



**WORKPLACE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS IN DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN
YENOGOA BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Accepted: January 22, 2020

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness in Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 277 employees of nineteen (19) Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. The sample size of 164 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the data analysis revealed that there is a significant the relationship between workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness in Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. The study recommended that management of Deposit Money Banks should create avenues for workplace recreational activities for its employees because it not only polishes the employee skills but also prepare them to accomplish the current and future challenging assignments. It was hereby recommended that employees should be allowed activities that would increase and boost their performance in the work place.

Keywords: *Recreational Activities, Employee Effectiveness, Timeliness, Innovativeness*

CITATION: Enenifa, C. E., & Akintokunbo, O. O. (2020). Workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness in deposit money banks in Yenogoa Bayelsa State, Nigeria. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 7(1), 223 – 234.

INTRODUCTION

Increasing and intense competitiveness in the market has made performance the most important issue for profit and non-profit organizations. Employee effectiveness has been described in many ways; ability to achieve targets, realize goals, attain benchmarks. Most commonly people immediately talked of job performance as what a person did at work. Different stages of job as well the complexity of a job also affected the overall performance of the jobholder. This could mean that job performance as a construct could be defined in different ways depending on the different stages and complexities of the job (June & Mahmood, 2011). Sarmiento and Beale, as cited in June and Mahmood (2011) noted job performance resulted from two elements, abilities and skills (natural or acquired) that an employee possessed, and motivation to use them in order to perform a better job.

Employees experience stressful situation at work from the effects of stressors that emanate from the work environment and other personal-related factors. Some of the stressors in this regard are said to be functional, while others are dysfunctional, and can impede employees from having a good fit with the work environment for them to perform in achieving their personal goals and that of the organization. Scholars have suggested that, managing employee stress in the workplace involve individual and organizational level strategies that can minimize the manifestations and menace of dysfunctional stressors (Miller, 2008). This means that, stressors are integral to the work environment, and those that are dysfunctional in nature can be maintained at an optimal level through effective stress management. One way of achieving this is by providing workplace recreational activities.

As part of human resource development, organizations and individuals are slowly appreciating the concept of planning and managing employee recreation. American Council on Exercise (2000)

contends that creating some leisure time in the course of the day allows employees to recharge themselves psychologically and emotionally and this can lead to improved job performance. There is increased involvement in leisure activities and wellness programmes by companies in a bid to promote employees' physical and mental health. According to Taylor, Doherty and McGraw (2008), the demand for man-made additional resources for recreation is greater now than before. Though there are many mushrooming of entertainment and sports clubs, many organizations have invested large sums of money to provide such facilities within the workplace

Many scholars have discussed the effects of recreation programs on job performance and productivity. For instance, Golaszewski and Yen (1992) and Wattles and Harris(2003) reported that health promotion programs resulted in fewer health claims, high productivity, lower absenteeism, and higher return on investment on amount spent. Another report confirming this assertion was the Aga Khan Development Framework (2013) that showed how health problems such as diabetes mellitus and hypertension declined when employees engaged in workplace recreation or leisure activities. Similarly, organisations such as the American Council on Exercise and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) have supported the concept of workplace recreation arguing that setting aside leisure time and wellness programs improves the employees' quality of life thereby enhancing their job performance, mental status, and physical health (Aga Khan Development Network, 2013; Parks and Steelman, 2008). The trend in workplace recreation has continued to gain momentum as the demand for recreation increases. Many entertainment and sports venues have attempted to meet this demand by providing diverse leisure and recreation activities for employed workers (Mokaya and Gitari, 2012; Wattles and Harris, 2003).

This study therefore examined the relationship between workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness in Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. Furthermore, this study will also be guided by the following research questions:

- What is the relationship between workplace recreational activities and timeliness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State?

- What is the relationship between workplace recreational activities and quality service delivery of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State?
- What is the relationship between workplace recreational activities and innovativeness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State?

