Workers' Modes of Self-Expression and Behavioural Manifestations of Loyalty or Exit-Intentions When Engaged in Systemic Structural Activities

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ABSTRACT

This study explored how employees' modes of self-expressions affect their behavioural manifestations of loyalty or exit-intentions, when engaged in systemic strucutral activity and the influence of such activity on a firm's organizational tolerance. Using the systemic activity theoretical approach, a questionnaire was developed from standardized measurement scales and used to collect quantitative data from 250 employees of mining-support firms in Ghana. It was found from the analyses that employees' active- and passive-constructive voices positively correlated with their behavioural manifestations of loyalties while their active- and passive-destructive voices positively correlated with their manifestations of exist-intentions. Organizational tolerance moderated the relationships between the employees' active-constructive and passive-constructive voices, and their manifestations of job loyalty, but did not moderate the relationship between their active-destructive voice and manifestations of exist-intentions. It is concluded that unlike the passive-destructiveness of employees voices, the active-destructiveness of such voice will positively influence their intentions to exit their organizations.

Keywords: Employee voice, Organizational tolerance, Employee loyalty behaviour, Employee exit-intention behaviour, Mining-support firms, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

The mining industry plays an important role in a country's socioeconomic development. Firms providing mining-support services play key roles in ensuring the sustainability of the industry. In the Ghanaian mining sector, one key pre-requisites for enhancing employees commitment is management's encouragement of employees participation in organizational decision-making, since the input of their ideas will help enhance the functional effectiveness of work environment. Basically, employees engage in work activities entailing several actions and operations that constitute practices (Sanda, 2023). It is the performances of such practices that leads to the actors attaining habitual accomplishment of specific tasks (Sanda, 2023). This meant that employees are cognitively influenced by their psychosocial interaction with the work context, starting from their goal formulation process (Sanda, 2023) and their practices occurrences in the macro-contexts that provide commonalities of action, and the micro-contexts in which action is highly

localized (Sanda, 2020). In this wise, different organisations have many ways of expressing "voice". Davis and Lansbury (1996) posited that employee "voice" is attained through both informal and formal mechanisms. Informal employee "voice" mechanisms include general conversation between employees and employers, email communication, employee feedback, social functions and meetings at the workplace (Davis and Lansbury, 1996). Formal mechanisms include communication tools, such as employee surveys and suggestion boxes (Davis and Lansbury, 1996). Though Dwomoh (2012) studied employee voice dynamics in one Ghanaian public organization, such studies, especially in the mining and mining-support sectors, appeared lacking not only in Ghana, but in most in Africa countries, thus representing a knowledge gap. This study, therefore, explored how employees' voice-types affect their behavioural manifestations, and how such effect is influenced by organizational tolerance in mining-support firms in Ghana. The research questions were as follows: (i) Does employees' voice-types affect their behavioural manifestations of loyalty and/or exit-intentions when engaged in systemic structural activities? (ii) Does organizational tolerance influence the relationship between the employees' voice-types and their behavioural manifestations of loyalty and/or exit-intentions when engaged in systemic structural activities?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Voices and Behavioural Manifestations

There are different ways of expressing employee "voice" in an organization. This is done through both informal and formal mechanisms (Lansbury, Davis and Simmons, 1996). According to Lansbury et al. (1996), informal employee "voice" mechanisms include general conversation between employees and employers, email communication, employee feedback, social functions and meetings at the workplace. Employees influence corporate decision making through their actions, such as turnover and absenteeism (Lansbury et al., 1996). Formal employee voice mechanisms include communication tools, such as employee surveys and suggestion boxes (Lansbury et al., 1996). According to Purcell (1987), the culture of an organization must support "voice" mechanisms to help determine what is acceptable to "voice" and how to voice it (Purcell, 1987). Gorden (1988) has categorized employee "voice" into four forms. These are the active-constructive voice, passive-constructive voice, active-destructive voice, and passive-destructive voice (Gorden, 1988). Constructive employee voice is promotive in nature and is demonstrated by employees when they are satisfied (Gorden, 1988). The active-constructive voice is characterized by suggestions, union bargaining, principled dissent and negotiation (Gorden, 1988). Therefore, the active-constructive voice can results in employees' exhibiting citizenship behaviours (Withey and Cooper, 1989). Similarly, the passive-constructive voice orients employees to be optimistic about situational improvement of the organizational environment (Gorden, 1988). With this voice, employees would accept any unfavorable situation at the workplace, with the hope that the unfavorable situation will become favourable with time (Rusbult et al., 1988). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H1: Employees' having active-constructive voice will exhibit loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms.

