

## Counterproductive Work Behaviour among Local Government Employees in Edo State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

There is a growing concern about the pervasiveness of counterproductive work behaviours among employees in many organisations. In spite of its damaging consequences and negative impacts on organisational wellbeing, counterproductive work behaviours usually go unnoticed or unreported perhaps due to its illegal nature. This study examined the forms and level of prevalence of counterproductive work behaviours among local government employees in Edo State, Nigeria. It also ascertained the relationship between psychological contract breach and counterproductive work behaviours. A cross-sectional research design was employed, and data were gathered through the use of a questionnaire which was administered on 319 sample respondents, out of which 282 questionnaires were retrieved and found usable, representing a response rate of 88.4%. The data obtained were analysed using statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation and ANOVA analysis. The results of the study revealed that the forms of counterproductive work behaviour investigated (i.e. sabotage, withdrawal, theft and abuse) are exhibited at a moderate level among

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local government employees. The results also indicated that psychological contract breach has a significant influence on counterproductive work behaviours that is organisational and interpersonal in nature. It was recommended that the local governments should fulfil their part of the psychological contract. The study also recommends that the local government should organise regular enlightenment programmes, and formulate appropriate HR policies that would help reduce the level of counterproductive work behaviours among employees.

**Keywords:** Counterproductive work behaviour, Employees, Local governments, Nigeria, Psychological contract breach

## Introduction

In many organisations, it is expected that individuals exhibit a wide range of work behaviours that would impact positively on organisational well-being. Yet, this is not always the case as some employees also have the tendency to indulge in work behaviours that are inimical to organisational interest and wellbeing. This type of workplace behaviours had at various times been described using terms such as ‘workplace deviance’ (Robinson and Bennett, 1995), ‘antisocial behaviour’ (Giacalone and Greenberg, 1996), ‘organisational misbehaviour’ (Vardi and Weiner, 1996), and ‘dysfunctional behaviour’ (Griffin *et al.*, 1998). Though the terms may differ from study to study, all forms of harmful workplace behaviours are subsumed under the broader construct of ‘counterproductive work behaviour’ (CWB) (Czarnota-Bojarska, 2015; Spector and Fox, 2005; Dalal, 2005; Gruys and Sackett 2003; Sackett, 2002; Robinson and Bennett, 1995).

Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) refers to intentional workplace behaviours that deviate from established organisational norms and harm the legitimate interest of the organisation (Sackett, 2002; Vardy and Weitz, 2004). Spector and Fox (2005:220) perceive CWB as “volitional acts that harm organisations or people in organisations”. CWB epitomises the dark side of employees’ behaviour (Keskin *et al.*, 2016). Employees that engage in CWB direct such harmful behaviours at the organisation or co-workers. While

organisational CWB describes employee behaviour that is targeted at harming the organisation, interpersonal CWB illustrates employee behaviour that is targeted at harming co-workers (Robinson and Bennett, 1995).

Though CWB studies have majorly been conducted along the lines of organisational CWB and interpersonal CWB, (Berry *et al.*, 2007) opine that other classifications of CWB are also useful depending on the research questions being asked. For example, Gruys and Sackett (2003) postulate eleven forms of CWB in the workplace as theft and related behaviours, destruction of property, misuse of information, unauthorised use of time and resources, unsafe behaviour, poor attendance, poor-quality work, alcohol use on the job, drug use, inappropriate verbal actions and inappropriate physical actions often exhibited by organisational members. They further grouped these forms of CWB into two broad dimensions of interpersonal-organisational and task relevance dimensions. (Spector *et al.*, 2006) collapse earlier classifications of CWB along the lines of interpersonal CWB and organisational CWB into five forms of abuse, sabotage, withdrawal, production deviance, theft and abuse. While abuse, sabotage, withdrawal, production deviance, and theft are categorised along the line of organisational CWB, abuse is listed as interpersonal CWB since it depicts "harmful and nasty behaviours" often targeted at co-workers (Spector *et al.*, 2006:459). In the past decades, CWB has emerged as an important area of research in the field of organisational psychology and organisational behaviour (Czarnota-Bojarska, 2015; Spector *et al.*, 2006). This emanates from its potential consequences for both the organisation and its workforce (Keskin *et al.*, 2016; Czarnota-Bojarska, 2015; Berry *et al.*, 2007; Dalal, 2005; Robinson and Bennett, 1995). CWB could result in "lost productivity, increased insurance costs, lost or damaged property, and decreased turnover" (Penney and Spector, 2005:778). Also, studies link CWB with low employee morale, job commitment, decreased citizenship behaviour, productivity, high labour turnover (Keskin *et al.*, 2016; Roxana, 2013; Dalal, 2005).

In the last decades, successive governments in Nigeria have implemented reforms in local government administration. These reforms are geared towards facilitating both rural and urban

development. However, it would appear that in spite of government efforts at repositioning the local government system for better service delivery and rapid development at the grassroots level, local governments in Nigeria have continued to be bedevilled with a plethora of problems which seems to derail its activities. These problems range from the underfunding of local government councils, poor remuneration and delay in payment of workers' salaries (Ozohu-Suleiman and Paul, 2015; Ananti and Umeifekwem, 2012). Also included, are constant political interference in local government administration, corrupt practices by local government officials, nepotism, and favouritism in the recruitment, promotion and appointment of individuals into key positions in the local government councils (Ushie and Igbaji, 2015). These problems probably accounted for the poor attitude to work often noticeable most times among the average Nigerian worker in the public/and or civil service (Osezua *et al.*, 2009).

