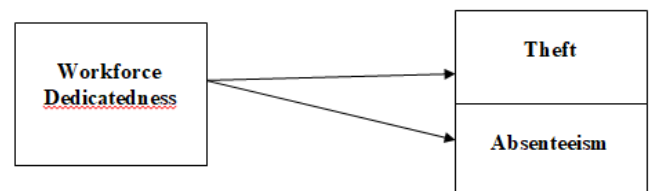


Figure 1: Operationalized framework for workforce dedicatedness and counter productive work behavior

Workforce Dedicatedness and Counterproductive Behaviour

Workforce dedicatedness is defined as their innate enthusiasm, commitment, and readiness to go above and beyond the call of duty

in order to accomplish organisational success (Meyer & Allen, 2016). It includes qualities like commitment, responsibility, tenacity, and moral responsibility, all of which support a successful workplace. On the other hand, voluntary employee behaviours that undermine an organisation's objectives are referred to as Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB). Examples of this type of behaviour include unethical behaviour, workplace deviance, absenteeism, and resource misuse (Spector & Fox, 2018).

Workforce dedicatedness seems to have a positive impact in reducing counterproductive behaviour. High-dedication workers are inherently driven to make valuable contributions to their companies, which lowers the possibility that they would engage in unproductive behaviour (Podsakoff et al., 2017). Employee disengagement and low dedication, on the other hand, result in lower production and unethical actions that impede the expansion of the company. Establishing robust recognition programmes, offering professional development chances, and guaranteeing equitable compensation are all ways that organisations may encourage dedication (Van Knippenberg, 2020). A supportive workplace culture and moral leadership further encourage commitment, which lowers CWB and fosters long-term success. Organisations may improve overall performance, ethical standards, and efficiency by placing a high priority on employee dedication.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a correlational research design to examine the association between workforce dedication and counterproductive work behavior, utilizing a quantitative approach. Data collection is based on a primary source, specifically a structured questionnaire administered to respondents through survey instruments. The focus of this study is on civil servants across various ministries in Yenagoa, Bayelsa. However, only those with a minimum of 13 years of service, holding a First Degree or Higher Diploma, and occupying positions at level 9 or above were considered. This selection is based on the rationale that such individuals are more likely to have a long-term career trajectory within the Civil Service. The total number of civil servants across the ministries was obtained from the State Civil Service Commission and further verified through the Establishment Unit of each ministry, resulting in a study population of 1,978. The Krejcie and Morgan (1980) sample size determination table was applied, yielding a sample size of 332. Data collection was conducted using questionnaires, with workforce dedicatedness measured using the scale developed by Imasuen and Lambo (2017). For counterproductive work behavior, the study adopted the 15-item scale proposed by Motowidlo (2004), which was later validated in the work of Ibura and Caleb (2015). To ensure reliability, Cronbach's alpha was employed, adhering to Nunnally's (1978) recommended 0.7 threshold for construct validity. In terms of the data analysis, both inferential and descriptive statistics were used. Measures of central tendency, including mean scores, percentages, and standard deviation to evaluate dispersion, were incorporated into the descriptive analysis with visual representation through bar and pie charts where applicable. Inferential analysis was conducted through hypothesis testing using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient,

facilitated by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

DATA ANALYSIS

Workforce Dedicatedness and Measures of Counter Productive Work Behaviour

The table below demonstrates the result of correlation matrix obtained for dedication and measures of counter productive work behaviour.

		Workforce Dedicatedness	Absenteeism	Theft
Dedication	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.806**	-.956**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
	N	270	270	270
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	-.806**	1.000	.900**
	Absenteeism Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
	N	270	270	270
Theft	Correlation Coefficient	-.956**	.900**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
	N	270	270	270

Source: SPSS Output Version 23.0

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between workforce dedicatedness and theft in the civil service in Bayelsa State.

The table's results show that the designated significance level (p = 0.000 < 0.05) is exceeded by the computed significance value. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. This demonstrates a strong correlation between worker devotion and theft in Bayelsa State's civil service.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between workforce dedicatedness and absenteeism in the civil service in Bayelsa State.

The computed significant value is less than the predetermined significance level (p = 0.000 < 0.05), according to the data in the table above. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests a strong correlation between absenteeism and employee commitment in Bayelsa State's civil service.



DISCUSSION

In the Bayelsa State Civil Service, the results show a strong, substantial negative correlation between workforce dedicatedness and counterproductive behaviour. In essence there exists an inverse relationship between workforce dedicatedness and counterproductive behaviour. An employee who is dedicated or has high levels of dedicatedness to work is less likely to indulge in counterproductive work behaviour. This finding corroborates with the earlier works of Clinton and Guest (2014), revealing that there was more of relationship between employees dedication among lower level employees compared to their middle level counterparts. The current finding aligns with Askew et al. (2013) who conducted a study on dedication and punctuality at work and concluded that much of the behaviour of punctuality amongst personnel of the courier firm is influenced by prevailing dedication climate. Furthermore, the results are consistent with Sharkawi and Azura (2013), who found that workers will exhibit unproductive job behaviour in response to an employer's breach of the psychological contract about "independence and authority." Conversely, there is a negative correlation between CWB and person-organisation fit, indicating that employees are less likely to act counterproductively when they feel a sense of belonging to their company. Additionally, Monnastes (2010) discovered a negative correlation between employee-oriented CWB and organization-oriented CWB and perceived organisational support. According to the findings, employees who felt that the organisation did not support them were more likely to engage in hazardous behaviours, whereas CWB was less likely to be linked to positive perceptions of organisational support.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study demonstrate how important workforce dedicatedness is in reducing unethical and ineffective practices in Bayelsa State's civil service. The findings imply that greater dedication by staff considerably lowers these detrimental workplace behaviours, as there is a very substantial negative link between worker dedication and both theft and absenteeism. The statistical analysis for the study question showed a substantial negative association between workforce dedicatedness and theft, suggesting that a considerable decrease in theft is correlated with greater levels of devotion among public workers. This emphasizes how important workforce dedicatedness is to reducing fraud in government organisations. The research findings also implies that absenteeism may be successfully decreased by encouraging a culture of devotion among civil service personnel. All things considered, the study offers factual proof of the value of dedicatedness of employees in promoting responsibility, lowering workplace misconduct, and improving general effectiveness in Bayelsa State's civil service. In order to further enhance organisational performance and integrity, it highlights the necessity for government organisations to put in place policies that promote staff commitment, such as training, incentives, and recognition programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Administrators in the Civil Service should implement incentive programs such as performance-based rewards, integrity awards, and career growth opportunities to encourage employee dedication. When employees feel valued and fairly compensated, their likelihood of engaging in theft decreases.
- ii. Bayelsa State government agencies should ensure that procedural justice is upheld in areas such as promotions, salary structures, and workload distribution. Creating an open feedback system where employees feel heard and valued will also enhance their sense of belonging and reduce tendencies towards absenteeism and workplace theft.

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