

## Work Overload and Workers Productivity in the Telecommunication Industries in Nigeria

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### Abstract

The study examines the relationship between work overload and workers productivity in the telecommunication industries in Nigeria. The research is a cross-sectional correlation survey with a population of 105 workers of the telecommunication industries under survey in Nigeria. Sample sizes of 83 respondents were determined from the population using Taro Yamane's formula. The study made a combined use of both primary and secondary sources of data collection. On the other hand, secondary sources which include past literature were used to support the primary data. Out of 83 copies of the questionnaire administered, 77 copies were returned and used for analysis. Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient and regression was used to test hypotheses as aided by Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. The findings of the study revealed that work overload positively and significantly relates with all measures of workers productivity and as such, its adoption will not only enhance workers productivity but also crave for increase in profitability. The study therefore recommends amongst that: organizational management should provide an enabling working condition that is stress-free for her workers, role description should be made clear to workers to avoid the uncertainty about his/her expectations that comes with an ambiguous role: and that attention is focused not only on organizations effectiveness but also on the employees' health so they are motivated for increased performance that translates into the attainment or organizations set goals.

**Keywords:** Work Overload, Workers Productivity, Employees' Effectiveness, Employees' Efficiency.

### Introduction

There has been multiple empirical stand on the issues of organisational work overload (Johnson and Ossai 2017; Eketu 2016; Kimbred & Jones 2019). The trimming down on the

numbers of workers in organisations has given rise to few employees working for longer hours as the rising levels of responsibilities require them to exert themselves even more strenuously to meet rising expectations from the organisation (Hart, 2017). Work overload is a phenomenon in modern organisation especially in the developing countries which still finds it difficult to find its' footing in the proper aspect of management of the organisational activities. Work overload is an inevitable consequence of modern living. It is a condition of that has a direct impact on the psychological state of the individual workers (Johnson, Kalio & Ossai, 2018).

Nathans and Jameson (2015), noted that, work-overload has a direct bearing on the individual workers at the lowest rung of management since they have a little or no control about the structures of work activities in the organisation. Work overload happens when an employee experiences the lacking of resources, including organisation. This results in emotional changes as a reaction of this danger it stems from the relationship between a person and his environment, and it appears as pressure that is subjective because the same work-overload can affect one person but not another. When an employee can manage the pressure of the job and the possibility to complete a task is substantial, then work-overload can work as a motivating factor (Halkos and Danison, 2013). Work-overload is a complex and dynamic concept. Undesirable level of work-overload affects the overall performance of not just the employee but also, the organisation.

Therefore, in order to get the work done effectively and to achieve any organisational objective, managers of organisations should be able to identify and properly manage the work-overload in the work environment. Work overload has the capacity to constitute stress on the employee. Notwithstanding, there are two general classes of stressors: physiological (or physical) stress and mental pressure. Stresses are physiological or physical when they put strain on our bodies; for instance, freezing/hot temperatures, damage, incessant ailment or agony. Additionally, stress is said to be mental when occasions, circumstances, remarks, people or whatever else is deciphered to be pessimistic and compromising shows up especially in the work place. Work-over-load has a crucial significance and has become a key test for the organisation in light of its lashing effect on the exhibition of a person just as the association.

It is of immense significance to note that employees serve as assets for an organisation, but when they are bombarded with an overload of work, undesirable circumstances such as increased absenteeism, low productivity, low motivation, less effectiveness, poor initiative usually legal financial damages (which eventually affect the employee work behavior and leads him/her towards the counter productive work behaviour) emerge. Work-overload in organisations affects both the individual and the organisation.

Work-overload is often times negative when it results in negative effects on workers' health and performance. Employee performance is adversely affected by work overload. This in turn

reduces the effectiveness of the employees and organisation (Jimmieson et al, 2004). Such job overload often results in work place accidents (Morison, 2007). Work overload is also recognized worldwide as a major challenge to workers' health and the healthiness of the organisation. It is observed that employers of labour in Nigeria do not protect their workers from stress arising within the work environment.

Organisations as well as their workers have been facing hardship for some time, considering that employers of labour are not adhering to the international labour organisations protocol which posit that employers of labour should initiate a stress management policy that will not only enhance the effectiveness and productivity of their organisations but will boost their morale at work and make them healthier (Bewell, *et al*, 2014).

