



Counterproductive Work Behaviour and Productivity of Employees of Rivers State University Teaching Hospital (RSUTH), Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

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Date of Submission: 05-07-2024

Date of Acceptance: 18-07-2024

ABSTRACT

The paper investigated the forms and causes of counterproductive work behaviours on the productivity of the employees of Rivers State University Teaching Hospital, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Teaching hospitals are generally expected to render quality and prompt services to their patients but this is highly dependent on the calibre of employees who, to a large extent, determine the quality of services patients receive. Methodologically, the paper adopted triangulation methods of data collection. Primary data obtained through questionnaire was analysed through descriptive statistical and quantitative methods, while the content analysis was used in the analysis of the secondary data. Employee Fraud Triangle Theory articulated by Donald R. Cressey was used to direct the paper. The findings revealed abuse (harassment, argument, maltreatment in the workplace), production deviance, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal are the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital and recommends amongst others that the hospital should create awareness of how behaviour affects both organizational and employee productivity.

Key Words: Behaviours, counterproductive, employees, productivity, work.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Rivers State University Teaching Hospital, Port Harcourt, Rivers State is a tertiary health institution established to service the Faculty of Medicine of the university. Notably, employees play an important role in achieving institution's goals and objectives, but employees in teaching hospitals may sometimes be burdened with the heavy workloads of

providing quality service delivery to the community (Yakasai et al., 2013). In Rivers State University Teaching Hospital, like many other government owned-health institutions, much premium is placed on the employee productivity, particularly in areas relating to proper clinical diagnosis, maintaining the confidentiality of patients, accountability for any course of action in the hospital and ensuring a good relationship between colleagues and patients.

Aside from incentives like competitive salary, job security, and advancement opportunities, staff would require a supportive environment like call-rooms and well-lit spaces to maintain a high-level of effectiveness in productivity. (Ogunnubi et al., 2020). Sometimes, when the working environment and other factors mentioned above are lacking or inadequate, they may affect productivity or even lead to industrial action, strikes and the lives of the patients in the facility will be in danger. Furthermore, a variety of work practices that would improve the health of the organisation are anticipated from RSUTH staff members. Yet, this is not always the case as some employees of RSUTH have been reported to exhibit some unfriendly behaviour that are contrary to the norms of the hospital (Ositadinma, 2018). Thus, one of the main issues at RSUTH that need immediate action is behaviour at work that goes against the rules and endangers the well-being of the hospital, its employees, or both; it includes activities like workplace bullying, mistreatment, gossiping, incivility, regularly missing work and conflict as well as neglect of work tasks (Ositadinma, 2018; Agiobu, 2022).

Further to the above and problematical, research regarding counterproductive work behaviour and employee productivity has been researched on by various researchers in the past of which most of the studies were done in local government system, manufacturing and maritime



industry but not in the health sector. Even, studies (Torpman & Sandgren, 2018; Ahimsyah & Endang, 2018; Marcela-Sefora et al., 2021) on related variables were not done in Rivers State and did not combine the two variables together or find the cause of any of the variable on the other. Hence, there is a consideration for inquiry with regards to understanding the forms and causes of counterproductive work behaviour that negate the productivity of employees in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital where mistreatment, negligence, lateness and absenteeism of employees have been decried (Ositadima, 2018). The concern of this present study therefore is to examine the fashion and the drivers responsible for the exhibition of counterproductive work behaviour that influences employee productivity in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital, 2011 - 2021.

Based on the above, the research poses the following questions:

- i) What forms of counterproductive work behaviour are identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital?
- ii) What factors are responsible for the exhibition of counterproductive work behaviour that influences employee productivity?

Based on the above questions, the aim of the paper is to examine the fashion and the drivers responsible for the exhibition of counterproductive work behaviour that influences productivity of RSUTH employees. The specific objectives of the paper include to:

- i) Identify the forms of counterproductive work behaviour exhibited by employees of Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.
- ii) Investigate the factors that drive counterproductive work behaviour in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory, the Employee Fraud Triangle Theory, was used to guide the research. Employee Fraud Triangle Theory articulated by Donald R. Cressey, offers a rational theory of employees' criminal and deviant behaviours in the workplace (Cressey, 1973). The employee fraud triangle theory heavily focuses on the attitudinal elements of the employee. Essentially, this theory identifies three forces (Opportunity, Pressure and Rationalisation) which influence an employee's tendency to engage in unethical behaviours such as theft, abuse, withdrawal of efforts, and other forms of counter-productivity. According to this theory, when an employee is confronted with these three forces, the odds of engaging in deviant behaviours become very high.



