

Employee Work Self-Estrangement and Employee Deviant Behaviour in the Hotel Industry within South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between employee work self-estrangement and deviant behaviour in the hotel industry within the South-South Region of Nigeria. A survey design was adopted using questionnaire as the research instrument which was distributed to 291 employees of three selected hotels in the South-South region of Nigeria. The data derived were analyzed through the use of Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Statistical as well as t-statistics to test the relationship between the variables of the study through the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences within a significance level of 0.05. The findings showed that employee work self-estrangement has significant influence on deviant behaviour vis-à-vis production deviance, property deviance, political deviance and personal aggression as measures of deviant behaviour in the studied hotels. We therefore recommend that managers should encourage the free flow of communications between employees and managers in order to reduce boredom that might lead employee exhibiting deviant behaviour in the organization and managers should give more priorities to employee participation so as to reduce employee work self-estrangement and give necessary training to minimize the occurrence of deviant behaviours in the organization.*

Key words: *Work Alienation; Self-estrangement; Deviant Behaviour*

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Introduction

Due to today's complex and uncertain business environment, the study of employee behaviour in the organization has become of more importance than before in the sense that organizations need their employees to exhibit the right behaviour in order to enhance their productivity as well as performance in today's turbulent business environment. However, there are employees in the workplace who exhibit behaviours that are not in line with the organization's standards known as deviant behaviours. Deviant behaviours in the workplace have become one of the major quandary that has bedeviled the success of the organization of today (Bashir, Nasir, Qayyum & Bashir, 2012). Hence, Yildiz, Alpkhan, Ates, and Sezen (2015) articulated that the understanding of these deviant behaviours has today become a significant area of research and emerging phenomenon. Deviant behaviour is also known as dysfunctional behaviour and organizational misbehaviour (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001; Vardi & Wiener, 1996) which occurs among

workers in the organization (Novalien, 2017). These behaviours are intentional behaviours exhibited by employees that do not conform to set values and standards within the organization which threatens the organization's success and survival as well as its members (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Hence, deviant behaviours are acts displayed by employees that are not in line with the objectives of the organization. Nevertheless, the occurrence of deviant behaviour in the workplace is not without a cause which according to Kelloway, Lori, Matthew and James (2010) is as a result of employee work alienation. When an individual is suffering from alienation such as self-estrangement it means that either the individual cannot utilize his given qualities or he is not given the opportunities to utilize his or her given qualities (Weisskopf, 2006).

In the workplace as well as in our society of today, alienations comes in the form of squat output, reduced drive, increased employee's absenteeism, reduced organization's dedication, turnover which result in different kinds of social vices like enhanced rate of crimes, disruption, vandalism, as well as a dejected society (Erjem, 2005). Employee suffering from alienation is not always happy but tries as much as possible to saves time though the employees tries to save time he or she has the tendencies of wasting the same time he is trying to save (Fromm, 2014). The symptoms of alienated employee in the workplace includes separation, boredom, lack of commitment to one's job, low participation to organization's activities, withdrawing, detachment as well as seclusion (Erjem, 2005) which often times lead to the exhibition of deviant behaviours such as absenteeism, late arrival and so on. An employee who is alienated in the form of work self-estrangement sees his or her work as a tool to just meeting needs, hence, he or she is not excited about work and not personally involved in the day to day operations of the organization as a result do not care to participate in the organization success. When workers in the organization have the feeling that they are alienated from their organization's work environment, they may not have the tendency to be committed to their job which can result in the exhibition of negative attitude towards the organization such as coming late and misusing the organizational properties at the detriment of the organization. Thus, Nelson and O'Donohue (2006) expressed that employee self-estrangement has the capability to cause diminished motivation and work involvement as well as hinder employees from being good organizational citizens. When a worker is estranged from his or her work, he or she might develops pessimistic and hostile behaviour towards people around him or her in the organization. This is because work alienation in the form of work estrangement decreases the worker's passion and emotionally separates him or her from the organization which reduces his or her level of participation in the organization (Banai, Reisel & Probst, 2004).

