MANAGER'S SOCIAL INFLUENCE ON AGGRESSION MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate manager's social influence on the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment using cross-sectional survey. Accessible population of five manufacturing companies operating in Enugu state was surveyed. -96 participants completed the instrument but only -182 were returned and found valid for analysis. Face validity was used to determine the validity of instrument used. Cronbach α was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Frequency distribution and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were used to conduct the analysis. The results of the study revealed that aggression management has positive significant relationship with organisational commitment. On the other hand, manager's social influence positively and significantly moderates the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment. The study concludes that aggression management measured in terms of self-control and punishment enhances organisational commitment. The implication of this study is that managers, policy makers and human resource professionals

should use their social influence in handling aggressive behaviour in the workplace so as to increase the commitment of their subordinates which will in turn increase profitability, growth and expansion of the organisation.

Keywords: manager's social influence, aggression, aggression management, organisational commitment, social influence theory.

INTRODUCTION

Organisational commitment has been a major discourse amongst organisational behaviourists, human resource management researchers as well as other social science scholars (Robbins & Judge, 2018; McShane & Von Glinow, 2018). It has been shown that organisational commitment is a predictor of organisational performance, effectiveness, sustainability as well as organisational resilience (Ramli & Mariam, 2020; Amangala, 2013). Yousef (2000) contended that organisational commitment is what engenders team cohesiveness and organisational harmony. Meanwhile, organisational commitment is stimulated by employees that serves vehicles that drives every objective of the organisation (Joiner & Bakalis, 2006). What this implies is that without employees, there will be no organisational commitment because the employees are the ones that identifies and attach themselves with the organisation in order to achieve its goals. However, irrespective of employees' attachment and identification, if aggression arises between one individual and another in the workplace, production will suffer a lot of setback. It is against this backdrop that organisational behaviourists contended that to identify negative work attitudes or counterproductive behaviour, managers must embrace the epistemology of aggression management strategies which shall serve as instruments for correcting or modifying employees' negative behaviour so as to attain organisational goals (McShane & Von Glinow, 2018; Robbins & Judge, 2018; Kinicki & Fugate, 2016; Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2014).

Aggression is usually not noticed during talent attraction, but it manifests gradually as time goes on in the workplace hence managers that are proactive in terms of its identification will arrest it before it gets out of hand. Aggressive behaviours that are not properly handled will produce workplace violence and this will not augur well with management

reputation especially as they deal with outside personalities called customers (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2014; Tesser & Bau, 2002). It has been shown that aggressive behaviour of employees has the capacity of destroying company's image, relationship with host communities and alliances (Weihrich, Cannice & Koontz, 2008; Hsieh & Chen, 2017).Most workers that exhibit aggressive behaviour in the workplace do so as a result of frustration from their homes or family lineage which is hereditary (Abdulmalik, Ani, Ajuwon & Omigbodun, 2016). Some employees that display aggressive behaviour caused by frustration when traced to their families revealed that either the father, mother or grandparents were in one way or the other exhibited the same behaviour which confirms its transferability to one of their children (Ria & May, 2018; Nwachukwu, 2000). It has also been confirmed that frustrated employees are usually angry with anyone that they see especially when the frustration is intense (Colquitt, Lepine & Wesson, 2017). Such workers are also said to hate their colleagues without anyone hurting them but due to the frustration they will exhibit hatred without any course.

Aggression is also triggered by verbal provocation from another person who is in competition with another in the workplace (Estefania, Sergio, Gonzalo & David, 2008). Provocation occurs when one tries to tease another individual during personal discussion (Satnam & Kiranjot, 2015). Such individuals that tease their fellow workers are either trying to gain advantage by self-presentation either to become the group leader or for promotion (Robins, Judge & Sanghi, 2009). Another factor that can trigger frustration in the workplace is injustice (Hogg & Vaughan, 2010). When an employee perceives that he/she is not treated fairly in terms of distributive justice, procedural justice or informational justice (Sinding & Waldstrom, 2014); such employee will feel frustrated and believed to have been betrayed by the manager or the management in general (McShan e& Von Glinow, 2018; Smith, Bond & Kagitçibasi, 2006). When employees are frustrated, their reactions manifest in the form of despair, sadness and depression which results to withdrawal of their commitment to organisational objectives (Simone, Dimitrij, Katharina, Schmalen, Charlotte & Jürgen, 2019).