In the local governments across the country, cases of lateness to work, acts of insubordination, buck-passing, corruption, embezzlement and/or misappropriation of government funds and dereliction of duty have been reported (Odalonu, 2015; Ananti and Umeifekwem, 2012). In a society like ours (please revise) where not much value is placed on hard work and honesty at work, (over generalization—please consider revising) there is the tendency for the Nigerian worker to resort to all manner of behaviours regardless of whether it is inimical to the overall interest of the organisation in an effort to actualise life-long aspirations. While empirical literature on CWB in the Nigeria context has largely focused on the educational sector (Uzondu *et al.*, 2017; Onyishi and Onunkwo, 2014); health sector (Ugwu, 2017; Gabriel, 2016), and maritime sector (Uche *et al.*, 2017), there is dearth of empirical studies on counterproductive work behaviours in local governments in Nigeria. This perceived gap in literature necessitated the need for this study. The objectives of this paper are two-fold. First, the paper investigates the forms and level of prevalence of counterproductive work behaviours among local government employees. Second, the paper examines the relationship between psychological contract breach and counterproductive work behaviours among local government employees.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Concept of Counterproductive Work Behaviour**

Spector and Fox (2005:220) defined counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) as deliberate deeds that harm or are intended to harm organisations or individuals in organisations. Sackett (2002) observes that CWB is an intentional behaviour on the part of an individual that deviates from established organisational norms and harms the interest of the organisation. According to Keskin *et al.*, (2016) CWB is the premeditated endangerment of organisational outcomes and its usual functioning. According to (Raman *et al.*, 2016), CWBs are intentional or unintentional employees' behaviour that runs contrary to the aspirations of an organisation. From the aforementioned definitions, it is clear that CWB is a deliberate as against accidental act or behaviour that is intended to harm the organisation, employees and possibly customers (Griep *et al.*, 2018). It is also instructive to state that employees that engage in CWB violate established organisational norms (Griep *et al.*, 2018; Raman *et al.*, 2016; Spector and Fox, 2005). Two major targets of CWB are outlined in the extant literature; they are interpersonal CWB and organisational CWB. Interpersonal CWBs are harmful work behaviours that are targeted at co-workers and include verbal abuse of co-workers, sexual harassment, workplace bullying and gossiping of co-workers (Robinson and Bennett, 1995). Organisational CWBs are harmful workplace behaviours that are targeted at the organisation itself and include employees intentionally slowing down work, and divulging of confidential company's information to business rivals or competitors (Raman *et al.*, 2016; Robinson and Bennett, 1995).

CWB can result from numerous underlying causes and motivations. Yüksel (2012) placed the antecedents of CWB under two broad categories: individual-related factors and situational factors. Individual-related factors consist majorly of personality traits and employee's demographics. Personality traits include conscientiousness, emotional stability and agreeableness. Individual-related factors consist of employees' job experience, marital status, age, gender and net income per month. Situational factors consist of work situations that predispose employees to engage in CWB (Henle, 2005). Situation factors include perceived injustice in the workplace,

psychological contract breach, organisational constraints, work stressor, organisational culture and climate (Appelbaum *et al.*, 2007). Interpersonal conflicts in the workplace is another important antecedent of CWB (Keskin *et al.*, 2016). Victims of workplace conflicts are most likely to resort to CWB at perpetrators of the perceived conflict in the workplace (Keskin *et al.*, 2016).

### **Typology of Counterproductive Work Behaviour**

As early as the 70's, Mangione and Quinn (1975) conceptualised two types of employee deviance: counterproductive work behaviour and doing little. Wheeler (1976) categorised rule-breaking behaviour into serious and non-serious crimes. Hollinger and Clark (1982) grouped deviant workplace behaviour into two categories. The first category was termed 'property deviance', while the second set of deviant workplace behaviour was termed 'production deviance'. (Hollinger *et al.*, 1992) suggested 'altruistic' property deviance as another form of deviant workplace behaviour. Robinson and Bennett (1995) opine that earlier typologies failed to provide a clear explanation of how different forms of deviant workplace behaviours are related or interrelated with each other. They also questioned the validity of earlier typologies since they were not inductively or empirically derived. Robinson and Bennett (1995) further note that earlier typology failed to capture clearly the interpersonal nature of employee deviance. Against this backdrop, Robinson and Bennett (1995) offered a typology of workplace deviance that integrated earlier typologies into a single framework using a multi-dimensional scaling system on the basis of their underlying assumptions. The resultant outcome was a typology of workplace deviance that varies along two dimensions of minor versus serious deviance, and interpersonal deviance versus organisational deviance. Minor versus serious deviance depicts the severity or degree of the deviance. The second dimension, interpersonal versus organisational deviance, reflects targets of employee deviance. Interpersonal deviance, also referred to as interpersonal CWB illustrates employee deviance that is targeted at co-workers and includes verbal abuse of a co-worker, sexual harassment and bullying behaviour (Robinson and Bennett, 1995).

