
ORGANIZATIONAL FRUSTRATION AND SELF-ENHANCING HUMOUR AS CORRELATES OF ADHERENCE TO CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

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Abstract

Inability to solve crimes has been perceived as one of the daunting challenges facing the criminal justice system today. This has been variously attributed to difficulties faced by investigating officers; hence the outrageous number of awaiting trials in Nigeria Prisons and police cells. Worthy of note is the impermeability nature of some offenders, which sometimes makes the investigating officers resort to shortcuts, an act capable of jeopardizing the entire justice process when suspected by a trial judge. What may contribute to an investigative officer's resort to shortcuts prompted a study on organizational frustration and self-enhancing humour as correlates of adherence to criminal investigation procedure, with two hundred and seventeen (217) police officers. The Self-enhancing Humor Sub-scale of humour style questionnaire (HSQ), Frustration Discomfort Scale and Adherence to criminal investigation questionnaire were used for data collection. The correlational design, and Multiple Regression Analysis were adopted as the appropriate design and statistics for the study respectively. The result indicated that Organizational frustration did not correlate with adherence to criminal investigation procedure ($r = -.053, p < .01$). It also showed that self-enhancing humour strongly and positively correlated with adherence to criminal investigation procedure ($r = .972, p < .01$). Finally, frustration and self-enhancing humour predicted adherence to criminal investigation procedure ($r = -.053, p < .01$). Improved work environment and inculcating positive interpersonal skills which may improve floating of humour within investigation contexts were thus recommended.

Keywords: Adherence to Criminal Investigation Procedure, Organizational Frustration, Self-enhancing Humour.

Introduction

Administration of crime remains a cardinal component of the fundamental role of governments all over the world. Proper administration of same is based on proper criminal investigation. For better administration, the investigation officers are expected to adhere to the rules that guide acceptable forensic depositions by suspects. Unfortunately, many a suspect do not confess to their crimes readily. Thus, inducing pressure on police officers that may motivate resort to 'shortcuts', which in turn hinder criminal proceeding and leading to setting free of offenders. For the same reason also, innocent persons have been reported variously punished (Obi-Nwosu, 2016).

Indisputably, this cajoles the justice system as it negates the actualization of her objectives: upholding human rights, and the rule of law. Hence, jeopardizing the entire crime process. The question of what may contribute to non-adherence to the criminal investigation Procedure warranted an evaluation of the relationship between organizational frustration, self-enhancing humour and adherence to criminal investigation procedure.

Adherence to criminal investigation procedure illustrates complete commitment and alignment to exact undertakings, performed in reaction to unpredictable and still-evolving crime-related events with incomplete information to guide the process (Gehl & Plecas, 2016). In other words, adherence to criminal investigation procedure is keeping faith with a set of processes organized to meet the demands of a system of justice. And, often, the more serious the crime, the more complex and demanding the degree of adherence to investigation procedure. In the opinion of Oxburgh, Myklebust and Grant (2010) and Fahsing (2013), adherence to criminal investigation procedure describes obedience to all the process adopted in answering questions as to if, how, where, when, why, and by whom a crime was committed. Thus, as Inne (2013) puts it, adherence to criminal investigation procedure captures compliance to the process required to identify, interpret and order information with the objective of ascertaining whether a crime has occurred, and if so, who was involved and how, as well as acquiring, transmitting and applying evidence gathered appropriately and effectively (Hald, 2011; 2013).

Derived from the Act's explanation are three distinct objectives, described thus: First, to ascertain if an offence has been committed – this will require reference to the statutes and laws in any particular jurisdiction and the defining criteria for an offence. Second, to identify who committed the crime – this is the part of criminal investigation which is most often portrayed as the key task. The third objective is to gather admissible evidence. It is this part of the criminal investigation that is observable in crime scene processing, for example, there must be enough evidence that has been gathered in a manner acceptable to the requirements of criminal justice to prove 'beyond reasonable doubt', that the suspect committed the crime. Sometimes, however, an offender may be immediately identifiable, yet his or her involvement in the crime must still be proved to the standard required: beyond reasonable doubt.

