

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Manufacturing organisations in Nigeria continue to report occasional drop in performance due to employees' non-challant attitudes as a result of high level of dissatisfaction caused by hazardous and unhygienic work environments. This study assessed the relationships between occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance in selected manufacturing companies in Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was employed, and out of the 1,568 copies of questionnaire that were administered proportionally in the selected companies, 1,153 copies were retrieved and found useful. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and the hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results of the findings show the f-statistics of 133.635 and so, there is a significant relationship between Occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance among Nigerians working in the selected manufacturing companies. Also, f-statistics of 412.127 shows a significant relationship between Occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance among other nationals in the selected MNCs. The study concluded that there are significant relationships between Occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance in selected manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria.

Keywords: Occupational health and safety practices, performance, and manufacturing companies.

1.0 Introduction

Employees remain the most important resource in organisations considering their enormous efforts at driving material resources at their disposal towards accomplishing organisational set goals and objectives (Mudah, Rafiki & harahap 2014). However, it is not always easy achieving targets and high job performance through employees and this has been a major concern for organisations (Lee & Wu 2011). Employee performance in most Nigerian organizations are decreasing and this is a major threat to the private sector initiatives of the government (Inuwa, 2016; Ogbulafor, 2011).

Occupational health and safety practices are so important among other HRM practices considering the roles they play and their direct impact on production technicians' performance in manufacturing organisations. It directly affects the output of the firm and guaranty health and safety of its employees who are on the factory floors, especially the production technicians and the factory floor operatives (Perera, 2019). However, hazardous and unhygienic work

environments are common in developing countries and this has made the study of remedying the situation very attractive to both the academia and those in the industry. Common features of hazardous and unhygienic environments noticeable across the world and most especially in developing countries include wrong siting of production plants, faulty human-machine system design, inappropriate factory layout, wrong placement of employees, poor handling of machines and filthy work environment in addition to chemicals, biological agents, physical factors, and adverse ergonomic conditions (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpon-Roharo, 2013; Izuogu and Onyekwere, 2019; Shikdar & Sawaqed, 2003). All these, among others have been causing ill-health among employees and causing one industrial accidents or the other. Workers performance have been impacted negatively by these factors and productivity has been hampered due to these developments. Developing countries need to learn from the developed ones regarding the adoption of styles of laying out factories and the factors to put into consideration when siting one to be able to avoid some of the problems of safety noticeable in their work places (Kaynak, Toklu, Elci, & Toklu, 2016; Perera, 2019). It is in the interests of organisations to always put things right and ensure every employee is cared for and kept safe from injuries to reduce employee turnover and decrease the level of absenteeism being witnessed in the Nigerian manufacturing companies today.

The level of industrial accidents being witnessed today in Nigerian factories is an eyesore (Ewuzie and Ugoani, 2016; Izuogu and Onyekwere, 2019; Ishola, 2017; Olatubi & Olatubi, 2017) and thus, calls for concerted efforts from the government, regulatory authorities and industry captains (who account for performance deficits) to remedy the situation. Also, Okoronkwo (2017) reported that additional studies should be carried out to address the gaps in literature regarding which of the human resource management practices contribute the most to performance. This is the essence of this study, atleast regarding the manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

Occupational Health and Safety Practices (OCHSP)

Occupational health and safety practices involve all managerial activities aimed at protecting and maintaining the physical injury and psychological and social health of workers and their families (Hughes & Ferrett (2005). It can also be viewed as the study of factors or conditions influencing the survival of workers not only in the place of work but also at home with the aim of promoting health, safety and welfare of the workers and their family.

The joint International Labour Organisation ILO (2006) and WHO (2004) constituted in 1950 and revised in 1995, defined occupational health as the “promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations”. ILO further summarised occupational health definition as the “prevention of departure from health among workers caused by their working conditions; the prevention of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health, the placing and maintenance of the workers in occupational environment adapted to their physical and psychological well-being; and the adaptation of work to man and man to his work.

This study defines occupational health and safety practices as the sum total of all activities and programmes that are aimed at preventing, protecting and maintaining the highest level of health and safety among workers in any work environment which can be industrial, non-industrial or private or organisational. The ILO (2006) reported that globally, about 2.2 million people die every year from occupational accidents and diseases, while some 270 million suffer serious non-fatal injuries, another 160 million fall ill for a short or a long period from work-related causes, arising from problems and challenges associated with unsafe working environment or conditions.