Figure 2.1: Employee Fraud Triangle Theory
Source: Puspasari, 2016

The first element in the employee fraud triangle is the pressure or motivation, which may also be termed incentive – the presence of a pressure or the financial need of the person (i.e. debts or inability to meet basic needs among others) who commits fraud that drives him/her to engage in fraud. Then, the opportunity to commit fraud opens up when such (an) employee(s) gain(s) access to assets and information that allows them to both commit and conceal the fraud. Opportunity enables fraud to occur. It is usually caused by the weak internal controls in an organisation, the lack of supervision, and the authority abuse. Among the three elements of fraud triangle, opportunity is the element that is most likely to be minimized through the process, procedures, control and early detection efforts against fraud. The final element of the theory is the rationalisation of the fraudulent behaviour, which regulates the reasons advocated by the perpetrators of the deviant acts – i.e. being unpaid, suffering salary cuts, etc. Rationalization is an important element for the occurrence of fraud, where perpetrator always seeks justification for his action. For example, the perpetrator rationalizes that his action in committing fraud is for the happiness of his family and the people he loves, his working period has been long enough and he feels that he is entitled to get more (in position, salary, promotion), the corporate profit is so large that it does not matter for him to take part of it. This theory is particularly relevant to this study given the turbulent economic downturn the country is experiencing. According to Deloitte Financial Advisory Services (2008), during economic recession, employees' tendency to engage in on-the-job deviant behaviour for financial gain is higher. Likewise, unemployment, loss of job, and unpaid salaries are currently becoming uncontrollable in Nigeria with the component States struggling/unable



to to pay the workers' salaries (Uche et al., 2017). Rivers State in particular is yet to promote its public servants in the last seven years. The loss of these rights and privileges may propel employees to steal or engage in on-the-job dishonest behaviours.

III. WORK BEHAVIOUR

Work behavior refers to activities' employees perform to meet the responsibilities and goals of their roles. Onyishi (2007) opined that work behavior is the behavior one uses in employment and is normally more formal than other types of human behavior. This varies from profession to profession, as some are far more casual than others. For example, a computer programmer would usually have far more leeway in their work behavior than a lawyer. People are usually more careful than outside work in how they behave around their colleagues, as many actions intended to be in jest can be perceived as inappropriate or even harassment in the work environment. In some cases, men may take considerably more care so as not to be perceived as being sexually harassing than they would ordinarily (Salgado et al., 2013).

According to Hoffman et al. (2007), work behavior is one of the significant aspects of human behavior. It is an individual's communication towards the rest of the members of the work place. It involves both verbal as well as non-verbal mode of communication. For example, trust is a non-verbal behavior which is often reflected by a verbal communication at a work place. It represents your attitude towards your team and colleagues. A positive and good work behavior of an individual leads to higher performance, productivity and great outputs by the team or an individual. From the organisational perspective it is the most important area where Human Resource managers should focus (Riketta, 2008).

Raja and Johns (2010) opined that work behavior is essential to uncovering ways to elevate your business's operations, work culture, and employer brand. Ilies et al. (2007) notes that work behaviour in the workplace is a vital factor that determines your entire work experience in an organisation. A positive behaviour at work from employees leads to higher productivity and performance by the team and the individual. People who behave more professionally and efficiently at work often eventually become irreplaceable employees.

According to Okediji et al. (2009), the way team members act and interact with one another ultimately affects a company's bottom line. In general, positive, professional behaviors fuel

productivity and a company's status, while poor, unprofessional behaviors are hindrances to growth. Steinberg (2010) opined that a successful organisation requires employees who are not only skilled and well-trained, but also who are in roles that align with their strengths and weaknesses. Every role requires unique traits; when the right individuals are placed in the right roles where their work behaviors are beneficial, employees can more easily and effectively engage with their work. Assessing work behaviors can help employers decipher the types of people they should hire for unique positions.

Factors that affect work behaviour

Employee behaviour at the workplace is influenced by external and internal factors. This paper serves to explore some of these factors and examine the effects they have on organisational productivity. This will help the company to evaluate if such factors exist within its organisation and how to develop strategies to overcome them.

(a) **External factors:** External factors refer to the factors outside the organisation and they are not easy to control. These include factors such as family background, employee expectations, health, values and beliefs.

i. **Family background:** According to Mathur and Gupta (2012), people who grew up under a lot of parental care, love and concern, possess good behaviour in terms of respect and interaction with others wherever they go. Since they grew up in a protected environment, in return, they offer the same to their friends and colleagues at work. However, those who come from broken families from their childhood are believed to be insecure and less jovial which results in poor decision-making skills as they do not have self-confidence. In this context, family background is a very important issue when inducting a candidate into the company. That is why some companies grill candidates in order to try and have an understanding of their background and they can discriminate them on this parameter. However, Mabindisa (2014) argues that discriminating potential candidates due to their backgrounds is not accepted as per human rights act.

ii. **Values and beliefs:** Cultural diversity in terms of values and beliefs has increased due to globalization. Values and beliefs differ from place to place and these differences have an influence on employee behaviour. Different values and beliefs result in different opinions towards work. When a culturally diverse workforce is put together to



accomplish a mutual goal through teamwork and collaboration, employees will behave differently and this can hinder them from achieving organisational objectives.

