

Work Environment and Worker-Productivity in Public Parastatals in Ogun State Nigeria

Fatunmbi, Oladotun Muideen

Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Topo-Badagry, Lagos, Nigeria

Abstract:

The study examines the relationship between work environment and productivity among government workers in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State Nigeria. The research design is the descriptive survey and data were gathered through a structured questionnaire. The population for the study consists of 250 workers of Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria out of which a sample of 150 individuals were drawn through the stratified simple random technique to reflect the various categories. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection, measured on a 5-point Likert Scale. 149 copies of the questionnaire were correctly completed and returned for analysis representing a return rate of 99.3%. Data collected were analyzed using the descriptive statistical techniques of Percentiles, Correlation and Regression methods with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for editing and encoding. The findings of the result reveal that there exists significant weak positive relationship between office ventilation and employee productivity ($r = 0.305, p < 0.05$) and that there is significant strong positive relationship between illumination and employee efficiency ($r = 0.705, p < 0.05$) in the local government area. The study however recommends that the officials of Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area should constantly improve on the work environments to enhance efficiency and effectiveness that guarantee better service delivery to all the stakeholders.

Keywords: Work Environment, Ventilation, Illumination, Efficiency, Effectiveness.

1.0 Introduction

An understanding of work environment and worker-productivity cannot be over-emphasized. Experience has shown that workers are directly influenced by the environment they find themselves or where their competence will achieve nothing in terms of productivity if the environment is not conducive. Workers today are more educated than before. They are more likely to raise questions about their environment of work since management itself is dynamic. However, poor environment and bad conditions have posed a great danger to workers mental and physical health and therefore making them to work with less enthusiasm and also work progress is disrupted and hampered.

Gnaft (1964) stated that environmental factors contribute to employee's productivity, quality output, level of wastage and rate of turnover. He

also postulated that unhealthy depressing and unsafe work environment leads to job dissatisfaction and eventually low productivity and also when an office is grossly deficient in stimulation, the resultant effects are lateness, wastage of resources, disobedience, and many other negative attitudes.

Hicks (1974) opined that poor working environment expose employees to discomfort and that reduces productivity, therefore an organization has to provide a conducive

environment that will protect them under emergency conditions. He also opined that there is nothing a worker can do without the environment being friendly and conducive. As a result of this all efforts should be geared towards providing those conditions like enough space, good ventilated office, adequate light and other materials that will enhance the productivity of the employees.

However, work environment has been regarded as a forerunner of employee achievement (Angel del Brio 2007, Konar and Cohen 2001, Lankoski 2000.) and an inverse relationship between employee productivity and job dissatisfaction amongst different employees has been reported (Bockerman and Ilmakunnas 2012). Greater levels of complicated job satisfactions were related to lower employee achievement and reduced assurance to continue in the job for a long-term (Blasé, 1982; Manthei and Solomon 1988).

Furthermore, the gap between the objective genuineness of the work environment and individual's subjective feelings of the work environment also can lead to low productivity. Outcomes of all these factors, such as job dissatisfactions and work environment measures can result in psychological worries which indicate negative feelings that employees have regarding their jobs and its related achievements (Abowd 1999, Cahuc and Dormont 1997, Kahn and Sherer 1990).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Organizations are set up for a purpose and such purpose is generally referred to as the objective and this cannot be

achieved if the environment looks unhealthy. The absence of important work materials as a result of non-availability of some necessary office facilities like air conditioners, rugs, good and ventilation. Some offices or departments look depressing and un-stimulating. Some of them have no light or broken louvers and leaking roofs. As a result of non-availability of these facilities, the performance of employees is in a declining state. It is widely accepted that the work environment has an impact either positive or negative on employee performance. The work environment strongly influences the extent to which employees are engaged and committed to their work in the organization.

However, an investigation and observation of most staff offices indicate a dearth of the infrastructural facilities and they are not adequately ventilated and illuminated. Nevertheless, for the sake of scholarly investigation and better appreciation of the problem, the study examines the extent to which these environmental factors affect worker productivity among the workers in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

1.3 Objective of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the work environment and worker-productivity in public parastatals in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- i. To examine how office ventilation affect worker-productivity in public parastatals? .
- ii .To review the influence of illumination on worker-productivity in public parastatals?