Therefore, this study examined the effect of work-overload on workers' productivity in the telecommunication industries in Nigeria.

Three research questions were proposed for this study in line with the aim of the study, which is the operational investigation of the relationship between work-overload and workers productivity of the telecommunication industries in Nigeria. These questions are as follows:

- 1) What is the relationship between work overload and employees' efficiency of telecommunication industries in Nigeria?
- 2) What is the relationship between work-overload and quality of work of telecommunication industries in Nigeria?
- 3) What is the relationship between work overload and employees' effectiveness of telecommunication industries in Nigeria?

## Literature Review

### Work Overload

In recent years many organisations are striving to attain their objectives in accordance with the day to day changing requirements of the new technological world by introducing new innovative ideas, hiring new human resource management, policies in order to increase the profitability and productivity of the organisations. The pace of this globalization has expanded the acceleration of the results of the work over-burden like mental pain, truancy, diminished efficiency and duty and the most essential bringing down the worker execution at their working environments (Armstrong, 2003; Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005).

Work over-load happens when an individual encounter the lacking of assets, including time and vitality, expected to satisfy their needs all things considered (Hecht, 2007). Abmady et al. (2007) characterizes Work over-overload as having an excessive amount to do and such a large number of obligations to do everything great. (Jex, 1998) defined overload as employee's insight that they had to work extra than the work should be completed within

given time period, therefore, all the work overload faces by someone in his/her job, will be treated as job overload.

## Employee Performance

Employee performance is otherwise called occupational activities of a worker at working environment. It is considered as a significant factor in the accomplishment of any organisation. As per Otley (1999), authoritative profitability and achievement relies upon the representative execution. Higher the level of performance of employees, greater will be the organisational accomplishments. Herzberg *et al.* (1959) defined in terms of managerial aspect of the performance as “let an employee do what I want him to.” On the other hand, according to another study, the capability of a person to achieve its goals and targets as well as satisfying the expectations of his supervisors or achieving the organisational objectives led down by the upper management is said to be job performance of an employee (Gloet, 2006; Lewis, 1999; Mathis & Jackson, 2011).

Employee performance is defined as whether a person executes their job duties and responsibilities well. Many companies assess their employee’s performance on an annual or quarterly basis in order to define certain areas that need improvement. Performance is a critical factor in organisational success Johnson et al (2019).

Afshan et al. (2012) characterize execution as the accomplishment of explicit work processes estimated against foreordained or recognized gauges of precision, fulfillment, cost and speed. Representative execution can be showed in progress underway, ease in utilizing the new innovation, profoundly spur laborers.

Worker execution is ordinarily taken a gander at regarding results. Be that as it may, it can likewise be taken a gander at as far as conduct (Armstrong 2000). Kenney et al. (1992) expressed that representative's exhibition is estimated against the presentation norms set by the organisation. There are various estimates that can be contemplated when estimating execution for instance utilizing of efficiency, proficiency, viability, quality and benefit measures (Ahuja 1992) as quickly clarified from now on. Benefit is the capacity to gain benefits reliably over a period of time of time. It is communicated as the proportion of gross benefit to deals or profit for capital utilized (Wood & Stangster 2002).

## Quality of Work

According to Parasuraman et al (1988) quality can be considered as the overall judgment similar to attitude in the direction of the task an employee is assigned to deliver and the outcome of this task is normally used as bench mark to measure the overall customer satisfaction.

It therefore looks at the difference between the expected and actual performance of the employees. It also speaks of how products and services supplied by a company meet or

surpass customer expectation. The nature of work done by the representatives is probably going to build the quantity of clients or level of all out clients, whose revealed involvement in a firm, its items or its administrations surpasses indicated fulfillment objectives. Demand for work or service stems from comparisons by customers in line with their expectations and perceptions on the service delivered by the organization through the works (Zeithaml *et al*, 1990).