- iii. **Social networking:** Ferreira and Plessis (as cited in Jengwa and Chisoro, 2018) argued that the blame for negative employee behaviour is not on organisations only. The popular social networking sites such as Facebook, have had major effects on employee behaviour. Some employees neglect to perform their daily responsibilities by spending too much time on social media. To some extent, social networking plays an important role to employees' behaviour by allowing them to connect with other people across the globe and share important ideas that enable them to work effectively. By social networking, employees increase their skills and knowledge, which result in increased in both employee and organisational productivity.
- iv. **Expectations:** Employees have different expectations at workplaces. These personal expectations contribute towards employee behaviour. People look for employment in order to fulfil their different needs, such as financial and career development. Therefore, their behaviour is influenced by achieving these needs. For instance, some employees just work to get their monthly salaries without paying much detail to their work, whilst others work hard to gain an in-depth knowledge of their work so as to intensify their work experience. In this context, employees who work to satisfy financial needs do not positively behave as compared to those who would want to gain knowledge and experience (Alman, 2014).
- v. **Health:** There is a direct relationship between an employee's output and his or her mental and physical health. Employees with good health execute their duties with positive energy, zeal and joy. Weak and sick employees do not perform according to expected standards and they do not meet targets in time. According to Mabindisa (2014), most of the CEOs of big companies value their physical and mental health in order to carry all the organisational loads without affecting the quality of the outputs.
 - (b) **Internal factors:** Internal factors include all factors within the organisation such as leadership style, organisational culture, organisational commitment, job responsibilities, communication and workplace relationships.
 - i. **Leadership style:** According to Li and Zheng (2014), innovative behaviours of employees

also depend on effective stimulation from the external environment, especially the organisation's leadership. Ali et al. (as cited in Jengwa and Chisoro, 2018, p.426) defines leadership as "the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal setting and goal accomplishment". This is unlike traditional leadership perspectives that see leadership as encouraging compliance, respect, and cooperation. This perception depicts the leader as exercising power over followers to gain cooperation. It also portrays the leader's role as that of goal formulation and ensuring the efficient accomplishment of such goals. The focus of transactional leaders is on the completion of tasks, compliance, and reliance on organisational rewards and punishments to influence the performance of employees. The difference between transformational and transactional leadership models thus lies in the process that leaders use to motivate subordinates, and the types of goals set. Ali et al., (as cited in Jengwa and Chisoro, 2018) asserted that an organisation's success is dependent on the ability of the leader to optimize human resources. A good leader must understand the importance of employees in the attainment of organisational goals and that the motivation of these employees is vital in attaining these goals. There is need for people in the organisation to be inspired so that they invest themselves in the mission of the organisation. They also need to be stimulated in order to be effective.

- ii. **Organisational culture:** An organisation's culture has a great contribution in shaping groups and individuals' behaviours in organisations. Werner (2010, p. 31) defines organisational culture as "a system of shared assumptions or meaning held by members that distinguishes one organisation from others". From the foregoing, it can be reasoned that an organisation's success and sustainability can only be realized by enhancing the employees' productivity and by the development of teams' and individuals' capabilities. It is the culture of an organisation that helps to influence employees' behaviour towards high or low productivity.

- iii. **Organisational structure:** According to Mester et al., (as cited in Jengwa and Chisoro, 2018), the level of job satisfaction and the effective performance of every employee is dependent upon an appropriate structure of the organisation. Werner (2010) asserts that the structure of an organisation enables effective performance of important activities and the support of employees' efforts. It is set basically for the promotion of cooperation and facilitation of the exercise of executive leadership.



iv. Motivation: Motivation as defined by Ibrahim and Brobbey (2015) is an internal process that drives a person to move toward a goal. Motivation is not an attribute that can be directly observed. Motivation can stem from enjoying one's work and/or from desiring to attain certain goals, such as gaining promotion or earning more money. It can also stem from the sense of satisfaction that is derived from the completion of something or the achievement of a successful result after a challenging assignment or solved problem. Ibrahim and Brobbey (2015) assert that organisations should fill the gap between an employee's ability and his willingness by motivating the employee so that he or she can produce results according to his abilities.

v. Career development: Researchers have commented on how companies with positively behaved employees give their workforce opportunities to develop their skills, acquire knowledge and reach their potential. Failure to promote skills development leads to poor organisational performance. Most of the employees tend to invest their energy in organisations that invest in their career development. Skills development programs should be put in place and the organisation has to encourage the employees to further their academic and technical skills. Absorbing new technology, raising productivity, improving the quality and competitiveness of exports, all depend on the skills of the workforce. Lack of education promotes ineffectiveness of the organisation. Therefore, organisations should support their employees in completing appropriate educational courses that enable them to work effectively (Jengwa & Chisoro, 2018).

Judge et al. (2011) notes that there are four main types of work behaviors to track: job performance, organisational citizenship, absenteeism, and turnover. Note that the first two behaviors are desirable ones, whereas the other two are often regarded as undesirable. Each type plays a role in why an employee behaves the way they do in the workplace.

i. Job Performance: Job performance is the accomplishment of a given task measured against the standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed. It focuses on how well an employee performs their job duties. Employers may assess the quality and quantity of their work to evaluate an employee's overall performance. Job performance relates to how individuals perform their job duties. In addition to training and natural ability (like dexterity or inherent skill with numbers), job performance is impacted by workplace environment factors including physically

demanding tasks, employee morale, stress levels, and working extended hours. Poor conditions and high stress can lead to compromising health habits like smoking and/or poor diet, which then have increasing detrimental effects on job performance. On the other end of the spectrum, well designed work environment, low stress, and a supportive employer can greatly increase job performance. Job performance is an important part of workplace safety and productivity.