H2: Employees' having passive-constructive voice will exhibit loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms. Farrell and Rusbult (1992) postulated that constructive-voices evoke employees job happiness and manifestation of loyalty behaviours, which culminates in employees practice of good citizenship behaviours (Rusbult et al., 1988). The active-destructive voice is manifested by employee behaviour characterized by verbal complains to co-workers, verbal aggression, and involvement in antagonistic exit (Gorden, 1988). The passive-destructive voice is informed by employees behaviours characterized by murmurings, apathy, silence and withdrawal from active-participation in organizational decision-making, all of which result in employees' intentions to exit the organization (Gorden, 1988). Hunjra et al. (2010) found that both active-destructive and passive-destructive employee voices have significant positive impact on employee intention to exit the organization. Farrell and Rusbult (1992) found a significant negative relationship between employee destructive voice and job dissatisfaction, resulting in the manifestation of not only exit behaviours, but also neglect behaviours. Employees display neglect behaviours to show their displeasure on organizational issues (Farrell, 1983), and which issue they perceive as negative and unsolvable (Withey and Cooper, 1989). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed.

H3: Employees' having active-destructive voice will exhibit exit-intention behaviours in mining-support firms.

H4: Employees' having passive-destructive voice will exhibit exit-intention behaviours in mining-support firms.

Employee Voice and Organisational Tolerance

According to Purcell, (1987), the culture of an organisation must support "voice" and determine what is acceptable to "voice" and how it is voiced (Purcell, 1987). In this regard, the effective management of voice mechanisms can transform destructive employee behaviours into constructive ones, thereby creating employee happiness at the workplace (Edmondson, 2003). The underlying notion for this observation is that positive management practices enhance employee "voice" (Dirks, 1999). According to Detert and Burris (2007), organizational tolerance stimulates employee empowerment and satisfaction when managers exercise it by being open and showing the willingness to act on employees' input. This implies that employees who are able to "voice" out, will exhibit loyalty to the organization, engage in constructive compliance (Miller and Monge, 1986). On the contrary, employees who are dissatisfied due to their inabilities to "voice" out, will exhibit negative attitudes and behaviours characterized by neglect-portrayals and exit-intentions (Miller and Monge, 1986). Thus, this study hypothesized that;

H5: Organizational tolerance will moderate the effect of employees' active-constructive voice on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours.

H6: Organizational tolerance will moderate the effect of employees' passive-constructive voice on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours.

H7: Organizational tolerance will moderate the effect of employees' active-destructive voice on their exhibition exit behaviours.

H8: Organizational tolerance will moderate the effect of employees' passive-destructive voice on their exhibition exit behaviours.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was used as the data collection tool. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. Section A measured respondents' demography. Section B measured employee "voice" ranges. Section C measured organizational tolerance for employees' "voice". Section D measured respondents' manifestation of loyalty and exit-intention behaviours. The scales for employee voice ranges were adapted from the "employee response to dissatisfaction" scale. The scale for organizational tolerance was adapted from the "organizational tolerance for dissent" scale, while that for loyalty and exit-intention behaviours were adapted from the "measures of voice" scale. The questionnaire was provided a 5-point Likert scale with response options ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Using the survey approach, data was collected by administering questionnaire to 200 respondents who were employees of two mining-support firms in Ghana. through assigned human resource officers in each firm who got their employees to complete the questionnaires before proceeding to their workstations at the mining sites. The data was analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. Pearson correlations analysis was used to determine the relationship among the study variables, as outlined in the various hypotheses. Multiple hierarchical regression analysis was used to determine the moderation effect on variables relationships. Employee voice was the dependent variable while employee behavioural manifestation was the independent variable. The moderating variable was organizational tolerance. The respondents' demography were considered as controls variables. The statically package for the social sciences software, version 23 was used as the analytical tool.

RESULTS

Correlation Analysis of Study Variables and Hypotheses Testing

To answer the first question as to whether there is a relationship between the employees voice-types and their behavioural manifestations in mining-support firms, correlation analysis was conducted. The Pearson correlations estimates for all the variables are summarized in Table I below.