All employees in the organization have tendency to exhibit deviant behaviour; however its occurrence may be higher in some jobs than others (Griffin & Lopez, 2005). Furthermore, been an everyday occurrence in the workplace, the issue of deviant behaviour in the hotel sector is not an exemption, centered on the consistent facts from media as regards to workers poor work attitude, absenteeism, late arrival and early departure, sabotage among other deviant behaviours. Thus, this study looks forward in reducing the occurrence of deviant behaviours in the hotel sector in the south-South Region of Nigeria by studying the relationship between employee work self-estrangement and deviant behaviours. This study would be of great impact to managers in the hotel industry as well as other sectors in the Nigerian economy because understanding deviant behaviour and what influences it is the first step for knowing how to manage its frequent occurrence. This study would provide information about the effect of employee work self-estrangement on deviant behaviours, thus through the outcomes of this research; managers of organization in general and the studied hotels particularly will able to reduce deviant behaviours

by effectively managing such behaviours in their organization by avoiding employee work estrangement in their workplace.

Research Questions

The research questions this paper seeks to answer are as follows:

- i. What is the relationship between employee work self-estrangement and production deviance of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between employee work self-estrangement and property deviance of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relationship between employee work self-estrangement and political deviance of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria?
- iv. What is the relationship between employee work self-estrangement and personal aggression of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses are stated in the null form and they are as follows:

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between employee work self-estrangement and production deviance of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between employee work self-estrangement and property deviance of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between employee work self-estrangement and political deviance of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

H0₄: There is no significant relationship between employee work self-estrangement and personal aggression of Hotels in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on social exchange theory which suggests that behaviour is the product of exchange process with aim of minimizing cost and maximizing benefits by each party involved (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Employees often time analyze the difference between the cost and benefit provided by their organization and once the relationship is fair enough they exhibit behaviours that will also benefit the organization. On the other hand, if employees sense that the organization is not taking their interest seriously they might exhibit behaviours that are deviant in nature to the values and objectives of the organization. Therefore, Blau (1964) expressed that if employees feel lack of participation and belongingness (feel alienated) they are likely to display harmful behaviour. Since work alienation can be as a result of lack of participation (Yen & Teng, 2013), we propose that employee alienation brought about by low participation can be a source of deviance behaviour in the organization. Thus, if employees are self-estranged from their work environment they are more likely to exhibit deviant behaviours in the workplace.

Employee Work Self-estrangement

Employee self-estrangement as used here is a dimension of employee work alienation and alienation is a disconnection from ones job, situation or oneself (Nair & Vohra, 2010). It is the degree at which an employee has low emotional commitment to a particular job which borders on circumstances where employees does not take interest in the work he or she is performing and commit little efforts in doing the work as well as work basically for extrinsic remuneration (Weisskopf, 2006). Employees suffering from alienation manifest behaviour such as flaccid abandonment from work and regularly been absent from work. Furthermore, self-estrangement

in the workplace occurs when an individual do not feel any happiness of achievement because he/she is unable to connect to the things that he/she wants to realize and achieve with the work he/she does (Banai & Raisel, 2007). Self-estrangement occurs according to Mottaz (1981) when workers do not find their work exciting to them. For this reason, the employees cannot draw a link with the things they actually wants to do and what they are doing as a result they are not happy (Eryilmaz & Burgaz, 2011). Ashforth and Humphrey (1993), sees it as a form of alienation, whereby the worker is not in reality with himself and feels he is behaving against the normal way of others. Self-estrangement is an emotion of withdrawal, disaffiliation, or recoil from some object, condition, or situation perceived to be unpleasant or toxic (Kavanagh & Bower, 1985). In self-estrangement, the estranged self is seen as repugnant and undesirable. Here disgust is not considered as an elementary, visceral reaction to repulsive or contaminated material, but rather as a socio-moral connotation triggered by a person, behaviour, or condition seen as aversive, degraded, or polluted. The self-estranged individual experiences disgust and a feeling of disaffiliation upon perceiving that one's actual self is significantly inferior to the self that one has aspired to become (Blauner, 1964). The effect of isolation and loneliness culminates, where an individual feels unable to tackle or face their oddness, thus resulting to estrangement concerning oneself and others. This estrangement prevents the individual from effective relationship with others. The self-estranged individual experiences sadness upon perceiving a failure to satisfy fundamental human needs; an inability to engage in activities that are intrinsically rewarding; a sense that the actual self is not the ideal or moral self to which they aspired; a loss of a true, or authentic, self, or the sense that one possesses a false self; loss of knowledge of what one's true self might be; a loss of memories of biographical episodes that have been significant to one's life and formation of one's present self; and a loss of a feeling of self-efficacy; a concomitant need to adhere to social constraints and social demands (Kavanagh & Bower, 1985).

