

WORKPLACE DEVIANCE AND EMPLOYEE JOB INVOLVEMENT IN TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES IN KADUNA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of workplace deviance on employee job involvement in telecommunication companies in Kaduna State. The study aimed at determining the effect of workplace deviance on employee job involvement in telecommunication companies in Kaduna State. The study is cross-sectional and data was obtained from primary source using questionnaires and SPSS analysis was employed to analyse the data. The findings of the study revealed that workplace deviance negatively and significantly affects job involvement of employees. The results of the research will serve as a guide the managers in the telecommunication companies to improve the level at which the employees participate in the affairs of the organization by reducing deviant behaviours among them.

KEYWORDS: *Job Involvement, Telecommunication companies, Workplace deviance.*

INTRODUCTION

The degree to which an employee mentally identifies with and is personally involved in their work function is known as job involvement. While low job involvement is associated with absenteeism, turnover intentions, and lower performance, high job involvement is associated with increased effort, perseverance, and behavioral comparison with organizational goals. Al-Refaei, Ali, Ateeq, Ibrahim, Ibrahim, Alzoraiki, Beshr, (2024).

One important predictor of endless effort, perseverance, and job performance is job involvement, which is the extent to which a person psychologically identifies with and is immersed by their professional position. Changes in employee's job involvement can have significant operational and reputational implications for telecommunication enterprises because the industry is customer-facing and technology-driven, and the attitudes of frontline and technical people immediately affect the quality of services provided. To achieve this, employees are expected to perform effectively and ethically without engaging in deviant behaviors (Adekanmbi, & Ukpere, 2019).

Every member of an organization is expected to perform in accordance with the rules, which are based on instructions, guidelines, and principles. According to Robinson and Bennett (1995), deviant behavior in the workplace is an employee-controlled action that goes against important organizational ideals and endangers the organization and the welfare of its members. Deviant behavior at work can be either positive or detrimental. Ukeni and Harrington (2025) state that previous research has primarily focused on negative behaviors that are considered abnormal. On the other hand, followers of morally upright leaders are

less inclined to behave unethically. Deviance can be functional in its approach and is mostly related to control; for instance, moral leaders who behave in a way that is congruent with standards may promote moral settings that discourage deviant behavior. As a result, it would be possible to see work chop—a type of workplace abnormality—as a phenomenon that fosters interpersonal solidarity. This not only highlights the alternative to work-chop, but it also highlights the ways in which leaders can cultivate the ethical and social motivation to engage in and operationalize more ethical behaviors.

However, deviant workplace behavior is negatively correlated with positive work outcomes, such job involvement and Job performance. Uninvolved employees may be more likely to engage in workplace deviance, whereas working environments that support or accept deviance such as perceived injustice and poor leadership weaken employees' psychological bonds to their jobs. Therefore, deviant workplace conduct is linked to lower job involvement, according to Tian and Guo (2023).

The telecommunications sector is labor-intensive and service-oriented; employee attitudes and behavior directly affect customer experience and operational reliability (Fadele, & Tanko, 2018). Studies conducted worldwide in the service sector demonstrate that deviant behaviors, such as interpersonal violence, sabotage, and absenteeism, impair organizational performance and service quality (Abas, Vo-Thanh, Bukhari, Villivalam, & Senbeto, 2023). Thus, employee Involvement is crucial in the telecommunications industry since disengaged or deviant employees' bad customer service or technical issues can easily result in losses in business and harm to the company's brand.

Although the major Nigeria telecommunication enterprises (MTN, Glo, Airtel, 9mobile) have been studied for market and human resources issues Fadele and Tanko, (2018). There is currently minimal empirical work that focused specifically on workplace deviance and employee job involvement in the operations of the telecommunication companies in Kaduna State.