Table 1. Pearson's correlation coefficient estimates for the study variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Active-constructive voice	-						
2. Active-destructive voice	−0.34**	-					
3. Passive-constructive voice	0.43**	−0.22**	-				
4. Passive-destructive voice	−0.18**	0.39**	−0.03	-			
5. Organizational tolerance	0.36**	0.02	0.22**	0.10	-		
6. Exit-intention	−0.27**	0.23**	−0.01	0.03	−0.11	-	
7. Loyalty behaviour	0.52**	−0.16*	0.28**	−0.07	0.35**	−0.19**	-

* significant ($p<0.05$); ** very significant ($p<0.001$)

Effect of Active-Constructive Voice on Employees
Loyalty Behaviour

Regarding the effect of active-constructive voice on employees loyalty behaviours (i.e. hypothesis H1), results from the correlation analysis (see Table I) showed a significant positive correlation between employees' active constructive voices and their behavioural manifestation of loyalty ($\alpha = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$). This means that an increase in employees active-constructive voices will increase their manifestations of loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms. This finding was then followed by a simple linear regression analysis to determine how the employees active-constructive voice influences their behavioural manifestation of loyalty. The result of the simple linear regression analysis between employees active-constructive voice and employee loyalty behaviour reveals that employees active-constructive voice predicts their manifestation of loyalty behaviour ($R = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$). Further analysis shows that the model is fit, and that employees active-constructive voice predicts employee loyalty behaviour with an R^2 value of 0.52. This showed that the hypothesis (H1): "employees' having active-constructive voice will exhibit loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms" is supported. In effect it can be implied that approximately 52% of the variation in employees loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms can be explained by the prevalence of active-constructive voice [$R = 0.72$, $R^2 = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$]. The result also shows that a unit increase in employees active-constructive voice will lead to a 0.72 increase in their manifestation of loyalty behaviours.

Effect of Passive-Constructive Voice on Employees Loyalty Behaviour

Regarding the effect of passive-constructive voice on employees loyalty behaviours (i.e. hypothesis H2), results from the correlation analysis (see Table I) showed a significant positive correlation between employees' passive-constructive voices and their behavioural manifestation of loyalty ($\alpha = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$). This means that an increase in employees passive-constructive voices will increase their manifestations of loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms. This finding was then followed by a simple linear regression analysis to determine how the employees passive-constructive voice influences their behavioural manifestation of loyalty. The result of the simple linear regression analysis between employees passive-constructive voice and employee loyalty behaviour reveals that employees passive-constructive voice predicts their manifestation of loyalty behaviour ($R = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$). Further analysis shows that the model is fit, and that employees passive-constructive voice predicts employee loyalty behaviour with an R^2 value of 0.10. This shows that the hypothesis (H2): "employees' having passive-constructive voice will exhibit loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms" is supported. In effect it can be implied that approximately 31% of the variation in employees loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms can be explained by the prevalence of passive-constructive voice [$R = 0.31$, $R^2 = 0.10$, $p < 0.01$]. The results also shows that a unit increase in employees passive-constructive voice will lead to a 0.31 increase in their manifestation of loyalty behaviours. The results showed that as the employees passive-constructive voice increases,

they will exhibit increased manifestation of loyalty behaviours in the performance of their jobs.

Effect of Active-Destructive Voice on Employees Loyalty Behaviour

Regarding the effect of active-destructive voice on employees loyalty behaviours (i.e. hypothesis H3), results from the correlation analysis (see Table I), results from the correlation analysis (see Table I) showed a significant positive correlation between employees' active-destructive voices and their behavioural manifestation of exit-intentions ($\alpha = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$). This means that an increase in employees active-destructive voices will increase their manifestations of exit-intentions behaviours in mining-support firms. This finding was then followed by a simple linear regression analysis to determine how the employees active-destructive voice influences their behavioural manifestation of exit-intentions. The result of the simple linear regression analysis between employees active-destructive voice and employee exit-intentions behaviour reveals that employees active-destructive voice predicts their manifestation of exit-intentions behaviour ($R = -0.42$, $p < 0.01$). Further analysis shows that the model is fit, and that employees active-destructive voice predicts employee exit-intentions behaviour with an R^2 value of 0.18. This shows that the hypothesis (H3): "employees' having active-destructive voice will exhibit exit-intentions behaviours" is supported. In effect it can be implied that approximately 42% of the variation in employees exit-intentions behaviours in mining-support firms can be explained by the prevalence of active-destructive voice [$R = 0.42$, $R^2 = 0.18$, $p < 0.01$]. The results also shows that a unit increase in employees active-destructive voice will lead to a 0.42 increase in their manifestation of exit-intentions behaviours. The results showed that as the employees active-destructive voice increases, they will exhibit increased intention of leaving the firm.

