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WORKPLACE BULLYING AND ABUSIVE SUPERVISION AS PREDICTORS OF INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR AMONG EMPLOYEES IN LAGOS STATE

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ABSTRACT

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This study examined workplace bullying and abusive supervision as predictors of innovative work behaviour among employees of a manufacturing company in Lagos State. The sample consisted of 200 participants (153 males and 47 females) selected from the organization using the purposive sampling technique. The age of the participants ranged from 28 to 54 years, with a mean age of 39.88 and a standard deviation of 7.37. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested. The Negative Acts Questionnaires-Revised (NAQ-R) developed by Einarsen, et al. (2009), the Abusive Supervision Scale by Tepper (2000), and the Innovative Work Behaviour Scale (IWBS) by Scott and Bruce (1994) were used as measurement instruments. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, and the data were analysed using hierarchical multiple regression statistics. The study reveals that both workplace bullying and abusive supervision had significant negative impacts on innovative work behaviour among employees. Based on these results, organisations are advised to take proactive measures to prevent and manage workplace bullying and abusive supervision. This may involve implementing clear policies against bullying, promoting a positive and respectful work environment, and providing training and support to employees and managers on recognizing and addressing such behaviours.

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of organizational behaviour, innovative work behaviour represents a pivotal aspect that drives progress and success. It encompasses employees' deliberate actions aimed at generating, introducing, and implementing novel ideas, processes, products, or procedures within the confines of their roles, groups, or organizations (Afsar & Badir, 2015). This intentional behaviour, as articulated by Chatchawan, Trichandhara, and Rinthaisong (2017), involves the introduction or application of new concepts to assigned work roles, spanning diverse domains like work processes, personnel recruitment, product and service enhancements, supply chain improvements, quality refinement, cost-effective production, and even changes in production equipment and location. This innovative behaviour often emerges in response to the dynamic market forces experienced by workers or as a result of their ingenious efforts to secure a competitive edge.

Given the backdrop of cutthroat competition and the challenging economic landscape, organizations such as banks and manufacturing companies constantly grapple with the imperative to stay relevant and effective (Afsar & Badir, 2015). Survival is contingent on innovation, with companies seeking to harness the potential of their workforce to drive change and growth. The significance of employees' innovative behaviour as a potential source of competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving business environment cannot be overstated. By utilizing creativity to explore novel technologies, processes, techniques, and product concepts, organizations can enhance their overall performance (Jaiswal & Dhar, 2015). As businesses confront technological shifts and structural changes, the perspectives of their employees become invaluable in identifying optimal solutions.

In the current interconnected economy, customer demands are on the rise due to greater exposure to information and a wide array of suppliers (Yukl, 2011). This scenario necessitates organizations to uphold higher product quality and service standards, even while striving to reduce costs. While innovation was previously seen as merely tactical, it has now become a driving force for economic development (Zawislak & Marins, 2008). Organizations must continuously innovate to stay competitive in a rapidly evolving market (Xerri & Brunetto, 2011).

In the midst of this environmental uncertainty, organizations are turning to innovation as a means of maintaining competitiveness and efficiency (Anderson, Dreu & Nijstad, 2014). Employees' innovative work behaviour, encompassing activities that generate new products and optimize workflows through the adoption and application of novel ideas, has emerged as a critical asset for adapting to dynamic business environments (Koser, Rasool & Samma, 2018). This realization is prompting heightened attention toward the personal and situational factors influencing innovative work behaviour (Rasool et al., 2019), especially considering that human resources play a pivotal role in managing organizational resources (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

In light of the evolving economic landscape driven by knowledge and innovation, organizations must transition from the traditional reliance on land, labour, and capital to an emphasis on creative ideas and innovation (Chompukum, 2008). However, a critical challenge arises: workplace bullying, which poses a significant threat to employees' wellbeing and innovative potential (Rasool et al., 2020). The prevalence of workplace bullying, although widespread, often remains hidden due to victims' reluctance to report due to factors such as shyness, lack of evidence, and fear of reprisals (Taylor & Rew, 2011). This hidden cruelty obstructs victims' wellbeing and dampens their ability to contribute innovative ideas, thereby compromising their organization's competitive edge.

