

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS AND WELFARE SERVICES ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIA MANUFACTURING SECTOR

By

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Abstract

This paper examines the effect of good working conditions and welfare services on employees' performance in the Manufacturing Sector, A case study of a reputable Food and Beverage Industry. The objectives were to: determine the extent at which good working condition affect employees' performance, assess the rate at which welfare services affect employees performance; and to ascertain whether good working conditions and welfare services can jointly predict employees performance. Primary method of data collection were used. The use of questionnaire was employed to gather necessary and relevant data from the respondents. Data was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics. Hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), t-statistics and multiple regression analysis. The results of the findings show that R^2 value of 0.656 which reveals that good working conditions independently account for 65.6% of the variation in employee's performance, and that welfare services independently accounts for 72.9% of the variation in employee's performance. Good working conditions and welfare services is significant at 0.01 significant level on employee's performance, which implies that good working conditions and welfare services have positive impact on employees performance. The study recommends that Management must create conducive and friendly working conditions that will aid employees' performance; management must communicate with their employees in order to plan and implement good working condition policies that will aid favourable employees' performance; and management should ensure the provision of good welfare packages that will encourage and promote employees performance.

Keywords; Working Condition, Welfare Services, Employees and Performance.

Introduction

The realisation of the stated objectives of an organisation can be achieved based on the level of relationship between the management and employees of the organisation. This relationship centres on various factors which include the level of motivation, good welfare services, compensation packages, enabling and conducive environment.

The working environment is so large and complex, it incorporates the working conditions and other vital factors that may hinder or promote peaceful coexistence and interaction between employees and the management. Working conditions are created by the interaction of employees with their organisational climate, and it includes psychological as well as physical working conditions (Gerber, 1998). It can also be seen as the working environment and all existing circumstances affecting labour in the work place including job hours, physical aspects, legal rights and responsibility, organisational climate and work load. From this, it is glaring and obvious that working conditions is an integral part of the environment that may hinder or promote the performance of employees. It is therefore paramount to have enabling environment that will enhance effective performance.

The vitality of the working condition is a necessity for good and improved performance. If employees have negative perception of their working conditions, there is tendency to have high level of absenteeism, low commitment, poor relationship and ineffective employees' performance. On the other hand, organisations that have good working conditions, taken into cognisance a favourable relationship will experience greater and improved performance (Kreisler, 1997).

Working and employment conditions include issues of occupational safety and health, maternity protection, work family issues, homework, working time, wages and income, work organisation, sexual harassment, violence at work, working time, workload, workers welfare facilities, housing, nutrition and environment (Ajala, 2012) . The generality of the working environment speaks a lot in terms of the performance of employees. It is therefore necessary for managers and employers to make sure that the working conditions are enabling, suitable and friendly. These will have a positive effect on the performance of employees, and in turn helps in the performance of the organisation as a whole. If employees have negative and adverse perception about the working conditions, it will have a negative effect on their performance and vice versa.

Work environmental related issues have been prioritised in labour policies of most leading organisations. This is because organisation is an integral part of the environment, necessitating a conducive environment that will foster employees' performance which will lead to good organisational performance. People made

up the organisation, therefore, conditions relating to employees and people in general must be friendly in nature if the performance of the organisation as a whole is to be valued and appreciated.

It is not the desires of some employees to perform below expectations but because the necessitating working conditions for improved performance is not in place. The paucity of these conditions negatively affects performance. It is obvious that specific variables are responsible for motivating the inner and outward perception of an employee in contributing maximally towards the actualisation of the organisational objectives. Aside from bonus and salaries, employees consider certain variables that propel them to perform beyond expectations. Good working condition which has to do with the favourability and suitability of the working environment and condition of service is a critical factor that must be given considerable attention.

Environment is an integral part of the working conditions. It constitutes the surroundings of employees which must be manipulated to suit the taste and expectations of the employees. The environment must be enabling, friendly and conducive in nature. Chapins (1995) was of the view that the workplace entails an environment in which the worker performs his/ her work. In other words, the workplace is a subsystem of the environment. The workplace as a subsystem must be friendly if employees are to perform their duties as expected and beyond the expectation of management. Efficient workplace can be viewed as an integral part of the environment where results can be achieved (Mike, 2010; Shikdar, 2002).

It is an undisputable fact that the workplace environment is as germane and critical in retaining an employee for effective performance if the organisational objectives are to be achieved. This is because it is a factor that determines the satisfactory level of employees in organisational settings. Employee satisfaction with his or her job depends on the level of friendliness of the environment and the attached working conditions. It is therefore necessary and vital for management to make sure that the environment is enabling and conducive in nature.