Organisational deviance also referred to as organisational CWB depicts employee behaviour that is targeted at harming the overall

interest and wellbeing of the organisation and includes acts such as an employee slowing down work deliberately, and the misuse of organisational resources (Robinson and Bennett, 1995). Also, Robinson and Bennett (1995) postulated four categories of employee deviance: production deviance, property deviance, political deviance, and personal aggression. Production deviance is explained as the deliberate effort on the part of an organisational member to slow down work, or unwilling to perform a given job task as stipulated by the organisation (Welbourne and Sariol, 2016; Spector *et al.*, 2006). Property deviance refers to the deliberate destruction of organisational property and assets (Hollinger and Clark, 1982). Political deviance describes the “engagement in social interaction that puts other individuals at a personal or political disadvantage” (Robinson and Bennett, 1995:566). Schat and Kelloway (2005:191) defined personal aggression as any “behaviour by an individual or individuals within or outside an organisation that is intended to physically or psychologically harm a worker or workers and occurs in a work-related context” (Schat and Kelloway, 2005:191).

Spector *et al.* (2006) postulated five forms of CWB: abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal. Abuse against others refers to “harmful and nasty behaviours that affect other people” (Spector *et al.*, 2006:459). It includes spreading false rumours, telling lies, engaging in malicious acts against co-workers, unfair criticisms of co-workers, physical assaults against co-workers, gossiping against co-workers, teasing or humiliating co-workers (Sackett, 2002). Production deviance, on the other hand, refers to instances where organisational members purposely do their job incorrectly or engage in multiple errors (Bolton *et al.*, 2010). It is the deliberate failure on the part of an employee to perform slated responsibilities or assigned duties as expected (Robinson and Bennett, 1995). It is purposely slowing down work while reducing the quality and quantity of outputs (Spector *et al.*, 2006; Robinson and Bennett, 1995). Sabotage is the deliberate destruction of organisational property or asset. It is also closely linked to the misuse of information and the deliberate effort on the part of an employee to tarnish the image of the organisation (Bolton *et al.*, 2010; Spector *et al.*, 2006). Theft is the unlawful acquisition of personal goods or property belonging to another person for one’s self (Bolton *et al.*, 2010). Theft in the workplace can take

different forms such as producing misleading records or information, stealing the organisation's properties or assets, and engaging in deceptive acts. Withdrawal is explained as avoiding work through being late or absent (Bolton *et al.*, 2010), and it includes deviant acts such as taking longer breaks than officially allowed, and intentionally reducing working hours (Spector *et al.* 2006). Withdrawal could also be in the form of workers closing earlier than officially allowed, and cultivating a habit of lateness to work.

### **Empirical Review**

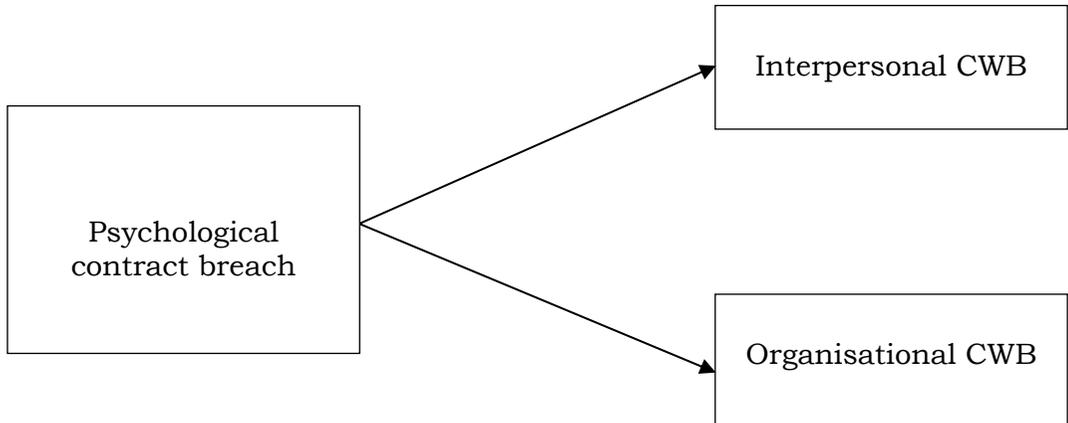
Empirical studies have examined the relationships between CWB and its antecedents. A meta-analysis of 57 empirical studies showed that interpersonal conflicts have a significant positive relationship with both organisational CWB and interpersonal CWB (Hershcovis *et al.*, 2007). Roxana (2013) focused on ascertaining the relationship between job stressor, CWB and employees' intention to quit and found that job stressor was a significant determinant of CWB. The influence of perceived high workload on CWB among nurses in Nigeria has also been examined (Ugwu, 2017). The results revealed that perceived high workload has a significant influence on CWB. Uche *et al.* (2017) ascertained employee demographics as an important predictor of CWB in Nigerian organisations. The link between organisational variables (organisational cynicism, organisational injustice and psychological contract breach) and CWB was examined by (Ahmed *et al.*, 2013). A study by Rauf (2015) concluded that organisational justice is an important predictor of CWB. This finding is similar to studies of Nyarko *et al.* (2014) and Alias and Rasdi (2015) that revealed that organisational justice is significantly associated with CWB. The role of organisational justice as a predictor of CWB was also explored by Cohen and Diamant (2017). Findings did not support the link between organisational justice and CWB. Sharma and Thakur (2016) investigated psychological contract breach as an antecedent of CWB within the context of the manufacturing industry in India and found that psychological contract breach has a significant influence on CWB that is organisational and interpersonal in nature. What this implies is that employees that perceive that their organisation has breached the psychological contract might resort to CWB. Similarly, a study by Cohen and Diamant (2017) found that psychological contract breach has a significant positive relationship with both interpersonal