Amidst this backdrop, leadership emerges as a pivotal factor influencing employees' innovative behaviour. While previous studies have explored leadership's role in fostering innovative behaviour (Liu, Liao & Loi, 2012; Gu et al., 2017), recent attention has turned to the "dark side of leadership," specifically abusive supervision, and its influence on subordinates' innovative behaviour (Lee, Yun & Srivastava, 2013). The prevalence of abusive behaviours, particularly in contexts such as China with a culture of high-power distance, underscores the complexity of this relationship (Gu et al., 2017). Despite the dual perspectives on

the impact of abusive supervision, the underlying psychological mechanisms and contextual factors require deeper investigation.

In this context, this study aims to investigate the factors influencing innovative work behaviour among employees in southwest Nigeria, particularly Lagos. While prior research has explored innovative work behaviour's implications and contexts, a dearth of literature exists pertaining to the Nigerian scenario, necessitating a fresh inquiry to contribute to the body of knowledge in this area.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to ascertain if workplace bullying and abusive supervision will significantly predict innovative work behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper company in Alausa, Ikeja.

Specifically, the purpose of this study is to explore if;

1. Workplace bullying will significantly predict innovative behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper company in Alausa, Ikeja.
2. Abusive supervision will significantly predict innovative behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper company in Alausa, Ikeja.

Empirical Review

Workplace Bullying and Innovative Work Behaviour

Eze and Obi (2021) investigated the prevalence and effect of workplace bullying on employee job performance in road transport Subsector in Imo State, Nigeria. This study is survey research. Associated Bus Company plc, with a population of 1,500 employees, was the case study. Primary data was sourced through structured questionnaire while secondary data was collected from the human resources department of the Case organization. Purposive sampling technique was used to select samples of 80 supervisory and managerial staff of ABC Transport plc. Based on Questionnaires survey administered on 800 management and supervisory staff of ABC Transport plc the result established that employees in the road transport sector faced a number of bullying behaviours that impeded on their performance in the workplace, mostly, humiliation, persistently assaulted, often physical abused, exposure to unmanageable workload, deliberate denial of entitlement, excessive monitoring of work by superiors and given tasks with unreasonable deadlines. The study also showed that there is a significant but negative relationship between workplace bullying and employee job performance.

Yahaya, Tan, Goh, Yahaya, Yusof, Hashim and Taat (2012) investigated the impact of workplace bullying on work performance. The population of this study is 217 employees from a plastic manufacturing company which it is a leading manufacturer and converter of flexible packaging in the ASEAN region, with its manufacturing operations located in Malaysia. This company is located in the industrial areas in Melaka, Malaysia. The results revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between workplace bullying and towards work performance. The independent-samples T-test revealed that there were significant differences between workplace bullying and work performance between local and foreign employees. The result showed Multiple regression showed there was contribution for the variables such as person related bullying towards work performance. The results showed that the three predictor factors accounted for a 51.4% increase in change criterion (work performance). The study also found that the person related to bullying was predicted as a strong contributor toward work performance. A predictor model was constructed via analysis of multiple regression analysis.

Xiang, Samma and Dawei (2020) e investigated the impact of workplace violence (WV) on innovative work behaviour (IWB). The researcher distributed 550 questionnaires among the workers of small and medium enterprises entrepreneurs located in Guangdong Province, China. The researcher received 360 questionnaires. Therefore, 24 questionnaires were uncompleted. The complete sample size was 336. The results confirm that,

in the direct relationship, Workplace Violence (harassment, mobbing, and sabotage) has a negative relationship with innovative work behaviour. Moreover, results also confirm that employee wellbeing is mediated between Workplace Violence (harassment, mobbing, and sabotage) and innovative work behaviour. Therefore, the empirical results of this paper identify that workplace violence reduces employees' innovative work behaviour by reducing their subjective and eudemonic wellbeing, which further broadens the perspective of innovative work behaviour's motivation analysis.

