

WORKPLACE ONLINE TRANSACTION SYSTEM AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY OPERATORS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between workplace virtual meeting System and organizational health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State. The objective of the study was to examine the extent of relationship between workplace virtual meeting system and measures of organizational health in terms of communication health, operational efficiency and customer service health. ten research questions and ten hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The work adopted positivism as its philosophical underpinning. Thus, the explanatory cross-sectional survey research design was equally adopted for the study with a population of eight hundred and ninety-eight (898) Hospitality firms in Rivers State. Applying the Taro Yamene Formula, the sample size of the study was five hundred and fifty-two (552) respondents. Questionnaire developed on a 4-point rating scale was used to elicit data from respondents. Out of five hundred and fifty-two (552) copies of the questionnaire administered, a total of three hundred and ninety (390) copies were retrieved. Mean and standard deviation were used for the univariate analysis; Spearman Rank Coefficient Correlation was used for the bivariate analysis. SPSS version. The analysis revealed that workplace online transaction system has significant positive relationship with organizational health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State in terms of communication health, operational efficiency and customer service health. Hence it was concluded that getting workplace virtual meeting system transformation right is vital for sustainable business success in a new digital business world. Hospitality industry operators in Rivers State who fail to digitalized their workplace, might find it really challenging to attain a healthy organization. The study recommended that Management of hospitality industry should endeavour to provide adequate network system to necessitate online transactions in their various workplace. The study has contributed to knowledge on how workplace digitalization interacts with organizational health specifically in of hospitality industry operators in Rivers State.

Keywords: Workplace Virtual Meeting System, Organisational Health, Communication Health, Operational Efficiency, Customer Service Health

INTRODUCTION

Workplace virtual meeting system can best be considered as the natural evolution of the workplace that is comprised of management and employees' technology working environment (Finklestein & Wong, 2017). A Workplace virtual meeting system, conceptually, is seen as an operational practice where employees use internet-enabled mobile devices and special applications to enable them work seamlessly. A Workplace virtual meeting system is such a one that gives an employee the leverage to handle some other multi-taskable activities while responding to work engagements. According to Berg et al. (2018), a Workplace virtual meeting system ranges from the human resource applications and core business applications to e-mail, instant messaging and enterprise social media tools and virtual meeting tools. Zoom meeting, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet are the diverse ways that a Workplace virtual meeting system can be indicated.

Workplace virtual meeting and organizational health have constituted research interest over the years. For instance, Ahmadu (2014) studied the effects of electronic banking on growth of deposit money banks in Nigeria; Saeid (2011) studied the impact of information technology in banking

system in Keshavarzi Iran; information technology and the growth/development of banking industry in Nigeria (Alfred, 2012); impact of the Nigerian business environment on company performance of capitalized companies in Nigeria (Gado, 2015); Impact of online banking on the performance of Nigerian banking sector (Auwal (2016); effects of information technology on organizational performance in Nigerian banking industries (Balogun (2016); impact of ATM banking performance on customer satisfaction with the bank in Malawi (Charles, 2016); impact of ICT on the performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria (Nwakoby et al., 2018); technological environment and organizational performance/productivity in bank and enterprises (Okechukwu & Okoronkwo, 2018; Mohammed et al., 2019).

However, none of these studies above provided empirical evidence on how dimensions of Workplace virtual meeting interact with measures of organizational health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State such as **communication health, operational efficiency, and customer service health**. This suggests that the relationship between Workplace Digitalization and organizational health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State have not received sufficient research attention. This knowledge gap necessitated this study.

Workplace Virtual Meeting System and Organizational Health

The health of an organization can be determined by so many factors. One of the strong ones amongst them is a Workplace virtual meeting system. The era of Covid-19 as it looks like it has come to stay just like malaria, has pushed many organizations to go beyond holding meetings and conferences beyond physically located destinations. The advent of virtual technologies in applications and gadgets have made hosting of meetings and conferences a lot easier for persons who are not physically situated. Employees, management, clients, and customers do not need to physically come together always for smooth flow of data, information, ideas, etc. for optimization of communication health. Gone are the days when the workplace was merely a network of employees, management, and machines/tools in a physical space. Today's connected, instant access environment has blurred the lines between the physical office and the place where work actually happens. As the distinction between professional and personal life dissolves, and the work environment becomes truly digital, management and employees are communicating and collaborating in unprecedented ways. This enhances the health of an organization such as a hospitality firm. Customers get served better; operational and human resources are maximized due to unrestricted interaction and relationships established through online conferences and meetings; and obviously, there is timely feedback, notifications, and information access as a result of constant communication that is facilitated by the presence of Workplace virtual meeting system. A Workplace virtual meeting system ranges from the human resource applications and core business applications to e-mail, instant messaging and enterprise social media tools and virtual meeting tools (Berg et al., 2018). Due to advances in technology, the notion of a Workplace virtual meeting system has now become a reality and further developments will continue to have an effect as the work system evolves. Business organizations such as Hospitality Industry Operators now have Zoom meeting, Microsoft Teams, and Google meet that they use to communicate with all stakeholders across-the-board. This allows seamless flow of business operations for the organization, thereby enhancing the health of the organization. The hypotheses to these, however, are given below:

- Ho₁: Workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with communication health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.
- Ho₂: Workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with operational efficiency of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.
- Ho₃: Workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with customer service health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.