The majority of industries are unsafe and unhealthy (Koehn & Datta, 2003) and even the Nigerian work environment has been described as the worst considering the level of unemployment, corruption, bad and outdated legislation and inappropriate enforcement mechanisms (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpon-Roharo, 2013). Health threats from the different types of work, include chemicals, biological agents, physical factors, and adverse ergonomic conditions are responsible for a variety of health consequences. Chemical substances, and their derivatives are widely used in many sectors work periods, workers are faced with a variety of hazards almost as numerous including industry, agriculture, mining, water purification, public health and particularly for disease eradication and infrastructure development. Their utilization has brought immense benefits to mankind. However, the production, storage, transportation, and removal of these substances can pose risks to people and the environment, and at the same time it has had negative impacts on human health and safety.

The basic objectives of a good occupational health and safety programmes are to protect employees against health hazards in their work environment and also to ensure the suitability of individuals according to their physical capabilities, mental abilities and emotional make up in that they can perform with an acceptable degree of health and safety for themselves and that of their family. The level of safety management in industrial firms in the Nigerian industrial settings is largely inadequate (Ewuzie & Ugoani, 2016; Olatubi & Olatubi, 2017). When it comes to safety management, employers of labour are fond of making empty promises, talk from both sides of their mouth and end up not attending to one. Very few studies have reported that few are willing to take actions towards solving these problems despite the fact that every employer is duty bound to protect employees and keep them informed about health and safety practices (Ewuzie & Ugoani, 2016; Ishola, 2017; Izuogu & Onyekwere, 2019).

However, the prevailing safety of management practices have been identified to be debilitating and how these affect employees is of considerable priority to scholars (WHO, cited in Ishola, 2017). These conditions negatively impact on the physical and psychological wellbeing of the industrial workers (WHO, cited in Ishola, 2017). However, Izuogu and Onyekwere (2019) found that recruitment practices is not significant predictor of health and safety practices and that compensation practices do not predict employees' health and safety environment in Saipem (an oil and servicing multinational corporations). There is need to determine the impact occupational health and safety practices have on employees' performance in manufacturing multinational corporations. Empirical study linking industrial safety to wellbeing status is scarce (Izuagu & Onyekwere, 2019). Also, studies localised to the study of industrial hubs in the Nigerian

hinterland are limited and these areas have gained little attention from regulatory authorities (Ishola, 2017).

Employee performance

Performance is attained via objectives measured in terms of standards set by individual organisations (Richard, 2009). Performance measurement can be carried out through two different dimensions (Bhatti, Awan & Razaq 2013). Performance from the objective dimension considers financial and market-based measures, like capacity utilisation, profitability and market share. From the subjective dimension are customer and employee based measures, such as service quality, employee performance and customer satisfaction.

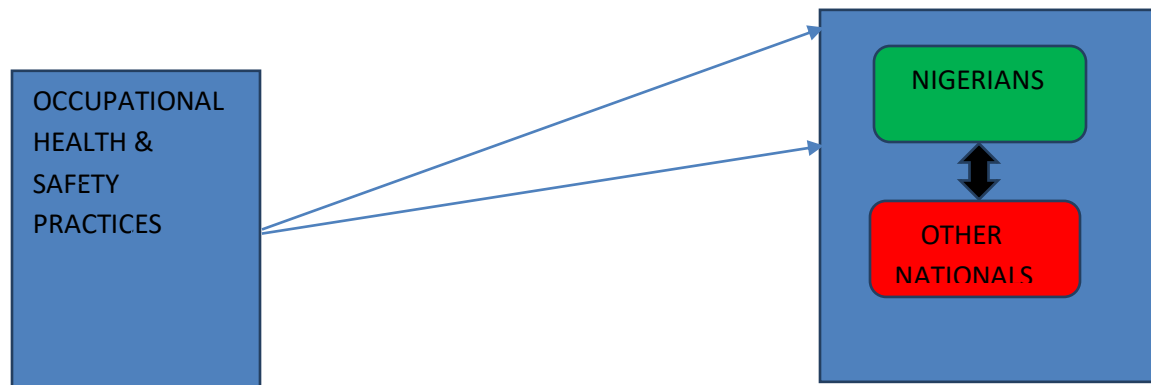
However, observations have shown that financial performance employed by firms are falling short of expectations and so, the need to consider dimensions that take the human factor into consideration because of rapid changes such as increased product quality and movement of people and accelerated technologies across the globe (Moers, 2015). Faiza and Nazir (2015) defined employee performance as feedback gotten through attitudes demonstrating new skills acquired by the employee or the type of training the employee has acquired. Kinicki & Kreitner (2007) posited that employee performance determinants are reflected in the level of happiness and satisfaction derived by employees on their different roles. This study, thus, defines employees' performance as the positive difference made in the output and other set targets of an organisation occasioned by the degree of safety in place in the organisations.