Few studies specifically evaluated job involvement as an outcome, and even fewer explore the relationship between workplace deviance and job involvement in the telecommunications industry. The majority of studies conducted worldwide look at workplace deviance and its effects on overall performance indicators (Tian & Guo, 2023). Also, there is a geographical and sectoral gap that this study seeks to address. Although, Kaduna State in northern Nigeria is home to significant telecommunication operations, there are limited studies on the impact of workplace deviance on employee involvement in the state. Existing local studies typically focus on related concepts such as productivity Olaoye, (2025), job performance Rahman, Karan, and

Ferdausy, (2013) and leadership development Ukeni and Harrington (2025). However, there is a no study that has been conducted on the effects of workplace deviance and job involvement into a single model for Kaduna telecommunication companies. While deviance research is robust, relatively few studies used *job involvement* as the dependent variable; most focus on performance or commitment. This study seeks to fill this gap by assisting the Human resources (HR) managers to create a focused solutions and better ethical climate that will be adapted to the operational context of the major telecommunication companies in Kaduna state.

However, the main objective of this study is to determine the effect of workplace deviance on employee job involvement in telecommunication companies in Kaduna State. Based on this objective, the following hypothesis has been formulated as follows;

H01: Interpersonal deviance has no significant effect on employee job involvement in telecommunication companies in Kaduna state.

H02: organizational deviance has no significant effect on employee job involvement in telecommunication companies in Kaduna state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Workplace Deviance

(Jeremy, Charn, Ellen, & Carson, 2019) defined workplace deviance as the voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational rules and jeopardizes the welfare of the company or its members. This is a general term that encompasses actions directed at the organization, such as theft and sabotage, as well as actions aimed at people, such as rudeness and harassment. Robinson and Bennett (1995) further categorized workplace deviance into organizational deviance and the interpersonal deviance and also explained the degree of workplace deviance, as either small or severe. These deviant behaviors were further classified by the model as political, property, personal/interpersonal, and production deviance. In order to investigate the relationship between employee job involvement and the proxies of workplace deviance mainly organizational deviance and interpersonal deviance.

Concept of Inter-personal Deviance

Inter-personal deviance refers to as counterproductive behavior, interpersonal deviation specifically refers to deviant behaviors directed at coworkers, such as bullying, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, harmful gossip, social exclusion, and other forms of interpersonal aggression (Robinson & Bennett, 2000). These actions immediately impair the wellbeing of coworkers, erode team unity, and may lead to withdrawal or retaliation. Interpersonal deviance, as defined in this study, refers to employees' voluntary interpersonal behaviors that go against workplace norms and injure or seek to injure coworkers' wellbeing or ability to perform their jobs, such as bullying, verbal aggressiveness, malicious gossip, and harassment. This is consistent with Robinson and Bennett's (1995) concept of interpersonal unproductive conduct.

Concept of Organizational Deviance

According to Jeremy, Charn, Ellen, & Carson, (2019), The act of breaking the law and organizational norms in order to obtain a competitive advantage is known as organizational deviance. When such transgressions occur, managers usually step in to try to prevent or lessen aberrant conduct at work. Sometimes the deviant behavior is suppressed as a result of

their efforts, but other times organizational deviance can persist and even be encouraged by the exact set of regulations that were originally prohibited.

Concept of Job Involvement

Kanungo, (1982) defined job involvement as the degree to which an employee psychologically identifies with their work and views job performance as crucial to their self-worth. It captures the emotional and cognitive aspects of an individual's level of "involvement" with their work role, such as how essential the job is to their identity and how occupied they are in their work-related duties. Job involvement is not the same as related concepts like organizational commitment which shows employee's connection to the organization rather than the job position itself and job satisfaction which is an evaluative feeling.