1.4 Research Questions

- i. To what extent does office ventilation affect worker-productivity in public parastatals?
- ii. How does illumination influence worker-efficiency among workers in public parastatals?

1.5 Research Hypotheses;

- i. Ho: Office ventilation does not have significant effect on worker-productivity in public parastatals.
- ii. Ho: Illumination does not significantly influence worker-efficiency in public parastatals.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Productivity involves getting as much as possible accomplished within a very short time. The study provides insight into how government officials can resolve issues that concern welfare of workers and appreciation of the relevance of good work environments. Again, it serves as reference materials for better understanding the factors or forces that enable efficiency to be low most especially in the public or government parastatals. It's also a good

reference to enhance excellent policy decisions by government officials in their quest for improved performance strategies.

2.0 Literature Review

Many scholars have attempted conceptualizing the working environment. Perhaps, it may be defined in the simplest and easiest form as the settings, situations, conditions and circumstances under which people work. It is further opined by Briner (2000) as a very broad category that encompasses the physical setting (e.g. equipment and tools), characteristics of the job itself (e.g. workload, task complexity), broader organizational features (e.g. culture and history) and even aspects of the extra organizational setting(e.g. local labor market conditions, industry sector, work-home relationships). It means that work environment is the sum of the interrelationship that exists among the employees and the employers and the environment in which the employees work which includes the technical, the human, and the organizational environment as a whole.

Opperman (2002) was quoted in Yusuf and Metiboba (2012), to define workplace environment as composition of three major sub-environments which include the technical environment, the human environment and the organizational environment. According to them, technical environment refers to tools, equipment, technological infrastructure and other physical or technical elements of the workplace. The human environment includes the peers, others with whom employees relate, team and work groups, interactional issues, the leadership and management as a whole. The human environment can be interpreted as the network of formal and informal interaction among colleagues; teams as well as boss-subordinate relationship that exist within the framework of organizations. Such interaction (especially the informal interaction), presumably, provides avenue for dissemination of information and knowledge as well as cross fertilization of ideas among employees. Of course, it has been established in previous studies that workers' interpersonal relations at workplace tend to influence their morale (Clement 2000; Stanley 2003).

Brenner (2004) had the opinion that "the ability to share knowledge throughout organizations depends on how the work environment is designed to enable organizations to utilize work environment as if it were an asset. This helps the organizations to improve effectiveness and allow employees to benefit from collective knowledge". In addition, he argued that working environment designed to suit employee's satisfaction and free flow of exchange of ideas is a better medium of motivating employees towards higher productivity. Kohun (1992) defines working environment as an entirety which comprises the totality of forces, actions and other influential factors that are currently and or potentially contending with the employee's activities and productivity. Working environment is the sum of the interrelationship that exists within the employees and the environment in which the employees work or operate. The work environment can involve the

social interactions at the workplace, including interactions with peers, subordinates and managers.

Generally, and within limits, employees are entitled to a work environment that is free from stress and harassment. A hostile work environment exists when the employees find the work environment offensive, intimidating, stressful. Work environment can also be associated with the physical condition of the building. Healthy environments will be free from problems associated with sick building syndrome, which is often due to poor ventilation or no cross ventilation and also accumulation of molds and mildew may lead to sick building syndrome. Hypothetically, whatever affects morale on the job is likely to affect job commitment.

According to Akintayo (2012) organizational environment refers to the immediate task and national environment where an organization draws its inputs, processes it and returns the outputs in form of products or services for public consumption. The task and national environment includes factors such as supplier's influence, the customer's role, the stakeholders, socio cultural factors, the national economy, technology, legislations, managerial policies and philosophies. All these go a long way in influencing people's psych and attitude towards work.

Work environment is thus defined in this study of interrelationship between employees and employers and the environment in which they operate which may be conducive or toxic (good or bad). Hughes (2007) in a survey reported that nine out of ten workers believed that quality of work environment affects the attitude of employees and increases their productivity. Chandraseker (2011) also confirm that unsafe and unhealthy workplace environment in terms of poor ventilation, inappropriate lighting, excessive noise etc. affect workers productivity and health.