Effect of Passive-Destructive Voice on Employees Loyalty Behaviour

Regarding the effect of passive -destructive voice on employees loyalty behaviours (i.e. hypothesis H4), results from the correlation analysis (see Table I), results from the correlation analysis (see Table I) showed the correlation between employees' passive-destructive voices and their behavioural manifestation of exit-intentions is not significant ($\alpha = 0.03$, $p > 0.05$). This means that an increase in employees passive-destructive voices will not increase their manifestations of exit-intentions behaviours in mining-support firms. This finding was then followed by a simple linear regression analysis to confirm the non-correlation between the employees passive-destructive voice and their behavioural manifestation of exit-intentions. The result of the simple linear regression analysis between employees passive-destructive voice and employee exit-intentions behaviour reveals that employees passive-destructive voice does not predict their exit-intentions behaviour ($R = -0.15$, $p > 0.05$). Further analysis shows that the model is not fit, and that employees passive-destructive voice does not predict employee exit-intentions behaviour with an R^2 value of 0.02. This shows that the hypothesis (H4): "employees' having passive-destructive voice will exhibit exit-intentions behaviours in

mining-support firms" was not supported. In effect it can be implied that approximately 15 % of the variation in employees exit-intentions behaviours in mining-support firms can be explained by the prevalence of passive-destructive voice [R = 0.15, R^2 = 0.02, p > 0.05] which was very low. The results also shows that a unit increase in employees passive-destructive voice will lead to a 0.02 increase in their manifestation of exit-intentions behaviours, which is also very low. The results showed that as the employees passive-destructive voice increases, they will exhibit increased intention of leaving the firm.

Moderation of Organizational Tolerance on the Relationship Between Employees' Active-Constructive Voices and Loyalty Behaviour

Regarding the influence of organizational tolerance on the relationship between employees' active-constructive voices and their manifestation of loyalty behaviour, (i.e. hypothesis H5), the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis indicates that employees active-constructive voice significantly explained 52 % of the variation in employees behavioural manifestation of loyalty (R^2 = 0.52, R= 0.72, p < 0.01). This shows that an increase in employees active-constructive voice leads to increase in their behavioural manifestation of loyalty. The results also showed that organizational tolerance significantly explained 54 % of the variation in employees active-constructive voice (R^2 = 0.54, R = 0.20, p < 0.001) with a significant ΔR^2 = 0.02. The interaction of organizational tolerance and employees active-constructive voice was found to explain 54 % of the variation in the employees behavioural manifestation of loyalty (R^2 = 0.65, R = −0.81, p > 0.05) with a significant ΔR^2 = 0.11. This shows that organizational tolerance has significant positive influence on the relationship between employees active-constructive voice and their behavioural manifestation of loyalty. This finding is reinforced by the existence of the very significant correlation (see Table I) between organizational tolerance and employees active-constructive voice (α = 0.36, p < 0.01), and between organizational tolerance and employees behavioural manifestation of loyalty (α = 0.35, p < 0.01). This shows that the hypothesis (H5): "organizational tolerance will moderate the effect of employees' active-constructive voice on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms" was supported. This implies that an increase in organizational tolerance will increase the effect of employees' active-constructive voices on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours, while a decrease in organizational tolerance will lead to a decrease in the effect of employees' active-constructive voices on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours.

Moderation of Organizational Tolerance on the Relationship Between Employees' Passive-Constructive Voices and Loyalty Behaviour

Regarding the influence of organizational tolerance on the relationship between employees' passive-constructive voices and their manifestation of loyalty behaviour, (i.e. hypothesis H6), results from the hierarchical multiple

regression analysis indicated that employees passive-constructive voice significantly explained 10% of the variation in employees behavioural manifestation of loyalty ($R^2 = 0.10$, $R = 0.31$, $p < 0.01$). This shows that an increase in employees passive-constructive voice leads to increase in their behavioural manifestation of loyalty. The result also showed that organizational tolerance significantly explained 5% of the variation in employees passive-constructive voice ($R^2 = 0.05$, $R = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$) with a significant $\Delta R^2 = 0.05$. The interaction of organizational tolerance and employees passive-constructive voice was found to explain 24% of the variation in the employees behavioural manifestation of loyalty ($R^2 = 0.14$, $R = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$) with a significant $\Delta R^2 = 0.14$. This shows that organizational tolerance has significant positive influence on the relationship between employees passive-constructive voice and their behavioural manifestation of loyalty. This finding is reinforced by the existence of the very significant correlation (see Table I) between organizational tolerance and employees passive-constructive voice ($\alpha = 0.22$, $p < 0.01$), and organizational tolerance and employees behavioural manifestation of loyalty ($\alpha = 0.35$, $p < 0.01$). This shows that the hypothesis (H6): "organizational tolerance will influence the effect of employees' passive-constructive voice on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours in mining-support firms" was supported. This implies that an increase in organizational tolerance will increase the effect of employees' passive-constructive voices on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours, while a decrease in organizational tolerance will lead to a decrease in the effect of employees' passive-constructive voices on their exhibition of loyalty behaviours.