Different empirical studies have found significant relationships between occupational health and safety practices and employee performance (Iheanacho & Ebitu (2016); Ishola, (2017); Izuogu and Onyekwere (2019) and Ogunyomi & Brunning (2015); Perera (2019), while others like Nwachukwu and Chladkova (2017); and Kaynak *et al.*, (2016) found indirect relationships between occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance. Kaynak, Toklu, Elci, & Toklu (2016) found that safety procedures and risk management, safety and health rules, and organisational safety support had indirect effects on job performance of the employees. Also, Iheanacho & Ebitu (2016) reported an inverse significant relationship between occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance.

Conceptual Framework

**OCCUPATIONAL
HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES**

**EMPLOYEES'
PERFORMANCE**



Researchers' conceptualisation (2020)

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted social exchange theory as its baseline theory. The social exchange theory states that human beings are into relationships to better their lots and in the interest of the benefits derivable therein (Hutchison & Charlesworth 2003). The theory postulates that employees do put in extra efforts and go extra miles in accomplishing tasks where they perceive their care and interests are paramount in organisations. The theory popularizes the give-and-take idea and that employees' commitment towards performance is tradeable and that the reciprocal gesture is the provision of enabling environment that is conducive and caring enough to spur employees to extra efforts among others. A well-established health and safety policies that address accidental happenings promptly have been found to be a powerful spur to employees' actions, and ultimately, a boost in their performances.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed cross-sectional survey design. The approach allowed responses to be sought from staff of Nestle Foods Plc, Unilever Plc, Cadbury Plc, GlaxoSmithKline Plc, International Breweries Plc and Guinness Nigeria Plc head offices through structured questionnaires. (Osundina, 2014). 1,568 copies of questionnaires were administered proportionally and 1,153 copies were retrieved and found useful for the study. Purposive sampling technique (maximum variation sampling method) which is a deliberate choice of participants considering their qualities (nationalities) was employed in this study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential (Anova) statistics. The population for this study consisted of all quoted food and beverages manufacturing multinational corporations in Nigeria. The target population was six thousand, three hundred and fifty-six (6,356) (NSE Fact Book, 2020) full-time employees of the quoted food and beverages multinational corporations.

The questionnaire was pre-tested in one of the non-listed food and beverage manufacturing multinational corporations – Wamco Campina (producer of peak milk) plc. This pilot test was carried out before the actual survey following slight modifications in the scale to ensure appropriate questions were asked along with its design, wordings and measurement scales. The measuring instrument yielded satisfactory level of reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The human resource management practice policies and practice scale (HRMPPS) (Demo, Neva, Nune, & Rozzett, 2012) was used for occupational health and safety practices practice and it showed alpha coefficient of 88% greater than the 80% threshold recommended by authors such as Nunally & Bernstein (1994). Employee performance was measured by an adopted instrument in the work of Liao, Lu, Huang & Chiang (2012). The 5-point Likert Scale ranged from Agree (A) to Strongly Disagree (SD) and with Cronbach Alpha of 0.85. The five items considered in the instrument are: (1). I understand the criteria of performance review of my company. (2). I understand my work schedules and how to carry it out. (3). I am able to find solution to unexpected schedules on time. (4). I maintain good record of attendance in this company, and lastly, (5). I always carry out assigned duties effectively and efficiently.

Model Specification

The study adapted the linear regression model (Howell, 1992) and so, the determinants of occupational health and safety practices on employees’ performance in the manufacturing MNCs’ are given by:

$$EPerf.N = f(OCHSP)$$

$$EPerf.N = \beta_0 + \beta_1OCHSP + \mu_i \text{ ----- (3.1)}$$

$$EPerf.ON = f(OCHSP)$$

$$EPerf.ON = \beta_0 + \beta_1OCHSP + \mu_i \text{ ----- (3.2)}$$

Where: EPerf.N= Employees’ performance of Nigerians; EPerf.ON = Employees’ performance of other nationals and OCHSP=Occupational health and safety practices; Equations 3.1 and 3.2 centred on employees’ performance among Nigerians and other nationals with respect to Occupational health and safety practices.

4.0 Results and interpretation

Demographic Analysis of Respondents

The analysis in Table 1 on Companies showed that out of the total respondents in the study, 96 respondents representing 8.3% were employees of Cadbury Nig. Plc., 191 respondents representing 16.6% were Guinness Nig. Plc's employees, 182 (15.8%) were employees of Unilever Nig. Plc., 197 (17.1%) were representatives of International Brewery Plc., 325 respondents representing 28.2% were members of staff of Nestle Nig. Plc., and the remaining

162 representing 14.1% were members of staff of Glaxo Smithkline Plc. This implies that Nestle Nig. Plc. and Cadbury Nig. Plc. have the highest and the lowest number of staff representatives respectively. 964 respondents representing 83.7% were male participants and 188 representing 16.3% were female participants in the study. Also, 882 (76.5%) were Nigerians while 271 (23.5%) were non-Nigerians. This implies that food and beverage section of manufacturing industry have higher proportion of male staff than female staff. It also indicated that most of the employees are Nigerians while about 24% were non-Nigerians in the context of this study.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of the Respondents