Empirically established literature had shown the stands on productivity in relation to the organisational outcome (Richmond & Jones, 2014). This means that both quality and productivity is critical to organisational survival; you can sacrifice on at the expense of the other. (James & Sasser 1995; Dick and Basu 1994): A customer who has the intention to repurchase and recommend believe that the firm's service continues to serve as the best choice alternative. Furthermore he/she determination of performance and its related elements must be evident in the production of the needed goods and services that meets all quality requirements. Reduction in quality will therefore, indicate a fall in productivity and leads to outright customer dissatisfaction and loss of loyalty and market share.

## **Effectiveness**

The idea 'adequacy' alludes to an organisation achieving its particular goals (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989: 11). School viability consequently signifies 'the school achieves its destinations'. School viability can accordingly be viewed as a particular attribute of a successful school. The idea of adequacy can, be that as it may, mean various things and this has prompted a worldwide discussion around the idea (Alvin, 2014).

Effectiveness estimates connection among information sources and yields or how effectively the information sources have been changed into profitability (Low, 2000). The less the information sources used to produce results, the more noteworthy the effectiveness. As per Pinprayong and Siengthai (2012) there is a distinction between business productivity and hierarchical proficiency. Business proficiency uncovers the exhibition of information and profit proportion, while authoritative productivity mirrors the improvement of inner procedures of the organization, for example, hierarchical structure, culture and network. Superb hierarchical effectiveness could improve elements execution as far as the board, efficiency, quality and gainfulness.

Kenrick et al, (2016), considers on hierarchical adequacy have two particular points: right off the bat, to recognize factors that are normal for viable associations, and furthermore, to distinguish contrasts between authoritative. The decision and utilization of result measures has been available to fight in numerous organisational platform and with respect to scholarly research (Kimbred, 2018). One of the touchstones of successful schools is the effect on students' instruction results (for example test or assessment results got during formal

evaluation). In this regard, Bennet, Crawford and Cartwright (2003:176) define an effective organization as that with greater level competitiveness within the environment.

### **The Influence of Work Overload on Efficiency**

The heavy assignment of task, unreachable deadlines and long working hours combine in the concept of work overload. Data analysis for the test of hypotheses revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between work overload and employee efficiency. This empirical findings agrees with previous findings in this area especially Robbins, (1996) who argued that the limit of workload on an employee has important implication for employee performance. Employers with the appropriate work-load will experience high employee efficiency (Tahier et al, 2012), hence, overall performance can be measured by quantifying efficiency which is all about resource allocation across alternative uses (Kumor & Gulati, 2010).

In the light of the above, it is obvious that work overload will either pave way for organizational efficiency or not. This means that work overload may aid or deter organizational efficiency which will automatically enhance or mal employee productivity.

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant relationship between work-overload and workers productivity.

### **The Influence of Work Overload on Quality of Work**

The second hypothesis was tested using the Spearman's rank correlation technique, the data analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between work overload and quality of work done by the employee as the quality of work done by the employees is very likely to increase the number of customers or percentage of total customers whose reported experience with a firm, its products or services exceeds specified satisfaction goals. Performance is likely to deviate from quality to task if there is an overload of work on the work overload and quality of work.

$H_{02}$ : There is no significant relationship between work overload and quality of work.

### **The Influence of Work Overload on Effectiveness**

Data analysis for the third hypotheses revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between work overload and employee effectiveness. Work load is seen as a process where a worker is faced with multiple task simultaneously. It is a source of mental stress for employees. The analysis showed a significant correlation between employee efficiency and work overload (Rod, Ashil & Carruthers, 2008).

$H_{03}$ : There is no significant relationship between work overload and employee efficiency.

## Methodology

The design chosen for the study is the cross sectional survey design and adopts the quantitative methodology in its analysis of the variables. The design and methodology is considered highly effective for survey studies such as one of this nature and for developing concepts more clearly, establishing correlations and also ascertaining factorial levels of association (Kothari, 2004, Bryman & Bell, 2003). Also, the population of this study is 105 elements drawn from the telecommunication industries in Nigeria. The sample size for the study was mathematically derived using Taro Yamen’s formular to distributed, 77 were properly filled and returned. This served as the basis for data analysis.

The data for the study were generated from the analysis of the questionnaire using the statistical tool of SPSS (statistical package for social sciences for windows version 20) with a significance level of 0.05. The SPSS was used in quantitative analysis to express the correlation coefficient on the influence of work-overload on workers’ productivity of telecommunication industries in Nigeria.

