Organizational Paranoia and Employee Performance: A Case of Nigerian Bottling Company and Seven Up Bottling Company, Benin Plants, Nigeria

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Abstract

The researchers observed that some employees of the companies in focus see their colleagues as unreliable. This by extension could impact the performance level of these employees. This has necessitated the determination of the effect of attribution bias on employee turn-over intention of Nigerian bottling company Benin plant and seven up bottling company, Benin plant. Survey research design was adopted for the study, a sample size of two hundred and thirty nine (239) was used for the study, Krejcie and Morgan, (1973) sampling technique was used for the study, the data collection tool employed by the researcher was the questionnaire, while the analysis of the data was done using the linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that that attribution bias impacts employee turn-over intention of Nigerian bottling company and seven up bottling company, Benin plant since (F = 974.986; R2 = 0.847; P <.05). The researchers therefore concluded that organizational paranoia impacts employee performance of the companies in focus. It was against this backdrop that the researchers recommended a close observation of the attitudes of employees by managers of the focused firms so that they can detect when employees begin to exhibit some negative behaviours and frequent manager-employee interaction should be encouraged as it could help managers get vital information from employees.

Keywords: Organizational Paranoia, Employee Performance, Attribution Bias, Employee Turn-Over Intention.

Introduction

Paranoia as a concept has a greek origin which means mental illness (Berrios,2009). It is an instinct or thought process believed to be heavily influenced by anxiety or fear, often to the point of delusion and irrationality (World English Dictionary, 2009). Paranoid thinking typically includes beliefs of conspiracy concerning a perceived threat towards oneself. Paranoia is a term used to describe people who are preoccupied with the thought that people or others are out to get them or people always talk about them (Gale, 2008). Paranoia is distinct from phobias, which also involve irrational fear, but usually no blame. Organizational paranoia as a concept began to gain consideration in management and other fields of study in the 80's (Berrios,2009).Organizational paranoia as a concept entails making false accusations against other employees and the general distrust of others in an organization (Green, Freeman, Kuipers, Bebbington, Fowler, Dunn & Garety 2008). This distrust of others in business organizations could impact employee performance level as employees would find it difficult to work with people they don't trust. This gives credence to the determination of the effect of organizational paranoia on employee performance in Nigerian Bottling Company Benin Plant and Seven Up Bottling Company Benin Plant. Naser, (2007) asserted that when employees are dissatisfied with the nature of employees in their work environment, they are less committed and will look for other opportunities to quit. If opportunities are unavailable, they may emotionally or mentally withdraw from the organization. Thus, organizational paranoia is an important attitude in assessing employees' intention to quit and the overall contribution of the employee to the organization.

Employee performance is the outcome of actions with the skills of employees who perform in some situation (Prasetya & Kato, 2011). According to Suhartini, (1995) employee performance is a mutual result of effort, ability, and perception of tasks. Good performance is step towards the achievement of organizational aims. Hence, more effort is required to improve the organizational performance.

Negin, Omid and Ahmad, (2013) affirmed that the presence of an atmosphere of trust between individuals in an organization can improve employees' performance and raise organizational overall competitiveness. The researchers observed that some employees of the companies in focus see their colleagues as individuals that they cannot confide in. This by extension could impact the performance level of these employees. The broad objective of this study is to determine the effect of organizational paranoia on employee performance of Nigerian bottling company Benin plant and seven up bottling company, Benin plant. Specifically, this study seeks to determine the effect of attribution bias on employee turn-over intention.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

Organizational Paranoia

Organizational paranoia is a situation where employees believes that harm is occurring, or is going to occur, to him or her or that other employees has the intention to cause harm to him or her (Freeman & Garety 2000). Harm in this case is defined as anything that employees find distressing. Harm can be physical, psychological, or social, and it can be of any severity as long as the individual finds it distressing (Freeman & Garety, 2000). This definition of paranoia has been employed in previous research on paranoia in previous studies (Ellett, 2013; Ellett & Chadwick, 2007), and therefore it will also be adopted in this current study.