In its completeness therefore, adherence to criminal investigation procedure is an officer's total amenability to the scientific method that involves the study of facts used to identify, locate and prove the culpability of an accused person through questioning, dialogue/interrogations, and crime scene evidence collection and preservation, and various methods of investigation (O'Hara, 1994). Thus, an officer who adheres to criminal investigation procedure is expected to achieve the following:

- i. Detection and prosecution of crimes,
- ii. Aiding to resolve criminal case,
- iii. Helping to enhance national security,
- iv. Giving respect for human rights such as the right to fair hearing,
- v. Preserving law and order,
- vi. Protection of establishment,
- vii. Certifying a fair and efficient system of criminal law that provides for offences that distinguish between major and minor wrongdoings,
- viii. Establishing full facts and sequence of events that led to the adverse event,
- ix. Identifying the concerns of families and the root cause of the omission, determine why and how it happened and what can be learned, identify the actions required to prevent recurrence (Ladapo, 2012).

From this understanding, adherence to criminal investigation procedure is very vital, as it leads to truth-finding, at the end of which crime is solved: offenders are caught (Maguire, 2008). Noteworthy is the criticism of the truth-finding claim of criminal investigation which has been largely because adherence seems utopian. Empirical probing of criminal investigations showed that instead of trying to uncover the 'truth' by focusing on the crime scene of each offense, detectives usually pursue a suspect-centred approach in which they try to construct a case against the suspects known by the police. Officers thus turn a search process to an interpretive activity in which they try to construct the truth by continuously collecting and analyzing available information – an act that portrays non-adherence to the laid down methods that must be followed in criminal investigation for truth-finding (Tong & Bowling, 2006).

Tong, Bryant, & Horvath, (2009) strongly suggest that non adherence to the CIP may lead to delay in the administration of justice, stalled trials, victimization of innocent citizens and encouraging the escape of offenders from paying for their misdeeds, which in general ultimately affects public perceptions of the police and the overall criminal justice system.

One of the factors that may correlates with adherence to criminal investigation procedure is organizational frustration. This has been defined as an interference with goal attainment or maintenance that is caused by some stimulus condition within the organization (Spector, 1978). It is also further narrowed to the interference with an individual's ability to carry out their day-to-day duties effectively (Keenan & Newton 1984).

The sources of organizational frustration put forth by Spector (1978) include the physical environment (both natural and man-made), the organizational structure and climate, the rules and procedures of the organization, and individuals both in and out of the organization. In addition, the concept of situational constraints (Peters & O'Connor, 1980) has been hypothesized to contribute to organizational frustration (Storms & Spector 1987). Spector (1978) also suggested four reactions to organizational frustration: (a) an emotional response of anger and increased physiological arousal, (b) trying alternative courses of action, (c) aggression, and (d) withdrawal. Of the behavioral reactions, the second one that is trying alternative courses of action to obtain the goal is an adaptive response, while the other three are maladaptive responses.

It is likely that the emotional reaction accompanies one of the three behavioral reactions, although the emotional reaction may be maladaptive by itself and become a further impediment to goal attainment. Clearly, should an individual become frustrated, it is in the best interests of the organization to have the individual respond in an adaptive way and attempt to find another solution to the problem in a clear decisive manner. Spector also put forth the idea that some mild forms of frustration may be seen as challenges rather than problems for some individuals, thus causing a motivational effect rather than a hindering effect and increasing the likelihood of an adaptive response rather than a maladaptive one.

In his model, Spector described behavior as exemplifying two of the three maladaptive responses, in an organization. Examples of withdrawal behavior in an organization could include the abandonment of a goal, absenteeism, or turnover. Examples of organizational aggression include interpersonal aggression, sabotage and withholding of output. Both of these maladaptive responses are thought to lead to a decrease in job performance, which in this regards mean adherence to criminal investigation procedure.

Another variable that may correlate with adherence to criminal investigation procedure is self-enhancing humour. This is the second sub dimension of humour style elaborated by Romero and Cruthirds (2006) and defines a style of humor related to having a good-natured attitude toward life, having the ability to laugh at oneself, one's circumstances and the idiosyncrasies of life in constructive, non-detrimental manner. It has also been defined as a type of humour used by individuals to enhance the self in a benevolent, positive manner (Martin, Patricia, Gwen, Jeanette & Kelly, 2003). According to Kuiper et al. (1993) self-enhancing humor style find amusement in the incongruities and absurdities of life and use humor to cope with stressors and negative life events. Martin (2001) complements this definition and explains that this type of humor is best understood as a type of coping or emotion-regulating humor in which individuals use humor to look on the bright side of a bad situation, find the silver lining or maintain a positive attitude even in trying times (Martin, 2001). Hence, people who have a self-enhancing humor style use humor to achieve intrapersonal rewards, that is, to enhance or maintain positive psychological well-being. They maintain a humorous outlook on life, coping with difficult circumstances by viewing them from a humorous perspective.

