Business Administration and Economics

Job Characteristics and Deviant Behaviour among Employees of Selected Public and Private Universities in Ondo and Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigates the effect of job characteristics on deviant behaviour in selected Nigerian public and private universities. Despite the prevalence of deviant behaviour in the tertiary institutions, there is dearth of empirical study on the effect of job characteristics on deviant behaviour in Nigeria. Primary data were collected from the academic and administrative staff of the Ekiti State University (EKSU), AfeBabalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD), the Federal University of Technology Akure (FUTA) and Elizade University, Ilara-mokin (EU) with the aid of questionnaires. Both the descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for the purpose of analyses. The results of the simple regressions show that Job characteristic factors have a negative effect on deviantbehaviour in the selected public and private universities. The results imply that level of influence, relevance and feedback, role performed, position occupied, autonomy enjoyed has a reducing effect on deviant behaviour in the selected university. We present the first test of the effect of job characteristics on deviant behaviour in Nigeria.

Keywords: Job attributes; negative behaviour; tertiary institutions.

JEL Classification: D23; L22; L3; L8; J23

1. Introduction

Employees' behaviours could either be positive or negative. A positive behaviour among employees will yield a productive result and enhance the work environment in the organization. Negative behaviours are also known as deviant behaviours. Behaviour is said to be deviant when an individual is involved in acts that are different from the norms of the organization, which is capable of causing harm to individuals, organizations and the society (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Workplace deviance varies in its nature, form, extent, and intention. Most literature treats deviance from organisational rules as exceptional and undesirable (Walle, 2014).

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Organisations do set some rules and norms that help to guide behaviours in the organization. According to Galperin (2002) and Nwuche and Eketu, (2015) firm observance of procedures can hinder innovativeness which is greatly required in contemporary workplace, non-adherence might also pose threat to the general efficiency of the organization.

Matter relating to workplace deviant behaviour has become a main concern to the employers and the organization. Workplace deviance such assabotage, absenteeism, sexual harassment and fraudulent practices, have been frequently reported. While the number of issues is still under control, it does not imply that employees' acts of deviance are declining (Wameed, 2015). Fagbohungbe, Akinbode, and Ayodeji (2012) examined organizational determinants of workplace deviant behaviours in Nigeria using public and private organizations drawn from communication, financial, advertising, construction, energy, manufacturing, and transportation and administration sectors in Lagos Metropolis. Amazue, Onyishi, and Amazue (2014) also investigated surface acting and distress tolerance as determinants of commercial banks in Nigeria while Akikibofori (2013) investigated causes and consequences of workplace deviant behaviour on operational staff performance in Nigeria using Intel's (communication) as a case study.

Furthermore, Wammeed (2015) examined ethical climate, job characteristics and human resources practice as determinants of deviant behaviour; the study was carried out using Chemical/Fertilizers industry of State of Basra as a case study. The current study focused on the examination of job characteristics as determinants of deviant behaviour in Nigeria. Unlike Wammeed (2015), educational sector is used as case study. There was a need to examine the effect of job characteristics on workplace deviant behaviour in the educational sector, being the brain factory for the production of the intellectual manpower that is needed for multi-sectoral development. The aforementioned studies in Nigeria neither considered tertiary institution nor examined job characteristics as part of the determinants of deviant behaviour. Thus the current study aimed at determining how the above mentioned factor affects deviant behaviours among employees of selected public and private universities in South-West Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

One of the major problems faced by organizations today is the problem of workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). According to Nwuche and Eketu (2015), when there is no adherence to the norms and procedures of the organization it constitutes the phenomenon variously referred to as workplace deviance. This phenomenon has been given various names such as employee deviance, workplace misconduct, counterproductive work behaviours etc. (Fagbohungbe, Akinbode & Ayodeji, 2012). Robbinson and Bennettt (1995) defined destructive deviance as "voluntary behaviour that violates significant organizational norms thus threatening the wellbeing of an organization, its members or both." Kaplan (1997) explained that workplace deviance refers to voluntary acts or behaviours which occurs when the employee is not motivated to conform to the norms of the organization or his more motivated to violate these norms. Although workplace deviance has been viewed to be detrimental to the organization, yet it has been found that 33 to 75% of workers have been found to engage in one form of deviant behaviour or another, such as absenteeism, vandalism, sabotage, embezzlement, theft (Harper,1990; Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