Indicators of Paranoid Individuals in Business Organizations

Attribution Bias: paranoid individuals in an organization typically have a biased perception of reality, often exhibiting more hostile beliefs (Bentall & Taylor, 2006). A paranoid person may view someone else's accidental behavior as though it is with intent or threatening. Poor Inter-Personal relationships: Due to the suspicious and troublesome personality traits of paranoia, it is unlikely that someone with paranoia will thrive in interpersonal relationships. Most commonly paranoid individuals tend to be lone rangers in an organization (Deutsch & Fishman,1999).

Social Anxiety: In business organizations, paranoid individuals tend to have social anxiety (Freeman, Garety, Bebbington, Smith, Rollinson, Fowler, Kuipers, Ray & Dunn, 2005).

Causes of Paranoia in an Organization

Social factor: An employee's social status might influence his belief system and his perception of others in an organization. Environmental factors: The nature of the work environment can impact an employee's line of thinking as well as his attitude towards others in an organization. Physical factors: Factors like brain decline and high blood pressure can lead to paranoia (Bentall & Taylor, 2006).

Attribution Bias

Attribution bias is a cognitive bias that refers to the systematic errors made when people evaluate or try to find reasons for their own and others' behaviors. People constantly make attributions regarding the cause of their own and others' behaviors; however, attributions do not always accurately reflect reality. Rather than operating as objective perceivers, people are prone to perceptual errors that lead to biased interpretations of their social world (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002). Attribution biases were first discussed in the 1950s and 60s by psychologists such as Fritz Heider, who studied attribution theory. Other psychologists, such as Harold Kelley and Ed Jones expanded Heider's early work by identifying conditions under which people are more or less likely to make different types of attributions. (Martinko, Harvey, Sikora, & Douglas, 2011).

Attribution biases are present in everyday life, and therefore are an important and relevant topic to study. Since the inception of this concept, researchers have continued to examine how and why people exhibit biased interpretations of social information. Many different types of attribution biases have been identified, and more recent psychological research on these biases has examined how attribution biases can subsequently affect emotions and behavior (Darity, 2008).

The perseverative thinking questionnaire (PTQ) of Ehring, Zetsche, Weidacker, Wahl, Schonfeld and Ehlers, (2011) aided the drafting of the questionnaire for questions relating to attribution bias. It is a trans-diagnostic measure of repetitive negative thinking that captures three characteristics of repetitive negative thinking: repetitiveness, instrusiveness and difficulties to disengage. Specifically, the repetitiveness dimension was used for the study.

Employee Performance

Aguinis (2007) opines that employee performance is about behaviour or the output of the work of employees and it is determined by a combination of declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, motivation and commitment of the employees. Wood and Stangster (2002) states that employee performance is measured against the performance standards set by the organization. Kotler and Armstrong (2002) assert that employee performance is measured in terms of the quality of output (goods and services) produced by the employee. Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of behavior (Armstrong, 2001).

Kinicki and Kreitner (2007) opine that some employee key performance indicators are: Turnover intention, time required to complete task, product quality, return on training investment, revenue per employee, 360 degree feedback score, employee core competency profile, employee engagement level, organizational citizenship behavior, human capital value added, job satisfaction and employee innovation.

The definitions of various researchers on employee performance have shown that employee output level and behavior towards their job are used to determine their performance level.

Turn-over Intention

Reggio (2003) contends that employee turnover intention "refers simply to the intent of employees to leave an organization". It is a negative aspect, which might lead to the failure of employee retention strategies in organizations when an employee eventually leaves "Leaving of job appears to reflect significant work place problems, rather than opportunities for advancement into better Jobs" (Holzer & Wissoker, 2001). Turnover of employees disrupts teams, raises costs, reduces productivity, and results in lost knowledge. It was measured through some salient indicators of employee turn-over intention.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the cognitive dissonance theory developed by Festinger (1957). Festinger (1957) stated that people will strive to minimize dissonance (inconsistency) in their environment, and that the presence of dissonance results in distress and dissatisfaction with a given situation. Employees who experience continuous dissonance in their work situation will experience distress and will contribute poorly to the organizational output, while employees who are less distressed with their work will impact the organizational output level positively.

