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IMPACT OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REGULATIONS ON LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF SLABMARK NIGERIA LIMITED

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ABSTRACT

Occupational safety and health is a process of ensuring that people stay safe and healthy in the workplace to increase workers capacity in their day to day activities. An organisation that tends to maintain good health and safety policies for the workers enhance their job commitment and increases productivity. This study therefore takes a look into the impact of occupational safety and health regulation on labour productivity in Nigeria with particular focus to Slabmark Nigeria Limited. The overall objective of this study is to investigate the impact of Occupational Safety and Health Regulation on labour productivity in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to: examine the impact of Occupational Safety and Health Regulation on labour productivity, identify the challenges of labour productivity in an organisation and suggest measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that the occupational safety and health rights are protected. The study utilizes survey research design of ex post facto type with the use of questionnaire to collect data for the study. The data collected was analysed using Frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The study finds out that, there is a high extent of impact of occupational safety in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria. The study also reveals that, there is a high extent of impact of health regulations in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria. It is also revealed in the study that, occupational health and safety really affects productivity if not properly implemented, and the study finds out that, there are some palliative measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that occupational safety and health rights are protected. The study therefore recommends that, Government should establish a monitoring team that will visit these

operational business organisations unannounced to evaluate their safety policies and measure as well as their levels of compliance.

Keywords: Occupational Safety, Health Regulation, Labour Productivity, Organization, Slabmark Nigeria Limited.

Introduction

Occupational safety and health is a cross-disciplinary area concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work or employment. The goal of all occupational safety and health programmes is to foster a safe work environment (Frend & Kohn, 2006). Occupational health deals with ill-health arising from working conditions/or environment that slowly accumulate to lead to deterioration of the workers health. However occupational safety is concerned with prevention of accidents and minimizing the aspect of work environment that has the potential of causing immediate violent harm to employees (Armstrong, 2012).

The health and safety of employees is a very significant issue to consider with relation to the attainment of organizational goals. Health and safety policies and programs are concerned with protecting employees and other people affected by an organization's activities, products and sernst hazards. With limited resources to help reduce occupational injuries, companies struggle with how to best focus these resources to achieve the greatest reduction in injuries for the optimal cost. Safety culture has been identified as a critical factor that sets the tone for importance of safety within an organization (OToole, 2002).

Occupational Health and Safety is an important issue for trade unions and should be given a prominent position in collective agreements and conditions of service. A healthy and safe environment is among the most valuable assets of workers, communities and countries. It also means that a healthy worker is an asset employer; therefore, the provision of a healthy and safe environment is one goal that must be jointly pursued by the union and employer.

Workers in Nigeria at different sectors of the economy recently, have been subjected to accidents which range from minor to fatal, as some have lost their lives right in the line of duty, while some have lost vital organs, therefore rendered permanently incapacitated. The issue of safety and health at workplace which once occupied a major place in the programmes and plans of the employers are now treated with levity. One such case was the fire incident that razed West Africa Rubber Product Company Ikorodu, Lagos State in 2002 where many workers met their death at night because of the negligence of the Chinese owners of the company who locked the workers in the factory without provision for emergency exit. There are equally other unregistered companies using incorporation as cover, many of them have worse cases involving health and safety of their workers. Nigeria joined the rest of the world on April 28, 2010 to mark, World Day for Safety and Health at work which is an international annual campaign, jointly agreed to by the International Labour Organisation, ILO, and Social Partners to promote safe, healthy and decent work annually on the exact date.

Ahiuma-Young (2012) commenting on safety and health development in Nigeria revealed that the global estimate of 2.3 million occupational fatalities occur annually while nothing less than 100 occupational fatalities and some billions of capital losses have been recorded in Nigeria between April 28, 2009 and April, 2010. Not less than 200 cases of industrial accidents

occur in the workplaces in Nigeria daily with an equally high rate of fatalities. Available statistics indicates that no fewer than 400 workers have lost their lives in the power sector between 2010 and 2012 while performing their official duties. In the maritime sector, also findings show that since the concessioning of the ports, over 100 cases of fatal industrial accidents have occurred with over ten deaths, numerous incapacitations and innumerable serious body injuries.