Deviant Behaviour

Deviant behaviour is a purposeful act engaged by individual that is not in conformity to the interest of the organization. It is an employee behaviour that is intended to have negative effect on co-workers and the firm (Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Fox *et al.*, 2001). More so, according to Schnake (2011), employee deviance is an intentional behaviour exhibited by employees that could violate substantially the standards and norms of the organization thereby affecting the success of the organization and its stakeholders. In other words, deviant behaviour in the organization is behaviour that tends to impinge on the capability of the organization to attain set goals and its general success. There are two basic features of deviant behaviour vis-à-vis they are done intentionally and the primary goal of this kind of behaviour is to harm the firm and its stakeholders (employees, customers, shareholders and host of others). Its features includes low work quality, sabotage, lack of commitment, deliberately working slowly, stealing, gossiping, misuse of organizational resources, absenteeism and coming late to work, nepotism and partiality, use of abusive words as well as verbal assault among others. Furthermore, Bennett and Robinson (2000) categorized employee work deviant behaviour to include production deviance, property deviance, political deviance and personal aggression which were also adopted in this study. Political deviance (interpersonal and minor) including deviant behaviours like favourism, gossiping about fellow co-workers, as well as raining blames on co-workers, organizational vulgarity, unhealthy competition between co-workers; these deviant acts contributes towards a negative working environment which breeds hostile work environment, demoralizing employee morale and destroying leader- member and/ or managers-employee relationship. More so,

victims of political deviance suffer from depression which can lead to other workplace deviance such as absenteeism and intentionally doing work wrongly (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007). In the same vein, Sarwar, Awan, Alam, and Anwar (2010) expressed that political favouritism in the organization increase in the employee negative behaviour; hence, such favouritism can cost the organization a lot; personal aggression (interpersonal and serious) which include deviant behaviour like, embarrassing others, maltreatment of other workers, verbal abuse of co-workers, sexual persecution and endangering of co-workers; production deviance (organizational and minor) include deviant behaviour such as intentionally working slowly on a given task, going on undue breaks, using work time for personal use, coming late to work, leaving workplace earlier than the scheduled time, sleeping on duty, wasting organization's resources; and property deviance (organizational and serious) include deviant behaviours such as thievery, sabotage, using organizational properties without due permission.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design vis-à-vis correlational design that examines the relationship between employee self-estrangement and deviant work behaviour. The time horizon adopted is cross-sectional while the unit of analysis was on the employee of three (3) selected Hotels in the South-South, Nigeria. One each from Rivers State, Akwa-Ibom State and Cross-Rivers State and a visit to the 3 Hotels (the various hotels' human resource managers), we discovered that they have 1014 employees made up of junior staff, middle-cadre staff, senior staff, and management cadre. Out of the 1014 employees in the 3 hotels, 291 employees were used as the sample size gotten through the use of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination. We also used cluster sampling to get the number of respondents in each hotel, a hotel been a cluster. More so, selection from the clusters to arrive at sample size was by proportionate sampling complemented with simple random sampling techniques which was done using Bowley's (1964) technique in the determination of unit sampling. More so, the study adopted questionnaire as the research instrument. Employee self-estrangement is the predictor variable and is used as a dimension of work alienation thus it is operationalised as a uni-variable using Merkhe (2015) questionnaire which consist of four respond choices with 5 Point Likert scales ranging from 1 to 5 indicating strongly disagree, disagree, indifference, agree and strongly agree respectively. The criterion variable is deviant behaviour with measures as production deviance, property deviance, political deviance and personal aggression which was operationalised using Bennett and Robinson (2000) deviant behaviour questionnaire consist of four respond choices each with 5 Point Likert scales ranging from 1 to 5 indicating strongly disagree, disagree, indifference, agree and strongly agree respectively. Face and content validity was also used for the validity of the research instrument while the reliability of the research instrument indicates a Cronbach Alpha value higher than 0.7; specifically the employee self-estrangement = 0.917; production deviance = 0.914; property deviance = 0.931; political deviance = 0.928 and personal aggression = 0.919. From the 291 questionnaire distributed, 276(94.81%) copies of questionnaire were retrieved while the remaining 15(5.19%) were not retrieved. More so, out of the 276 number of questionnaire retrieved, 13(4.71%) copies was not useful because it was not filled properly while the remaining 263(95.29%) copies of the retrieved questionnaire were filled correctly which were used for data analysis. The data derived were analyzed through the use of Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Statistical as well as t-statistics to test the relationship between the variables of the study through the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Windows version 25 within a significance level of 0.05.