In many organisations, job performance determines whether a person is promoted, rewarded with pay raises, given additional responsibilities, or fired from the job. Therefore, most employers observe and track job performance. This is done by keeping track of data on topics such as the number of sales the employee closes, the number of clients the employee visits, the number of defects found in the employee's output, or the number of customer complaints or compliments received about the person's work. In some jobs, objective performance data may not be available, and instead supervisor, coworker, customer, and subordinate assessments of the quality and quantity of work performed by the person become the indicators of job performance. Job performance is one of the main outcomes studied in organisational behavior and is an important variable manager must assess when they are engaged in the Controlling role.

Under which conditions do people perform well, and what are the characteristics of high performers? These questions receive a lot of research attention. It seems that the most powerful influence over job performance is general mental ability also known as cognitive ability or intelligence, and often abbreviated as "g." General mental ability can be divided into several components—reasoning abilities, verbal and numerical skills, and analytical skills—and it seems to be important across different situations. It seems that "g" starts influencing employees early in their school days because it is strongly correlated with measures of academic success even in childhood. It seems that the influence of "g" on performance is important across different settings, but there is also variation. In jobs with high complexity, it is much more critical to have high general mental abilities. Examples of such jobs are manager, sales representative, engineer, and professions such as law and medicine. In jobs such as police officer and clerical worker, the importance of "g" for high performance is still important but weaker.



Perceptions of organisational justice and interpersonal relationships are factors determining employees' performance level. When employees feel that they are being fairly treated by the organisation, that their manager is supportive and rewards high performance, and when they trust the people they work with, they tend to perform better. Why? It seems that when employees believe they are treated well, they want to reciprocate. Therefore, they treat the organisation well by performing their job more effectively.

The *stress* employees experience on the job also determines their performance level. When employees are stressed, their mental energies are drained. Instead of focusing on the task at hand, they start concentrating on the stressor trying to cope with it. Because their attention and energies are diverted to dealing with stress, employees' productivity suffers. Having role ambiguity and experiencing conflicting role demands are related to lower performance. Stress that prevents employees from doing their jobs does not have to be related to employees' experiences at work. For example, when people are in debt, worrying about their mortgage payments or college payments of their kids, their productivity will suffer.

Employees' *work attitudes*, particularly job satisfaction, are also correlates of job productivity but not to as great a degree as you might expect. Some studies show weak correlations between satisfaction and performance while others show higher correlations (what researchers would call "medium sized" correlations of .30). Even with a correlation of .30, though, the relationship may be lower than you may have expected. Why is this the case?

It seems that happy workers have an inclination to be more engaged at work. They may *want* to perform better. They may be more motivated. But there are also exceptions. Think about this: Because you want to perform, does this mean that you will actually perform better? Chances are your skill level in performing the job will matter. There are also some jobs where productivity depends on factors beyond an employee's control, such as the pace of the machine, equipment or tools they are working on. Because of this reason, in professional jobs such as with engineers and researchers, we see a stronger link between work attitudes and productivity, as opposed to manual jobs such as assembly-line workers. Also, think about the alternative possibility: If you don't like your job, does this mean that you will reduce your productivity? Maybe up to a certain point, but there will be factors that prevent you from reducing your performance: such as the fear of getting fired,

the desire to get a promotion so that you can get out of the job that you dislike so much, or your professional work ethic. As another example, among nurses, there seems to be a weak correlation between satisfaction and performance. Even when they are unhappy, nurses put a lot of effort into their work because they feel a moral obligation to help their patients.

Finally, job productivity has a modest relationship with *personality* traits, particularly conscientiousness. People who are organized, reliable, dependable, and achievement-oriented seem to outperform others in various contexts.

- ii. **Organisational Citizenship:** While job performance centers on execution, organisational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) focus on behaviors that are voluntary. Organisational citizenship is employees' willingness to go above and beyond in the workplace. Employees perform positive actions that benefit their co-workers and the organization even though they are not included in the basic job description. Organisational citizenship is demonstrated largely by behaviours that exhibit these five principles of altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue in the workplace. Employees execute these voluntary behaviors to help people and the company. Helping a new coworker understand how things work in this company, volunteering to organize the company picnic, and providing suggestions to management about how to improve business processes are some examples of citizenship behaviors. These behaviors contribute to the smooth operation of business.