Fajana (2012) estimated that at least 50 million Nigerians are at risk of occupational hazards. This group he pointed out includes about 3.2 million Nigerians and children who are involved in economic activities, (even as abused participants) in the labour market. In the manufacturing sector, the frequency of fatal industrial accidents is very alarming. Many times, the managements collaborate with some union officials to conceal cases of industrial accidents and secretly negotiate compensation. The management simply pays out paltry sums as compensation to the families of victims in both deaths and permanent disabilities.

However, Fajana (2012) posited that a properly-managed safety culture based on tested principles of workplace safety will produce employees who participate actively in training; these employees will be able to identify and alert one another and management to potential hazards. They develop effective control measures and feel a sense of responsibility for their safety and safety of others. Accepting safety as a responsibility demonstrates a sincere concern for each employee; which establishes the foundation for an effective safety culture he opined

A significant proportion of Nigerians do not enjoy the desirable level of wellbeing that allows social and economic productivity, especially those working in Nigerian factories. Wellbeing is the state of acceptable level of good physical health, emotional and mental wellness (WHO, 2004). Wellbeing is all encompassing referring to aspects of psychological; physical health; financial, social well-being and the likes (WHO, 2004). Grant, Christianson, and Price (2007) define well-being in terms of three factors which include social, physical, and psychological functioning. Following the classification of Nussbaum, (2001) and Sen, (1993); the psychological dimensions describes variables such as agency, satisfaction, self-respect, and capabilities; physical dimension include food, shelter, health care, warmth, and mobility. The dimensions of social wellbeing include; community participation, acceptance and altruistic behaviours. A broad spectrum of literature have identify that importantly employee well-being is a significant determinant of organisational performance and firms survival. Due to its ability to lower health/illness related costs, labour turnover, work tardiness, absenteeism, increased organizational citizenship behaviour (Grant, Christianson, and Price ,2007; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach, 2000) and job performance (Grant, Christianson, and Price, 2007).

Accordingly, managerial safety initiatives among other organisations goals are often structured with the explicit aim of improving performance through increasing employee well-being. These include: Identification, assessment and control of all workplace hazards and risks; proactive approach to safety and health issues by members of organization (Supervisors, Workers and Managers); provision of information and training for employees in all cadre; design and implementation of organizational goals on health and safety (National safety Council, 2005). Literature has shown that the most significant approach to safety management (improving employees' safety awareness and safety behaviours) is through safety training

practices, equipment design and maintenance though given less priority by organizations (Jensen, 2002).

International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012) reported that, everyday about 6,300 people die as a result of occupational accidents of work-related diseases - more than 2.3 million deaths per year, 317 million accidents occur on the job annually; many of these resulting in extended absences from work. The human cost of this daily adversity is enormous and the economic burden of poor occupational safety and health practices is estimated at 4 percent of global Gross Domestic Product each year. "Most of these deaths and injuries occur particularly in developing countries where a large part of the population is engaged in hazardous activities taking severe toll on these economics.

This study therefore takes a look into the impact of occupational safety and health regulation on labour productivity in Nigeria with particular focus to Slabmark Nigeria Limited.

Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study is to investigate the impact of Occupational Safety and Health Regulation on labour productivity in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the impact of Occupational Safety and Health Regulation on labour productivity
2. Identify the challenges of labour productivity in an organisation
3. Suggest measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that the occupational safety and health rights are protected.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study; they are:

1. What are the Impact of occupational safety and health regulation on labour productivity?
2. What are the challenges of labour productivity in an organisation?
3. What are the suggested measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that the occupational safety and health rights are protected?