Some researchers were of the opinion that some environmental factors have significant impact on productivity. These factors are lighting, ventilation rates, access to natural light (Becker 1981; Humphries 2005; Veitch et al 2004; Karasek

and Theorell 1990). Lighting and other working conditions have significant impact on employees' performance (Dilami 2004; Milton et al 2000; Veitch and Newsham 2000).

One of the distractions that negatively affect employees performance is noise. Some researchers were of the opinion that noise affects productivity in negative ways which adversely affect performance. It is therefore necessary to have a noiseless environment where employees can perform their duties effectively (Wilson, 2015).

Training facilities and encouragement on the job cannot be left out when discussing working conditions of the organisation. Management and employers must note that all these will have impact on employees' performance. It is necessary for management to train and retrain employees on the job which will give employees some level of satisfaction as far as the job is concerned.

The welfare of employee is a vital factor that contributes positively to employees' performance when positively implemented. This incorporates health aspect of the employees, in terms of good medical centres, good pension scheme and hazard allowances. This paper investigates the effect of good working conditions and welfare services on employees' performance in the food and beverages sub –sector of the manufacturing industry.

Objectives of the Study

- 1 To determine the extent to which good working condition affect employees' performance
- 1 To examine the rate at which welfare services affect employees performances; and
- 2 To ascertain whether good working conditions and welfare services can jointly predict employees' performance.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarification

It is unquestionable that conducive work environment ensures the well-being of employees which invariably enable them to perform their roles with all vigour, thus, leading to high productivity in the institution (Akinyele, 2007). Ajala (2012) defined working conditions as working environment and all existing circumstances affecting labour in the work place, including job hours, physical aspects, legal rights and responsibility, organisational culture, workload and training. Gerber (1998) were of the fact that working conditions are created by the interaction of employees with their organisational climates and includes psychological as well as physical working conditions. From the view of Ali (2013), one can presume the fact that working environment and all existing circumstances affecting employees must be provided in a friendly manner. If all these factors are adequately provided, it will definitely increase employees' performance. It is the responsibility of management to make sure that the enabling, conducive and friendly environment necessitating effective workers or employees performance are created. This will not only aid increased performance but also help in the actualisation of organisational objectives.

In a similar view, Yesufu (1984) was of the view that the physical conditions operating in a workplace under which an employee operates dictates to a large extent the performance of the employees. These physical conditions include lighting, ventilation rates, access to natural light. Offices that are too hot or not well ventilated affect negatively the performance of employees. It is therefore necessary for management to provide good offices, hygienic environment, clinic, protective clothing for factory workers, rest rooms, first aid facilities e.t.c. These will affect performance.

In the same vein, Bornstein (2007) was of the fact that employees should not be exposed to stressful working conditions. He reiterated the fact that stressful working conditions will adversely affect employees' performance. It is therefore vital for management to prevent employees from being exposed to stressful working conditions. This prevention will definitely give room for effective performance.

Noise is one of the leading causes of employees' distraction, leading to reduced productivity, serious inaccuracies, and increased job-related stress. According to Bruce (2008), study showed that workplace distractions cut employee productivity by as much as 40%, and increase errors by 27%. Also, Moloney (2011) citing Loftness study of 2003 confirmed the importance of natural light and air (ventilation) to workers' productivity. The study showed a 3-18% gain in productivity in buildings with day-lighting system.

Effective workplace communication is a key to cultivation of success and professionalism (Canadian Centre for Communication, 2003). A company that communicates throughout the workplace in an effective manner is more likely to avoid problems with completing the daily procedures, and less likely to have a problem with improper occurrence and will generate a stronger morale and a more positive attitude towards work. When employees communicate effectively with each other, productivity will increase because effective communication means less complains and more work getting done (Quilan, 2001). It removes confusion and frees up wasted time that would have been otherwise spent on explanation or argument (Fleming & Larder, 1999). It makes workplace more enjoyable, less anxiety among co-workers which in turn means positive attitude towards work and increased productivity (Makin, 2006; Taylerson, 2012). Furthermore, another aspect of communication that affects productivity is noise level. Noise has negative influence on communication, Frustration levels increase while productivity decreases in relation to persistence and loudness of noise. A reason adduced for this is that spoken communication becomes progressively more difficult as noise levels increase.

