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**INTERPERSONAL DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF OIL SERVICING  
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**ABSTRACT**

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*This paper investigated the impact of interpersonal deviant behaviour on organizational performance of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The measures of organizational performance utilized in this paper are productivity, growth and survival. The research design used was a cross-sectional survey. Using purposive sampling, five companies were drawn from the oil servicing sector and a total of eight hundred and two (802) employees from the five companies constituted the study population. A sample size of two hundred and sixty-six (266) employees was drawn using the Taro Yamane's formula. Instruments for the variable were assessed for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha at a 0.7 threshold. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient as used to test the postulated hypotheses. The results revealed that interpersonal deviant behaviour has negative but significant correlation with the measures of organizational performance. Although interpersonal deviant behavior may start as a conflict between co-workers, it often mutates into other dimensions of deviance and spills over to the organization impacting on property, production system and organizational processes to the detriment of the performance of oil servicing companies. The study concluded that interpersonal deviant behaviour in the workplace is an issue of serious concern to management and recommended that strategies be put in place to control and mitigate conditions that trigger them.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Deviant Behaviour, Interpersonal Deviance, Organizational Performance, Productivity, Growth, Survival*

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**INTRODUCTION**

Workplace deviance is behavior displayed by employees with the aim of harming the organization and sometimes co-workers. The phenomenon has financial, social and psychological consequences and a very high percentage of corporate failure results from employee's deviant behavior (Bolin & Heatherly, 2001; Hollinger, Slora & Terris, 1992). Further, according to Flaherty & Moss (2007) more than 200 billion dollars are lost by organizations every year to deviant behavior. With these alarming statistics, workplace deviance is quite clearly a deadly virus eating up many organizations and the phenomenon has to be better understood. The problem cuts across countries and industries and Nigeria's oil servicing

sector is not an exception and researchers and managers need to adequately understand the phenomenon.

Several researchers have used numerous theories to explain workplace deviant behavior. Some equity theorists have espoused the view that employees adopt deviant behaviour in settling of scores about the injustice they perceive to have been done to them (Adams, 1965; Bies & Moag, 1986). In other words, when a worker notices an inequitable allocation of payment, or that the process is not right, this will affect the relationship between the employee and those they perceive to be behind the problem and they may respond with abnormal conduct to give back the perceived injustice. Adams (1965) went further to contend that when employees are treated badly or unjustly, they will tend to develop

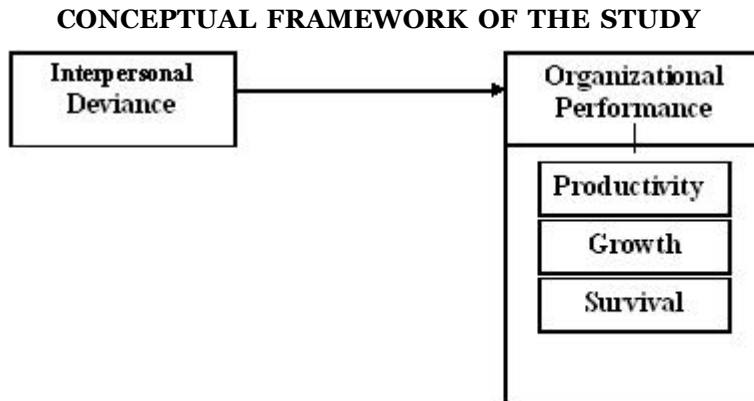
attitudes that are not acceptable in the organization. However, even though deviant behavior has ruined many organizations, the understanding and knowledge of the occurrence is still very limited in Nigerian organizations.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This paper seeks to empirically investigate the effects of interpersonal deviant behavior on organizational performance. The specific objectives are to investigate the relationship between interpersonal deviant behavior and organizational productivity, growth and survival in oil servicing organizations in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The research questions could be read off from the stated objectives.

The following hypotheses were tested:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational productivity of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational growth of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational survival of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.