Research Hypothesis

The following Null hypothesis will be tested for

Ho1 There is no significant influence of occupational safety and health regulation on labour productivity.

Ho2 There is no significant challenges of labour productivity in an organisation,

Ho3 There is no significant measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that the occupational safety and health right are protected.

Methodology

This study adopts the survey research design of the *ex-post facto* type. The populations of this study comprises of all staff of Slabmak Nigeria Limited, Ibadan including male and female, junior and senior staff, core and casual staff. The sample for the study comprises of sixty (60)

respondents who are purposively selected. This was used in order to select the target population that satisfies the criteria for participation in the study. This is done because of the unique attributes of the respondents and for equal evidence of representation. Self-made questionnaire method was adopted to enable the researcher have a comprehensive information on the impact of occupational safety and health regulation on labour productivity in Nigeria with particular focus to Slabmark Nigeria Limited. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section covers information on the respondent's personal bio data and the second section focus on the question relating to the impact of occupational safety and health regulation on labour productivity in Nigeria. Frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the bio data of the respondent while chi-square was used in analyzing data collected from the field which was tested at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance.

Results

Research Question one: To what extent does occupational safety impact labour productivity in Nigeria?

Table 1: Measures of occupational safety in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria

s/n	Occupational safety	SD	D	U	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	Adequate and comfortable working environment as well as safety practices will affect productivity positively	-	2 3.3%	-	17 28.3%	41 68.3%	4.62	0.67
2	The work area is sufficiently equipped for typical operational needs (normal storage, movements, etc.)	-	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	31 51.7%	26 43.3%	4.37	0.64
3	Favourable environmental conditions (less noise, suitable temperature etc.) provided at the work place will increase my productivity at work	-	-	2 3.3%	36 60.0%	22 36.7%	4.33	0.54
4	The practice of health and safety will protect employees from injuries and illness	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	31 51.7%	28 41.7%	4.30	0.77
Weighted Mean =4.41								

Table 1 shows the extent to which occupational safety impact labour productivity in Nigeria.

"Adequate and comfortable working environment as well as safety practices will affect productivity positively" ($\bar{x}$=4.62) was ranked highest as the main measures of occupational safety and was followed by "The work area is sufficiently equipped for typical operational needs (normal storage, movements, etc.)" ($\bar{x}$=4.37), "Favourable environmental conditions (less noise, suitable temperature etc.) provided at the work place will increase my productivity at work" ($\bar{x}$=4.33) and lastly by "The practice of health and safety will protect employees from injuries and illness" ($\bar{x}$=4.30) respectively.

Inference to be deduced from the above expression is that there is a high extent of impact of occupational safety in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria

Research Question two: To what extent do health regulations impact labour productivity in Nigeria?

Table.2: Measures of health regulations in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria

s/n	Health regulations	SD	D	U	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	The practice of health and safety will protect employees from injuries and illness	1 1.7%	-	-	34 56.7%	25 41.7%	4.37	0.66
2	Sick leave and other fringe benefit enhance workers productivity in the organization	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	5 8.3%	39 65.0%	14 23.3%	4.07	0.73
3	I am satisfied with the occupational health and safety procedure of the organization	1 1.7%	9 15.0%	4 6.7%	31 51.7%	15 25.0%	3.83	1.03
4	Health and safety standards affects productivity	2 3.3%	18 30.0%	1 1.7%	21 35.0%	18 30.0%	3.58	1.29
5	Welfare services in the organization are well managed	6 10.0%	10 16.7%	4 6.7%	33 55.0%	7 11.7%	3.42	1.20
6	The employees are contacted about their health and safety concerns	4 6.7%	13 21.7%	6 10.0%	28 46.7%	9 15.0%	3.42	1.18
Weighted Mean = 3.78								

Table 2 shows the extent to which health regulations impact labour productivity in Nigeria.