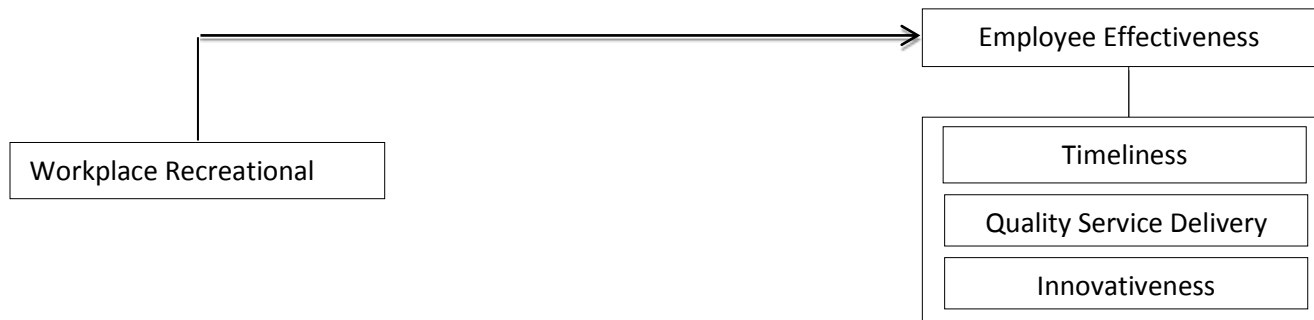


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for the relationship between workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness

Source: Author's Desk Research, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Systemic Stress: Selye's Theory

According to Karanja (2014) the popularity of the stress concept stems largely from the work of the endocrinologist Hans Selye. In a series of animal studies he observed that a variety of stimulus events (e.g., heat, cold, toxic agents) applied intensely and long enough are capable of producing common effects, meaning not specific to either stimulus event. (Besides these nonspecific changes in the body, each stimulus produces, of course, its specific effect, heat, for example, produces vasodilatation, and cold vasoconstriction.) According to Selye, these nonspecifically caused changes constitute the stereotypical, i.e., specific, response pattern of systemic stress. Selye (1976) defines this stress as 'a state manifested by a syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically induced changes in a biologic system.'

This stereotypical response pattern, called the 'General Adaptation Syndrome' (GAS), proceeds in three stages. (a) The alarm reaction comprises an initial shock phase and a subsequent counter shock phase. The shock phase exhibits autonomic excitability, an increased adrenaline discharge, and gastro-intestinal ulcerations. The counter shock phase marks the initial operation of defensive processes and is characterized by increased adrenocortical activity. (b) If noxious stimulation continues, the organism enters the stage of resistance. In this stage, the symptoms of the alarm reaction disappear, which seemingly indicates the organism's adaptation to the stressor. However, while resistance to the noxious stimulation increases, resistance to other kinds of stressors decreases at the same time. (c) If the aversive stimulation persists, resistance gives way to the stage of exhaustion.

The organism's capability of adapting to the stressor is exhausted, the symptoms of stage (a) reappear, but resistance is no longer possible. Irreversible tissue damages appear, and, if the stimulation persists, the organism dies. Although Selye, fails to take into account coping mechanisms as important mediators of the stress–outcome relationship, his theory serves to explain the detriments of stress of interventions are not made in time to rescue the stressed individuals. This theory indirectly underpins the importance of stress management strategies to avoid employees reaching the irreversible stage when the stress is more advanced. With adequate intervention measures that are applied in time, employees' commitment may be restored and therefore their productivity.