However, managers can mediate between aggressive employees and their commitment through social influence theory (Jones & George, 2017; Kelman, 1958).Social influence was found to have moderated

previous studies (e.g. Le, 2021; Yazdanmehr, Wang & Yang, 2020).We employed social influence to our study as a controlling factor for aggression management and organisational commitment with emphasis on manager as the role model through which counterproductive behaviour would be modified into functional behaviour. Social influence theory is the view that leaders or managers have the ability and capacity to influence workers through their behaviour, attitudes, or feelings any direction they want (Langton, Robbins & Judge, 2016; Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). Therefore, managers' effort to handle aggressive behaviour is dependent on their social influence which serves as a tool to retain the workers with such counterproductive behaviour instead of laying them off completely from the organisation (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). In line with the above affirmation, managers' social influence gives the employees opportunity to adjust their behaviour by conforming to the new order that will gradually eliminates frustration from their emotions (Luthans, 2011; Dutton, Boyanowsky & Bond, 2005).

Managers' social influence is associated with obedience, cohesiveness, social norms and organisational citizenship behaviour (Kelman, 1958; Colquitt, Lepine & Wesson, 2017). Baron and Branscombe (2012) added that the application of social influence in settling conflicts, negative work attitude has increased the commitment of many employees through compliance in the workplace. This implies that affective commitment, continuance, and normative commitment can be sustained through manager's social influence even if one of the employees displays aggressive behaviour (Hogg & Vaughan, 2010). Social influence theory also begat normative social influence between the influencer and the employee been influenced (Hogg & Vaughan, 2010; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Kinicki & Kreitner, 2003). Social influence has also revealed its effectiveness on ingratiatory attitudes on the part of the influenced (target) whose motives is to be like the influencer (Kinicki & Fugate, 2016; Robbins & Judge, 2018).

Nonetheless, apart from frustration and provocation, other factors that are responsible for aggression are when employee is socially excluded from their families; love ones or partner (Langton, Robbins & Judge, 2016). Other factors that can trigger aggressive behaviour in the workplace are sexual jealousy amongst employees, lack of money; excess intake of alcohol and death of loved ones (Baron & Branscombe, 2012; Hogg & Vaughan,

2010). Previous studies revealed that aggressive behaviour management had been investigated (Margaret, 2019; Ria & May, 2018; Abin & George, 2017; Hsieh & Chen, 2017; Abdulmalik, Ani, Ajuwon & Omigbodun, 2016; Satnam & Kiranjot, 2015; Aya, 2015; Herrmann & McWhirter, 2003; Shlomo, Ramon (Rom), Joel & Philip, 2011); but none was linked with members of organisation especially in manufacturing companies. The geographical scope covers manufacturing companies operating in Enugu metropolis, southern part of Nigeria. Enugu is the capital of old eastern Nigeria with many industrial clusters. The unit of analysis of this study is individual (employees) as well as organisational level (organisation).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aggression Management (AM)

Aggression usually comes in the form of direct or indirect (Chernyak-Haia, Se-Kang & Aharon, 2018). Direct aggression includes physical or verbal confrontation such as yelling and hitting and individual (Richardson, 2014; Warren, Richardson & McQuillin, 2011). Marshall, Arnold, Rolon Arroyo and Griffith (2015) added that indirect aggression can also be known as harmful behaviours such as rejection or exclusion. On another hand, indirect aggression includes spreading rumours in the workplace and damaging organisational property (Chernyak-Haia, Se-Kang & Aharon, 2018). Some of the factors that engender aggression in the workplace are; hot temper, anger, high intake of alcohol, sexual jealousy and social exclusion (Baron & Branscombe, 2012), provocation, frustration, locus of control, pay cut and withheld employee remunerations. In order to influence employees to be committed to organisational goals, manager who is the agent is saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that aggressive behaviour is either reduced or eliminated in the workplace (Andrzej, Robin & Mandy, 2003).