**Figure 1: Interpersonal Deviant Behaviour and Organizational Performance Framework of the Relationship**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Workplace Deviance**

Across the globe, one of the most disturbing issues facing managers of many organizations is how to maintain a healthy management-worker relationship and avoid or drastically reduce employee deviant behavior in the workplace. diverse names such as counterproductive behaviour, bad behaviour, among others has been used to describe these occurrence in the workplace (Appelbaum, Iaconi, & Matousek, 2007; Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Gabriel, 2016; Greenberg, 1990). Workplace deviant behaviour is an intentional act or deeds initiated by employees that break or contradict laid down principles, rules, regulations, norms and standards that can significantly destroy the structure of the organization (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Examples of workplace deviance behaviour include sexual harassment; playing pranks on others, jesting and watching home video during working hours; acting rudely, arguing, physical aggression, none adherence to safety instructions and endangering the life of co-workers coworkers; disobedience to organizational rules; deliberate slowing down of production, lowering of quality and producing bad products and adding them to good ones; lying on hours worked, mocking and abusing coworkers; spending unnecessary time on organizational politics and making key customers to withdraw patronage or to sue the organization (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Bennett *et al.*, 2003; Salmani & Radmand, 2008).

**Causes of Deviant Behaviors in the Workplace**

Studies by various researchers have highlighted employee attitude, social, psychological, interpersonal and organizational factors as responsible for deviant behavior (Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007). Bolin and Heatherly (2001) observed that ‘attitude’ can be a key factor why a number of employees involved themselves in deviant behaviours. Employees with unconstructive or wrong attitude will always get involved in

the act of deviant behavior even though the rules and regulations of the organization are right, because causing harm to others or the organization is normal to them and they enjoy it. an employee psychological state can be responsible for some types of deviant behaviour. Employees who are frustrated will find expression for their anger on the organization and co-workers by perpetuating acts of aggression, vandalism, stealing and sabotage on them (Bennett & Robinson, 2000).

Quite clearly, organizations do not operate in a vacuum but within the context of the wider society and environment. The environment in which organizations operate has changed profoundly in the last decades and misbehavior, greed and unethical practices are on the increase. Expectedly, these have crossed-over from the environment or society to the workplace and are manifesting in many forms some of which are categorized as deviant behavior. This poses a serious challenge to mangers in general and Human Resource Managers in particular because workers are recruited from the pool in the environment. Example of some of these behaviour in the society that have being transferred to the workplace include drug abuse, sexual harassment, excessive use of bad language, stealing, disobedience of rules and regulations and blackmailing individuals just to cause harm to them and the use of computer and the internet for mischief making, to bully co-workers, to perpetuate unwholesome practices or to do private business during working hour while pretending to be working for the organization. The point is not that these tendencies are new, but rather that they are on the increase and managers must be mindful of this development.

Organizations sometimes fuel deviant behavior. For example, the ethical climate of an organization will influence

the behaviour and attitude of employees. Unethical behaviour might result from the goals set by management which creates unhealthy competition among different individuals or groups in the organizations. The competition level is considered to be unethical when the result is what matters most; while how it is achieved is inconsequential - the end justifies the means syndrome. This type of unhealthy competition can create high levels of deviant behavior where customers can be cheated because it is winning that counts (Appelbaum *et al.* 2007). Quite clearly, unethical practices in the workplace signify bad leadership. Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005), note that leaders with bad character create an atmosphere that breeds deviant behavior, as subordinates generally look up to supervisors and managers as role models and internalize some of their qualities. Good leaders ensure that the maintained self discipline, as well as live as a model for others to copy. If a manager or supervisor is seen to display deviant behavior tendencies, such behavior will be adjudged as acceptable behavior pattern to the subordinates and as a form of approval for what is allowed in the organization. Moreover, if some employees notice that co-employee or colleague willfully disobeyed organizational rules and regulations and nothing is done about such behaviour or the employee goes unpunished, other employees can take that to mean that bad behavior is acceptable. If disobedience and some acts of deviant from some employees are condoned by a manager, that ill embolden others to also do the same since they believe that they may also be pardoned. Therefore, strict adherence to organizational justice is important to ensure that those who break organizational norms, standards, regulations, and rules are punished according to laid down guidelines and procedures. Serious but fair punishment for any act of deviant behavior is the most effective way to reduce the incidence of the phenomenon (Sheppard, 1989; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Another source of deviant behaviour in organizations that is wittingly or unwittingly promoted by management is unfair allocation of resources. Once the distribution of firm's resources is seen to be inequitable among employees, there will be a unhelpful sentiment and mood within the employees and this may result to deviant behaviour. This is the line of thinking supported by many researchers and the equity theory as employees always compare what they receive as tangible and intangible rewards from the organization against their contributions such as skills, training, education, and work effort to the organization and sometimes more importantly against what other employees at a comparable level receive.