Unlike performance, citizenship behaviors do not depend so much on one's abilities. Job performance, to a large extent, depends on our general mental abilities. When you add the education, skills, knowledge, and abilities that are needed to perform well, the role of motivation on performance becomes more limited. As a result, just because someone is motivated will not mean that the person will perform well. For citizenship behaviors, in contrast, the motivation-behavior link is clearer. We help others around us if we feel motivated to do so, and managers, in the Leadership role, are responsible for motivating employees. Employees who exhibit the five key behaviours of organizational citizenship are extremely valuable to the workplace.

- iii. **Absenteeism:** Absenteeism is any failure to report for or remain at work as scheduled, regardless of the reason (Cascio & Boudreau, 2015). This is usually unplanned, for example, when someone falls ill, but can also be planned, for example during a



strike or willful absence. The key to this definition is that the person was scheduled work. This means that absenteeism does not include vacation, personal leave, jury-duty leave or other reasons. Commonly used synonyms of absenteeism include absence, sickness, skipping or taking leave. Here, absenteeism looks at the frequency of absences at work. An employee's absenteeism may indicate the types of changes an employer should make in a role. For example, if an employee is absent often due to family obligations, you may want to offer flexible work options (i.e., remote/hybrid structure or varied work hours) to help them adequately fulfill their job responsibilities.

What causes absenteeism? First, is to look at the type of absenteeism. Some absenteeism is unavoidable and is related to *health reasons*. For example, reasons such as acute or serious illness, lower back pain, migraines, accidents one may have on or off the job, or acute stress are important reasons for absenteeism. Health-related absenteeism is costly, but it would be unreasonable and unfair to institute organisational policies penalizing it. When an employee has a contagious illness, showing up at work will infect coworkers and will not be productive. If the illness is not contagious, it is still in the organization's best interest for the employee to receive proper medical treatment and rest to promote a full recovery. Indeed, companies are finding that programs aimed at keeping workers healthy are effective in dealing with this type of absenteeism. Companies using wellness programs, educating employees about proper nutrition, helping them exercise, and rewarding them for healthy habits have reported reduced absenteeism.

Work/life balance is another common reason for absences. Staying home to care for a sick family member, attending the wedding or funeral of a loved one, and skipping work to study for an exam are all common reasons for unscheduled absences. Companies may deal with these by giving employees more flexibility in work hours. If employees can manage their own time, they are less likely to be absent. Conversely, when a company has "sick leave" but no other leave for social and family obligations, they may fake being sick and use their "sick leave." One solution is to have a single paid time off policy that would allow workers to balance work and life and allow companies to avoid unscheduled absences. Organisations such as Lahey Clinic at Burlington, Massachusetts, have found this to be effective in dealing with unscheduled absences. Some companies such as IBM got rid of sick leave altogether and instead allow employees to take as much time off as they need, so long as the work gets done.

Sometimes, absenteeism is a form of work withdrawal and a step followed by turnover. In other words, *poor work attitudes* lead to absenteeism. When employees are dissatisfied with their work or have low organizational commitment, they are likely to be absent more often. Thus, absenteeism is caused by the desire to avoid an unpleasant work environment. In this case, management may deal with absenteeism by investigating the causes of dissatisfaction and dealing with them.

Are there personal factors contributing to absenteeism? Research does not reveal a consistent link between personality and absenteeism, but there is one demographic criterion that predicts absenteeism: age. Interestingly, and against some stereotypes that increased age would bring more health problems, research shows that age is negatively related to both frequency and duration of absenteeism. That is, younger workers are the ones more likely to be absent. Because of reasons that include higher loyalty to their company and a stronger work ethic, older employees are less likely to be absent from work.

iv. **Turnover:** Turnover refers to an employee's leaving an organisation. Employee turnover has potentially harmful consequences, such as poor customer service and poor organisation-wide performance. When employees leave, their jobs still need to be performed by someone, so organisations spend time recruiting, hiring, and training new employees, all the while suffering from lower productivity. Yet, not all turnover is bad. Turnover is particularly a problem when high-performing employees leave, while a poor performer's leaving may actually give the company a chance to improve productivity and morale.

Why do employees leave? An employee's *productivity* level is an important reason. People who perform poorly are actually more likely to leave. These people may be fired, may be encouraged to quit, or may quit because of their fear of being fired. Particularly if an organisation has pay-for-performance systems, poor performers will find that they are not earning much due to their below-standard production. This gives poor performers an extra incentive to leave. This does not mean that high performers will definitely stay with a company. High performers may find it easier to find alternative jobs, so when they are unhappy, they can leave more quickly.

Work attitudes are often the primary culprit in why people leave. When workers are unhappy at work, and when they do not feel committed to their



organisation, they are more likely to leave. Loving the things, you do, being happy with the opportunities for advancement within the organisation, being happy about pay are all aspects of our work attitudes relating to turnover. Of course, the link between work attitudes and turnover is not direct. When employees are unhappy, they will have the intention to leave and may start looking for a job. But their ability to actually leave will depend on many factors, such as their employability and the condition of the job market. For this reason, when unemployment is high, many people who are unhappy will still continue to work for their current organisation. When the economy is doing well, people will start moving to other organisation in response to being unhappy. Understanding the connection between employee happiness and turnover, many organisations make an effort to make employees happy.