Thramme (2003) viewed employees' performance from the point of employees productivity. He carried out a research on working conditions and employees' productivity. He was of the conclusion that working conditions have positive and significant impacts on productivity. This means that the friendly and conducive the working conditions are the more the level of productivity.

Theoretical Framework

There are various theoretical justifications suggested which may induce the employers to promote different working conditions and employee welfare activities. The following are the theories on labour welfare (Railkar, 1990):

Religious theory

Welfare activities are considered to be necessary under this theory on the basis of religious principle. It is an attempt to appeal to the religious sentiments of the employer. It may also be interpreted as if an employer wants to come out purified from his sinful acts of exploitation and profit making. Religious appeal demands sharing the fruits of progress and wealth partly with your fellow beings. Even God will not tolerate too much selfish and acquisitive tendency. Therefore, making some compromises with the working class becomes the religious duty of every employer (Railkar, 1990).

Philanthropic theory

Closely related to religious principle is the theory of charity or philanthropy. This theory goes a step ahead and argues that everyone should have brotherly relations with the rest of mankind. It is a duty of the rich to help the poor. Mutual help within the society alone will help to promote a peaceful and cooperative atmosphere (Shervish & Havens, 1996).

Policing theory

According to this theory, welfare is a legal or statutory responsibility of the employer. Under this theory, every employer is compelled to make available minimum comforts to the working class such as minimum rate of wages, minimum safety, security provisions, promote payment of wages and other benefits. According to this theory employers are compelled to contribute to the minimum facilities under the fear of punishment. The State regulation, supervision, inspection of the industrial premises helps to ensure satisfactory fulfillment of the 'police function' of the entrepreneur in promoting welfare (Railkar, 1990).

Placating theory

According to this theory, employers promote welfare not as a matter of charity, but as a fruit of sustained efforts on the part of the working class. It is a matter of right of the working class to organize itself into militant unions, to plan agitation activities and compel the employers to concede more and more

facilities to the working class. Therefore stronger the working class unity, greater would be the benefits in the form of welfare provisions. The employers are frightened not by the laws of the State, but by the unity of the workers that compels them to placate or satisfy the working class (Railkar, 1990).

Public relations theory

According to this theory, welfare activities are provided to create a good impression on the minds of the workers and the public, particularly the latter. Clean and safe working conditions, a good canteen, crèche and other amenities, make a good impression on the workers, visitors and the public. Some employers proudly take their visitors around the plant to show how well they have organized their welfare activities (Railkar, 1990).

Social theory

The social obligation of an industrial establishment has been assuming great significance these days. The social theory implies that a factory is morally bound to improve the conditions of the society in addition to improving the conditions of its employees. Labour welfare should gradually become social welfare (Railkar, 1990).

It can be noticed from the above theoretical explanations on labour welfare that, no single theory can explain the large variety of welfare activities that are provided by the modern industrialists for the benefit of the working class. Therefore, total welfare programmes in modern times can be said to be an outcome of a composite effect of several theoretical considerations.

Empirical Review

Bornstein (2007) assessed working conditions from the perspective of stressful working conditions, using delivery of service as a factor for employees' performance. He was of the opinion that stressful working conditions have negative impact on service delivery. He reiterated the fact that, employees should not be exposed to stressful working condition. To him, favourable working conditions will create a positive and improved employees performance. He was of the view that working environment can be divided into two divisions:

Physical and behavioural components. The physical environment consists of elements that relate to the office occupiers' ability to physically connect with their office environment while the behavioural environment consists of components that relate to how well the office occupiers connect with one another and the effect of the office environment on the behaviour of the employee.

Stallworth and Kleiner (1996) were of the view that the incorporation of employees into office design will lead to efficient employees' performance. They were of the view that employees as well as their needs must be taken care of in office design if efficient employees' performance is to be achieved. This conclusion also falls in line with Barry (2008) who suggested that physical design of office buildings have significant and positive impact on performance. He reiterated the fact that physical design of office buildings will result to a 5-10% increase in productivity, and eventually increase employees performance. Scott (2000) was of the view that working conditions have significant and positive impact on job satisfaction. He maintained that good working conditions will pave way for job satisfaction. Ali et al (2013) were of the opinion that working conditions have significant and positive impact on employees' productivity. They viewed employees performance from the point of employees productivity. To them, there is a significant relationship between working conditions and employees productivity, considering employees productivity from the perspective of employees performance. Asigele (2012) falls in line with the previous researchers in terms of the significant relationship between working conditions and employees performance. He was of the opinion that favourable working conditions will give room for effective employees performance. He reiterated the fact that there is a significant relationship between working condition and employees performance. Emmanuel (2012) was of the fact that absence of noise increase productivity due to less distraction and reduction in job-related stress. He concluded that there is a significant relationship between working conditions and employees' performance. Citing Bruce (2008) in Emmanuel (2012), findings shows that reduction in work place noise reduces physical symptoms of stress by as much as 27% and performance of data- entry workers increased with a 10% improvement in accuracy.