S/N	Demographic variable	Grouping	Frequency	Percent
1.	Companies	Cadbury Nig. Plc.	96	8.3
		Guinness Nig. Plc.	191	16.6
		Unilever Nig. Plc.	182	15.8
		International Brew. Plc	197	17.1
		Nestle Nig. Plc	325	28.2
		Glaxo Smithkline Plc	162	14.1
2.	Sex	Male	965	83.7
		Female	188	16.3
3.	Nationality	Nigerians	882	76.5
		Other Nationals	271	23.5
4.	Marital Status	Single	148	12.8
		Married	773	67.0
		Divorce	212	18.4
		Widowed	20	1.7
5.	Age	16-25	35	3.0
		26-35	137	11.9
		36-45	454	39.4
		46-55	509	44.1
		56 years and above	18	1.6
6.	Years of Experience	1-5	71	6.9
		6-10	121	10.5
		11-15	309	26.8
		16-20	469	40.7
		21 years and above	175	15.2
7.	Highest Educational Qualification	Primary	7	0.6
		Secondary	22	1.9
		Graduate	565	49.0
		Postgraduate	324	28.1
		Professional	235	20.4

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Tests of Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between Occupational health and safety practices and employees’ performance among Nigerians in food and beverages manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria

The findings from the ANOVA help in indicating the weakness or the strength of the model (Bathke, 2004). From the findings obtained in Table 2, the F-test value is 133.635 with a significance value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value 0.00 obtained was < 0.05, the F-test is significant, hence, the conclusion that the regression model was a good fit.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	386.098	5	77.220	133.635	.000 ^b
	Residual	662.780	1147	.578		
	Total	1048.878	1152			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees’ performance for Nigerians

b. Predictor: (Constant), Occupational Health and Safety Practice.

Source: Data Analysis (2020).

The f-statistics of 133.635 thus shows that the model is statistically significant. It shows that there is a significant relationship between Occupational health and safety practices and employees’ performance among Nigerians working in selected manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between Occupational health and safety practices and employees’ performance among other nationals in food and beverages manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria.

The findings from the ANOVA help in indicating the weakness or the strength of the model. From the findings obtained in Table 3, the F-test value is 412.127 with a significance value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value 0.00 obtained was < 0.05, the F-test is significant, hence, the conclusion that the regression model was a good fit.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	856.059	5	171.212	412.127	.000 ^b
	Residual	476.503	1147	.415		
	Total	1332.562	1152			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees’ performance for other nationals

b. Predictor: (Constant), Occupational Health and Safety Practices

Source: Data Analysis (2020)

The f-statistics of 412.127 thus shows that the model is statistically significant. It shows that there is a significant relationship between Occupational Health and Safety practices and employees' performance among other nationals working in selected manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The test of research hypothesis, H_{01} shows that there is a significant relationship between Occupational Health and Safety practices and employees' performance. The f-statistics of 133.635 shows that the model is statistically significant. It implies a significant relationship between Occupational Health and Safety practices and employees' performance among Nigerians working in selected manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria. In the same vein, Hypothesis (H_{02}) reveals f-statistics of 412.127 shows that the model is statistically significant. It shows that there is significant relationship between Occupational Health and Safety practices and employees' performance among other nationals working in selected manufacturing MNCs in Nigeria.

The findings are in support of submissions of Iheanacho & Ebitu (2016); Ishola, (2017); Izuogu and Onyekwere (2019) and Ogunyomi & Brunning (2015); and Perera (2019) which reported significant relationships between occupational health and safety practices and employee performance. Different empirical studies have found significant relationships between occupational health and safety practices and employee performance (Iheanacho & Ebitu (2016); Izuogu and Onyekwere (2019) and Ogunyomi & Brunning (2015); Perera (2019), while others like Nwachukwu and Chladkova (2017); and Kaynak *et al.*, (2016) found indirect relationships between occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance. Kaynak, Toklu, Elci, & Toklu (2016) found that safety procedures and risk management, safety and health rules, and organisational safety support had indirect effects on job performance of the employees. Also, Iheanacho & Ebitu (2016) reported an inverse significant relationship between occupational health and safety practices and employees' performance.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Regular and transparent occupational health and safety practices significantly affect the progressive level of an employee and his/her achievement rate. Employees' safety should be of utmost importance to the food and beverages industries in Nigeria, therefore, management of organisations should provide HR practice for occupational health and safety practices of their employees. This study advocate that management of industries should set up an effective and proactive HR practices in charge of occupational health and safety of their employees. Other sectors of the Nigerian economy can equally be investigated to ascertain the roles of other human resource management practices' variables or their combined effects on employee job performance. Also, this study can be replicated in other sectors like the educational sector, health and public sector.

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