Hameed and Amjad (2009) in a survey of 31 bank branches showed that comfortable and ergonomic office design motivates the employees and increased their performance substantially. Based on these findings and literature review, it was observed that most researches on workplace environment and productivity have been concentrated on profit oriented organization and not much focus have been placed on government organizations, it was against this background that this study sought to analyze the influence of workplace environment on employees productivity in government organization.

The environment is man's immediate surrounding which he manipulates for his existence. Wrongful manipulation introduces hazards that make the environments unsafe and impede the productivity rate of the worker. Therefore, the workplace entails an environment in which the worker performs his work (Chapins, 1995) while an effective workplace is an environment where results can be achieved as expected by management (Mike, 2010; Shikdar, 2002). Physical environment affect how employees in an organization interact, perform tasks, and are led. Work

environment is a mixture of many factors, which when come together form the environment of an organization. These factors are goal setting, workplace incentives, defined processes, performance feedback, Role congruity, mentoring, resource availability and supervisor support. All these factors together have an impact on the performance of an employee.

Health (2006) states that the biggest goal of most organizations is to increase the productivity, thereby decreasing their cost of production and making high profits. Although, there is a very less amount of effort, which the organizations make in order to increase their productivity. Many employers have a very wrong view that productivity can be increased by giving their employees good salary and also incentives timely for their work. However, some of these employers do not realize that it is more than these incentives and good pay that have a huge impact on the employees, but rather the workplace environment is a major factor that contributes to the attitude and behavior of the employees in the organization.

The author says that the level of creation of an employee, his performance at work, his commitment to the work, and other relevant factors are determined by the immediate work environment and engagement level of that organization. This simply shows that the workplace environment plays a very important and crucial role in the employee's professional life. Employees require more than just monetary incentives, they want healthy work environment where they can work peacefully and in harmony with other members of the team and also the supervisors. In every organization, it is important for the employers to provide the employees with a job that aligns with the employee's expectations from the job to be able to create a cordial environment for the employees to operate in. The job description should be in uniformity and the role in which the employees are likely to perform will be lined accordingly with the tasks the managers are going to allocate. Also, the processes of the performance of tasks should be defined and there should be proper communication of the job requirements and also the management process of the job (Taiwo, 2010).

Employee's performance for better productivity in the workplace depends on various factors but the most important factor is training and development which enhances the skills and capabilities of the employees (Raja, Furqan, and Khan, 2011). The employees that have more experience on the job than others tends to perform better on the job because their skills and competencies are increased resulting from more on the job experience (Fakhar and Khan 2008).

Employee productivity is a metric that is calculated based on the amount of output on a project versus the amount of time it takes. It can also be measured against a standard or base of productivity for a group of workers doing similar work. Employee productivity is important to create a culture where employees can take ownership where by the employers should trust their employees if they want them to

be productive, also when employers improve their internal communication, it can be a productivity booster or a bottle meaning that if people do not get the right information, it is obvious that they cannot be productive so employers should encourage open and honest dialogue between their employees being that the communication is direct and honest, also making it easy for people to get to know each other by organizing team events and other social activities.

Another importance of employee productivity is to inspire the employees which is up to the leadership by sharing the challenges the organization is facing and also making them more engaged and enables them to be productive. When employees develop themselves by allowing them educate themselves which is by taking courses and attending workshops and conference, giving them time to work on personal projects. Making employees happiness a priority is very important to boost the productivity of an organization positively that is by hosting weekly happy hours and team lunches, telling people how valuable their work is and make things like meetings more fun.

Efficient employees always to look to develop themselves, professionally by working towards improving their position, they actively participate in their career development programs and also keep up on the current industry trends. Their efficient work pays off and helps them to climb the organizational ladder and they are concerned about the company's performance and also offer ideas to improve the same. When employees have a positive attitude and open minds to work, they are emotionally stable and also have a consistent and efficient working and leadership style. An open mind enhances the learning capabilities of employees and also makes them good problem solvers. A trait characteristic of employees that have high productivity is when they have healthy work relations with their team members. Productivity is very important in the workplace for the organization to attain higher profit that can be used for expansion and other important activities and also this profit can be used to provide better facilities and the working conditions to the employees which results to employees' welfare. The organization can get a good credit recognition or rating by financial institutions that will enable the organization to get less expensive funds from the market to meet working and fixed capital requirements.