Job characteristics can simply be defined as attributes of a job that is capable of acting as a motivational factor for the employees. According to Hackman and Oldham, (1976), there are five core job characteristics; they are skill variety, job significance, task importance,job identity and job autonomy. These characteristics are capable of influencing individual behaviour in the workplace. For employees to feel internally motivated there is need for employees to perceive that the job they are doing is meaningful, they want to feel responsible for the outcome of their jobs and also want to know if they are performing their jobs well (Rahim, Shabudin&Nasurdin, 2012). Researchers' reports in the management literature also reveal that work content and work context are two critical job characteristics that are capable of explaining the relationship between work status and job satisfaction (Conway &Briner, 2005; Krausz, 2005). According to Nuhrita, Ahmad, Abd, Hamid &Mohd, (2010) job characteristics include skill variety, autonomy, task importance, level of feedback and task identity. The work-related factors may come out of unclear job descriptions, work overload, conditions of service and lack of resource among others.

Affective events theory helps in understanding how emotions of employees are central to employees' performance and satisfaction on the job. There is the need for organizations to understand how emotions can impact their workers. AET proposes that an individual emotion affect how the work environment generally and work events specifically lead to affective reactions (e.g., anger, joy) experienced at work, which then lead to work attitudes such as job satisfaction and work behaviors, which may be affect-driven or judgment-driven. A core premise of affective events theory

is that job satisfaction must be distinguished from affect (mood or emotions) experienced at work, and that each (emotions and job satisfaction) are likely to have independent influences on workplace behaviors. Another key assertion is that models which incorporate work affect must be dynamic in nature. As Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) note, "Research on mood and emotion clearly indicates that affect levels fluctuate over time and that the patterns of these fluctuations are predictable to a great extent."

In Bangladesh, Sahidur, Rana, and Shameema (2013) investigated the relationship between deviant workplace behavior and job performance. The study was analyzed using descriptive tools, correlation, and regression analyses. The findings revealed a high and negative relationship between the typology of deviant acts and job performance. Laiba, Saba, Ambar and Yasir (2015) reviewed the impact responsibility conflict, job overload, leadership support and workplace politicshas on job stress and its multiplier effect on sales intention in Pakistan. Multiple and correlation analyses of 205 questionnaire responses revealed that there is a significant direct correlation between responsibility conflict, job overload, leadership support and workplace politicsand job stress and job stress relates directly with sales intention. In Malaysia, Ibnu (2015) determined the relationship between workload, work stress, role conflict, emotional exhaustion, and workplace on bank employees in Klang valley. Descriptive analysis (mean, frequency, mode and standard deviation) and the inference analyses (Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis) were used. The findings indicated a low level of workplace deviant behaviour. The result of correlation analysis between the variables showed a significant relationship between workload, work stress, role conflict, role ambiguity and workplace deviant behaviour. The result of multiple regression analysis indicated role conflict was the largest contributor to workplace deviant behaviour.

In India, Satpathy, Patnaik, and Mohanty (2016) researched on dynamics of deviant workplace behaviour; the methodology used was purely secondary sources. Through reviews, the various variables identified are a voluntary behaviour occurring due to job stress, workload, job autonomy, dissatisfaction have negative effect on individual performance, work family conflict, organizational injustice, and abusivebehaviour. The study also found that it may cause strong rumor, taking an excessive break, gossiping, physical assault and threatening.Muafi (2011) investigated the causes and outcome of deviant acts in Indonesia, using a sample of 101 field workers in Surabaya Industrial Estate Rungkut. It was revealed that lack of satisfaction, intent to quit and organizational contempt have a direct impact on workplace deviant behavior; lack of satisfaction has a direct impact on intent to quit and deviant acts have an inverse relationship with individual performance. The study recommended that managers should correct negative workplace attitude with the

positive workplace attitude to enable manufacturing industry play its strategic role in the growth of the economy.