Empirical Review

Olaoye, (2025) examined the effect of Workplace deviance and productivity in private businesses. A qualitative method was employed to investigate the experiences of workers at three well-known organizations (MTN Nigeria, Shoprite, and Guaranty Trust Bank), drawing on feminist theory and organizational justice theory. It was discovered through in-depth interviews that sexual harassment and abusive supervision both result in lower production and unfavorable outcomes for workers. Deviant conduct at work was investigated by Fashogbon, Funso-Adebayo, and Ukpabi (2025) among non-teaching staff at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. 300 samples from junior non-teaching staff were chosen for the study, which used a descriptive design. Purposive and basic random sampling techniques were used to choose samples for the study, which used an ex-post facto descriptive design with a combined method of qualitative and quantitative approaches. based on the data's accessibility, the researcher's convenience and interest, and the speed at which information may be accessed for in-depth research. Through in-depth interviews, it was found that both sexual harassment and abusive supervision lead to negative results and decreased productivity for employees.

Sunday, (2013), This study used all of the study's participants are active employees of Intel Nigeria Ltd. Purposive sampling was used in the design of the study's samples. According to the results of the questionnaire distribution, 101 respondents out of 150 samples fully answered the questions, meeting the requirements for structural equation modeling (SEM). The Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 7 denoting "strongly agree," is the scale arrangement approach used to express intent to quit, unhappiness, and deviant behavior. The results of the study provide relatively strong support for the existence of a positive effect on deviant workplace behavior, dissatisfaction positive effect to deviant workplace behavior, dissatisfaction positive effect to intent to quit, company contempt positive effect to deviant workplace behavior and deviant workplace behavior negative effect to individual performance of operational staff in Intels Nigeria Ltd. The results may differ from the organizational context of telecommunications businesses in the north because it was conducted at Intels Company in Portharcourt, which is located in the southern part of the country. Additionally, because the study was conducted in the pre-pandemic (COVID-19) era, there is a significant period gap. By capturing the numerous changes in the current post-pandemic era, the current research would be able to close this gap.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This study adopted the social exchange theory to explain the relationship between workplace deviance and job

involvement. One of the most important theories for describing social behavior in organizations is the Social Exchange Theory (SET). introduced the theory in his book "Exchange and Power in Social Life," which offered a more profound sociological understanding of interpersonal and professional relationships. The primary tenet of social exchange theory is that reciprocal transactions and cost-benefit evaluations sustain human connections. Employees grow more satisfied, trusting, and engaged in their work when this exchange relationship is balanced. Negative effects like workplace deviance or decreased job involvement, however, could happen if the transaction is thought to be unjust or exploitative (Abbasi & Ismail, 2023). A theoretical explanation of how workplace deviance impacts employee job involvement in an organization can be found in Social Exchange Theory. Social Exchange Theory therefore predicts a negative association between workplace deviance and job involvement.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive research design and makes use of primary data. The respondents consist of selected employees of the four major telecommunication companies in Kaduna state including MTN, AIRTEL, GLOBACOM, and 9MOBILE based on the convenience of the researcher. The study selected those employees that were reachable, cooperative, and willing to participate in the survey. The structured questionnaires were distributed to 76 respondents in which 71 of the questionnaires were successfully filled and returned. The Social Statistical Package (SPSS) was employed as the tool for data analysis.

Measurement of Variables

All of the variables' item scales were adapted from previous research. The researchers utilized a 5-point Likert scale with a range of strong disagreement to strong agreement. The measurement for workplace deviance was adapted from Robinson and Bennett (2000) while Kanungo (1982) was adapted for the measurement of job involvement of employees. There were 8 components items that measured interpersonal deviance; 4 items include questions on interpersonal deviance while the other 4 items consist of questions on organizational deviance. However, job involvement was measured using 6 items.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Cronbach's alpha was used to test the construct dependability. The recommended values for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.7, (Hair et al., 2014). Furthermore, Abdillah and Jogiyanto (2015) says that an instrument can be said to be reliable if the value of Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.6. The reliability result showed that JIV (0.884) has a value above 0.7 while IDV (0.624) and ODV (0.641) fall within the threshold of 0.6.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix

	JIV	IDV	ODV
Pearson Correlation			
JIV	1.000	0.727	0.667
IDV	-0.727	1.000	0.514
ODV	-0.667	0.514	1.000

The Correlation Matrix describes relationship between dependent and independent variables, as well as between independent variables. The study's correlation matrix is as shown in Table 1 above. Threshold of a value above 0.9 in the correlation between the constructs implies that there is a

tendency of multicollinearity among the exploratory variables of the dataset (Gujarati, 2003; Hair et al, 2010). The results presented in table 1 shows that there are no multicollinearity issues in the dataset, because all value falls within the acceptable threshold.

Table 2: R Square

	R Square	F Stat	Durbin Watson
JIV	0.646	61.997	2.720

Source: SPSS 25

R square, also known as the coefficient of determination indicates how well the independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variable of the model. Additionally, an R square value predicts the overall validity of the model. Table 2 shows how Interpersonal deviance (IDV) and Organizational Deviance (ODV) account for 65% variation in JIV. F stat shows the statistically significant of the model. Durbin Watson statistic is used to test for autocorrelation in the residuals of a regression analysis. Values ranging between 1.5 to 2.5 indicates no serious autocorrelation (Durbin & Watson, 1950). From the above result in table 2, it indicates that the model has a slight autocorrelation issue with a value (2.7) slightly higher than the recommended benchmark.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Variables	Beta Value	TStatistics	P-Value	Decision
IDV	-0.522	-6.203	0.000	Rejected
ODV	-0.399	-4.746	0.000	Rejected

Source: SPSS 25

Table 3 shows the Beta Value and P-Value to determine the level of significance at 5%. Interpersonal Deviance B (-0.522), P(0.000) is negatively significant to job involvement. Table 3 further showed that Organizational Deviance (B -0.399, p=0.000) is negatively significant to job involvement. Therefore, both HO1 and HO2 were rejected.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the effect of workplace deviance on job involvement of employees in telecommunication companies in Kaduna state. Based on the results of the study, the following findings are reported;

- i. Interpersonal deviance has a negative significant effect on job involvement. This Implies that employees who engage in deviant behaviours at the interpersonal level are more likely to be less involved in their job as the findings of this research showed higher workplace deviance lowers the level of employees' involvement in their jobs.
- ii. Organizational deviance also has a negative significant effect on employee job involvement. Based on the above finding, the level at which employees involve or participate in their job which affects the organization is influenced by some of the deviant behaviors that employees engage which affects the organization. workplace deviance of the employees.

RECOMMENDATION

Arising from the findings, this study recommends the followings;

- i. Management should give top priority to programmes that ensure discipline and ethical behaviours in the telecommunication companies. This will reduce the level of interpersonal deviance that may affect the employee or co-workers in order to encourage involvement of employees and enhance peace, harmony, and effective teamwork in the companies. If the employees are free from deviant behaviours like gossiping or harassment by their colleagues, they will be more participative in the organizations.
- ii. In order to improve the involvement of employees in their jobs, the telecommunication companies should give priority to initiatives that promote favourable working conditions, and welfare that will promote participation of employees and reduce deviant acts at the organizational level. By doing this, employees will be able to feel a sense of belonging to their respective companies and this will enable them to align their personal goals with the organizational goals for success and growth.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The effect of workplace deviance on employee job involvement in Kaduna State's telecommunications industries was the main subject of this study. The study only looked at Kaduna State; more research should be done to include all of Nigeria. The research findings on the association between workplace deviance and employee job involvement can also be improved by adding a moderating or mediating variable. To be more precise and avoid sample bias, future researchers should also employ a statistical probability sampling method and approach. Additionally, the telecommunications sector was employed in this study; future researchers should attempt to include different domains in order to examine a variety of businesses or industries. Lastly, future researchers should also employ a sampling method/technique other than the convenience sampling that was used by this present research.

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