Frewen, Jaylene, Rod and David (2008) says that humor is associated with a number of personality variables as well as psychological, physical and health-related outcomes. Individuals who engage more in the self-enhancing humor style are less likely to exhibit depressive symptoms. In an organizational setting, self-enhancing humor has been shown to promote creativity and reduce stress in the workplace (Romero & Kevin, 2006). The self-enhancing style of humor has also been shown to be related to increased levels of self-esteem and psychological well-being, as well as decreased levels of depression and anxiety. Individuals who use the self-enhancing humor style are more likely to exhibit extraversion and openness to experience as personality characteristics and less likely to exhibit neuroticism (Martin, Patricia, Gwen, Jeanette & Kelly, 2003).

The possibility that sense of self-enhancing humor may contribute to workplace effectiveness has also been studied. Research reports specifically show positive associations between self-enhancing humor and creativity, socialization, employee bonding, rapport and morale (Holmes & Marra, 2002; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). Self-enhancing humor has also been found to alleviate boredom and frustration (Pryor *et al.*, 2010), promote effective communication (Sherman, 1988), and reduce social distances between people yielding improved peer relations (Sherman, 1988). Research also suggests that self-enhancing humor may have the potential to buffer the deleterious effects of workplace stress through its use as a coping mechanism (helping promote relaxation, tension reduction, and dealing with disappointments; Lippitt, 1982), and its ability to lubricate social interactions in stressful circumstances (Martin *et al.*, 2003).

What seems to be neglected in literature is direct association of self-enhancing humour and workplace performance, specifically adherence to laid down rules governing modules of performance in a given organization. This study seeks to close that gap.

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on the goal theory proposed by Campion and Lord (1982), which argues that the level of frustration experienced by individuals clearly can differ, depending on the circumstances surrounding the frustrating experience and on the individuals themselves. According to this author, one major factor in goal formation and achievement is goal commitment, which refers to the determination to try for and persist in the achievement of a goal. Research on goal theory indicates that goal commitment has a strong relationship to performance and is related to both the importance of the task or outcome and the belief that the goal can be accomplished (Locke & Latham 2002). Hence, individuals will have a high commitment to a goal when the goal is important to them and they believe that the goal can be attained (Locke, 1996). The importance of the goal, in addition to the strength of the desire to obtain the goal (Dollard et al. 1939), will affect the level of goal commitment as well as the strength of the subsequent reaction to interruption.

By this theory, it makes sense to suggest that the level of frustration investigation officers experience would be influenced by how important the goal of delivering on the job is to them, as well as how confident they are in their abilities. Because goal-directed behavior involves valued purposeful action, failure to attain goals may result in highly charged emotional outcomes (Lincecum, 2000); including frustration. This may in turn lead to underperformance or counterproductive work behaviour, which in this regards may be described as non-adherence to criminal investigation procedure.

Statement of the Problem

One of the most formidable problems facing the administration of criminal justice in Nigeria is inability to solve crimes due to difficulties faced by investigating officers: hence the outrageous number of awaiting trials in Nigerian prisons and police cells. Sometimes due to impermeability of offenders, investigating officers attempt to elicit confessional statement from accused persons by using techniques that are not allowed by the extant criminal investigation procedure regulations. Unfortunately, once it is suspected or established by a trial judge that the procedure is breached, the entire investigation is annulled, after all, prosecution must prove her case beyond reasonable doubt.

Again, since all stakeholders in the crime circuit experience varied psychological states, it becomes apt for forensic psychologist to search for strategies to solve this criminal investigation dilemma. Hence, this study seeks to find the nexus among the variables of organizational frustration, self-enhancing humour, and adherence to criminal investigation procedure in Nigeria. Accordingly, the following research questions arise:

1. Will organizational frustration predict adherence to criminal investigation procedure?
2. To what extent will self-enhancing humour predict adherence to criminal investigation procedure?

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study is to examine the correlation between organizational frustration, self-enhancing humour and adherence to criminal investigation procedure among officers of the Nigerian Police Force.

Therefore, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To find out whether organizational frustration will significantly predict adherence to criminal investigation procedure.
2. To evaluate whether self-enhancing humour will significantly predict adherence to criminal investigation procedure

Hypotheses

1. Organizational frustration will significantly predict adherence to criminal investigation procedure.
2. Self-enhancing humour will significantly predict adherence to criminal investigation procedure.