Methodology

This study makes use of survey research design that allow for the use of questionnaires to elicit data from the respondents. The population of this study is the entire management staff of Nigeria Bottling Company Plc, Consolidated Brewery and Nigeria Guinness Plc. The targeted population for this study was taken to be 120 members of staff. However, sample of 100 (83%) of the population was randomly selected and was administered but 60 were duly completed and returned. Primary and secondary sources were used. Primary data was obtained with the aid of questionnaire. The use of questionnaire was employed to gather necessary and relevant data from the respondents. Data was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics involves frequency table and percentages, while the hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics (regression analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)).

Methods of Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics involves frequency table, likert scale and percentages, while the hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics (regression analysis, multiple regression analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)).

Result and Discussion**Test of Hypotheses****Hypothesis 1**

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between good working condition and employees performance

Table 4.3.1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.810 ^a	.656	.651	.471

a. Predictors: (Constant), lighting, ventilation rates, noise, workplace communication

b. Dependent Variable: Employees Performance

Source: Authors' Computation, 2015

For the first hypothesis, the study observed that the value of R^2 is 0.656 reveals that good working condition independently accounts for 65.6% of the variation in employees' performance. The remaining 34.5% is explained by variables outside this model. It also implies that working conditions is actually contributing to improve employees' performance thereby accepting the alternative hypothesis and rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 4.3.2 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	.016	1	.016	23.072
	Residual	16.867	59	.225	
	Total	16.883	60		

a. Dependent Variable: employees' performance.

b. Predictors: (Constant), lighting, ventilation rates, noise, workplace communication

Source: Author's Computation, 2015

The calculated ANOVA table is analyzed to see if *any* of the variables are significant. The F-statistic is compared with 1 and 59 degrees of freedom using stats tables. From the ANOVA table, $F = 23.072$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 \leq 0.05$ (sig.). Since $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$ (critical value), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted. This implies that the predictor influence employees' performance.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between welfare services and employees performance

Table 4.3.3 Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.854 ^a	.729	.721	.496

a. Predictors: (Constant), medical centre, good pension scheme, hazardous allowances

b. Dependent Variable: Employees Performance

Source: Authors' Computation, 2014

For the second hypothesis, the study observed that the value of R² is 0.729 reveals that good employee welfare such as providing good medical centre, good pension scheme and hazardous allowances independently accounts for 72.9% of the variation in employees' performance. The remaining 27.1% is explained by variables outside this model. It also implies that employee welfare is actually contributing to improved employees' performance thereby accepting the alternative hypothesis and rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 4.3.4 ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	
1 Regression	.055	1	.055	32.22	
Residual	18.465	59	.246	2	
Total	18.519	60			

- a. Dependent Variable: employees performance
 - b. Predictors: (Constant), good welfare service
- Source: Author’s Computation, 2015

The calculated ANOVA table is analyzed to see if *any* of the variables are significant. The F-statistic is compared with 1 and 59 degrees of freedom using stats tables. From the ANOVA table, $F = 32.72$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 \leq 0.05$ (sig.). Since $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$ (critical value), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted. This implies that the predictor influence employees’ performance.

Hypothesis 3

H₀₃: Good working condition and welfare services cannot jointly predict employees’ performance

Table 4.3.5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.831 ^a	.691	.672	.474

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Good working conditions and welfare services
 - b. Dependent Variable: Employees Performance
- Source: Authors’ Computation, 2014