Data Analysis and Results

Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Production Deviance

Table 1: Correlations Analysis showing the strength of Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Production Deviance

			Self-Estrangement	Production Deviance
Spearman's rho	Self-Estrangement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.966**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	263	263
	Production Deviance	Correlation Coefficient	.966**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	263	263

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

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

Table 1 above indicates that rho = 0.966 and a PV= 0.000 less than 0.05; it means that the relationship between employee self-estrangement and production deviance in the studied Hotels is very strong, positive and significant. The relationship is further tested applying t-statistics as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Effects of Employee Self-estrangement on Production Deviance

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		UnStandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.687	.357		4.726	.000
	Self-estrangement	.369	.080	.292	4.595	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Production Deviance

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

The table 2 above shows a (t-cal. =4.595 and t-crit. =1.96) at significant level of (P=0.000 < 0.05) which indicates a significant relationship between employee self-estrangement and production deviance. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis; we therefore conclude that employee self-estrangement had a positive and significant relationship with production deviance in the studied Hotels in Nigeria.

Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Property Deviance

Table 3: Correlations Analysis showing the strength of Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Property Deviance

			Self-Estrangement	Property Deviance
Spearman's rho	Self-Estrangement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.986**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	263	263
	Property Deviance	Correlation Coefficient	.986**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	263	263

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

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

Table 3 above indicates that $\rho = 0.986$ and a $PV = 0.000$ less than 0.05 ; it means that the relationship between employee self-estrangement and property deviance in the studied Hotels is very strong, positive and significant. The relationship is further tested applying t-statistics as shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Effects of Employee Self-estrangement on Property Deviance

Coefficients ^a						
Model		UnStandardised Coefficients		Standardised	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.584	.390		16.890	.000
	Self-estrangement	.808	.088	.530	9.216	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Property Deviance

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

The table 4 above shows a ($t_{\text{cal.}} = 9.216$ and $t_{\text{crit.}} = 1.96$) at significant level of ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$) which indicates a significant relationship between employee self-estrangement and property deviance. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis; we therefore conclude that employee self-estrangement had a positive and significant relationship with property deviance in the studied Hotels in Nigeria.

Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Political Deviance

Table 5: Correlations Analysis showing the strength of Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Political Deviance

		Self-Estrangement	Political Deviance
Spearman's rho	Self-Estrangement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	263
	Political Deviance	Correlation Coefficient	.688**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	263

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

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

Table 5 above indicates that $\rho = 0.688$ and a $PV = 0.000$ less than 0.05 ; it means that the relationship between employee self-estrangement and political deviance in the studied Hotels is strong, positive and significant. The relationship is further tested applying t-statistics as shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Effects of Employee Self-estrangement on Political Deviance

Coefficients ^a						
Model		UnStandardised Coefficients		Standardised	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	.277	.203		8.367	.173
	Self-estrangement	.145	.046	.115	3.173	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Political Deviance

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

The table 6 above shows a ($t_{\text{-cal.}} = 3.173$ and $t_{\text{-crit.}} = 1.96$) at significant level of ($P = 0.002 < 0.05$) which indicates a significant relationship between employee self-estrangement and political deviance. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis; we therefore conclude that employee self-estrangement had a positive and significant relationship with political deviance in the studied Hotels in Nigeria.

Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Personal Aggression

Table 7: Correlations Analysis showing the strength of Relationship between Employee Self-estrangement and Personal Aggression

			Self-Estrangement	Personal Aggression
Spearman's rho	Self-Estrangement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.885**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	263	263
	Personal Aggression	Correlation Coefficient	.885**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	263	263

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

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

Table 7 above indicates that $\rho = 0.885$ and a $PV = 0.000$ less than 0.05 ; it means that the relationship between employee self-estrangement and personal aggression in the studied Hotels is very strong, positive and significant. The relationship is further tested applying t-statistics as shown in Table 8 below:

Table 8: Effects of Employee Self-estrangement on Personal Aggression

		Coefficients ^a				
		UnStandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.305	.282		15.273	.000
	Self-estrangement	.781	.063	.593	12.327	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Personal Aggression