Thus, it can be concluded that any discrepancy between employees' internal ethical standard and their perception of others will result in a moral conflict and cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1942). This theory is relevant to the study because when employees perceive their colleagues as unreliable, it could make the work environment un-conducive for them and this could impact their turn-over intention.

Empirical Review

Castilho, Xavier and Costa (2015) examined the relationship between anger, shame, depression, paranoia beliefs and employee performance in an organization. Questionnaire was used to collect data from 208 respondents, correlation was used to analyse the collected data. The findings revealed that there is a relationship between anger, shame, depression, paranoia beliefs and employee performance in an organization.

Blazer, Hays and Salive (1996) examined the factors associated with paranoid symptoms. 9.5% adults in North Carolina were used for the study, questionnaire was the data collection tool employed, chi-square statistical tool was used to analyse the collected data. The findings revealed that these factors were associated and strongly with individuals with lower income and lower level education.

Jan-willem and Reinout (2016) examined the effect of organizational paranoia (conspiracy beliefs) on organizational commitment and turn-over intentions. All the respondents used for the study were U.S citizens, mailed questionnaire was used to collect data from 193 respondents, correlation analysis and structural equation modeling was used to analyse the collected data. The findings revealed that organizational paranoia impacts organizational commitment and turn-over intentions. The findings also revealed that organizational paranoia was dependent on leadership style. Freeman, Brugha, Meltzer, Jenkins, Stahl and Bebbington, (2010) obtained secondary data from a survey study of psychological morbidity in the British population, correlation was used to analyse the collected data. The result found strong correlations between the experience of paranoid thoughts and insomnia, anxiety, depression and irritability.

Pinto, (2017) examined the effect of paranoia on employee performance. Randomized comparison design was used for the study, convenience sampling was used, 100 respondents was used for the study, ANOVA was used to analyse the collected data. The findings revealed that paranoia and worry affects employee performance.

Gap in Knowledge

None of the empirically reviewed examined organizational paranoia as it relates to employee performance of Nigerian bottling company, Benin plant and Seven up bottling company, Benin plant, none of the empirically reviewed identified attribution bias as it relates to turn-over intention and none of the reviewed used Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) sampling technique. This is the gap in knowledge that this study intends to fill.

Methods

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was the survey research design. It was used because of the nature of the study. Survey research design enables the researcher to observe what happens to the sample subjects without manipulating them.

Population of Study

Table 1: Population of Employees in the Organizations of Study

Company	Top Level Managers	Middle Level Managers	Lower Level Managers	Total Population
Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC) Benin Plant	72	167	282	521
Seven Up Bottling Company, Benin Plant	45	84	194	323
Total	**117**	**251**	**476**	**844**

Source: Personnel Department of the Organizations of Study

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) sampling technique was used for this study. The formular is denoted below:

$$S = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + x^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where S= Sample Size

X^2= Table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom 0.05 confidence level (3.84)

N= population Size (844)

P= Population proportion (0.5)

d= Degree of accuracy (0.05)

S= $3.48(844)(0.5)(1-0.5) / 0.05^2(844-1)+3.84(0.5)(1-0.5)$

S= (1468.56) (0.5)/ 2.11+ 0.96

S= 734.28/ 3.07

S=239.2 =239

Based on the above, 239 copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed to the respondents in the organizations of study.