Person–Environment Fit Theory

Lewin and Edwards' Person–Environment Fit Theory was popularized in 1962 as cited in Osita (2018). This theory of psychological stress describes the interaction between the person and environment ($P \times E$) as the key to comprehending people's cognitive, emotional and behavioural reactions such as stress as well as operational productivity level. The relevant assumptions of this theory as deemed fit for this work are as follows:

- i. A mismatch between a person and his work environment will lead to tension and uneasiness capable of hampering his level of productivity;
- ii. Worker's capabilities (skill sets) will determine the level of work pressure and how environmental press affects their output (Lewin and Edward as cited in Odu, 2018). This is the phase of the theory that strengthens the fact that the ability of a manager in a hospitality company to effectively and efficiently utilize the digital at his disposal in the workplace will influence how stressful the work will be, as well as influence communication health, operational efficiency, and customer service health in the organization.

The implication of the first assumption is that a manager with low expertise on use of digital platforms and gadgets in terms of workplace online transaction system, Workplace virtual meeting system, and Workplace social media will be greatly challenged in coping with a workplace environment fortified with hi-tech digital technologies. Such individual will need to sharpen himself so as to be fit to efficiently and effectively utilize all of those technologies at his disposal to run activities, thereby enhancing organizational health in areas of communication health, operational efficiency, and customer service health, amongst others.

Adopting this theory as the major theoretical framework for this study was based on the fact that the theory is related to Workplace Digitalization, which is the independent variable here. Another point that made this theory appropriate to be adopted as the theoretical foundation of this study is the fact that it explains and predicts that the more acquainted a manager is with digital platforms and gadgets in a digitally-inclined work environment, will determine whether the Manager will be able to achieve results and in what degree.

Empirical Review

Ahmadu (2014) carried a study on the effects of electronic banking on growth of deposit money banks in Nigeria. The Ex-post factor research design was adopted for this study. Using time series data for the period 2006- 2012, this study examined the effects of electronic banking on growth of deposit money banks in Nigeria. Data were collected from secondary sources through annual reports and statistical bulletin of Central Bank of Nigeria. Electronic banking was measured using the total value of internet and mobile banking while growth was measured using the value of total deposits and total assets of deposit money banks in Nigeria. A total deposit was regressed on internet and mobile banking, while a total asset was regressed on internet and mobile banking using multiple regression technique. The study revealed that positive relationships exist between mobile banking and total deposits, and between internet banking and total asset while on the other hand, no significant relationships between internet banking and total deposits, and between mobile banking and total asset.

Saeid (2011) studied the impact of Information Technology in Banking System. The aim of the study was to investigate the effect of information technology in the banking system of Bank Keshavarzi Iran. Both exploratory research and descriptive research designs were used for the study. The data was obtained from customers and the employees (100 bank customers and a sample of 20 clerical and 20 managerial in the bank). The data were then analyzed using the exact percentage and the 5-point Likert scale to determine the impact of Information technology in the banking system affairs. The findings then proved that Information technology contributes to the

banking system in three different ways as follows: IT saves the time of the customers and the employees conspicuously, IT cuts down the expenses and IT facilitates the network transactions. Alfred (2012) studied the impact of information technology on the growth and development of banking industry in Nigeria. The researcher paid attention to the concept of information technology, history of information technology, evolution of Nigerian banking industry, banking operations in Nigeria, application of information technology in Nigerian banking industry, the role of information technology in Nigerian banking industry, and the problems and challenges of information technology in Nigerian banking industry. The descriptive and exploratory survey designs were adopted for the study with reference to big three (3) commercial banks (United Bank for Africa plc (BA), First Bank of Nigeria plc (FBN) and Zenith Bank plc). A total sample size of 1500 was to be adopted for this research, as a sample of 500 was drawn from each of the three (3) banks that were under investigation. The simple percentage and chi-square statistical tools were used for the analysis of research questions and hypotheses. Findings revealed that information technology enhances the growth and development of banking industry in Nigeria.