Workplace Recreational Activities

The goal of human resource management (HRM) is to ensure that employees and organisations achieve high levels of performance. An emerging concept that addresses this performance expectation is workplace recreation (Tan & Waheed, 2011). Workplace recreation programmes are defined as activities that promote the health of staff in an organisation (Mokaya & Gitari, 2012). These programs include annual family days, sports days, travel, gym membership, and sports facilities (Mak & Sockel, 2001). They also include wellness promotion programs such as weight loss classes, hypertension and cancer screenings, substance management classes, self-help or counseling classes, and subsidised pharmacotherapy treatments (Wellness Proposal, 2006; Goetzel and Ozminkowski, 2008). These programs are designed to increase morale, motivate employees, and enhance their job satisfaction (Akmal & Ghazali, 2012).

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The trend in workplace recreation has continued to gain momentum as the demand for recreation increases. Many entertainment and sports venues have attempted to meet this demand by providing diverse leisure and recreation activities for employed workers (Mokaya & Gitari, 2012; Wattles & Harris, 2003). In addition, organisations have invested funds and time to create recreation facilities in the workplace.

Recreation is an activity of leisure, the need to do something for recreation is an essential element of human biology and psychology. Workplace recreational activities are often done for enjoyment, amusement or pleasure and are considered to be fun. The term recreation appears to have been used in English first in the late 14th century, first in the sense of refreshment or curing of a sick person (Armstrong, 2011). Recreational facilities like those found in a gym can help in stress reduction and management. According to Armstrong, human body is like a working engine that harbors stress and tension, this stress and tension according to him is as a result of job demand or workload resulting from employees work which if not given attention can result in such disorder as headache, body-pain, chest pain and other forms of

health disorder which if not well handled can result in severe health complication of the employee. Recreational facilities can help in reduction and management of employee stress. Humans spend their time in activities of daily living, work, sleep, social duties, and leisure, which involuntarily results in stress on the employee or individual, according to Armstrong (2011) one of the recommended way in which the employee or affected individual can bounce back to life is to take time off for recreation which primary aim is to help reduce and manage stress.

Employee Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a broad concept that is difficult to measure in organizations. According to (Amah, 2014) the concept of employee effectiveness is an elusive one that there is no single way of defining it. This may be due to the too many criteria used and the many definitions available for the concept. (Veldsman, 1982) defined employee effectiveness as a qualification attached to an organizations resulting from the comparison from the actual state of the entity against its ideal state. He posits that an organization can either be effective or ineffective. Effective organizations are built on effective individuals who work effectively in groups Lawler, (1972). There are different variables for measuring employee effectiveness. Maheshwari (1980) said this much when he opined that that organizational effectiveness is a multi-dimensional concept, which has no agreement as to which dimensions are significant and should be used as the basis of the analysis.

Timeliness

When the employees are productive, they accomplish more in a given amount of time. In turn, efficiency saves their company money in time and labour. When employees are unproductive, they take longer time to complete projects, which cost employee's more money due to the time lost (Olajide, 2000). The importance of higher productivity of the employees in

public enterprise cannot be overemphasized, which include the following; Higher incomes and profit; Higher earnings; Increased supplies of both consumer and capital goods at lower costs and lower prices; Ultimate shorter hours of work and improvements in working and living conditions; Strengthening the general economic foundation of workers (Banjoko, 1996). Armstrong (2006) stated that productivity is the time spent by an employee actively participating in his/her job that he or she was hired for, in order to produce the required outcomes according to the employers' job descriptions. As suggested by Bloisi (2003) the core cause of the productivity problems in the South African society are people's motivation levels and their work ethics. Time is an essential resource since it is irrecoverable, limited and dynamic (Downs, 2008) Irrecoverable because every minute spent is gone forever, limited because only 24hours exist in a day and dynamic because it's never static (Claessens, Roe & Rutte, 2009)

Quality Service Delivery

Service delivery is a continuous, cyclic process for developing and delivering user focused services. It is further defined in four stages as user engagement, service design and development, service delivery and lastly assessment and positive change of service (Dachs, Dachs, Ebersberger, & Pyka, 2004). Other scholars have propounded other definitions and according to Carrillat, Jaramillo & Mulki, (2007), service delivery is the physical access or reachability of services that meet a base standard. The later regularly requires detail as far as the components of service delivery, for example, essential equipment, medications and products, healthy workforce, and rules for treatment. Service delivery denotes the ability of the client to pay for the services where data can be collected by facility visits or by household interviews (Berghman *et al.*, 2006). In this study, service delivery was defined as the willingness and readiness of a workforce to provide services in a

dependable, accurate and responsive manner while utilizing the available resources.