Source: SPSS Windows Version 25

The table 8 above shows a ($t_{\text{-cal.}} = 12.327$ and $t_{\text{-crit.}} = 1.96$) at significant level of ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$) which indicates a significant relationship between employee self-estrangement and personal aggression. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis; we therefore conclude that employee self-estrangement had a positive and significant relationship with personal aggression in the studied Hotels in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Employee self-estrangement is an individual’s inability to find intrinsically rewarding activities that engages him/her. The inability of the employee to find his or her work not rewarding (that is not finding his or her work satisfying) may result in deviant behaviour such as watching YouTube, checking Facebook, playing video games, online shopping, and so on during work hours which can result in the reduction of organizational productivity. More so, Blauner (1964) observed that workers experienced estrangement when they felt their work was neither self-fulfilling nor intrinsically rewarding, but that their tasks were merely a means to accomplishing something else. So, for the estranged worker, nothing is inherently gratifying about work; work

is merely an instrumental activity which is done only for extrinsic rewards (Blauner, 1964), which can lead the employee to lose interest on the job and indulge in deviant behaviour such as arriving late, leaving early and indulging in absenteeism. Also, when an employee feel estranged in his or her workplace, the employees lacks pride on what he or she is doing, lacks identification with his/her work duties, he/she feels essentially detached from his/her employer, and he/she is involved in activities that are mainly instrumentally necessary, such as a paycheck, as opposed to activities that are mainly intrinsically rewarding (Blauner, 1964; Seeman 1959), this can make him or her to indulge in behaviour such as outright theft and organizational sabotage, since he or she does not feel any sense of pride or identification in his job. More so, self - estrangement is a crucial dimension of employee work alienation, this situation happens when employees' realize that they are strangers from the work process and there is a gap separating them from the product, in other words, they are alien and independent from their contributions (Sarros, Tanewski, Winter, Santora & Densten, 2002). The feeling of been estranged to work can make employees lose commitment to work that may lead to absenteeism and arriving late to work.

Furthermore, Bugental (2005) observed that self-estrangement is a feeling of being caged in a glass, where one can see the entire world and as people move by but one cannot do same. It occurs in the organization when workers do not feel a sense of wholeness as well as association. More so, self-estrangement is a combination of isolation, meaninglessness and powerlessness. Rose (1988) expressed that it comes into manifestations when employees feel that the work he or she is doing is not in conformity with his or identity which can lead to deviant behaviour. Employee work estrangement results in job dissatisfaction which is very distasteful to employees and employees naturally have the tendencies to react to distasteful situations through the search to look for way to minimizing the distasteful situation by looking for better job placement in the organization. This can make them indulge in political deviance such as spreading rumours or gossiping about others in a bid obtain better position in the organization as well as to better adapt. Self-estrangement which has to do with workers separations from their work operation and lack of identity with the organization has a lot to do with behaviour of the employee in the organization. Self-estrangement prevents employees from interacting with others and not being interacted with can lead to aggressive behaviour towards others such as verbal abuse, threats of physical harm, and endangering other co-workers. Employees are social beings and when he or she becomes unwanted, detested, or relegated to the background by others, they may display aggressive behaviour (Dodge, Coie & Lynam, 2006). Warburton, Williams, and Cairns (2006) observed that when employees are rejected in the organization they display aggressive behaviour. More so, Williams (2001) expresses that employee's segregation with organizations brings about a negative impact to fundamental worker human needs and that such frustrated makes the worker to feel frustrated which result in increased aggression towards others in the organization. The detrimental part of self-estrangement is that it hinders workers development, self-realization as well social connection between employees that may lead them to indulge in deviant behaviour.

Conclusion

From the result of data analysis, we discovered that employee self-estrangement has direct and significant effect on all the measures of deviant behaviour in the studied firms. In other words, if employees' self-estrangement are allowed to increase, there will be a higher tendency that deviant behaviours will increase in the organization. Inevitably, employees who do not feel powerful and valuable in the organization will have no enthusiasm towards the organization as well put less importance on their job as times goes by and display behaviour that may be

detrimental to the firm. This means that when employees are not connected to their job makes them to questioning their sense of belongingness and if appropriate managerial precautions are not taken may degenerate into display of deviant behaviours in the organization. However, while we recognize that employee self-estrangement can result to display of deviant behaviours; is not applicable to all employees due to fear of been sanctioned.

Recommendations

We therefore recommend that:

1. Managers of hotels in the south-south region in Nigeria should make sure workers do not waste organization's time for their personal use by monitoring workers activities during work hours electronically, such as checking histories of internet browsing and so on.
2. The managers should encourage the free flow of communications between employees and managers in order to reduce boredom that might lead to employee deviant behaviour in the organization.
3. More so, Managers should give more priorities to employee participation so as to reduce employee work self-estrangement and give necessary training to minimize the occurrence of deviant behaviours in the organization.
4. Also, managers should organize get to gather once a while in the organization to enhance its social environment so as to reduce boredom and deviant behaviour.

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