Anytime employees feel that the level of their incomes is not commensurate with their contributions, it will make them to be less committed to the organization. Employees and organizations are in co-operative social relationships; employees need organization as the vehicle for meeting their aspirations and likewise, every organization no matter how big depends on the right mix of employees to achieve its corporate goals and objectives. Deviant behaviour such as stealing may be adopted by employees to compensate for the perceived reward deficiency

### Interpersonal Deviance

Dimensions of workplace deviance include: interpersonal, retaliatory, restoratory and organizational deviant behaviour but the emphasis in this study will be on the former – interpersonal deviance. Interpersonal deviant is a destructive action that originates from employees or directed against fellow employees in the first instance. Whilst it is noted that some

of the acts mentioned above also apply to interpersonal deviance, when an employee spreads false rumors or gossip about another employee in an effort to gain promotion or more favorable assessment, or when supervisors and managers unfairly favour one employee over another or prevent deserving employees from getting their due benefits.

Possible reasons behind interpersonal deviance range from disregard for others rights in favour of one's gain, self-image management and promotion, revenge against injustice, jealousy and envy. Individually, these may seem to be minor but cumulatively they are unhealthy to organizations and have negative consequences for corporate performance. In most cases, this type of deviant behaviour will manifest more in organizations where there is poor and ineffective communication and limited opportunities for redress or conflict resolution (Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin & Glew, (1996); Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Interpersonal deviance is unique and very disruptive because it often intertwined with the other dimensions of the phenomenon. For example, employees may start from interpersonal deviance but progress to organizational, retaliatory and restoratory end of the deviance continuum where the organization's processes, production systems and property are imperiled. It is therefore the case that one act of deviance may be the beginning of a vicious chain reaction. Victims may resort to retaliation thereby triggering another round of deviant acts. Apart from the direct financial costs to individuals and the organization, victims may also suffer emotionally and psychologically and these may negatively affect their morale, job commitment and organizational performance. It is therefore the case that the very nature of the phenomenon makes it difficult to estimate costs to organizations.

### Organizational Performance

Organizational performance refers to the record of achievements made by an organization or firm at a given period of time (Zeb-Obipi, 2014). Performance results from individual and group effort plus organizational support. Organizational performance can be described as the sum total of the result or achievement of work done by individuals and groups in the organization. The sustainability of any organization depends on the performance of individuals and groups within such organization. In general, improve performance may not be possible without the individuals and or groups, who work tirelessly toward the achievement of the organizational goals. Workers thus, serve as the glue that binds organizations with other factors of production, customers, strategic goals, stakeholders and the wider society. The core of organizational performance is the creation of value. So long as the value created by the use of the contributed assets is equal to or greater than the value expected by those contributing the assets, resources will continue to be made available to the organization thus ensuring sustainability. Therefore, value creation, as defined by the resource provider, is the essential overall performance criteria for any organization.

According to Zeb-Obipi (2014) there are two proponents on how to measure performance - financial and strategic. Financial proponents focus predominantly on goals, objectives and financial outcomes. For them, the best measures of corporate performance include profitability and growth. Profitability is an indicator of the overall performance and is usually expressed in terms of net income, earnings per share

or return on investment while growth may include market share, output volumes, products or services delivered and total sales. Financial performance is a measure of the change of the state of an organization that results from management decisions and the execution of those decisions by organization members.

Since the attention to these results is relevant, the measuring stick used to quantify these exhibitions must be deliberately chosen dependent on the association's circumstance and the estimation destinations. Be that as it may, budgetary backers have been denounce for utilizing execution slack pointers (detailing past accomplishments) and for being excessively intrigued on expense and administrative contemplations. In this manner, they blend controllable and wild execution factors, present numerous ventures as costs and routinely blend unmistakable genuine cash with impalpable bookkeeping cash. All things considered, in spite of these restrictions, money related proportions of execution are essential, significant and fundamental.