Sudha and Khan (2013) examined the correlation between personality and motivational traits and deviance acts among public and private sector employees in India. The results showed that deviant acts are significantly different from public and private sectors employees and openness and personality traits affectbehaviour differently. Certain dimensions of personality, motivational traits and workplace deviance significantly correlated with neuroticism being the main correlate of deviance behaviour in both settings. Lastly, motivational traits have a high correlation with various dimensions of deviance behaviour in private and not in public sector. Wameed (2015) conducted a study on the determinants of deviant behaviour using three variables, namely ethical climate, job characteristics and human resources practices to test the relationship these variables have with the behaviour exhibited by employees. It was found out from the study that ethical climate and human resources management practices had an influence on the behaviour of employees while job characteristics have no influence on the behaviour of employees.

Efobi, Olabanji, and Oshikomaya (2014) reviewed workers' deviant behavior in the business outfit of a Nigerian university. The logistic regression technique was applied in testing the empirical model and the study found a statistically significant relationship between workers' defiant behavior and private University business. Onuoha and Scholarstica (2011) examined the attitudes of management and managers that trigger off and foster workplace deviance among employees of various organizations. Using qualitative approach the study discovered that there are four broad categories of the workplace or organizational deviance. These include political deviance, property deviance, production deviance, personal aggression and abusive supervision. These forms of deviance impact negatively on organizations' image, productivity, and finances. However, attitudes of managers that foster these deviant acts are the record system, social pressure to conform, job ambiguity, lack of trust and unfair treatment.

Osibanjo, Falola, and Akinbode (2015) explored an assessment of workplace deviant behaviours and its implication on organizational performance in a growing economy. Conclusions drawn from an extensive review of existing empirical studies revealed that workers performance is adversely affected by deviant practices in the workplace. Uwannah (2015) evaluated the determinants of deviant behaviour of Nigerian university staff. Results of regression and correlation analyses disclosed that absenteeism, nepotism, and tardiness are the main drivers of workers' deviant attitude in academia in Ogun State. Compared to other factors, favoritism has the greatest effect on staff's deviant behaviour. Nwuche and Eketu (2015) studied career development practices and workplace deviance in a cross-sectional survey of some

manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. It was concluded that organization managers may inadvertently be legitimating destructive deviance by their insufficient attention to employee's needs and not ensuring fairness in Career Development practice.Obalade and Arogundade (2019) concluded that ethical climate drives deviant behaviour among employees of selected public and private universities. To the best of our knowledge, there is no recognised study on the effect of Job characteristics on deviant behaviour in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

3. Research Method

3.1. The Study Area

The study was carried out in Ekiti and Ondo State metropolis. Ekiti State has only one private and two public Universities. However, Ondo state has three private and two private Universities. There are 16 Local Government Areas in Ekiti State while Ondo state is made up of 18 local governments. The two states were carved out of the then old Ondo state in the south West.

3.2. Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of this study covered all the academic and administrative staff of the selected universities. The populations of staff according to the registry department of the four universities are 2450, 1395, 2000 and 300 respectively. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used for this study; this was based on the fact that the sample belongs to different sub-group. The first stage was the purposive selection of Ekiti State and Ondo-State. The second stage was the purposive selection of one from two public universities in each state. Out of the two public universities in Ekiti State, namely: EKSU and FUOYE, and Ondo State, namely FUTA and AAU; EKSU and FUTA were chosen following a purposive sampling technique, the two are the older of the two public universities in each of the states. In Ekiti, ABU was chosen being the only private university while EU was selected among the three private universities in Ondo state using simple random sampling.The total sample size for the study was 367 using the Yamane model (1967). Proportionate sampling technique was used to get the total number of the respondent from each of the universities. The formula is given and the sample size was calculated as follows:

Sample Size

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2} \qquad\qquad (1)$$

$$n = \frac{6145}{1 + 6145(0.05)^2} = 375 \qquad\qquad (2)$$

Where,

n = the sample size; N= total population of the study; e= acceptable margin error term (0.05). Thus the number of respondents were 150 85, 122 and 18 from EKSU, ABUAD, FUTA and EU respectively.