Zhou, Rasool and Ma (2020) investigated the impact of workplace violence (WV) on innovative work behaviour (IWB). The researchers distributed 550 questionnaires among the workers of SMEs entrepreneurs located in Guangdong Province, China. The researchers received 360 research questionnaires from these questionnaires, and 24 questionnaires were uncompleted. The complete sample size was 336, which is 61% of the distributed questionnaires. The results confirm that, in the direct relationship, WV (harassment, mobbing, and sabotage) has a negative relationship with innovative IWB. Moreover, results also confirm that employee wellbeing is mediated between WV (harassment, mobbing, and sabotage) and IWB. Therefore, the empirical results of this paper identify that workplace violence reduces employees' innovative work behaviour by reducing their subjective and eudemonic wellbeing, which further broadens the perspective of IWB's motivation analysis.

Barbar (2022) examined the impact of workplace bullying on innovative work behaviour in the context of Pakistan, particularly in the public banking sector of the twin cities. The study also tested the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the given relationship between workplace bullying and innovative work behaviour. Moreover, the moderating role of the internal locus of control in the relationship between workplace bullying and perceived organizational support was also investigated. Data were collected from 336 employees working in public banks across Islamabad and Rawalpindi, through the convenience sampling technique. SPSS, process macro by Hayees were used for mediation and moderation analysis. Workplace bullying was found to have a significant and negative influence on innovative work behaviour. Perceived organizational support was also found to have a significant mediating effect on the relationship between workplace bullying and innovative work behaviour as depicted by the results. Results of the study also showed that internal locus of control moderates the relationship between workplace bullying and perceived organizational support in such a way that it weakens the relationship.

Abusive Supervision and Innovative Work Behaviour

Dawei, Xiaowen, Zhou, Phil, Zong and Yixin (2018) examined the relationships between abusive supervision, job insecurity, locus of control, and employees' innovative behaviour. This study was conducted across four enterprises in China. A total of 700 employees were asked to participate in the surveys. The final sample consisted of 641 participants, 549 women and 92 men, with an ultimate response rate of 91.6%. Among these participants, 72.1% were married. Results found that abusive supervision was positively correlated with job insecurity. In contrast, both job insecurity and abusive supervision were negatively correlated with employees' innovative behaviour, with the impact of abusive supervision on innovative behaviour being mediated by its effect on job insecurity. Having an external locus of control that served as a buffering factor for employees, mitigating the relationship between abusive supervision and job insecurity.

Zhu and Zhang (2019) investigated the relationship between abusive supervision and innovative behaviour. The researchers collected data from full-time employees in mainland China (including Beijing and Shanghai) at two points in time. The data were collected in China via an online platform named "sojump.com." A total of 402 individuals consented to participate and completed the Time 1 survey. The analyses included a total of 253 observations with complete data for the study's variables across the Time 1 and Time 2 surveys. Results showed that abusive supervision discouraged subordinates' innovative behaviour through reducing subordinates' psychological safety but promoted subordinates' innovative behaviour through enhancing challenge-related stress. Ronena and Donia (2020) investigated the impact of abusive supervision on employees' motivation and ensuing outcomes at work. Data was collected by Qualtrics Panel Management from a sample of 306 full-time employees working in a variety of different organizations and hierarchies in North America. Results of time lagged data collected from 306 full-time employees indicate that abusive supervision leads to lower autonomous motivation, higher controlled motivation, and more lack of

motivation (amotivation). These motivational states in turn are found to positively affect counterproductive work behaviours and intentions to quit the job and negatively affect employees' job-satisfaction and innovative behaviours.