Instrument of Data Collection

The data collection tool employed by the researcher was the questionnaire. It was designed on a five point Likert Scale. Strongly Agreed (SD), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D) and Undecided (U). The Bowley's (1926) allocation formula was used to determine the copies of the questionnaire to be distributed to each bottling plant. The formula is denoted thus:

Nh= n(nh)/N

Where Nh= Number of units to be distributed to each group.

nh = Number of respondents in each group.

n= Total Sample Size.
N= Total Population Size.
Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC) Benin Plant:
Nh = 239 (521)/844 = 124,519/844
= 147.5 = 148.
One hundred and forty eight copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the employees of Nigerian Bottling Company (NBC) Benin Plant.
Seven up Bottling Company Benin Plant:
Nh = 239(323)/844 = 77,197/844
= 91.4= 91.
Ninety one copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the employees of Seven up Bottling Company Benin Plant.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it intends to measure. The content and face validity test was used by the researcher.

Reliability of the Instrument

This is a measure of the consistency of a particular instrument employed by a researcher. Split-half reliability test was used for the study. Suwannoppharat and Kaewsa, (2015) asserts that a reliability coefficient of 0.696 and above is acceptable. Therefore, a benchmark of 0.696 was used for the study.

Table 2: **Scale: Reliability Statistics for Organizational Paranoia**

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.661
		N of Items	3[a]
	Part 2	Value	.850
		N of Items	2[b]
	Total N of Items		5
Correlation Between Forms			.579
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		.733
	Unequal Length		.739
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.721

a. The items are: Q1, Q2, Q3.
b. The items are: Q3, Q4, Q5.
Formular used in calculating Split-Half reliability is given below:
r SB= 2rhh/1+rhh
Where:
rhh=Correlation Between Forms
Applying the formular, we would have:
r SB= 2*0.579/1+0.579
r SB= 1.158/1.579
r SB= 0.733
Since the split-half score of the reliability statistics for organizational paranoia 0.73 is greater than 0.696, it shows that the instrument is reliable.

Table 3: Scale: Reliability Statistics for Employee Performance

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.510
		N of Items	3[a]
	Part 2	Value	.849
		N of Items	2[b]
	Total N of Items		5
Correlation Between Forms			.543
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		.704
	Unequal Length		.711
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.697

a. The items are: Q1, Q2, Q3.
b. The items are: Q3, Q4, Q5.

Formular used in calculating Split-Half reliability is given below:

r SB= 2rhh/1+rhh

Where:

rhh=Correlation Between Forms

Applying the formular, we would have:

r SB= 2*0.543/1+0.543

r SB= 1.086/1.543

r SB= 0.704

Since the split-half score of the reliability statistics for employee performance 0.70 is greater than 0.696, it shows that the instrument is reliable. The results of the reliability test were indications of the internal consistency of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

Regression analysis was used to analyse the collected data. This was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 4: Table of Returned and Unreturned Questionnaire

ANALYSIS OF RETURNED AND UNRETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE		
	Frequency	**Percentage (%)**
Returned Questionnaire (Valid)	178	74.48
Returned Questionnaire (Invalid)	12	05.02
Unreturned Questionnaire	49	20.50
Total Questionnaire Administered	239	100

Source: Field Survey, (2018)

What is the effect of attribution bias on employee turn-over intention of Nigerian bottling company and seven up bottling company, Benin plant?

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of the Analysed Data (Attribution bias)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	178	1.00	5.00	3.0056	1.41620
Q2	178	1.00	5.00	3.0112	1.41816
Q3	178	1.00	5.00	3.0225	1.67384
Q4	178	1.00	5.00	3.0056	1.41620
Q5	178	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.42218
Valid N (listwise)	178				

Source: Field survey, 2018.

A bench-mark of 2.5 was used for the study. Since the mean values of all the questions for attribution bias are above 2.5, it shows that all the questions were acceptable for the study. Hence, they were all used for the study.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of the Analysed Data (Employee turn-over intention)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	178	1.00	5.00	2.9831	1.41611
Q2	178	1.00	5.00	2.9944	1.41220
Q3	178	1.00	5.00	3.0112	1.66719
Q4	178	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.42218
Q5	178	1.00	5.00	2.9888	1.41417
Valid N (listwise)	178				

Source: Field survey, 2018.

A bench-mark of 2.5 was used for the study. Since the mean values of all the questions for employee turn-over intention are above 2.5, it shows that all the questions were acceptable for the study. Hence, they were all used for the study.