The strategists, then again acknowledge money related proportions of execution. To them, accomplishing agreeable money related execution is mandatory; or else the association's budgetary position can make dread to banks and investors, debilitate its capacity to support alluring thoughts, and maybe even put the very survival of the association in danger. Be that as it may, while tolerating budgetary execution or results as urgent, they contend that the accomplishment of worthy money related execution isn't sufficient without anyone else's input, yet that administrators should likewise give genuine consideration to vital proportions of execution (Porter, 2004; Thompson and Strickland, 2001). The strategic measures of performance clearly address issues bothering on long-term competitiveness, sustainability and organizational survival including: (i) gaining additional market share, (ii) beating competitors, (iii) technological and cost leadership, (iv) boosting corporate reputation, and (v) competitive advantage among others. On balance, it looks more reasonable to contend that both the financial and strategic measures of performance are necessary. This study therefore adopts this line of thinking and therefore captures the debate on the measurement of organizational performance into productivity, growth and survival thereby covering both financial and strategic perspectives.

### **Productivity**

According to Nwachukwu (1988), productivity refers to the proportion of how well asset are used to accomplish a lot of results. Jaja (2003) proceeded to characterize productivity improvement as an element of advancement, the move of assets from old and declining vocations to new and progressively profitable ones which comes to fruition through persistent improvement of authoritative assets. In organizations, production inputs such as labour, land, materials, information, technology and capital are organized to create value. Simply put, productivity is the conversion of organizational resources to utility. Nevertheless, no matter the definition, employees are critical and productivity is essentially concerned with the ability to effectively and efficiently convert organizational resources to utility to satisfy customers, the organization and its stakeholders.

### **Growth**

Growth is doubtless a vital live of structure performance notably for brand new ventures. for instance, it's sales growth that confirms that AN organization's product or services are

accepted within the market. Consequently, companies typically trade-off profitableness for growth. New venture researchers perceive this and regularly use each profitableness and growth measures to explain an organization's money performance. Growth is a natural phenomenon and there is no organization in the world that is expected to be static. Organizations are like living things and they must grow from one stage to another if they are performing optimally and this is manifested in the continual improvement of profit, market share, sales and customer satisfaction (Salamon & Robinson, 2008). In fact, the ability of any business to succeed and remain sustainable in the long-term is contingent on the level of profitability.

### **Survival**

Organizational survival could be seen as associate degree structure ability or state of continuous to exist within the face of competitors despite difficulties, challenges or dangers. For any organization to survive, it should have the power to contend for resources and market share against competitors. The foremost objective thanks to live survival in organizations is to watch their continued existence. a corporation survives as long because it is ready to induce resources from the surroundings and convert them into utility for the satisfaction of consumers however is claimed to fail once the coalition of resource suppliers can't be elicited to produce resources presumably as a result of they can't get hold of past support. The accord among stakeholders is that a firm has failing once it's entered bankruptcy proceedings (Moulton, 1988; Sheppard, 1994).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Population and Sampling**

The population of the study is eight hundred and two (802) from five Oil Service Companies namely: Schlumberger Nigeria Limited (209), Halliburton Nigeria Limited (170), Baker Hughes Nigeria Limited (181), Weatherford Nigeria Limited (126) and Saipem Nigeria Limited (116). The sample frame is all the employees of these organizations. The Taro Yamane (1967) formula was used to obtain a sample size of 266 and simple random sampling method was adopted.

### **Research Design**

The survey design was adopted for this study. As per Nachmias and Nachmias (1976) referred to in Baridam (2001), a survey design is characterized as a structure or plan that is utilized as a guide in gathering and breaking down the information of an investigation. It is a model of evidence that engages the analyst to draw induction on causality among the factors under scrutiny.

### **Measurement and Instrumentation**

The survey instrument is the organized survey with the scale for relational abnormality adjusted from crafted by Bennett and Robinson (2000). For the needy factors, profitability was estimated utilizing Harper's (1984) 12 things scale in which five was utilized. Development was estimated utilizing Brush and Vanderwerf (1992) and we utilized five of the things while survival was estimated utilizing Sheppard (1989) and five things out of the 14 was embraced for this work.