"The practice of health and safety will protect employees from injuries and illness" ($\bar{x}$=4.37), was ranked highest as the major measure of health regulations and was followed by "Sick leave and other fringe benefit enhance workers productivity in the organization" ($\bar{x}$=4.07), "Am satisfied with the occupational health and safety procedure of the organization" ($\bar{x}$ =3.83), "Health and safety standards affect productivity" ($\bar{x}$=3.58), "Welfare services in the organization are well managed" ($\bar{x}$=3.42), and lastly by "The employees are contacted about their health and safety concerns" ($\bar{x}$=3.42) respectively

Inference to be deduced from the above expression is that there is a high extent of impact of health regulations in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria

Research question three: What are the challenges of labour productivity in an organisation?

Table 3: Challenges of labour productivity in an organisation

s/n	Labour productivity	SD	D	U	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	You can notify the management about the health problems experienced in performing your duties	2 3.3%	3 5.0%	7 11.7%	39 65.0%	9 15.0%	3.83	0.87
2	The management advised you on the health and safety aspect of your job schedule	2 3.3%	9 15.0%	8 13.3%	30 50.0%	11 18.3%	3.65	1.05
3	In increasing the safe work level, does your company have standard forms for safe work quality records	3 5.0%	11 18.3%	7 11.7%	26 43.3%	13 21.7%	3.58	1.17
4	Health and safety standard affects productivity	5 8.3%	15 25.0%	3 5.0%	19 31.7%	18 30.0%	3.50	1.37
5	The organization does not have a safety policy	7 11.7%	16 26.7%	6 10.0%	18 30.0%	13 21.7%	3.23	1.37
6	The organization does not have an accident book or similar accident record system	2 3.3%	22 36.7%	7 11.7%	21 35.0%	8 13.3%	3.18	1.17
7	There is no health and safety coordinator and committee in the organization	3 5.0%	27 45.0%	4 6.7%	13 21.7%	13 21.7%	3.10	1.32
8	There is no senior management representative responsible for health and safety, within the organisation	3 5.0%	27 45.0%	4 6.7%	19 31.7%	7 11.7%	3.00	1.21
9	The workers are not allowed to speak out their opinion about health and safety policy	4 6.7%	26 43.3%	5 8.3%	17 28.3%	8 13.3%	2.98	1.24
10	The employees do not have the ability to approach management on issues of concern with regards to their health and safety	5 8.3%	36 60.0%	3 5.0%	9 15.0%	7 11.7%	2.62	1.19
Weighted Mean = 3.27								

Table 3 shows the challenges of labour productivity in an organisation. "You can notify the management about the health problems experienced in performing your duties" ($\bar{x}$=3.83) was ranked highest by the mean score rating as the main challenges of labour productivity and

was followed by "The management advised you on the health and safety aspect of your job schedule" ($\bar{x}$=3.65), "In increasing the safe work level, does your company have standard forms for safe work quality records" ($\bar{x}$=3.58), and "Health and safety standard affects productivity' ($\bar{x}$=3.50) respectively.

Research Question four: What are the measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that occupational safety and health rights are protected?