3.3. Research Instruments

The study adopted a survey research design method. Primary data were used for this study; the primary source of data collection involved administration of well-structured Likert scale questionnaire. The data were collected through the use of questionnaires that were administered to the selected respondents. The questionnaire was made up of four (4) sections with each of the respective sections containing questions on demographic information, workplace deviance scale, and job characteristics scale. The Robinson and Bennett scale on workplace deviance was used to test workplace deviance.

3.4. Data Collection

Primary data were employed in this study. In collecting the data375 questionnaires were distributed among the academic and administrative staff of Ekiti State University (EKSU), AfeBabalola University Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD), Federal University of Technology Akure (FUTA) and Elizade University, Ilara-mokin (EU). The universities were chosen within the Ekiti and Ondo states. It should be noted that three hundred and seventy five (375) questionnaires were administered for the purpose of this research out of which three hundred and fifteen (315) were retrieved from the field representing 84% response. Hence, the analysis of the study was based on the retrieved 315 questionnaires.

3.5. Model Specification and Estimation Technique

In order to determine whether the dependent variable (deviant behaviour) is significantly determined by the independent variables (job characteristics), the study modified Wameed (2015) model on the determinants of deviant behaviours. Since the current study is limited to the consideration of job characteristics, the effective model for the study is:

$$DB = F(JC) \hspace{2cm} (4)$$

Where DB = deviant behaviours; JC = job characteristics and F = functional notation. Descriptive statistic was used to present and analyze demographic data of respondents in the frequency table. The demographic factors were age, marital status, faculty, length of service, qualification. Simple regression was used to analyze and test the hypotheses and relationship between the dependent and independent variables. To test the hypothesis which states that job characteristics do not significantly affect deviant behaviour among employees of the selected universities, simpleregression analyses were employed. The separate models for public and private universities are given in equation 5 and 6.

$$DB_{PUB} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 JC + \varepsilon \qquad\qquad (5)$$

$$DB_{PRIV} = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 JC + \varepsilon \qquad\qquad (6)$$

Where DB $_{PUB}$ and DB $_{PRIV}$ are deviant behaviours in public and private university respectively; α_o is the constant, β_1 is the beta coefficients; ε represents the error term. Other variables are as earlier defined.

4. Results and Findings

This Section presents the results and interpretation of the analysis of the data collected. The data were analyzed in two stages. Stage one involved the analysis of the demographical data and general questions, while stage two involved the testing of the hypotheses. The general questions were answered using descriptive statistics involving frequency counts and percentages. The research hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance using inferential statistics involving simple regression analysis.

4.1. Results of Descriptive Analysis

The analysis in table 4.1 showed that out of the total respondents in the study, 213 representing 67.6% were male while the remaining 102 respondents representing 32.4% were female. This implies that male participants are greater than female participants from the selected institutions. More so, 81 (25.7%) of the total respondents are between the age of 21-30 years of age, 154 (48.9%) were between the age rank of 31-40 years, 58 (18.4%) are between the age range of 41-50 years and the remaining 22 (7%) were 51 years and above. Furthermore, 133 respondents representing 42.2% were Ekiti State University (EKSU) members of staff; 80 (25.4%) are members of staff of Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA); 85 (27%) and 17 (5.0%) of them were members of staff of AfeBabalola University (ABUAD) and Elizade University respectively. This thus implies that public institutions were represented by 67.6% while private universities represent 32.4%. The table further shows the educational qualification of the respondents as 16 (5.1%) were ND graduates, 152 (48.3%) were University/HND graduates, 113 (35.9%) obtained M.Sc. degree qualification and 34 (10.8%) were P.hD. degree holders. Lastly, it can be seen that 158 (50.2%) have been in service between 1-5 years, 88 (27.9%) have between 6-10 years experience, 43 (13.7%) are well experienced on the job and have been in service between 11-15 years while 26 (8.3%) were 16 years and above experienced.

Table 4.1. Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Demographic Variable

S/N	Demographic variable	Grouping	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Sex	Male	213	67.6
		Female	102	32.4
2.	Age	21-30	81	25.7
		31-40	154	48.9
		41-50	58	18.4
		51 years and above	22	7.0
3.	Institutions	EKSU	133	42.2
		FUTA	80	25.4
		ABUAD	85	27.0
		ELIZADE	17	5.4
4.	Educational Qualification	OND	16	5.1
		B.Sc./HND	152	48.3
		M.Sc.	113	35.9
		P.hD.	34	10.8
5	Years of Experience	1-5	158	50.2
		6-10	88	27.9
		11-15	43	13.7
		16 years and above	26	8.3

Source: Field Survey Report (2018)

Question: How do the Job characteristics factors determine deviant behaviours among the employees of selected public and private Universities?