People are more likely to quit their jobs if they experience *stress* at work as well. Stressors such as role conflict and role ambiguity drain energy and motivate people to seek alternatives. For example, call center employees experience a great deal of stress because of poor treatment from customers, long work hours, and constant monitoring of their every action. Organisations such as EchoStar realize that one method that is effective in retaining their best employees is to give them opportunities to move to higher-responsibility jobs elsewhere in the company. When a stressful job is a step toward a more desirable job, employees seem to stick around longer (Judge et al., 2011).

There are also individual differences in whether people leave or stay. For example, *personality* is a factor in the decision to quit one's job. People who are conscientious, agreeable, and emotionally stable are less likely to quit their jobs. Many explanations are possible. People with these personality traits may perform better at work, which leads to lower quit rates. Or, they may have better relations with coworkers and managers, which is a factor in their retention. Whatever the reason, it seems that some people are likely to stay longer at any given job regardless of the circumstances.

Whether we leave a job or stay also depends on our *age* and *how long we have been there*. It seems that younger employees are more likely to leave. This is not surprising because people who are younger often have fewer responsibilities such as supporting a household or having dependents. As a result, they can quit a job they don't like much more easily. They may also have higher expectations and thus be more easily disappointed when a job proves to be less

rewarding than they had imagined. Similarly, people who have been with an organisation for a short period of time can quit more easily. New employees experience a lot of stress at work, and there is usually not much keeping them in the organisation such as established bonds to a manager or colleagues. New employees may even have ongoing job interviews with other organisations when they start working. This, too, gives them the flexibility to leave more easily.

Summarily, employees demonstrate a wide variety of positive and negative behaviors at work. Among these, four are critically important and have been extensively studied in the OB literature. Job performance is the degree of success with which one accomplishes the tasks listed in one's job description. A person's abilities, particularly general mental ability, are the main predictor of job performance in many occupations. How we are treated at work, the level of stress experienced at work, work attitudes, and, to a lesser extent, our personality are also factors relating to one's job performance. Citizenship behaviors are tasks helpful to the organisation that go above and beyond one's job description. Performance of citizenship behaviors are less a function of employees' abilities and more of motivation. How employees are treated at work, personality, work attitudes, and employees' age are the main predictors of citizenship. Among negative behaviors employees demonstrate, absenteeism and turnover are critically important. People who experience health problems and work/life balance issues are prone to more absenteeism. Poor work attitudes are also related to absenteeism, and younger employees are more likely to be absent from work, especially when dissatisfied. Turnover is higher among low performers, people who have negative work attitudes, and those who experience a great deal of stress. Personality and being younger are personal predictors of turnover.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Methodologically, in order to test the relationship between the independent variable, counterproductive work behaviour, against the dependent variable, employee productivity, the study adopted correlational research design.

Correlational research is a type of non-experimental research design in which a researcher measures two variables, usually the independent variable has already occurred, and seek to understand and assess the statistical relationship between the dependent and independent variables with no influence from any extraneous variable. This design is necessary for the study because it allows the researcher to understand and interpret the



relationship between counterproductive work behaviour against employee productivity in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital as it occurs in everyday life.

Therefore, the population of the study consists of all the five hundred and eighty-two (582) medical and non-medical employees of Rivers State University Teaching Hospital (O. Chukuigwe, personal communication, September 20, 2022).

Furthermore, census method of data collection was adopted for the study. Census method, also known as 'complete enumeration' or '100% enumeration' or 'complete survey', is a statistical

investigation in which the data are collected from each and every element of the population. In this method, the researcher collects data related to the problem under investigation by covering every element of the population.

V. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Arising from the population census size, five hundred and eighty-two (582) copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents in the fifteen departments within a week and at different shifts. The distribution was thus:

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution According to Department in RSUTH

S/N	Department	No. Of Questionnaire Administered
1	Accident and Emergency (A&E)	37
2	Administration (General Admin.)	62
3	Dental	38
4	Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT)	37
5	Family Medicine	36
6	Finance & Accounts	40
7	Internal Medicine	35
8	Medical Records	52
9	Obstetrics & Gynaecology (O&G)	38
10	Ophthalmology/Lens	36
11	Pathology	27
12	Pharmacy	34
13	Radiology	27
14	Surgery	38
15	Works	34
	TOTAL	582

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Copies of the questionnaire were self-administered to enhance the validity and reliability of the survey by providing the guidance to respondents with a view to facilitating the respondents' ability to handle questionnaires carefully and to respond promptly. It is important to note that the researcher remained neutral to suppress any kind of biases that could have arisen so that the data can speak for itself through statistical analysis. Also, the researcher did not exercise any control over the response pattern of the respondents. In addition, the respondents were absolutely free to respond to the statements on the questionnaire given that the responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

VI. METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis, according to Nwokodo et al. (as cited in Iyalla, 2020, p.49) is "the breaking down and ordering of the quantitative information gathered from the esteemed respondents with an intent of

extracting information from them". It includes the searching for trend and patterns of association and relationships among the data. In this study therefore, the secondary data collected from textbooks, magazines, published journals, and online portals were content analysed in relation between variables; while the primary data collected from the field were processed individually on the basis of the stated research questions. To analyse the primary data, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse research questions one, two and three; while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was used to analyse research question four. The criterion for the mean was 2.5, implying that any item with a mean score of 2.5 and above was accepted while any item with a mean score below 2.5 was disagreed. This analysis was aided with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

Data analysis



Research Question 1: What forms of counter-productive work behaviour are identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital?