and organisational CWB. (Griep *et al.* 2018) reported that employees who perceive psychological contract violation would most likely engage in CWB that is targeted at the organisation.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Social exchange theory holds that employees will discharge their contractual obligations to their organisation for as long as the other party which happens to be employers stand by the rule of the exchange (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Social exchange theory is based on the principle of reciprocity which is to suggest that the quality of the exchange of resources between the parties would predict positive or negative outcomes (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Employees who perceive that their employer has violated the terms of the contract, whether actual or psychological would most likely reciprocate by withdrawing their loyalty and job commitment and invariably resort to acts that are counterproductive in order to get back at the organisation (Cohen and Diamant, 2017).

Based on the objective of the study and a review of empirical literature, the research model as depicted in Fig. 1 shows the relationship between psychological contract breach and two targets of CWB *i.e.* the organisation and people in the organisation. While organisational CWB depicts CWB that is targeted at harming the organisation, interpersonal CWB describes CWB that is targeted at harming co-workers. From a social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), and consistent with the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), individuals will reciprocate unfulfilled obligations on the part of the organisation by engaging in certain actions, which might not be beneficial to the organisation. Hence, employees that perceive psychological contract breach may reciprocate by engaging in CWB.



**Figure1.** The Research Model

## Methodology

A cross-sectional research design was adopted to gather data used for this study through questionnaire administration. The cross-sectional research design was considered appropriate as it guarantees the anonymity of respondents given the illegal nature of CWB.

The population of the study comprised local government employees in Edo State. The choice of Edo State was for convenience sake. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. Agbonifoh and Yomere (1999:122) posited that multi-stage sampling “involves dividing the region in which the study population is located into zones (cluster)”. The researchers’ might then use probability or non-probability sampling techniques to select the targeted population. This is the situation with this study where the eighteen (18) local governments (Egor, Ikpoba-Okha, Oredo, Orhionmwon, Ovia North East, Ovia South West, Uhumwonde, Akoko-Edo, Esan Central, Esan North East, Esan South East, Esan West, Etsako Central, Etsako East, Etsako West, Igueben, Owan East, Owan West) in Edo State are widely dispersed among three (3) senatorial districts. The senatorial districts are Edo South, Edo Central, and Edo North. Judgmentally, Edo South Senatorial district was selected for the study. Based on the National Population Commission (2006) report, Edo South Senatorial district has the largest population of citizens with 1,686,041 representing 52.1% of the total population of Edo State. Edo South

senatorial district comprised seven local governments of Egor local government, Ikpoba-Okha local government, Oredo local government, Orhionmwon local government, Ovia North East local government, Ovia South West local government, and Uhumwonde local government. Three local governments (Oredo Local Government, Egor Local Government, and Ikpoba Local Government) all located in Benin City were selected for this study. The choice of these local governments was on the basis of convenience and the belief that there is sufficient educational, religious, cultural, ethnic and gender diversity in the local governments. The numbers of staff in the selected local governments as obtained from Administration and General Services unit of the selected local governments are 600, 575, and 619 for Oredo Local Government, Egor Local Government, and Ikpoba Local Government respectively as at 30th March 2018. Since the population is finite, Yamane (1967) statistical formula was used in determining the sample size of the study. The equation is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(0.05)^2} \quad (1)$$

Where: n=sample size; N= population size =1,794; e= level of precision = 0.05

$$n = \frac{1794}{1+1794(0.05)^2} = 318.87 \cong 319$$

The equation shows that the sample size is 319. Therefore, 319 copies of questionnaires were proportionally administered to respondents in the selected local governments. More specifically, 107, 102 and 110 questionnaires were administered to local government workers in Oredo Local Government, Egor Local Government, and Ikpoba Local Government respectively, using convenience sampling method. The use of convenience sampling is justified on the basis that it gives room for easy access and interaction with the respondents in the local government, thereby giving the researchers an insight into the nature of CWB in terms of its forms, and level of prevalence among employees in the local governments.