Hypotheses

1. Workplace bullying will significantly predict innovative work behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper company in Alausa, Ikeja.
2. Abusive supervision will significantly predict innovative work behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper company in Alausa, Ikeja.

METHOD

Participants

Two hundred participants were selected for the study using purposive sampling technique. The participants (153 males and 47 females) were employees of a pulp and paper company in Alausa, Ikeja, Lagos State. Their ages ranged from 28 to 54 years with a mean age of 39.88 and Standard Deviation of 7.37. One hundred and 17 of the participants were married while 83 were single.

Instruments

Three questionnaires were used in the study; The Negative Acts Questionnaires-Revised (NAQ-R), Abusive Supervision Scale and the Innovative Work Behaviour Scale (IWBS).

The Negative Acts Questionnaires-Revised (NAQ-R) was developed by Einarsen, Stale; Hoel, Helge; and Notelaers, Guy in 2009. It constitutes a comprehensive tool for gauging exposure to workplace bullying. NAQ-R comprises of 23 items with three distinct subscales: work-related bullying, person-related bullying, and physically intimidating bullying. Alternatively, it can be utilized as a unified measure. Employing a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 "Never" to 5 "Daily"), the NAQ-R underscores the frequency of events, with higher scores indicative of greater occurrence. Respondents are prompted to reflect on their encounters with the 22 negative acts encompassed within the questionnaire, pertinent to their workplace experiences over the preceding six months. An additional 23rd item furnishes a precise definition of bullying. The NAQ-R exhibits a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90.

The Abusive Supervision Scale, developed by Tepper in 2000, constitutes a comprehensive tool comprising 15 items designed to evaluate an individual's perceived encounters with verbal, emotional, social, and ethical mistreatment from their superiors within a professional context. This instrument adopts a self-report format, necessitating employees or participants to introspectively assess their experiences of abuse inflicted by their superiors or supervisors. The self-evaluative nature of this report is quantitatively appraised using a 5-point Likert scale, wherein responses span from 1 denoting strong disagreement to 5 signifying strong agreement. This spectrum of responses facilitates a nuanced portrayal of the extent to which respondents concur or diverge with the various statements posed by the scale. Illustrative examples extracted from the questionnaire encompass statements such as "My supervisor communicates to me that my thoughts or emotions lack value," and "My supervisor disparages me in the presence of colleagues." The Abusive Supervision Scale, as validated by Tepper (2000), has demonstrated commendable internal consistency, with a reported validity coefficient of .95. A subsequent validation exercise conducted in Nigeria by Onyishi (2012) affirms the utility of this instrument within a distinct cultural context. Onyishi's validation study encompassed a Nigerian sample and reported a reliability coefficient of r = .89, thereby corroborating the soundness of the scale's psychometric properties within this specific population.

The Innovative Work Behaviour Scale (IWBS) by Scott and Bruce (1994), serves as a pivotal tool designed to evaluate the extent of innovation and creativity displayed by employees within a professional milieu. This multidimensional instrument gauges not only the level of ideation, exploration, communication, and implementation of novel concepts, but also encompasses the capacity to surmount obstacles in the pursuit of

innovation, along with the actual outcomes of such innovative endeavours. The (IWBS) comprises 22 items, all of which are subjected to self-assessment by respondents. To quantify participants' responses, the Likert format is employed, incorporating a range of five graded options, spanning from 1 to indicate "strongly disagree," to 5 signifying "strongly agree." This gradated framework fosters a nuanced evaluation of the degree to which respondents align with the statements posed by the scale. Selected items culled from the self-reported questionnaire include exemplars such as "I am keenly interested in exploring methodologies employed elsewhere, with a view to incorporating acquired insights into my own work," "I actively experiment with novel approaches to tasks in my work environment," and "I devise well-structured plans and schedules for the effective execution of newly conceived ideas." The foundational validity of the IWBS was established by its developers, Scott and Bruce (1994), through a rigorous analysis, yielding an impressive coefficient of internal consistency (α = .88). Subsequently, in a contextual adaptation within Nigeria, the IWBS has been validated by Ezeaku (2022) with the results indicating that the instrument is reliability and valid for use among Nigerian samples