However, some managers that do not understand how to handle aggressive behaviours in the workplace wrongly employ manipulation and intimidation approaches which later triggers subordinate aggressive behaviour that if not controlled produces other counterproductive work behaviours (Hogg & Vaughan, 2010). Drawing from several literatures on

aggression management it was discovered that self-control and punishment are instruments for aggression management (Baron & Branscombe, 2012; Luthans, 2011; Smith, Bond & Kagitçibasi, 2006; Tesser & Bau, 2002).

Self-control or self-regulation is concerned with the ability and capacity to regulate one own behaviour (Baron & Branscombe, 2012). Those that exhibit aggressive behaviour in the workplace can as a matter of fact regulate their anger or temper when the overt tend to be triggered. The holy bible stated this position in 2 Peter 1:5-7 as thus, 'For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love' (PC Study Bible, 2007). The above scriptural reference admonishes anyone that is associated with aggression on how best to deal with it by restraining oneself whenever the symptoms such as anger, temper arise. Self-restrain has improved aggressive behaviour amongst individuals associated with it in many workplaces (Baron & Branscombe, 2012; Luthans, 2011). An empirical examination on the relationship between self-control and employee initiative behaviour by Liu, Wang, Dou and Zhang (2015) showed that self-control has strong positive association with employees' initiative behaviour. Another investigation on the role of self-control and self-adjustment on academic achievement among junior high school students by Judistira and Wijaya (2017) revealed self-control has positive relationship with student academic achievement. In addition, another empirical examination carried out by Stavrova, Pronk and Kokkoris (2020) on the effects of self-control on perception of meaning in life revealed that self-control has positive relationship with the perception of one's personal life. Based on the above review of literature on self-control, the first hypothesis is hereby formulated.

HA1: Self-control has significant relationship with organisational commitment

In the workplace, if self-control fails, managers usually employ punishment as a deterrence to curtail aggressive behaviours in the workplace. Punishment that managers employ in the workplace is quite different from the societal correctional punishment. Some of the punishments managers used in the organisation include suspension, query, pay cut and dismissal

(McShane & Von Glinow, 2018). Query is usually the first warning letter that manager's use to correct negative behaviour of employees (Mullins, 2011). Suspension of workers occurs when an employee refuses to adhere to disciplinary rules in the workplace (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2014). An employee who is found wanting will be suspended for about three weeks or a month especially in the Nigerian work environment (Robbins & Judge, 2018). Apart from suspension, managers can influence behaviour by cutting an employee's salary either -75 percent or -60 percent. Investigations by Iheanacho, Edema and Ekpe (2017) on perceived discipline, punishment and organisational performance revealed that punishment has strong positive relationship with organisational performance. Another investigation on the effects of punishment certainty and punishment severity on organisational deviance by Kura, Shamsudin and Chauhan (2015) indicated that punishment has negative significant association with organisational deviance. In line with the above literature review on punishment, the second hypothesis is hereby formulated.

HA2: Punishment has significant relationship with organisational commitment

Manager's Social Influence

Manager's social influence is drawn from Kelman (1958) social influence theory which affirm that in order to for a leader to persuade his/her follower to carry out an assignment, the leader need to use his/her attitude, beliefs and actions to influence the follower. However, aligning this theory to this study, the manager is the influencer (actor) while the subordinate is the influenced. Thus, for aggression to be effectively managed, the actor must try as much as possible to influence the aggressor with his/her own positive behaviour both in dressing and in communication. The essence of this influence is to cause the follower to assimilate the leader's behavioural acumen which he/she is expected to exhibit in course of doing the job. Thus, manager's social influence behaviour rests on three fundamental processes which are compliance, identification and internalisation (Kelman, 1958).