Primary data were used in this study with the aid of a structured questionnaire to elicit a response from respondents. The items in the

questionnaire were divided into three sections. The first section contains questions on respondents' gender, age, marital status, job tenure, educational qualification and net income per month. The second part of the questionnaire contains 11-items which were adapted from Spector *et al.* (2006) CWB Checklist (CWB-C). Spector *et al.* (2006) CWB Checklist (CWB-C) measure CWB along five dimensions of abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal. The benefit of Spector *et al.* (2006) CWB Checklist (CWB-C) is that it affords the researcher(s) the opportunity to collapse the scale into two broad categories based on the targets of interpersonal CWB and organisational CWB. While abuse is interpersonal in nature and thus categorised as interpersonal CWB, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal are categorised as organisational CWB since these types of deviant behaviour are majorly targeted at the organisation. For this study, the Cronbach's alpha scores for the constructs of the adapted scale are 0.730, 0.712, 0.801, 0.706 and 0.804 for abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal, respectively (see Appendix B for details). All the items on the CWB scale were in a five-point Likert format with 5 representing very large extent, 4 representing large extent, 3 representing not sure, 2 representing small extent, and 1 representing very small extent (see details in Appendix A). Psychological contract breach was assessed with a 5-item global measure developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). For this study, the Cronbach's alpha score for the construct of the adapted scale is 0.714. The items in the psychological contract scale were using five-point Likert format with 5 representing the category of 'strongly agree,' 4 'agree', 3 'not sure,' 2 'disagree' and 1 representing 'strongly disagree' (see details in Appendix A).

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents in Oredo Local Government, Egor Local Government, and Ikpoba Local Government, all located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, with the help of trained research assistants, who also happen to be final year students of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management in the Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The research assistants were briefed on the purpose of the study and how best to distribute and retrieve the questionnaire with a view to eliciting a positive response from respondents and invariably reduce the

number of invalid questionnaires to the barest minimum. The researchers submitted letters to the Directors of Administration and General Services requesting permission to conduct research in the local governments concerned. An introductory letter was added to the questionnaire with the intent of explaining the essence of the study while soliciting voluntary participants/respondents to fill copies of the questionnaire. The respondents were encouraged to fill out the questionnaire for immediate collection. Where it was impossible to retrieve the questionnaire immediately respondents were encouraged to fill out and submit the questionnaire within five working days. On the whole, copies of the questionnaire were distributed and retrieved from respondents within twenty-one (21) working days.

Data collected through questionnaire administration were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation and ANOVA analysis. The research hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0 was used to carry out all statistical analysis.

## **Empirical Analyses and Results**

This section contains the description of respondents' bio-data, description of research variables and test of the research hypothesis.

**Table 1.** Description of Respondents' Bio-Data

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Male	130	47.1
	Female	146	52.9
	Total	276	100.0
Age	18-25yrs	45	16.1
	26-35yrs	102	36.4
	36-45yrs	87	31.1
	46yrs and above	46	16.4
	Total	280*	100.0
Marital status	Single	104	38.0
	Married	170	62.0
	Total	274	100.0
Job Tenure	Below 5yrs	76	27.6
	5-10yrs	94	34.3

	11-15yrs	65	23.6
	16yrs and above	40	14.5
	Total	275*	100.0
Education Level	Primary School Certificate	2	0.7
	SSCE/GCE	23	8.2
	OND/NCE	52	18.6
	HND/B.SC	143	51.1
	M.Sc/M.A	39	13.9
	PhD	21	7.5
	Total	280*	100.0
	Net Income per month	N10000 and Below	16
N10001 - N50000		96	34.5
N50001 - N100000		93	33.5
N100001 - N150000		22	7.9
N150001 - N200000		24	8.6
N200001 - N250000		17	6.1
N250001 - N300000		5	1.8
N300001 and above		5	1.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>278*</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: \* the difference in the figure represents a missing response

The majority of the respondents are females (n = 146, %= 52.9), while 130 (%=47.1) respondents are male respondents. The age distribution showed that majority of the respondents (n = 102, 36.4) are in the age category 26-35 years. Next, 87 (% = 31.1) of the respondents are aged between 36-45 years. Only 16.1% and 16.4% of the respondents are between the ages of 18-25 years and 46 years and above, respectively. Table 1 revealed that the majority of the respondents (n = 170, % = 62.0) are married, while 104 (n = 38.0%) respondents are single.

The majority of the respondents have worked for between 5-10 years. This category of respondents represents 34.3% of the total respondents. Table 1 indicates that 76 (% = 27.6) of the respondents have worked for less than 5 years. Only 65 (23.6 per cent) and 40 (14.5 per cent) of the respondents have worked for 11-15 years and 16 years and above respectively. The distribution of educational qualification shows that 143 (51.1%) of the respondents have HND/BSc Degree; 52 (18.6%) have OND/NCE, and 39 (13.9%) M.Sc/M.A degree. Only 21 (7.5%) and 2 (0.7 per cent) had a PhD and Primary School Certificate respectively. 96 (34.5%) of the respondents

earn N10001-N50000; 93 (33.5%) N50001-N100000; 24 (8.6%) of the respondents earn N150001-N200000; 22 (7.9%) of the respondents had N100001-N150000; 17 (6.1%) had N200001-N250000; and 16 (5.8%) of the respondents earn N10000 and below. Only 5 (1.8%) of the respondents earn N250001-N300000 and N300001 and above apiece.