Item 1 of table 4.2 shows that from the total respondents only 53 (16.8%) strongly agreed that the job is simple and repetitive, 119 (37.8%) agreed that the job is simple and repetitive, 33 (10.5%) of the respondent neither agree nor disagreed that the job is simple and repetitive, also 77 (24.4%) of the respondents disagreed that the job is simple and repetitive while the remaining 33 (10.5%) of them strongly disagreed that to the statement that the job is simple and repetitive. Based on the second item on the table, few of the respondents 17 (5.4%) strongly agreed that most of the things I have to do on this job seem useless or trivial, 54 (17.1%) agreed that most of the things I have to do on this job seem useless or trivial, 32 (10.2%) of the respondents remained undecided to the statement, large number of the participants 105 (33.3%) and 107 (34.0%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that most of the things I have to do on this job seem useless or trivial. Item 3 on the table further indicated 72 (22.9%) of the respondents also expressed their opinion by agreeing that the job denies me any chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work, 40 (12.7%) of the respondents were undecided, 112 (35.6%) of the total respondents disagreed that the job denies me any chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work while the remaining 66 (21%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the job denies me any chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work. More so, out of the total

respondents about 18 (5.7%) of them strongly agreed, and 49 (15.6%) agreed that the results of my activities cannot be seen, 44 (14.0%) of the respondents gave no opinion to the assertion made above on the table, 117 (37.1%) of the respondents disagreed that the results of my activities cannot be seen while the remaining 87 (27.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to the item that the results of my activities cannot be seen. Lastly on the table, 24 (7.6%) of the total respondents strongly agreed that the job itself provides very few clues about whether or not I am performing well, 88 (27.9%) of the respondents agreed to the assertion that the job itself provides very few clues about whether or not I am performing well, 41 (13.0%) of the respondents were muted on the assertion, while 104 (33%) and 58 (18.4%) of the total respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed on the assertion that the job itself provides very few clues about whether or not I am performing well.

Table 4.2. Degree at which Job Characteristic Determine Deviant Behaviours among employee

ITEMS	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The job is simple and repetitive	53	16.8	119	37.8	33	10.5	77	24.4	33	10.5
Most of the things I have to do on this job seem useless or trivial	17	5.4	54	17.1	32	10.2	105	33.3	107	34.0
The job denies me any chance to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work	25	7.9	72	22.9	40	12.7	112	35.6	66	21
The results of my activities cannot be seen	18	5.7	49	15.6	44	14.0	117	37.1	87	27.6
The job itself provides very few clues about whether or not I am performing well	24	7.6	88	27.9	41	13.0	104	33	58	18.4

Source: Field Survey Report (2017)

4.2. Difference of two Mean Between Public and Private Universities

ANOVA test was carried out to determine whether the effect of the job characteristics on deviant behaviourdiffer between employees of public and private universities. The result test of difference of two means between the two categories of universities is presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3:t-test of Equality of Mean between Selected Public and Private Universities on the Effect of job Characteristics Factors on Deviant behaviour among Employees
($P<0.05$)

Institution	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df = (n1+n2) -2	t-cal	t-table
Public institution	213	3.56	1.263			
Private institution	102	3.13	1.264	313	5.787	1.960

Source: Author's Computation, 2017.

Table 4.3 showed that t-value 5.787 is greater than critical t-value 1.960 at 5% level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected which implies that the effect of job characteristics factors on deviant behaviour of employees of public universities differ significantly from private university. Table 4.3 also showed that the mean score of public university is greater than the mean score of private universities, so it is concluded that job characteristics factor affected deviant behaviour of employees of public universities than employees of private universities.

4.3. Hypotheses Testing

The study presents a test of hypothesis that deviant behaviour is not significantly determine by job characteristics in public universities on one hand and in private universities on the other hand. The results of the estimation for the two categories of university are presented respectively in table 4.4 and 4.5.