### **Reliability**

Cronbach Alpha was used with the aid of SPSS 20.0 package in estimating the internal reliability of the instruments. The results are presented in table 2.1 below:



**Table 2.1: Test of Reliability**

Construct	No of items	Alpha( $\alpha$ )
Interpersonal deviance	5	0.783
Productivity	5	0.817
Growth	5	0.710
Survival	5	0.818

Source: Research Data 2019, and SPSS Windows Output, Version 20.0.

From the outcomes in table 2.1 above, the dimensions and measures of the construct have alpha qualities over the Nunnally (1978) and Ahiazu and Asawo (2016) edge of 0.7 and they are thusly viewed as solid.

**Administration and Retrieval of Questionnaire**

A total of 266 duplicates of questionnaire were disseminated to the respondents of which 240 copies of the poll were recovered. Additionally, 30 duplicates from the recovered section were not valuable; implying that 210 duplicates were considered as legitimate and appropriate for the investigation.

**Table 2.2: Questionnaire Administration and Retrieval**

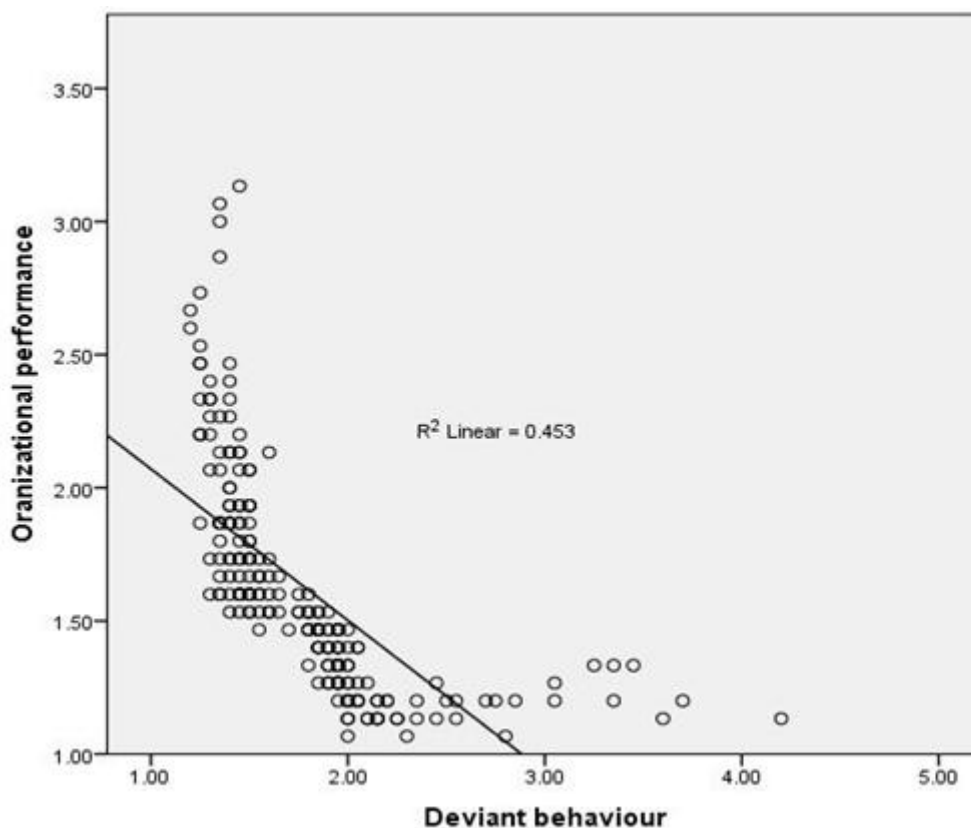
No	Companies	No distributed	No Retrieved	No not Retrieved	No notUsed	No Useful/ Response Rate
1.	Schlumberger	73	67	6	6	61(83.56%)
2.	Baker Hughes	60	56	4	7	49(81.67%)
3.	Halliburton	50	49	3	6	41(82.00%)
4.	Weatherford	45	40	5	7	33 (82.50%)
5.	Saipem	38	30	8	4	26(68.42%)
	Total	266	240	26	30	210(78.95%)

Source: Survey Data, 2019

**Statistical Test of Hypotheses and their Interpretations**

From the scatter graph below, the line is sloping downward from left to right with an  $R^2$  linear value of 0.453. This means that deviant behaviour has a negative but significant

relationship with the three measures of organizational performance. The direction of the line is not the best fit precisely because deviant behavior impacts negatively on organizational performance.