In line with the above, subordinates are expected to comply with organisational rules by accepting and displaying the virtues of the manager that they acquired from him/her. The essence of complying with

organisational policies is to avoid punishment and also to receive reward from the manager. On another perspective, identification occurs when the subordinate accepts the influencer's own attitude in order to sustain cordial relationship with the manager. Lastly, internalisation takes place when the subordinates adopt manager's actions and beliefs because of the rewards in the future that will be administered by the manager. Drawing from the above, the third hypothesis is formulated.

HA3: Manager's social influence moderates the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment

Organisational Commitment (OC)

Organisational commitment (OC) assumes that employees and other stakeholders contribute with their skills, experience, and abilities to the goals of the organisation (Osibanjo, Oyewunmi, Abiodun, & Oyewunmi, 2019). The proponents of organisational commitment argued that is the employee identification the firm or company (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Organisational commitment is a bond that connects stakeholders that contribute to organisational objectives (Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe, 2004). On another hand, organisational commitment is perceived as an employee desire to be part of an enterprise or a company (Kossivi, Ming & Kalgora, 2019; Sani, 2013).Thus, in this study organisational commitment is the extent to which an employee is submissive, loyal, and obedient to organisational philosophy. Meyer and Allen (1991) conceptualised organisational commitment into three dimensionality; affective, continuance and normative commitment. Affective commitment is concerned with emotional connection or feeling an employee has towards his/her company as a result of the membership he/she enjoys (Cho & Huang, 2012).

It has been shown that an organisation that wants to promote affective commitment, will give more room for open communication and participation in decision making (Rosemary, Kofi & Frank, 2018; Suma & Lesha, 2013). Continuance commitment is calculative type of commitment which assumes that employee is only committed to his/her organisation as a result of an alternative employment elsewhere (Kinicki & Fugate, 2016; Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2014). This type of commitment is known as 'one leg here; the other leg there' which translate that because of

an opportunity an employee has elsewhere he/she may not put much effort in the present organisation. On the other hand, normative commitment is a situation whereby an employee put to consideration the investment his/her current organisation has made on him/her over the years such as scholarship, training and as a result decides to remain with the organisation instead of leaving (McShane &Von Glinow, 2018; Langton, Robbins & Judge, 2016). In line with review of literature on aggression management and organisational commitment, we came up with conceptual framework showing their relationships as shown in Figure 1 below.
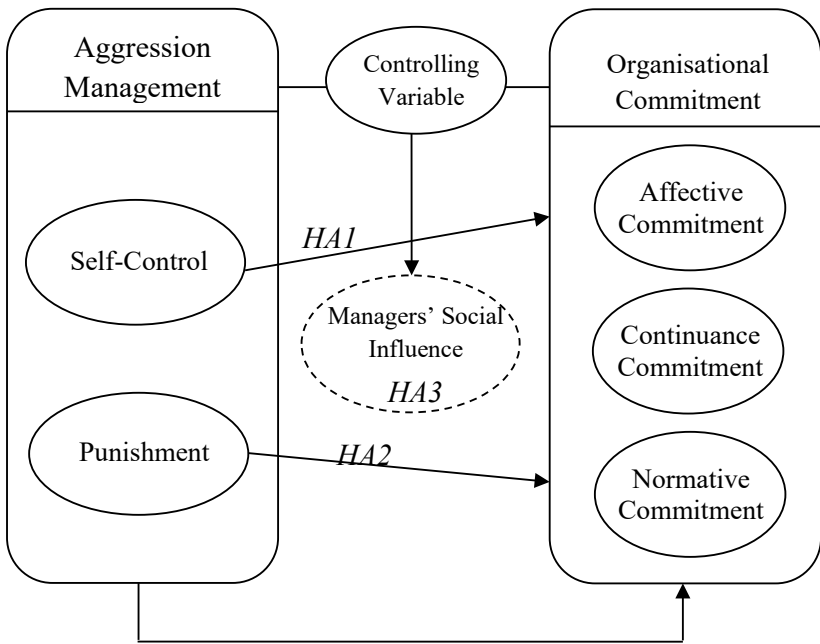
Figure 1: Researchers' Hypothesised Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional research survey was adopted in this study due to its affirmation on the use of questionnaire to collect (responses) data from participants within a particular geographical location at the same time (Ahiauzu & Asawo, 2016).The reason for adopting cross-sectional survey