Table 4: Measures of protecting occupational safety and health rights

s/n	Variables	SD	D	U	A	SA	$\bar{x}$	S.D
1	Health insurance scheme should be put in place for all workers	1 1.7%	-	-	23 38.3%	36 60.0%	4.55	0.67
2	The organisation should have a written health and safety policy	1 1.7%	-	-	24 40.0%	35 58.3%	4.53	0.68
3	Right of the employee, regardless of their level should be protected	1 1.7%	-	-	30 50.0%	29 48.3%	4.43	0.67
4	The organisation should have procedures for employees for reporting pains or other diseases in relation to the job processes	1 1.7%	-	-	30 50.0%	29 48.3%	4.43	0.67
5	Health centers should be provided for within the organisation to cater for any emergency	1 1.7%	-	1 1.7%	30 50.0%	28 46.7%	4.40	0.69
6	To enhance productivity, job specific health and safety training/education must be provided to all employees prior to starting a new job	1 1.7%	-	2 3.3%	31 51.7%	26 43.3%	4.35	0.71
7	All employees should be given the opportunity to voice out health and safety opinions/concerns	2 3.3%	-	1 1.7%	30 50.0%	27 45.0%	4.33	0.82
8	The company should provide investigation program upon accident report	1 1.7%	1 1.7%	5 8.3%	26 43.3%	27 45.0%	4.28	0.83
9	Implementation of health and safety act in the organisation will make employees feel safe	3 5.0%	-	1 1.7%	31 51.7%	25 41.7%	4.25	0.91
10	The organisation should have an accident book or similar accident record system	2 3.3%	-	5 8.3%	34 56.7%	19 31.7%	4.13	0.83
Weighted Mean = 4.37								

Table 4 shows measures that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that occupational safety and health rights are protected. "Health insurance scheme should be put in place for all

workers" ($\bar{x}$=4.55), was ranked highest by the mean score rating as the main measure to be taken which was followed by "The organisation should have a written health and safety policy" ($\bar{x}$=4.53), "Right of the employee, regardless of their level should be protected" ($\bar{x}$=4.43), "The organisation should have procedures for employees for reporting pains or other diseases in relation to the job processes" ($\bar{x}$=4.43), and lastly by "Health centers should be provided for within the organisation to cater for any emergency"($\bar{x}$=4.40) respectively.

ijj Testing of Hypothesis:

Research hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between occupational safety and labour productivity in Nigeria

Table 5: Correlation analysis showing the relationship between occupational safety and labour productivity in Nigeria

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	P-value	Remarks
Labour productivity	32.6833	7.2240	60	.066	.615	Not Sig.
Occupational safety	17.6167	1.6884				

It is shown in table 5 that there is no significant relationship between occupational safety and labour productivity in Nigeria (r = .066n=60, p(.615)> .05).

Hence, occupational safety had no influence on labour productivity in the study. This result supported hypothesis one thus it was accepted

Research hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between health regulation and labour productivity in Nigeria

Table 6: Correlation analysis showing the relationship between health regulation and labour productivity in Nigeria

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	n	r	P-value	Remarks
Labour productivity	32.6833	7.2240	60	.334*	.009	Sig.
Health regulations	22.6833	4.3783				

* Sig. at 0.05 level

It is shown in table 6 that there is a positive significant relationship between health regulations and labour productivity in Nigeria (r = .334n=60, p(.009)< .05).

Hence, health regulations positively influenced labour productivity in the study. This result did not support hypothesis two thus it was rejected.

Research hypothesis three: There is no significant joint contribution of occupational safety and health regulations on Labour productivity in Nigeria

Table 7: Regression Analysis showing the joint contribution of occupational safety and health regulations on Labour productivity

R	**R Square**		**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	
.335	.112		.081	6.9259	
A N O V A					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**DF**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**	**Remarks**
Regression	344.832	2	172.416	3.594	.034	Sig.
Residual	2734.151	57	47.968			
Total	3078.983	59				

Table 7 shows the joint contribution of the two independent variables to the prediction of the dependent variable i.e. labour productivity. The table also shows a coefficient of multiple correlation (R = .335 and a multiple R^2 of .112. This means that 11.2% of the variance was accounted for by two predictor variables when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at α =0.05. The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded F-ratio of 3.594 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance

Table 8: Regression Analysis showing the relative contribution of occupational safety and health regulations on Labour productivity

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
(Constant)	21.099	9.777		2.158	.035
Occupational safety	-5.991E-02	.550	-.014	-.109	.914
Health regulations	.557	.212	.338	2.628	.011

Table 8 reveals the relative contribution of the two independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights, viz: Occupational safety (β = -.014, p>.05), and health regulations (β = .338, p<.05) respectively. Hence, health regulations was significant i.e. could significantly and independently predict labour productivity and occupational safety could not.