Procedure

The researcher sought and obtained approval to carry out the study among their employees from the selected pulp and paper company at Alausa, Ikeja. Thereafter, participants who were available and willing to participate in the study were briefed on the purpose of the research and assured of their confidentiality regarding their responses to the questionnaires. They were also advised to read the instructions carefully before responding to the items. After responding to all items of the questionnaires, the researcher collected the questionnaires from the participants, appreciating them for their participation.

Design and Statistics

Cross-sectional survey design was utilized because of the large participants involved in the study while correlation and hierarchical multiple regression analysis were used to analyse the data collected.

RESULTS

Table 1:   Correlations for the Key Variables Used in the Study

	Age	IWB	Workplace Bullying	Abusive Supervision
Age	1.0	-.107	.207**	.007
IWB		1.0	-.338**	-.344**
Workplace Bullying			1.0	.202**
Abusive Supervision				1.0

*Note: N = 200, * = p<.05, ** = p<.01*

The Pearson correlation for all variables used in the study is presented in Table 1 above. The table show significant positive relationships between age and workplace bullying *(r = .207, n = 200, p<.01),* workplace bullying and abusive supervision *(r = .202, n = 200, p<.01).* However significant inverse relationships were found between innovative work behaviour (IWB) and workplace bullying *(r = -.338, n = 200, p<.05),* innovative work behaviour (IWB) and abusive supervision *(r = -.344, n = 200, p<.05).*

Table 2: **Two-Step Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses for Innovative Work Behaviour on Workplace Bullying and Abusive Supervision**

Predictors	Step 1β	Step 2β
Step 1		
Workplace Bullying	-.338**	-.280**
Step 2		
Abusive Supervision		-.287**
ΔF	25.51**	19.36**
R^2	. 114**	.193**
ΔR^2		. 079**
Df	1,198	2, 197
Dublin Watson	1.71	

$N = 200,$ ** $= p<.01$

The result of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis as presented in Table 2 above tested the two hypotheses of the study. The overall fit of the model shows that only 19.4% of the variation in innovative work behaviour scores among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State has been explained. Also, the Durbin-Watson of 1.71 falls within the accepted range (1.5 < D < 2.5), indicating that there is no autocorrelation problem in the data and that the error term is independent.

In the first hypothesis, workplace bullying was regressed into the model and it explained 11.4% variation in innovative work behaviour scores among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State. Workplace bullying also significantly inversely predicted innovative work behaviour scores among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State *(β = -.338, p>.01, t = -5.05)* implying that as workplace bullying increases, innovative work behaviour among employees reduces. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

Similarly, analysis of the second hypothesis shows that abusive supervision explained 7.9%% of the variations in innovative work behaviour scores among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State. The result also showed that abusive supervision inversely predicted innovative work behaviour scores among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State *(β = -.287, p>.01, t = -4.40)* implying that as abusive supervision increases, innovative work behaviour among employees reduces. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

Based on the result obtained, the first null hypothesis which stated that workplace bullying will not significantly predict innovative work behaviour among employees was rejected. The result implies that as workplace bullying increases, innovative work behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State reduces. The first null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The reason is that the assigned work roles must be conferred by the firm and adopted by its employee for the organization to function effectively as a goal oriented social entity. Furthermore, formal organizations were often characterized by role conflict (i.e., opposing norms that were held for actors by powerful others), that such conflict posed problems for both the actors and organization in which they appeared. Employees will experience frustration when the role expectations embedded in one of their work roles differ or even contradicts those associated with another of their work roles (Biddle, 1986). This result supports the findings of Eze and Obi (2021), Yahaya, Tan, Goh, Yahaya, Yusof, Hashim and Taat (2012) and Xiang, Samma and Dawei (2020) who found that workplace bullying influence innovative work behaviour.