**Figure 2.1: Scatter graph showing the relationship between Deviant Behaviour and Organizational Performance**

**Hypotheses on Interpersonal Deviance (ID) and Organizational Productivity (OP), Organizational Growth (OG) and Organizational Survival (OS).**

Table 2.3 shows inferential outcomes on the connection between the analyzed factors as contained in Ho1, Ho2 and Ho3. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was

utilized to test the speculations with the guide of SPSS Version 20.0 bundle and the measurable results are demonstrative of the idea of the relationship.

**Table 2.3: Test Results of Interpersonal Deviance and Organizational Performance**

Statistics	Ho <sub>1</sub>	Ho <sub>2</sub>	Ho <sub>3</sub>
	ID/OP	ID/OG	ID/OS
Pearson's correlation	-.558**	-.571**	-.379**
Sig(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
N	210	210	210

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Research Data 2018, and SPSS Windows Output, Version 20.0

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** *There is no significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational productivity of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.*

Ho<sub>1</sub> examined the relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational productivity and rho is - 0.558@ P0.000 <0.01. This exhibits a significant yet adverse relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational productivity, which implies that the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis (HA) is accepted.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** *There is no significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational growth of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.*

The relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational growth showed a moderate negative and significant relationship with rho -0.571@ p0.000<0.01. This shows that a significant relationship exist between interpersonal deviance and organizational growth. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** *There is no significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational survival of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.*

For Ho<sub>3</sub>, the relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational survival shows that  $r = -.379$   $p0.000 < 0.01$ . this indicates a weak negative but significant relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational survival. the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, while the alternate hypothesis has been accepted. This shows that a significant but negative relationship exist between interpersonal deviance and organizational survival.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study empirically investigated the relationship between interpersonal deviance and organizational performance of oil servicing companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. High level of interpersonal deviant behavior was observed among the employees of the organizations under focus. This confirms that deviant behavior is real in Nigerian organizations. More specifically, interpersonal deviant behaviour was observed to have significant, albeit negative relationships with all the three measures of organizational performance namely – productivity, growth, and survival; evidence of a tendency of employees to sabotage organizational production processes, systems and property with negative consequences for organizational performance.

These results corroborate the findings of Hollinger *et al.*, (1992) that employee misconduct is responsible for customer dissatisfaction and business failures. Deviant behaviour is initiated by disgruntled employees who develop the

willingness to contravene organizational norms and it further confirms Taylor's (2007) contention that the phenomenon can collectively cost organizations a lot of money every year. It can therefore be inferred that the phenomenon cost Nigerian organizations billions of naira every year. The findings are further corroborated by the studies of Gabriel (2016), Aquino *et al.*, (2001) and Tripp *et al.*, (2002) which is suggestive of the fact that retaliatory actions are considered reciprocal to perceived forms of maltreatment and injustice by workers.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, interpersonal deviance is impacting negatively on the productivity, growth and survival of oil service companies in Nigeria and managers should be aware that it is capable of damaging their organizations irreparably if not handled effectively. Creative and well thought-out mechanisms should therefore be put in place to mitigate the phenomenon.

## Recommendations

- Managers must ensure that there is punishment for anyone who breaks the company's rules and regulations to serve as a deterrent to others.
- Managers must ensure that employee's are rewarded as contracted and that there is no special treatment for some employees over others to avoid unwanted behaviour.
- Organizations should develop measures to address deviant behavior and ensure that rules and regulation are clearly stated and communicated to all employees.
- Researchers should be encouraged to do more work to improve understanding of the phenomenon, to estimate the costs to Nigerian organizations and to develop more robust framework for further research.

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