METHOD

Participants

Participants included two hundred and seventeen (217: 175 females and 42 males) officers, who were conveniently selected from Nigerian Police Force of Enugu and Awka Police Commands. Their ages ranged from 17 to 40years, with the mean age of 22.48, and standard deviation of 4.15.

Instruments:

Three instruments were used for data collection. They included:

Adherence to Crime Investigation Procedure Questionnaire:

This is a 15-item dichotomous scale (yes/no) developed by Police College Oji River, Enugu State (2015) to measure the extent to which police officers adhere to the principles guiding criminal investigation. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.73.

Frustration Discomfort Scale:

This is a 74-item scale developed by Harrington (2005). It is rated on five-point likert format, with the following anchors (0) absent, (1) mild, (2) moderate, (3) strong, (4) very strong. Harrington (2005) obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of .87. However, the scale was subjected to pilot testing and reliability of 0.87 and 0.86 were established respectively.

Self-enhancing Humor:

The Self-enhancing humor sub-scale of humour style questionnaire (HSQ) developed by Martin et al., (2003) was used. It contains eight items which are organized in a 7-point Likert-type response format scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree) to rate agreement with each item. Thus, higher scores indicate greater use of self-enhancing humour style.

Psychometrically appropriate levels of reliability and validity have been established for the HSQ (Chen & Martin, 2007; Martin et. al. 2003; Vernon et. al. 2008). Cronbach's alpha for the Self-enhancing humor is .83 (Martin et al., 2003)

Procedure

The Commissioners of Police of Enugu and Anambra State Police Commands were approached for permission through the Police Public Relations Officers (PPRO) to obtain approval. On approval, the researcher sought and gained the assistance of the PPROs during data collection. Only police officers involved in criminal investigation at the time were purposively selected, copies of the collapsed instrument (arranged in a form of five sections) were administered to them. Each respondent signed informed consent section of the form. It took an average of eight minutes for each officer to complete the forms and return same to the researcher.

Design and Statistics

The correlational design was adopted. The data was analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis Statistic.

Result

Table I

Showing the result of the Multiple Regression Analysis conducted on Organizational Frustration and Self-enhancing Style as correlates of Adherence to Crime Investigation Procedure

Model	Coefficients ^a							
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlation		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero Order	Partial	Part
(Constant)	-.208	.118		-1.761	.080			
Frustration	-.269	.037	-.05	-7.189	.000	-.053	-.441	-.104
Self - enhancing humor	1.344	.020	.977	67.210	.000	.972	.977	.976

a. Dependent Variable: Adherence to Crime Investigation Procedure

The regression table shows that the relationship between organizational frustration and adherence to criminal investigation procedure was not significant, Beta = -.05, $p > .05$; however, there was a strong and positive relationship between self-enhancing humour and adherence to criminal investigation procedure $B = .972, p < .05$

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study focused on the assessment of the relationship among organizational frustration, self-enhancing humour styles and adherence to criminal investigation procedure. The analysis conducted showed that hypothesis one, which stated that there would be a significant and positive correlation between organizational frustration and adherence to criminal investigation procedure, is not upheld. The finding of this study disagrees with the study by Pavel, Krejei, Jaroslav, Kvapil and Jiri (2016), who studied relationship between job satisfaction, job frustration, narcissism and attitude towards

professional ethical behaviour among police officers, and found that greater unethical behaviour were found among officers who scored lower on job satisfaction and high on job frustration. It is possible however that population of study, scope and research method may account for the variation between this finding and previous finding.

Conversely, acceptance was found for hypothesis II, which stated that self-enhancing humour would correlate with adherence to crime investigation procedure. This finding indeed validates the relief theory, which states that humour facilitates relief of tension caused by one's environmental stimuli, and engenders optimal performance in tasks within such environment. It make sense however to opine that the atmosphere of laughter that are sometimes obtainable among the police officers may be assumed to be serving a reviving function, that helps the officers to cope with stress relating to the job, and hence enable them to adhere to laid down rules governing service delivery in the force. It could be explained however that the reviving function of humour may have mitigated the frustration associated with eliciting forensic information from suspects who may be impermeable to confessional statements.

The findings of this study are considered very essential for policy makers and management of the force. Hence it is recommended that improved work environment and inculcating positive interpersonal skills which may improve floating of humour within investigation contexts should be encouraged by the authorities.

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