For the third hypothesis, the study observed that the value of R² is 0.831 reveals that good working conditions and employee welfare such as providing lighting,

ventilation rates, noise, workplace communication good medical centre, good pension scheme and hazardous allowances independently accounts for 83.1% of the variation in employees’ performance. The remaining 16.9% is explained by variables outside this model. It also implies that good working conditions and employee welfare is actually contributing to improved employees’ performance thereby accepting the alternative hypothesis and rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 4.3.6 ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
1 Regression	.018	1	.018	21.052
Residual	16.667	59	.220	
Total	16.685	60		

a. Predictors: (Constant), Good working condition and welfare services

b. Dependent Variable: Employees Performance

Source: Authors’ Computation, 2014

The calculated ANOVA table is analyzed to see if *any* of the variables are significant. The F-statistic is compared with 1 and 59 degrees of freedom using stats tables. From the ANOVA table, $F = 21.052$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 \leq 0.05$ (sig.). Since $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$ (critical value), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted. This implies that the predictor influence employees’ performance.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.284	.442		.641	.523
Lighting	.307	.084	.346	3.644	.000
Vent. Rate	.230	.258	.235	2.822	.013
Noise	.330	.148	.345	2.231	.028
Workplace Com	.454	.308	.446	3.504	.000
Med. Centre	.259	.204	.217	1.530	.030
Pension S.	.290	.213	.280	2.796	.028
H.Allowance	.202	.086	.217	2.358	.021

a. Dependent Variable: Q1

Table 'coefficients' shows the model coefficient (that is, the intercept and the slope). From the table the results show that lighting (t-value = 3.644, p-value = 0.000) is significant at the 5% level, ventilation rate (t-value = 2.822, p-value = 0.013) is significant at the 5% level, noise (t-value = 2.231, p-value = 0.028) is significant at 5% level, workplace communication (t-value = 3.504, p-value = 0.000) is significant at 5% level, good medical centre (t-value = 1.530, p-value = 0.030) is significant at 5% level, good pension scheme (t-value = 2.796, p-value = 0.028) is significant at 5% level, and hazardous allowances (t-value = 2.358, p-value = 0.021) is significant at 5% level. This implies that each of the variables has contributed to employees' performance. Hence, there is significant relationship between good working conditions and employee welfare and employees' performance. Organization must put proper and effective control measures in place to maximize employee work performance. This study empirically confirmed the study by Yesufu (1984) who opined that the physical conditions operating in a workplace under which an employee operates dictates to a large extent the performance of the employees. These physical conditions include lighting, ventilation rates, access to natural light. Offices that are too hot or not well ventilated affect negatively the performance of employees. It is therefore necessary for management to provide good offices, hygienic environment, clinic, protective clothing for factory workers, rest rooms, first aid facilities e.t.c.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings, the study shows that there is a significant relationship between good working conditions and employees performance. That is R^2 value of 0.656 reveals that good working conditions independently account for 65.6% of the variation in employees' performance. The f-statistics of 23.072 shows that the variables in the model are statistically significant. The study also reveals that there is a significant relationship between welfare services and employees' performance, with value of R_2 is 0.729; which indicates that welfare services independently account for 72.9% of the variation in employees' performance. The study further reveals that good working conditions and welfare service can jointly predict employees' performance. This is indicated in the coefficient table 5, with lighting (t-value = 3.644, p-value = 0.000) significant at 5% level, ventilation rate (t-value = 2.822, p-value = 0.013) significant at 5% level, noise (t-value = 2.231, p-value = 0.028) significant at 5% level, workplace communication (t-value = 3.504, p-value = 0.000) significant at 5% level, good medical centre (t-value = 1.530, p-value = 0.030) significant at 5% level, good pension scheme (t-value = 2.796, p-value = 0.028) significant at 5% level, and hazardous allowances (t-value = 2.358, p-value = 0.021) is significant at 5% level.

Conclusion

The Food and Beverage Industry in the Manufacturing Sector is one of the key sectors necessitating the growth and development of Nigeria economy therefore, it is vital for organisations to embark on effective working conditions and welfare services that will project and promote employees performance. Employees are integral part of the human resources management and therefore, must be properly managed in order to effectively perform beyond expectation. It is suffice to say that, employees must be provided with clean and good working conditions if the objectives of the organisation are to be achieved. More so, the welfare services and packages must be friendly and favourable if employees will perform adequately and beyond expectations.

From the hypotheses tested, the results show that, there is a significant relationship between good working conditions and employees' performance. This shows that good working conditions depend on employees' performance.

More so, there is a significant relationship between good welfare service and employees performance. Aside from this, good working conditions and welfare services jointly predict employees' performance.

Recommendations

In line with this study, the following recommendations were made.

Management must create conducive and friendly working conditions that will aid employees' performance.

Management must communicate with their employees in order to plan and implement good working condition policies that will aid favourable employees' performance.

Organisations should ensure the provision of good welfare packages that will encourage and promote employees' performance.

It is the desire of every organisation to constantly increase performance, thereby necessitating the need to motivate employees through comprehensive compensation policies and friendly working conditions.

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