The mean and standard deviation for the different variables is revealed in Table 4.2.1.

N=559, Criterion = 2.5

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital

S/N	Items	Mean	Std.	Remark
1	RSUTH staff harass, argue with colleagues/patients and maltreat medical records, and equipment at work	2.91	0.91	Accepted
2	Employees work slowly when things needed to get done	2.74	0.90	Accepted
3	Employees deliberately take actions that subvert, obstruct or frustrate the work process	2.60	0.87	Accepted
4	RSUTH employees misuse or steal resources belonging to the hospital without permission	2.95	0.89	Accepted
5	Employees of RSUTH habitually exhibit behaviours such as lateness/tardiness, absenteeism, complacency, etc to disengage themselves from the hospital	2.89	0.93	Accepted
Grand Mean		2.82	0.90	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 shows the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital. The table indicates that the abuse (harassment, argument with colleagues/patients, and maltreatment of medical records and equipment at work (mean=2.91, std.=0.91), production deviance (employees working slowly when things needed to get done) (mean=2.74, std.=0.90), sabotage (employees deliberately take actions that subvert, obstruct or frustrate work process) (mean=2.60, std.=0.87), theft (employees misusing or stealing resources belonging to the

hospital without permission (mean=2.95, std.=0.89), withdrawal (employees habitually exhibiting behaviours such as lateness/tardiness, absenteeism, complacency, etc to disengage themselves from the hospital) (mean=2.89, std.=0.93) are the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.

Research Question 2: What factors are responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity?

N = 559, Criterion = 2.5

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on the Factors Responsible for the Exhibition of Counter-Productive Work Behaviour that Influences Employee Productivity

S/N	Items	Mean	Std.	Remark
6	RSUTH employees contradict each other's job roles due to vague job description	2.50	0.90	Accepted
7	Superiors use harsh and insulting language on subordinates	2.52	0.97	Accepted
8	RSUTH appraisal process is conflicting, with a lengthy process of form filling and documenting	2.51	1.11	Accepted
9	Employees of RSUTH feel negative about their job, resulting from lack of motivation such as timely promotion, bonus, pay rise, etc	2.65	1.25	Accepted
10	An employee of RSUTH does not have training needs analysis file	2.73	1.25	Accepted
Grand Mean		2.58	1.10	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 3 shows the factors responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity. The table presents that unclear job description (mean=2.50, std.=0.90), harsh treatment and use of abusive language on subordinates (mean=2.52, std.=0.97), ineffective appraisal method (mean=2.51, std.=1.11), job

dissatisfaction due to lack of motivation such as timely promotion, bonus, pay rise, etc (mean=2.65, std.=1.25), and lack of periodic training (mean=2.73, std.=1.25) are the factors responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity.



In view of the above, the study made the following findings:

- i. Abuse (harassment, argument, maltreatment in the workplace), production deviance, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal are the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.
- ii. Unclear job description, harsh treatment and use of abusive language on subordinates, ineffective appraisal method, job dissatisfaction chiefly due to lack of motivation such as timely promotion, bonus, pay rise, etc., and lack of periodic training are the factors responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity in RSUTH.

VII. Discussion of findings

This research sought to examine the implications of CWB on employee productivity. Specifically, this study interrogated the forms and causes of CWB on employee productivity. It also sought to describe the productivity of RSUTH and examine the relationship between CWB and employee productivity from which there were the following findings:

Forms of Counter-Productive Work Behaviour Identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital

The first research question examined the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital. The study found that abuse (harassment, argument with colleagues/patients and maltreatment of medical records and equipment at work (mean=2.91, std.=0.91), production deviance (employees working slowly when things needed to get done) (mean=2.74, std.=0.90), sabotage (employees deliberately take actions that subvert, obstruct or frustrate work process) (mean=2.60, std.=0.87), theft (employees misusing or stealing resources belonging to the hospital without permission (mean=2.95, std.=0.89), withdrawal (employees habitually exhibiting behaviours such as lateness/tardiness, absenteeism, complacency, etc to disengage themselves from the hospital) (mean=2.89, std.=0.93) are the forms of counter-productive work behaviour identifiable in Rivers State University Teaching Hospital.