is because it helps researchers to collect data that is pertinent to finding the answer to participants' research questions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Population and Sampling

The target population for this study covered 25 manufacturing companies that are registered with Enugu State Ministry of Commerce and Industry. However, 20 manufacturing firms were selected using simple random sampling. From 20 companies, 400 middle line managers and supervisors were surveyed. To determine the sample size, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table was used, and the results yielded 196. 196copies of questionnaire were distributed to the participants' but only-182copieswere returned and found valid for analysis.

Measure

3-items validated Self-Control Scale (SCC)adapted from Tangney, Baumeister and Boone (2004) were used while Grasmick and Bursik's (1990) validated 3-items Punishment Certainty Scale (PCS) were adapted and modified while 12-items Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) and Tadesse (2019) Organisational Commitment (OC) validated and modified questionnaire was used. On the other hand, 4-items Manager's Social Influence (MSI) was also used. Aggression management (AM) dimensions, Organisational Commitment (OC) dimensions and Manager's Social Influence (MSI) were all measured on five-point Likert scale which ranges from 5=strongly agree to 1=neither agree nor disagree. The instrument was given to experts in organisational behaviour disciplines to determine the validity of the instrument and it was found valid. Cronbach α was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. Reliability of instrument results revealed that self-control has .78, punishment .81 and manager's social influence has .73α coefficients.

Data Analysis Technique

Participants' demographic profiles were analysed with frequency distribution. On the other hand, hypotheses one and two were analysed with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient while hypothesis three was analysed with Pearson Partial Correlation. Partial correlation is used to adjust a correlation between two variables to take into account the

possible influence of a controlling variable (Howitt & Cramer, 2017). Partial correlation coefficient is useful when trying to make causal statements from field survey research (Howitt & Cramer, 2017).

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

	Frequency	**Percentage (%)**
Gender		
Male	131	72.0
Female	51	28.0
Age Bracket		
46 years old and above	72	39.6
36-45 years old	83	45.6
26-35 years old	15	8.2
18-25 years old	12	6.6
Education		
PhD degree	9	4.9
Master degree	31	17.0
Diploma	35	19.2
Bachelor degree	107	58.8

Source: Field survey (2020)

     The results of participant demographic profiles revealed that 131 participants representing 72.0% are males while 51 participants representing 28.0% are females. 72 participants representing 39.6% fall within 46 years and above, 83 participants representing 45.6% are between 36-45 years, 15 participants representing 8.2% fall within 26-35 years, 12 participants representing 6.6% fall within 18-25 years. Nine participants representing 4.9% hold PhD degrees, 31 participants representing 17.0% hold master degree, 35 participants representing 19.2% hold Diploma certificates, and 107 participants representing 58.8% hold Bachelor degrees.