Moderation of Organizational Tolerance on the Relationship Between Employees' Active-Destructive Voices and Exit-Intention Behaviour

Regarding how organizational tolerance influences the relationship between employees' active-destructive voices and their manifestation of exit-intention behaviour, the hypothesis (H7) that "organizational tolerance will moderate the effect of the employees' active-destructive voice on their exhibition of exit-intention behaviours" was tested using a hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

Regarding the influence of organizational tolerance on the relationship between employees' active-destructive voices and their manifestation of exit-intention behaviour, (i.e. hypothesis H7), results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis indicated that employees active-destructive voice significantly explained 18% of the variation in employees behavioural manifestation of exit-intention ($R^2 = 0.18$, $R = -0.42$, $p < 0.01$). This shows that an increase in employees active-destructive voice leads to increase in their manifestation of exit-intention behaviours. Organizational tolerance was also found to significantly explain 18% of the variation in employees active-destructive voice ($R^2 = 0.18$, $R = -0.43$, $p < 0.01$) with an $\Delta R^2 = 0.00$. The interaction of organizational tolerance and employees active-destructive voice was found to explain 7% of the variation in the employees behavioural manifestation of exit-intention ($R^2 = 0.07$, $R = 0.26$, $p > 0.5$) with an $\Delta R^2 = 0.07$ that is not significant. This shows that

organizational tolerance has no significant influence on the relationship between employees active-destructive voice and their behavioural manifestation of exit-intention. This finding is reinforced by the existence of an insignificant correlation (see Table I) between organizational tolerance and employees active-destructive voice ($\alpha = 0.02$, $p > 0.5$), and organizational tolerance and employees behavioural manifestation of exit-intention ($\alpha = -0.11$, $p > 0.5$). This shows that the hypothesis (H7): "organizational tolerance will influence the effect of employees' active-destructive voice on their exhibition of exit-intention behaviours in mining-support firms" was not supported. This implies that organizational tolerance does not influence the effect of employees' active-destructive voices on their exhibition of exit-intention behaviours.

DISCUSSION

As it was established in the analyses, both the employees' active- and passive-constructive voices positively correlated with their behavioural manifestations of loyalties. This finding could be interpreted to mean that employees show happiness with their work environment by exhibiting constructive voices, thereby contributing positively to organizational decision-making and productivity. Also, both the employees' active- and passive-destructive employee voices were found to be positively correlated with their behavioural manifestations of exist-intentions, which indicates their unhappiness with their work environment (Hunjra et al., 2010). For this reason, the prevalence of a higher level of destructive voice in the organizations can be associated with employees' higher expectations for good problem-solving mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of existing organizational procedures for solving problems. The findings that organizational tolerance only moderated the relationship between the employees' passive-destructive voice and behavioural manifestations of exist-intentions is of significance. Arguing from the perspectives of Hyman and Mason (2005), this meant that when employees show a sense of unhappiness with their work environment and the orientation of their voices is passive-destructive, a higher degree of organizational tolerance will be required to offset their cultivation of exit-intentions from their organizations. It is thus postulated that when the employees destructive voice is active-oriented, it invokes a higher degree of unhappiness which could result in employees displaying negative behaviour characterized by senses of neglect and higher degree of exit-intentions, which situations can be become intolerable for the organization to manage. This finding agrees with the argument that when employees are engaged in systemic structural activity, the efficacy of the prevailing systemic structures, inclusive the voice mechanisms, impacts their cognitive workload and their abilities to recall and process stored information for decision-making (Sanda, 2023). By implication, the efficacy of the voice mechanism and organizational tolerance can influence employees problem-solving capabilities and their ability to engage in efficient and effective activities (Sanda, 2023). This could result in their manifestation of exit-intentions in the organization, influenced by the level of their dissatisfaction with the work environment, informed by the character

of the prevailing employee voice mechanism (Sanda, 2023; Farrell, 1983) observations that employees' display

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is concluded that provision of higher degree of organizational tolerance for employees' active- and passive-constructive voices leads to employees' happiness with their work environment, and which happiness culminates in their manifestation of loyalty to their organizations. It is also concluded that the though the passive-destructiveness of employees voices will not influence their intentions to exit their organizations, the active-destructiveness of such voice will positively influence their intentions to exit their organizations. The implication is that, the management of mining-support firms in Ghana need to understand and develop the requisite organizational tolerance for the effective management of their employees' active destructive voices in order to enhance the employees' happiness in the work environment.

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