Corroborating with this finding, Kadiri and Umemezia (2019) identified sabotage, withdrawal, theft, and abuse as forms of counterproductive work behaviour, and were exhibited among employees; Bowling and Eschleman (as cited in Chenyark-Hai et

al., 2014) noted that CWB includes disobeying orders, working slowly to claim unnecessary overtime pay, falsifying receipts, engaging in habitual tardiness, misusing working hours for personal matters, wasting organisational resources, and divulging organisational information with an unauthorized person. Furthermore, the study also agreed with Olusola and Aderemi (2019) who examined the determinants of CWB among workers established the prevalence of sabotage, theft, withdrawal, production deviance, and abuse against others at the workplace and the impact they have on organisational performance as a result of the leader's relationship. Well, considering the prevalence of CWB across the Nigerian public sector, it is not surprising to find that employees of government-owned facilities including RSUTH abuse co-workers and others either physically or psychologically through making threats, nasty comments, ignoring a person or patients, or undermining the person's ability to work effectively, etc. Also, Feng (2013) identified production deviance as one of the common problems faced in organisations among employees. In some instances, writers noted that employees are seen defacing or destroying physical properties belonging to the employer; intentionally wasting material in the organisation, and purposely dirtying or littering the workplace, known as sabotage. It is assumed that these unfriendly behaviours are exhibited by employees as a strategy to gain control over stressors and the accompanying negative emotional reactions.

Factors responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity

The second research question investigated the factors responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity. It was found that unclear job description (mean=2.50, std.=0.90), harsh treatment and use of abusive language on subordinates (mean=2.52, std.=0.97), ineffective appraisal method (mean=2.51, std.=1.11), job dissatisfaction due to lack of motivation such as timely promotion, bonus, pay rise, etc (mean=2.65, std.=1.25), and lack of periodic training (mean=2.73, std.=1.25) are the factors responsible for the exhibition of counter-productive work behaviour that influences employee productivity.

The driving forces behind CWB can be very broad and include individual need and opportunity, as postulated in the employee fraud triangle theory (Moorthy et al., 2011). In specifics, the finding of this study is substantiated by the position of early researchers that personality traits such as



dissatisfaction, stressful conditions, intent to quit and company contempt (Muafi, 2011), unclear job description, employment insecurity, lack of internal career opportunities and inappropriate appraisal system (Shamsudin *et al.*, 2011), lack of motivation, abusive supervision (Shoss *et al.* 2013), leader maltreatment and job stress (Aftab and Javed, 2012) are some stimulus of CWB. For instance, Aladenusi and Ayodele (2014) in a study on the effect of school climate (SC) on the relationship between teachers' counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) and job performance (JP) in secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria concluded that teachers' perception of the school climate as being satisfactory or not to a great extent influences their behaviour positively or negatively in achieving the school vision, as well as enhancing their commitment to work. Relatively, the teaching hospital climate is a strong link between counterproductive work behaviour and productivity. What this implies is that the employees most times react to the kind of environment they find themselves; their behaviours are usually fuelled by what they see and perceive in their work environment. It is therefore a concern that the hospital work environment is planned and geared toward organisational productivity. In a related example, Ebere (2014) investigated abusive supervision, work tension, and work overload as predictors of CWB. The result supports the present study's findings that it links counterproductive work behaviour to abusive, harsh treatment of staff and insufficient employee's motivation packages. The study is also in agreement with Samuel (2011) who in the study examined the relationship between work overload stress and CWB and the moderator effect of negative affectivity on the relationship asserted that CWB occur when work overload stress and negative affectivity was both high. Thus, this study also directs CWB to workplace treatment and welfare. Lastly, Moorthy *et al.* (2011) noted that individual variables such as need and opportunity, as postulated in the employee fraud triangle theory, serve as predictors for workplace theft behaviour of employees.

VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study was an attempt to examine counterproductive work behaviours and its implication for employee productivity. The results showed that ineffective appraisal method, low employee motivation in terms of incentives, recognitions and awards, unavailability of training schemes for employees, conflict over job description and harsh supervision were significant contributors of CWB such as abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft, withdrawal, etc. Reasons behind this

counterproductive work behaviour have been identified as unclear job description, harsh treatment, use of abusive language on subordinates, ineffective appraisal method, job dissatisfaction due to lack of motivation, and lack of periodic training.

Beside the effect of CWB on organisations including decreased citizenship behaviour, loss of man-hour, low job/organisational commitment, CWB have negative consequences on employee productivity. This is because CWB birth distraction and has the potential to damage relationships with colleagues which in turn have the tendency to make it difficult for employees to focus on work tasks. In other words, CWBs makes it harder for employees to collaborate effectively. Additionally, CWB makes the employees prone to accidents, and more likely to cause conflict with others. This can lead to decrease in morale and an increase in turnover

Based on the findings of this study, the following organisational interventions are suggested to minimize CWB and its implications on employees' productivity:

- i. The Rivers State University Teaching Hospital (RSUTH) should create awareness of how behaviour affects both organisational and employee productivity.
- ii. The management of the facility should design and deliver periodic trainings to meet the needs of all employees in such a way that the employees will not be only productive but also get a clearer understanding of their job description. It is also important for the management of RSUTH adopt timely promotion, job satisfaction practices, such as periodic increment in salaries, setting clear expectations and providing regular feedback etc in order to ensure increased citizenship behaviour.

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