The SERVQUAL model was developed by Parasuraman *et al.*, (1988) to define service quality by means of the gap between the customers' perceptions and the expectations about organization's service quality performance. The model distinguishes five determinants of administration quality as effects, unwavering quality, responsiveness, confirmation and sympathy. It is measured administration conveyance since it is a settled instrument that has been utilized as a part of different reviews and its psychometric properties have been examined by some of the studies (Asubonteng, McCleary & Swan, 1996). Consequently, service quality is composed of perceived quality and expected quality. While perceived quality can be defined as the customer's judgment about the general position and excellence of the administration they get, expected quality clarifies the assumptions about the administration they have gotten. Baki *et al.* (2009) point out that on this scale, otherwise called the crevice examination, benefit quality is characterized as an estimation of the degree to which the offered benefit quality empowers to meet client desires. Assurance which is an aspect of service quality implies the employees' knowledge and courtesy levels and their ability to inspire trust and confidence (this dimension also includes competence, courtesy, credibility, and security).

Innovativeness

Innovativeness of employees is measured by the propensity by which they innovate in their work (Miller & Friesen, 1982); their willingness to try new ways which are different from the existing; the enthusiasm to adopt new ideas or new methods to their work operation; and the eagerness to implement the innovation strategy in their work (Khandwalla, 1987). Innovativeness reflects a employee's tendency to engage in and support new

ideas, novelty, experimentation and creative processes (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996) that may result in new products, services, or technological processes and which may take the organization to a new paradigm of success (Swieczczek & Ha, 2003). It also implies seeking creative, extraordinary or strange solutions to problems and needs. Schumpeter (1934) considered employees to be essentially a creative activity and entrepreneur as an innovator who carries out new combinations in the field of men, money, material, machine and management. According to him, an entrepreneur is an economic man who tries to maximize his profits by making innovations in any one of the following fields: (1) new products; (2) new production methods; (3) new markets; or (4) new forms of organization.

Employee innovativeness refers to employees propensity to innovate can be conceived as complex behaviour consisting of idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization with Employee innovativeness refers to employees" propensity to innovate can be conceived as complex behaviour consisting of idea generation, idea promotion and idea realization with the aim of meeting organizational goals in novel ways . Individuals, alone or in groups, undertake innovative activities from the intention to derive anticipated benefits from innovative change. Creativity is central to innovativeness, but the concepts are not synonymous. Innovation can be seen as a successful and intentional implementation of creativity, which is more subjective and context specific by its nature (Miron, Erez & Naveh, 2004).

Employee innovativeness requires that the individual is both able and willing to be innovative. With respect to abilities, above average general intellect, certain cognitive capabilities, general skills and task and context-specific knowledge, for example, facilitate innovativeness (Barron & Harrington, 1981; Taggar, 2002). Beyond knowledge and skills, innovativeness requires intrinsic motivation and a certain level of

internal force that pushes the individual to persevere in the face of challenges inherent in the creative work (Shalley& Gilson, 2004). Moreover, the internal force keeps the employee going even when the challenges are successfully overcome: it is about a positive tension and desire to excel.