Similarly, the results of the second hypothesis which stated that abusive supervision will not significantly predict innovative work behaviour among employees was rejected. The result implies that as abusive supervision increases, innovative work behaviour among employees of a pulp and paper industry in Lagos State reduces. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected. Reason is that the exchange, or reciprocation,

in social relationships becomes stronger when both partners are willing to provide resources valuable to the other. Whereas employees value beneficial treatment, employers seek loyalty and dedication (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades 2001). However, positive actions directed at employees by the organization contribute to the establishment of high-quality exchange relationships including ability to innovate ideas useful to organizations (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades 2001; Settoon, Bennett & Liden, 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). This result supports the findings of Dawei, Xiaowen, Zhou, Phil, Zong and Yixin (2018), Zhu and Zhang (2019) and Ronena and Donia (2020) who found that abusive supervision influences innovative work behaviour.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study carry significant implications, namely that workplace bullying and abusive supervision exert a discernible influence on innovative work behaviour. The observed connection underscores the pivotal role played by the interpersonal dynamics between employers and employees in shaping attitudes within the organizational context. Consequently, organizations stand to benefit from fostering an environment characterized by open and respectful interactions with employees, a strategy proven to stimulate the generation of innovative ideas conducive to the attainment of overarching organizational objectives.

Moreover, these findings extend their utility to aspiring managers, offering insights into the most conducive relationship dynamics for nurturing optimal employee performance within designated roles while concurrently advancing organizational ambitions. The study's revelations thus offer valuable guidance to managers seeking to foster both employee growth and organizational success through strategic interpersonal engagement.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the intricate interplay between workplace dynamics and innovative work behaviour. The implications drawn from the findings emphasize the profound impact of workplace bullying and abusive supervision on employee attitudes and, consequently, their contributions to the organization. The pivotal role of the employer-employee relationship in shaping these attitudes underscores the need for fostering a work environment characterized by respect, collaboration, and open communication.

Furthermore, the insights offered by this study extend to aspiring managers, providing a roadmap for cultivating an environment in which employees can thrive while driving organizational success. The significance of this research lies in its ability to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering actionable strategies to enhance both employee well-being and innovation within the workplace. As the business landscape evolves and innovation becomes an indispensable driver of success, this study serves as a timely reminder that nurturing positive relationships and promoting a culture of respect can ultimately empower organizations to harness the full potential of their workforce and achieve their strategic objectives.

Recommendations

Chiefly among its recommendations, the study recommends that the organisation should promote a respectful and supportive work environment instead of just emphasizing a "liberal and cordial" relationship. Employees should focus on cultivating a respectful and supportive work environment which includes fostering open communication, active listening, and empathy. Creating a culture where employees feel valued and respected can also lead to increased innovative work behaviour.

There is also the need to implement anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies rather than addressing workplace bullying and abusive supervision only through relationship dynamics. These policies should be communicated effectively to all employees, ensuring a zero-tolerance approach to any form of mistreatment. This can contribute to a healthier work environment that encourages innovation

Managers should receive training on effective leadership and communication skills. This includes techniques for providing constructive feedback, recognizing employee contributions, and resolving conflicts in a respectful manner. Well-trained supervisors are more likely to inspire and motivate employees to contribute innovative ideas.

Implement a formal recognition and reward system for employees who contribute innovative ideas. This can include monetary incentives, promotions, or even public acknowledgments. Recognizing and rewarding innovation sends a clear message that the organization values creative thinking and encourages others to contribute their ideas as well.

Organisations should conduct regular feedback sessions and performance reviews that focus on both task accomplishments and innovation efforts. Constructive feedback can guide employees in refining their innovative ideas and aligning them with organizational objectives.

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