Table 2: Hypotheses Analysis of Aggression Management and Organisational Commitment

Correlations

Independent variables		Dependent Variables		
		Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
Self Control	Pearson Correlation	.710**	.732**	.862**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	001	.000	.000
	N	182	182	182
Punishment	Pearson Correlation	.702**	.766**	.807**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	182	182	182

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above table shows the correlation analysis between aggression management dimensions and measures of organisational commitment. The result above shows that self-control has positive significant relationship with affective commitment (.710**, .001<0.05), continuance commitment (.732**, .000<0.05), and normative commitment (.862**, .000<0.05). On other hand, punishment also has positive significant relationship with affective commitment (.702**, .000<0.05), continuance commitment (.766**, .000<0.05), normative commitment (.807**, .000<0.05).Based on the above results, alternate hypotheses are accepted while null hypotheses are rejected. The outcome of the analysis revealed that aggression management has significant positive relationship with organisational commitment.

Table 3: Moderating Role of Manager's Social Influence on Aggression Management and Organisational Commitment

Correlations

Control Variables			Aggression management	Organisational commitment	Manager's social influence
-none-[a]	Aggression management	Correlation	1.000	.821**	.856**
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		Df	0	180	180
	Organisational commitment	Correlation	.828**	1.000	.872**
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		Df	180	0	180
	Manager's social influence	Correlation	.856**	.872**	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		Df	180	180	0
Manager's social influence	Aggression management	Correlation	1.000	.871**	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	
		df	0	179	
	Organisational commitment	Correlation	.828**	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	
		df	179	0	

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations

b. *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 above shows the result of moderating influence of manager's social influence on the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment. The outcome of the above result revealed that manager's social influence positively and significantly moderate the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment [(.856**, .000<0.05); .872**, .000<0.05)].The null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results above, this study found that aggression management has positive significant relationship with organisational commitment. Secondly, manager's social influence positively and significantly moderates the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment. The findings of this study are in line with prior investigations such as Iheanacho, Edema and Ekpe (2017);Kura, Shamsudin and Chauhan (2015); Liu, Wang, Dou and Zhang (2015); Judistira and Wijaya (2017); and Stavrova, Pronk and Kokkoris (2020). Iheanacho, Edema and Ekpe (2017) results on perceived discipline, punishment and organisational performance revealed that punishment has positive association with organisational performance. Kura, Shamsudin and Chauhan (2015) findings on the effects of punishment certainty and punishment severity on organisational deviance showed that punishment has negative relationship with organisational deviance. Liu, Wang, Dou and Zhang (2015) empirical result on the association between self-control and employee initiative behaviour revealed that self-control has strong positive relationship with employees' initiative behaviour. Judistira and Wijaya (2017) results on the role of self-control and self-adjustment on academic achievement among junior high school students showed self-control has positive association with student academic achievement. Lastly, Stavrova, Pronk and Kokkoris' (2020) findings on the effects of self-control on perception of meaning in life indicated that self-control has positive relationship with perception of one's life.

The moderating results are in line with previous studies (e.g. S*edera et al*., 2017; Lee, Chung & Koo, 2015). Sedera *et al.*'s (2017) results revealed that social influence moderated the association between expectation and confirmation. On another perspectives, Lee, Chung and Koo (2015) findings on the moderating role of social influence on self-efficacy and aesthetic experience showed that social influence does not moderate the association between self-efficacy and aesthetic experience. From the foregoing, results of this study correspond with the findings of prior aggressive behaviour management studies (Albeit, Margaret, 2019; Ria & May, 2018; Hsieh & Chen, 2017).Albeit most of the findings of prior studies did not investigate the moderating influence of manager's social influence on the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment in Sub-Saharan Africa work environment. Therefore, finding of this study has

filled the lacuna of prior studies. On another hand, the finding of this study implies that manager's social influence on aggression management enhances organisational commitment.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study concludes that manager's social influence positively and significantly moderates the relationship between aggression management and organisational commitment. Secondly, aggression management measured in terms of self-control and punishment enhances organisational commitment. The implication of this study is that scholars can now explore the measures of aggression management which are self-control and punishment while managers, policymakers and human resource professionals should use their social influence in handling aggressive behaviour in the workplace so as to increase the commitment of their subordinates which will in turn increase profitability, growth, and expansion of the organisation.

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