Discussion of Findings

The study examines the impact of occupational health and safety on labour productivity in Nigeria. From the findings, it was revealed that there is a high extent of impact of occupational safety in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria. This finding was in line with the view of OToole, 2002, who opined that the health and safety of employees is a very significant issue to consider with relation to the attainment of organizational goals. Health and safety policies and programs are concerned with protecting employees and other people affected by an organization's activities, products and services against hazards. With limited resources to help reduce occupational injuries, companies struggle with how to best focus these resources to

achieve the greatest reduction in injuries for the optimal cost. Safety culture has been identified as a critical factor that sets the tone for importance of safety within an organization

The findings also show that, there is a high extent of impact of health regulations in relations to labour productivity in Nigeria. This was in line with the view of Fajana (2012) who estimated that at least 50million Nigerians are at risk of occupational hazards. This group he pointed out includes about 3.2 million Nigerians and children who are involved in economic activities, (even as abused participants) in the labour market. In the manufacturing sector, the frequency of fatal industrial accidents is very alarming. Many times, the managements collaborate with some union officials to conceal cases of industrial accidents and secretly negotiate compensation. The management simply pays out paltry sums as compensation to the families of victims in both deaths and permanent disabilities. Wilson & Rosenfeld (2004) asserted that integrated health, safety and productivity management programs are emerging as a business imperative aimed at improving the total value of human resource investments. These programs rely upon the joint management of human resources benefits and programs that employees may access when they are sick, injured or balancing work/life issues. They include health insurance, disability and workers' compensation, employee assistance, paid sick leave, and occupational safety programs. Wilson & Rosenfeld (2004) cited that also included are activities meant to enhance morale, reduce turnover, and increase on-the-job productivity**.** An integrated health, safety and productivity management model evolved over the past five to ten years. What led to its emergence? What prompted business leaders to actively pursue an integrated approach as a business imperative? Below we review some of the forces that supported a growing interest in, and adoption of, integrated health, safety and productivity management programs among American businesses.

Also from the findings, there is a measure that can be employed by the organisation to ensure that occupational safety and health rights are protected .Fajana (2012) posited that a properly-managed safety culture based on tested principles of workplace safety will produce employees who participate actively in training; these employees will be able to identify and alert one another and management to potential hazards. They develop effective control measures and feel a sense of responsibility for their safety and safety of others. Accepting safety as a responsibility demonstrates a sincere concern for each employee; which establishes the foundation for an effective safety culture he opined. According to Armstrong (2012) suggest that health and safety committee should help in conducting risk assessments and safety audits and make suggestions on improving health and safety performance. Employers should establish safety committees after consultation with trade union representatives and post a notice stating the composition of the committee and indicating what areas the organization will embrace.

Conclusion

From the findings, it was revealed that, information is vital for the development and implementation of effective programmes. The collection and dissemination of accurate information on hazards and hazardous materials, surveillance of workplaces, monitoring of compliance with policies and good practice, and other related activities are central to the establishment and enforcement of effective policies. Health promotion is a central element of occupational health practice. Efforts must be made to enhance workers' physical, mental and social well-being at Slabmak Nigeria Limited. Compensation, rehabilitation and curative

services must be made available to workers who suffer occupational injuries, accidents and work related diseases. Action must be taken to minimise the consequences of occupational hazards.

Recommendations

The study therefore recommends that:

- Management of organisations should ensure the safety precautions are taken in the work environment at all instances so as to enhance employees to higher productivity of the organisation.
- Qualified safety officers should be employed to manage the safety challenges facing the organisations in their business operations.
- The safety policies and programmes of the organisations must not be taken for granted, such must be effectively implemented to the later and adherence monitored at every instance.
- The occupational safety and health policies of the organisation should not just be a mere cosmetic colouration bit should be concise and effective.

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