## **Description of Research Variables**

### **Forms and Level of CWB among Local Government Employees**

The level of CWB was categorised according to the following mean scores: very low = less than 1.45, low = 1.45-2.44, moderate = 2.45-3.44, high = 3.45-4.44, very high = 4.45 and above. This scale was adapted from Dixon-Ogbechi *et al.* (2018). The forms of CWB investigated in this section are abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal. While abuse is categorised as interpersonal CWB, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal are categorised as organisational CWB. The frequency distribution, percentages, the mean and standard deviation for the different variables are revealed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** CWB among Local Government Employees in Edo State

S/n	Items	VLE	LE	ME	SE	VSE	Mean
<b>Sabotage</b>							
1	To what extent do employees deliberately waste office materials or supplies?	20(7.1%) 65(23.1%)	45 (16%)	62 (22%)	111(39.4%) 155(55.1%)	44(15.7%)	2.60
2	To what extent do employees deliberately litter the work environment?	14(5%) 55(19.6%)	41 (14.6%)	38 (13.5%)	130(46.1%) 189(67.1%)	59(21%)	2.37
<b>Overall Mean for Sabotage</b>							<b>2.48</b>
<b>Withdrawal</b>							
3	To what extent do employees deliberately come late to work without permission?	29(10.3%) 89(31.6%)	60 (21.3%)	48 (17.1%)	76(27%) 145(51.5%)	69(24.5%)	2.66
4	To what extent do employees deliberately take a longer break than they are officially allowed?	22(7.9%) 68(24.3%)	46 (16.4%)	65 (23.1%)	84(29.8%) 149 (52.9%)	65 (23.1%)	2.56
5	To what extent do employees deliberately leave their place of work than they are expected to?	16(5.7%) 71 (25.3%)	55 (19.6%)	50(17.8 %)	86(30.5%) 161(57.1%)	75(26.6%)	2.47
<b>Overall Mean for Withdrawal</b>							<b>2.56</b>
<b>Production Deviance</b>							
6	To what extent do employees deliberately fail to follow laid down procedures/instructions?	12(4.3%) 49(17.5%)	37(13.2 %)	72(25.6 %)	81(28.8%) 161(57.2%)	80(28.4%)	2.36
7	To what extent do employees deliberately slow things down when work needed to be done quickly?	17 (6.1%) 61(21.8%)	44 (15.7%)	69(24.5 %)	84(29.8%) 152(54%)	68(24.2%)	2.50
<b>Overall mean for production deviance</b>							<b>2.43</b>
<b>Theft</b>							
8	To what extent do employees deliberately take office supplies or tools home without permission?	10(3.6%) 48(17.1%)	38(13.5 %)	97(34.4 %)	83(29.5%) 137(48.7%)	54(19.2%)	2.53
9	To what extent are cases of theft or deliberate vandalism of government properties widespread in the local government?	18(6.4%) 60(21.3%)	42 (14.9%)	93 (33%)	65(23.1%) 129(45.8%)	64(22.7%)	2.59
<b>Overall mean for theft</b>							<b>2.56</b>
<b>Abuse</b>							
10		17(6.1%)	47(16.7 %)	94(33.4 %)	71(25.2%)	53(18.8%)	2.66

S/n	Items	VLE	LE	ME	SE	VSE	Mean
	To what extent do employees deliberately engage in or continue a harmful rumour at work?	64(22.8%)			124(44%)		
11	To what extent do employees engage in verbal abuse of other employees?	13(4.7%)	26(9.3%)	95(33.7%)	80(28.4%)	68(24.2%)	2.42
	<b>Overall mean for abuse</b>	39(14%)			148(52.6%)		<b>2.54</b>

Note: VLE- Very Large Extent, LE- Large Extent, ME- Moderate Extent, SE- Small Extent, VSE- Very Small Extent

### Sabotage

Over 19.6% of the total respondents said that to a large extent, office materials or supplies were deliberately wasted and the local government environment was deliberately littered by employees, as compared to over 55.1% of the respondents who thought that the extent to which these items were present in the local governments was small (consider : minimal). Generally, the extent to which employees deliberately waste office materials or supplies (Mean = 2.60) was moderate, while the extent to which employees deliberately litter the work environment (Mean = 2.37) was low. The results clearly indicate that the extent of sabotage in the local governments is moderate with a mean score of 2.48.

### Withdrawal

Over 24.3% of the total respondents stated that employees deliberately come late to work without permission to a large extent, took longer breaks than they were officially allowed, left their place of work than they were expected (please revise: idea not clear) as compared to over 51.5% of the total respondents who held views to the contrary. Generally, all the items under withdrawal which included the extent to which employees deliberately come late to work without permission (Mean = 2.66), the extent to which employees deliberately took longer break than they were officially allowed (Mean = 2.56), and the extent to which employees deliberately left their place of work than they are expected to (did they violate their allotted hours of work by “leaving the work place early”?) (Mean = 2.47) is moderate. Overall, the extent of withdrawal in the local governments studied was moderate with a mean score of 2.56.