Test of Hypothesis

Ha: Attribution bias affects employee turn-over intention of Nigerian bottling company and seven up bottling company, Benin plant.

Table 7: Model Summary of Regression Output a) Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.920[a]	.847	.846	.55613	.847	974.986	1	176	.000	2.086

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attribution Bias
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Turn-over

Table 8: ANOVA Result from Regression Output

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	301.544	1	301.544	974.986	.000[b]
	Residual	54.433	176	.309		
	Total	355.978	177			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Turn-over
b. Predictors: (Constant), Attribution Bias

Table 9: Coefficients from Regression Output Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.291	.097		3.012	.003	.100	.481
	Attribution Bias	.848	.027	.920	31.225	.000	.794	.902

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Turn-over

The result obtained from the regression analysis shows that attribution bias has significant effect on employee turn-over intention ($\beta = 0.920$, $t = 31.225$, $P<.05$).

Also, attribution bias is a predictor of employee turn-over intention (F = 974.986; R2 = 0.847; P <.05). The predictor variable single handedly explained 84.7% of the variance in employee turn-over intention, while the remaining 15.3% could be due to the effect of extraneous variables. The durbin-watson value of   2.086 shows that there is no first serial order correlation. This makes the result respectable.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the test of the hypothesis shows that attribution bias affects employee turn-over intention of Nigerian bottling company and seven up bottling company, Benin plant. This corroborates the work of Castilho, Xavier and Costa (2015). They examined the relationship between anger, shame, depression, paranoia beliefs and employee performance in an organization. The findings revealed that there is a relationship between anger, shame, depression, paranoia beliefs and employee performance in an organization. The result of Blazer, Hays and Salive (1996). They examined the factors associated with paranoid symptoms.

The findings revealed that these factors were associated and strongly with individuals with lower income and lower level education. In other words, employees with lower income and lower level of education tend to exhibit paranoid behaviours in an organization. The work of Jan-willem and Reinout (2016) also corroborates the result obtained from the test of the formulated hypothesis. They examined the effect of organizational paranoia (conspiracy beliefs) on organizational commitment and turn-over intentions in an organization. The findings revealed that organizational paranoia impacts organizational commitment and turn-over intentions.

Summmary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations\

Summary of Findings

Findings from the test of the formulated hypothesis shows that attribution bias affects employee turn-over intention of Nigerian bottling company and seven up bottling company, Benin plant since (F = 974.986; R2 = 0.847; P <.05).

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researchers concludes that organizational paranoia impacts employee performance of Nigerian bottling company and seven up bottling company, Benin plant. The findings of the study show that when employees perceive their colleagues as unreliable, it could make the work environment un-conducive for them and this could impact their turn-over intention.

Recommendations

The researchers made the following recommendations based on the findings of the study:

1. A close observation of the attitudes of employees by managers of the focused firms so that they can detect when employees begin to exhibit some negative behaviours.
2. Frequent manager-employee interaction should be encouraged as it could help managers get vital information from employees.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire Items On Orgaizatioal Paraoia and Employee Performance Options: Strongly Agree = SA, Agree = A, Undecided = UD, Strongly Disagree = SD, Disagree = D. Please tick ( ) as it represents your view□

No	Questionnaire Item for Independent Variable(Organizational paranoia)					
	Attribution Bias	**SA 5**	**A 4**	**UD 3**	**SD 2**	**D 1**
1	You always quarrel with other employees in your department.					
2	You feel that some of your colleagues always report your wrong doing to your head of department.					
3	You don't trust most employees in your department.					
4	There are some employees in your department you don't like working with.					
5	There are some employees in your department that won't like you to be promoted.					
	Dependent Variable (Employee Performance)					
	Employee turn-over intention					
1	There are occasions when you have thought of leaving your organization.					
2	Since you joined your organization, you have attended employment interview in other organizations.					
3	If you gain employment else where, you will leave your organization.					
4	You are happy with the working environment of your organization.					
5	You would like to retire in your organization.					