## Data Analysis

**Table 1. Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Work-overload and productivity**

Correlation			Work overload	Productivity
Spearman’s rho	Work overload	Correlation Coefficient	1.00	.947*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	77	77
	Productivity	Correlation Coefficient	.947*	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	.
		N	77	77

\*\*correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 1 revealed that the Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) = 0.947. This value is very high, which indicates that a very strong relationship exists between work overload and Productivity. It also shows that a positive relationship exists between the two variables due to the positive sign of the correlation coefficient. This implies that an increase in work overload will also bring about an increase in productivity. The probability and significant value ( $P_o$ ) =  $0.000 < 0.05$  (level of significance) therefore a significant relationship exists between work overload and productivity.

**Table 2. Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Work-overload and quality of work**

Correlation			Work overload	Quality of work
Spearman's rho	Work overload	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.820**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
		N	77	77
	Quality of Work	Correlation Coefficient	.820**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	.
		N	77	77

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

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 revealed that the Spearman's Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) = 0.820. This value is very high, which indicates that a very strong relationship exists between the two variables due to the positive sign of the correlation Coefficient. This implies that if the organisation studied reduces or increases in work overload will also bring about a reduction or increase in quality of work in the studied organisation. The probability/significant value ( $P_v$ ) = 0.000 < 0.05 (level of significance) therefore a significant relationship exists between work overload and quality of work.

**Table 3. Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Work-overload and employee efficiency**

Correlation			Work overload	Employee efficiency
Spearman's rho	Work overload	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.800**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
		N	77	77
	Quality of Work	Correlation Coefficient	.800**	1.000
		Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	.
		N	77	77

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

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 3 revealed that the Spearman's Correlation Coefficient ( $r$ ) = 0.800. This value is very high, which indicates that a very strong relationship exists between work overload and effectiveness. It also shows that a positive relationship exist between the two variables due to the positive sign of the Correlation Coefficient. By implication, if the organisation improves in work overload, this will also bring about an improvement in effectiveness in the studied organisations. The probability/significant value ( $P_v$ ) = 0.000 < 0.05 (level of significance) therefore, a significant relationship exists between work overload and employee efficiency.



## Discussion of Findings

From the tables in the study, the ‘r’ values are very high; this implies that a significant relationship exists between work overload and workers’ productivity. This means that direct, strong and positive relationship exist between the variables and further change in work overload will cause a change in productivity. Melvin and Amstrong (2014), observed that work stressors do not only impact the workers’ productivity but they can be the cause of versatile negative outcomes such as fatigue, less encouragement towards job, unfaithfulness and less punctuality, it makes workers prone to making mistakes because they feel angry towards their employer and resentful to co-workers, they also experience burnout. They believe that work overload at the work place also minimizes the ability of decision making because of this, employees do not have enough motivation to take initiatives and make decisions by themselves. Harcourt, (2016) established an empirical relationship between overloaded task on the workers’ productivity.

## Conclusion

The study was aimed at establishing an empirical link between work overload on workers’ productivity in telecommunication industries in Nigeria. The study was guided by three specific objectives which includes; establish the effects of work overload on Efficiency, poor quality of work and Effectiveness of employees.

It was revealed that workers negative disposition affect their job performance. Their job satisfaction and motivation levels are decreased and they show redundant behaviours like absenteeism, mistakes during work, drug use and abuse and violence at work environment. Furthermore, they have more health-related physical and psychological complaints. The resultant effect includes an inefficient and ineffective workforce as well as a dissatisfied customer base.

The result of this study affirms that work overload, is the main cause of inefficiency, customer-dissatisfaction and ineffectiveness among employees of telecommunication industries in Nigeria which reduce their work performance. It is also recommended that organisations should provide an enabling working condition that is stress free such that an employee is not bombarded with work load to be achieved on a very short notice as this will boost employee productivity which translate to the attainment of organisation set goals and objectives, it is worthy of note also that organisations should initiate stress management policies with a view to identifying factors such as the heavy assignment of task, long working hours and unreachable deadlines which constitute work overload.

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