High productivity in the organization helps the organization to be on good terms with the suppliers that will enable them give better credit terms due to its goodwill, there is also a better return on investment due to higher productivity, that is when the organization pays a better dividend (share of profit) to the shareholders, the market price of the share tends to increase. Productivity is more important than revenues and profit because profit determines only by end result meanwhile productivity determines the efficiency of the business and also the effectiveness of the organization, productivity helps in measuring the strengths and weaknesses and also the threats and opportunities that the market brings even though

over-productivity sometimes causes great disadvantage to the organization's growth.

3.0 Methodology

The population of the study is 250 individuals comprising all categories of workers of Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State, Nigeria after which the simple random sampling technique was applied to select 150 workers as sample from each of the categories to enhance representativeness. The study adopts the descriptive research design with questionnaire as the instrument for data collection measured on a 5- Point Likert Scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The data collected was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequencies, percentiles, Regression Method with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software to code and edit the raw data.

4.0 Results and Analysis

i. Hypothesis one:

H₀: Office ventilation does not have significant effect on worker-productivity.

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.305 ^a	.093	.087	1.128

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2020.

The result as presented in table 1 shows that there exists weak positive relationship between office ventilation and worker-productivity with correlation coefficient of 0.305 and about 9.3% variation in worker-productivity could be attributed to office ventilation.

Table 2: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.175	1	19.175	15.075	.000 ^b
	Residual	186.986	147	1.272		
	Total	206.161	148			

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2020.

The result from the ANOVA (table 2) shows the F-value of 15.075 with p-value of 0.000, this is an indication that the model is adequate and sufficient in relating the two variables (dependent and the independent variables).

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.497	.469		3.193	.002
Office Ventilation	.471	.121	.305	3.883	.000

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2020.

The regression coefficient for office ventilation is 0.471 with standard error of 0.121 (table 3) The t-value is 3.883 and p-value (0.000) which is less than significance value of 5%. This result is an indication that as there is improvement in the provision of a well-ventilated office there is 47.1% increase in worker-productivity because their office tends to be conducive for all office activities. Since the p-value is less than the 5% significance value, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and we conclude that office ventilation have significant effect on worker-productivity.

ii. Hypothesis two:

H₀: Illumination does not significantly influence worker-efficiency.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.705 ^a	.497	.494	.795

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2020.

The result as presented in table 4 shows there exists strong positive relationship between illumination and worker-efficiency with correlation coefficient of 0.705 and about 49.7% variation in worker-efficiency could be attributed to illumination.

Table 5: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	91.845	1	91.845	145.299	.000 ^b
Residual	92.920	147	.632		
Total	184.765	148			

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2020.

The result from the ANOVA (table 5) shows the F-value of 145.299 with p-value of 0.000, this is an indication that the model is adequate and sufficient in relating the two variables (dependent and the independent variables).

Table 6: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.367	.193		7.079	.000
1 Illumination	.667	.055	.705	12.054	.000

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2020.

The regression coefficient for illumination is 0.667 with standard error of 0.055 (table 4.2.6) The t-value is 12.054 and p-value (0.000) which is less than significance value of 5%. This result is an indication that as there is increase in office illumination there is 66.7% increase in efficiency of the staff. The illumination provided helps the staff to perform their job as expected even without delay.

The alternative hypothesis is accepted and we conclude that illumination does significantly influence worker-efficiency.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a significant relationship between work environment and worker-productivity in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area in Ogun State in particular and other public and government parastatals in the Nigeria. Consequently, the study recommends that the administrators of the local government area and the state should constantly improve on the work environments most especially the offices and the infrastructures to enhance higher human capital performance in terms of efficiency and effectiveness that guarantee better service delivery to all the stakeholders in the state.

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