The public university regression model result showed that job characteristic factors have an inverse relationship with deviant behaviour. It can be seen from Table 4.4 that job characteristic factors are statistically significant in determining deviant behaviour in the selected public university as the probability (.017) of *t*-statistics is greater than 5% level of significance. Thus a change in these factors leads to 0.195 decreases in deviant behaviour. Overall, deviant behaviouris a reducing function of Job characteristics in the public universities. The Table 4.5 indicated that the model had a correlation value of 0.253, which manifests a linear relationship between deviant behaviour and job characteristics variables. The Table further showed that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.064 which depicted that 0.064% of the

changes in dependent variable (deviant behaviour) was accounted for by the independent variable (job characteristics). The F value of 7.085 is associated with significant *p*-value 0.006 meaning that that the model does not suffer from specification bias.

In the same vein, it can be seen from Table 4.5 that job characteristics factor has a negative effect on deviant behaviour, such that a change in this factor leads to 0.251 decreases in deviant behaviour. In other words, a unit change in job characteristics resulted to about 0.251 unit change (decrease) in deviant behaviour. In addition the Job characteristic factorsare also found to be a significant determinant of deviant behaviour as probability of *t*-statistics is smaller at the 5% level of significance. This means that deviant behaviour amongst employees of the selected private universities is a reducing function of Job characteristics factors.Table 4.4 also showed that correlation coefficient (r) was estimated to be 0.269 which implies that there is positive relationship between job characteristics and deviant behaviour among employees of the selectedprivate universities. The coefficient of determination (r^2) was 0.072 which implies that about 7.2% variation in deviant behaviour among employees of the selected privateuniversities can be explained by job characteristics while the remaining high 92.8% were due to other variables outside the regression model which also affect deviant behaviour. The overall regression model is significant in terms of its overall goodness of fit as F calculated 8.061 has a significant *p*-values .006.

Table 4.4. Regression Coefficients (Public)

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	2.393	.243		9.859	.000
Job characteristics	-.195	.081	-.253	-2.398	.017
a. Dependent Variable: Deviant behaviour; R= .253; R^2 = .064; F-stat 7.085 (0.006)					

Table 4.5. Regression Coefficients (Private)

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	3.153	.380		8.286	.000
Job characteristics	-.251	.090	-.269	-2.794	.006
a. Dependent Variable: Deviant behaviour; R= .269; R^2 = .072; F-stat 8.061 (0.006)					

Source: Author's Computation, 2017.

4.5. Implication of Findings

In the test of hypothesis, the study found that job characteristics factor is a significant determinant of deviant behaviour in the selected public and private universities. Deviant behaviour is a reducing function of job characteristic factor, hence the role performed, autonomy enjoyed, level of feedback etc. does not contribute to deviant behaviour in the public and private university as many would expect, rather the factors help in the reduction of deviance behavior. This differs from Wameed (2015) who submitted that job characteristics factor has no influence on the behaviour of employees. In essence, this result reveals that job characteristics factor has a reducing effect on deviant behaviour, acts that are different from the organizational norms, which can be detrimental to the achievement of organizational goals and objectives; in selected private universities in Nigeria.

5. Summary and Conclusion

The study investigated the effect of job characteristics on deviant behaviour among employees of selected public and private universities in South Western Nigerian, with a view to establish whether acts that are different from the organizational norms, which can be detrimental to the achievement of organizational goals and objectives are significantly explained by job characteristics (the role performed, autonomy enjoyed, level of feedback,etc.). The study was born out of the need for such study in the educational institutions and the need to ascertain whether workplace deviant behaviour differs between different ownership structures.

Based on the results of the ANOVA test, it was found that ethical climate affect deviant behaviour of employees of public and private institutions differently and the effect is higher in the public than private institutions. Based on the test of hypothesis, the study concluded that deviant behaviour among employees of selected public and private universities can be significantly reduced by job characteristic factors. Job characteristic factors such as position, level of influence, relevance and feedback, role performed, position occupied, autonomy enjoyed etc. help to ameliorate rather than worsen deviance behaviour in the selected public and private universities.

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