### **Production Deviance**

Over 17.5% of the total respondents said that the extent to which employees deliberately failed to follow laid down procedures/instructions and slowed things down when work needed to be done quickly was large, as compared to over 54% of the total respondents who held a contrary opinion. Generally, the extent to which employees deliberately fail to follow laid down procedures/instructions (Mean = 2.36) appeared to be low, while the extent to which employees deliberately slowed things down when work needed to be done quickly (Mean = 2.50) was moderate. From Table 2, the extent to which respondents engaged in production deviance was low with a mean score of 2.43.

### **Theft**

Over 17.1% of the total respondents said that the extent to which colleagues deliberately took office supplies or tools home without permission and cases of theft or deliberate vandalism of government properties was large, as compared to over 45.8% who thought otherwise. Generally, the extent to which employees deliberately took office supplies or tools home without permission (Mean = 2.53), and the extent to which cases of theft or deliberate vandalism of government properties (Mean = 2.59) was moderate. Overall, the extent of theft in the local governments studied was moderate with a mean score of 2.56.

### **Abuse**

Over 14% of the total respondents were of the view that the extent to which colleagues deliberately engaged in or spread a harmful rumour at work and verbally abused other co-workers was large as compared to over 44% of the respondents who thought otherwise. The extent to which employees deliberately engaged in or spread a harmful rumour at work was moderate (Mean = 2.66), while the extent to which employees engaged in verbal abuse of other employees was low (Mean = 2.42). The results in Table 2 shows that the extent to which respondents engaged in abuse with a mean score of 2.54.

### **Perception of Psychological Contract Breach among Local Governments Employees**

**Table 3.** Perception of Psychological Contract Breach among Local Governments Employees

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>D(SD)</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A(SA)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
1	Almost all promises made by my employer during the recruitment process have been kept so far	123 (43.7%)	78 (27.7%)	81 (28.9%)	3.28
2	I feel that my employer has come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired	131(46.5%)	71 (25.2%)	80 (28.5%)	3.35
3	So far, my employer has done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me	118(42.0%)	76 (27%)	88 (31.3%)	3.19
4	I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions to my local governments	82(29.1%)	87 (30.9%)	113 (40.2%)	2.89
5	My employer has broken many of its promises to me though I've upheld my side of the deal	82(29.1%)	56 (19.9%)	144 (51.1%)	2.76
<b>Overall Mean For Psychological Contract Breach</b>					<b>3.09</b>

*Note: SD- Strongly Disagree, A-Agree, U-Unsure, A-Agree, SA- Strongly Agree*

We observed from Table 3 that over 43.7% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that ‘almost all promises made by my employer during the recruitment process have been kept so far’. Also, over 46.5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement ‘I feel that my employer has come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired’. Over 42.0% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that ‘so far, my employer has done an excellent job of fulfilling his promises to me’.

The results in Table 3 indicate that over 40.2% of the respondents agreed with the statement that ‘I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions to my local government’ and over 51.1% agreed with the statement that ‘my employer has broken many of its promises to me though I have upheld my side of the deal. The overall mean for psychological contract breach is 3.09 which could be considered moderate.

### Test of Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated to guide this study:

*H1: Psychological contract breach does not influence organisational CWB and interpersonal CWB.*

**Table 4.** ANONA Results for Psychological Contract Breach and CWB

Construct		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CWB-I	Between Groups	35.679	20	1.784	2.295	0.002*
	Within Groups	202.892	261	0.777		
	Total	238.571	281			
CWB-O	Between Groups	19.047	20	0.952	1.693	0.035*
	Within Groups	146.848	261	0.563		
	Total	165.895	281			

*Note: CWB - Counterproductive Work Behaviour, CWB-I: Interpersonal CWB, CWB-O: Organisational CWB*

The results in Table 4 revealed that psychological contract breach has a significant influence on interpersonal CWB ( $F = 2.295, p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, psychological contract breach has a significant influence on organisational CWB ( $F = 1.693, p < 0.05$ ); thus, H1 is rejected.

### Findings and Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine the level and forms of CWB exhibited by local government employees in Edo state, Nigeria. The study also ascertained if psychological contract breach has any significant relationship with CWB. CWB was measured in terms of five dimensions as postulated by Spector *et al.* (2006). These dimensions are: abuse, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal. While production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal are categorised along the line of organisational CWB since they are primarily targeted at harming the organisation, while abuse is listed as interpersonal CWB as it is aimed at harming co-workers.

With respect to the first objective of the study which aimed at examining the level and forms of CWB exhibited by local government employees, the study found that respondents engaged in different forms of CWB, albeit moderately. More specifically, the study found that sabotage, withdrawal, theft and abuse were exhibited at a

moderate level. Production deviance was exhibited at a low level. This finding is quite surprising when we take into account various forms of CWB which have been reported across various local councils in the country. These ranged from rampant cases of absenteeism from work, habitual lateness to work, buck-passing to bribery (Odalonu, 2015). Several factors have been identified to be responsible for the poor attitude of local government workers to work. Some of the factors include shortage of skilled manpower, politicisation and lopsided nature of the recruitment process (Ananti and Umeifekwem, 2012), gross underfunding of local government councils, poor working conditions, unavailability of facilities needed for optimum job performance, and limited opportunities available for career progression (Ozohu-Suleiman and Paul, 2015).