Relationship between Workplace Recreational Activities and Employee Effectiveness

Falkenberg (1997) established a link between employee workplace recreational activities and organizational performance. Their study was based on the premise that employee workplace recreational activities were attractive to employees, were mechanisms for retaining employees, and were significant in reducing stress which had a negative impact on work performance and productivity. Their study showed that workplace recreational activities had a significant positive impact on employee productivity and performance which births commitment. It showed that majority of employees who participated in workplace recreational activities had above average performance, lower rates of absenteeism, higher commitment to work, and lower employee turnover. The findings supported the assertion that workplace recreational activities had a positive impact on employee performance. Moreover, the study supported the need for workplace recreation programmes to improve employee performance and health needs. Similar studies by Pronk and Kottke (2009) and Kerr and Vos (1993) supported the implementation of workplace recreational activities to improve employee well-being and reduce absenteeism. Kerr and Vos's research sought to determine whether employee workplace recreational activities (ERAs) improved the health, performance, and well-being of employees of ING bank. The results of their study showed that ERAs reduced absenteeism rates and improved commitment.

There are three different types of fun at work, namely, the managed variety, natural or organic fun,

and task related (Baker, 2013). Humor and fun are said to offer a temporary escape from the tension of work. Ford, McLaughlin and Newstrom (2004) stated that an organization will improve its ability to attract new employees and have better customer's satisfaction, stronger employee's commitment, and lowered employee's turnover and absenteeism by creating and maintaining a fun work environment. A research study by McDowell (2004) came out with the scales of fun at work which included socializing with co-workers, celebrating at work, personal freedoms, and global fun at work. It also supports claims that fun and humor in the workplace reduce stress and may lead to a healthier workplace.

From the foregoing discussion, the study hereby hypothesized that:

- H₀₁** There is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and timeliness thinking of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and quality service delivery Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and innovativeness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was 277 employees of nineteen (19) Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. The sample size of 164 was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula for sample size determination. The reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order

Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23.0. The tests

were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Test of Hypotheses

Table 1: Correlations matrix for workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness

			Recreational Activities	Timeliness	Quality Service Delivery	Innovation
Spearman's rho	Recreational Activities	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.773**	.754**	.640**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	107	107	107	107
	Timeliness	Correlation Coefficient	.673**	1.000	.695**	.820**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	107	107	107	107
	Quality Service Delivery	Correlation Coefficient	.554**	.695**	1.000	.932**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	107	107	107	107
	Innovation	Correlation Coefficient	.640**	.820**	.932**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	107	107	107	107

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data July 2019 and SPSS output version 23.0

Table 1: illustrated the test for the three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements. The results showed that for:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and timeliness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between workplace recreational activities and timeliness. The rho value 0.770 indicated this relationship and it was significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represented a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings

the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and timeliness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and quality service delivery Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between workplace recreational activities and quality service delivery. The rho value 0.754 indicated this

relationship and it was significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and quality service delivery Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and innovativeness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between workplace recreational activities and innovativeness. The ρ value 0.709 indicated this relationship and it was significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represented a strong correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is no significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and innovativeness in Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined the relationship between workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness of Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between workplace recreational activities and employee effectiveness in Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State. This

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finding agreed with previous findings with regards to employee performance, Farmer and Seers (2004) conducted a study on the relationship between workplace entertainment and employee motivation. Wellness Proposal (2006) confirmed the positive effect of social and physical recreation programs on employee health. The proposal reported that the recreation programs reduced health care costs for employers by reducing sick leave, health costs, and disability costs by 27.8%, 28%, and 33.5% respectively. Similarly, the World Health Organization (2003) reported that workplace physical activities reduced sick leave by 32%, health care costs by 50%, and improve productivity by 52%. It also reported that employers enjoy intangible benefits of the recreation programs such as improved staff morale and productivity, staff retention, and improved corporate image (Aldana et al., 2004; Goetzel et al., 2001).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study therefore concluded that workplace recreational activities significantly influences employee effectiveness in Deposit Money Banks in Yenogoa, Bayelsa State.

The study recommended that management of Deposit Money Banks should create avenues for workplace recreational activities for its employees because it not only polishes the employee skills but also prepare them to accomplish the current and future challenging assignments. It was hereby recommended that employees should be allowed activities that would increase and boast their performance in the work place.

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