As for the second objective of the study which aimed at ascertaining if psychological contract breach has any significant relationship with CWB, the study revealed that psychological contract breach is a significant determinant of both organisational CWB and interpersonal CWB in the local governments in Nigeria. This is consistent with findings of Cohen and Diamant (2017), Sharma and Thakur (2016) who found that psychological contract breached correlates significantly with CWB. The findings also confirm studies of Ahmed *et al.* (2013), Onyishi and Onunkwo (2014) which found that psychological contract breach was a significant determinant of CWB among employees.

## **Conclusions**

This study reveals a number of practical implications for local government administration in Nigeria. For instance, since the findings of this study revealed the presence of CWB in the local governments albeit moderately, it is recommended that that measures should be put in place to curtail this phenomenon in the workplace. This could be done with the formulation of appropriate HR policies to help curtail this menace in the workplace. HRM policies could be formulated in the area of selection and recruitment, training, and compensation. It is also recommended that enlightenment programmes should be organised with a view to drawing the attention of employees to the detrimental consequences and negative impact of CWB on the

wellbeing and interest of the organisation. Since the results of the study show that psychological contract breach has a significant impact on employee predisposition to engage in CWB, it is recommended that local governments in Nigeria should also make efforts to fulfil psychological contract entered into with employees. Efforts should be made to pay workers' salaries as at when due, promotion of qualified employees should not be denied or delayed unnecessary and local government workers should be adequately trained for the job at regular intervals.

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## Appendix A. Research Questionnaire

### Section A

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age: 18-25yrs [ ] 26-35yrs [ ] 36-45yrs [ ] 46yrs and above [ ]
3. Marital Status: Single [ ] Married [ ]
4. Job Tenure: Below 5yrs [ ] 5-10yrs [ ] 11yrs-15yrs [ ] 16yrs and above [ ]
5. Highest Educational Qualification: Primary School Certificate [ ] SSCE/GCE [ ] OND/NCE [ ] HND/B.SC [ ] M.Sc/M.A [ ] Ph.D [ ] Others [ ]
6. Net Income per Month: N10,000 and below [ ] N10,001-N50,000 [ ] N50,001-N100,000 [ ] N 100,001-N150,000 [ ] N150,001-N200,000 [ ] N200,001-N250,000 [ ] N 250,001-N300,000 [ ] N300,001 and above [ ]

### Section B

**INSTRUCTION:** Please indicate as frankly as possible your opinion on the following statements. The options for each item are Very Large Extent (VLE), Large Extent (LE), Moderate Extent (ME), Small Extent (SE), Very Small Extent (VSE).

#### ***Counterproductive Work Behaviour (Spector et al., 2006)***

- SAB1: To what extent do employees deliberately waste office materials or supplies?
- SAB2: To what extent do employees deliberately litter the work environment?
- WIT3: To what extent do employees deliberately come late to work without permission?
- WIT4: To what extent do employees deliberately take a longer break than they are officially allowed?
- WIT5: To what extent do employees deliberately take a longer break than they are officially allowed?
- WIT6: To what extent do employees deliberately leave their place of work than they are expected to?
- PRO7: To what extent do employees deliberately fail to follow laid down procedures/instructions?
- PRO8: To what extent do employees deliberately slow things down when work needed to be done quickly?
- THE9: To what extent do employees deliberately take office supplies or tools home without permission?
- THE10: To what extent are cases of theft or deliberate vandalism of government properties widespread in the local government?

ABU11: To what extent do employees deliberately engage in or continue a harmful rumour at work?

ABU12: To what extent do employees engage in verbal abuse of other employees?

### **Section C**

**INSTRUCTION:** Please indicate as frankly as possible the extent to which you agree with the following statements. The options for each item are: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Not Sure (NS), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

#### ***Psychological contract breach (Robinson & Morrison, 2000)***

PCB1: Almost all promises made by my employer during the recruitment process have been kept so far.

PCB2: I feel that my employer has come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired.

PCB3: So far, my employer has done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me

PCB4: I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions to my local government.

PCB5: My employer has broken many of its promises to me though I've upheld my side of the deal. *Note: (1) The items under each construct were adapted from the sources indicated*

*(2) The items used for data analyses showed internal consistency as revealed by Cronbach's Alpha reliability test.*

**Appendix B:** Reliability scores of study variables

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Sub-Constructs</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Origin of the Construct</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha Value</b>
		Sabotage	2-items scale	Spector <i>et al.</i> (2006)	0.801
1	Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB)	Withdrawal	3-items scale	Spector <i>et al.</i> (2006)	0.804
		Production Deviance	2-items scale	Spector <i>et al.</i> (2006)	0.712
		Theft	2-items scale	Spector <i>et al.</i> (2006)	0.706
		Abuse	2-items scale	Spector <i>et al.</i> (2006)	0.730
2	Psychological Contract Breach	Psychological Contract Breach	5-items scale	Robinson and Morrison (2000)	0.714