Gado (2015) carried a study on the impact of the Nigerian business environment on company performance: a case of 20 most capitalized companies in Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to empirically ascertain the relationship between macro environment (Economic, Technological, Politico-legal and Socio-cultural) and performance of capitalist companies in Nigeria. This research shows the empirical standing of this theoretical convergence with respect to the 20 most capitalized companies in Nigeria. Using the Ordinary Least Square and simple multiple correlation methods, they showed the impact of the Nigerian business environment on the performance of these companies. Collectively, the variables of the environment have significant and positive impact on the companies' performance. Government expenditure and inflation have positive impact while exchange rate and interest rate have negative impact but on the whole there was a positive and significant impact.

Auwal (2016) studied the Impact of online banking on the performance of Nigerian banking sector. The aim of this study was to examine the impact of e-banking on the performance of the banking sector in Nigeria. E-banking was measured by the expenditure made on information and communication technology (ICT) investments, number of debit cards issued to customers, and number of automated teller machines (ATMs) installed by the banks. Return on assets (ROA), return on equity (ROE), and net interest margin (NIM) were used as performance variables. The impact of e-banking on the bank performance was examined in two periods: pre-consolidation (i.e., before adopting the e-banking) and post-consolidation (i.e., after adopting the e-banking). Data collection involves secondary data gathered via annual reports of 21 Nigerian banks. The SPSS software was used for data analysis. The SPSS software (version 22) was used to carry out the analysis. The analysis includes frequency analysis of demographics of the banks, standard deviations, and mean differences. Findings revealed that majority of the business sectors, including banks, have taken advantage of using IT to enhance their business operations and performance.

Balogun (2016) studied the effects of information technology on organizational performance in Nigerian banking industries. The researcher examined customer's and employee's responses to technology innovation, and their effects on the performance of the Nigerian banks. The field survey was adopted for the study. Fifteen (20) major banks were selected for the research. Four hundred and fifty (450) questionnaires were distributed to customers to test the first hypothesis out of which 400 were collected which is 88.88% of the distributed questionnaires, Chi square was used to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that technological innovation influenced banks employee's performance, customer's satisfaction and improvement in banks profitability.

METHODOLOGY

The work adopted the cross-sectional explanatory survey research design. The population of the study consisted of eight hundred and ninety-eight (898) hospitality firms. The Rivers State Yellow Pages Directory provides a total of eight hundred and sixty-six (866) hospitality firms in the state. However, further inquiry and tour round Port Harcourt City revealed six (6) of the firms were moribund with reduces the total number of operational hospitality businesses to 860. In the course of the researcher's tour and investigations, the researcher discovered thirty-eight (38) other extant hospitality firms (Fast Food = 7; restaurants = 26; and 5 hotels). Adding number of hospitality firms captured in the Rivers State Yellow Pages Directory (860) to the ones discovered in the course of the researcher's inquiry gives a total of eight hundred and ninety-eight (898) hospitality industry operators in Rivers. From a population of 898 hospitality firms, a sample size of two hundred and seventy-six (276) firms was obtained using the Taro Yamene Formula. For manageability, two managers were conveniently selected as respondents for each of the hospitality firms. The two (2) top level managers include the General Manager and Customer Relations Manager. Selecting two managers across the two hundred and seventy-six (276) hospitality firms, a total of five hundred and fifty-two (552) managers served as respondents. The study involved the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source consisted of a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The presentation and analysis of data/results was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The analysis of data was done in two main sections: descriptive analysis (univariate analysis) and bivariate analysis. The univariate analysis was done using mean and standard deviation while the bivariate analysis was done using Spearman Rank Order Correlation.

Results

Workplace Virtual Meeting System and Organizational Health

Ho₁: Workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with communication health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.

Table 1: Correlation of Workplace Virtual Meeting System and Communication Health

		Workplace Virtual Meeting System	Communication Health
Spearman's rho	Correlation	1.000	.642**
	Coefficient		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	390	390
	Correlation	.642**	1.000
	Coefficient		
Communication Health	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	390	390

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SPSS Output, 2022

Table 1 above reveals r value of 0.642 at a $P=0.00<0.05$ for the hypothesis relating workplace virtual meeting system and communication health. Since the significance value 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) which states that workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with communication health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate (Ha₁) was accepted. This implies that workplace virtual meeting system has a high positive relationship with communication health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.

Ho₅: Workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with operational efficiency of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.

Table 2: Correlation of Workplace Virtual Meeting System and Operational Efficiency

		Workplace Virtual Meeting System	Operational Efficiency
Spearman's rho	Workplace Virtual Meeting System	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.704**
		N	.000
			390
	Operational Efficiency	Correlation Coefficient	704**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000
			390

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SPSS Output, 2022

Table 3 above reveals r value of 0.704 at a $p=0.00<0.05$ for the hypothesis relating workplace virtual meeting system and operational efficiency. Since the significance value 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) which states that workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with operational efficiency of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate (H_{a2}) was accepted. With a correlation coefficient of 0.704, the result implies that workplace virtual meeting system has a high positive relationship with operational efficiency of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State. This judgment is drawn base on the decision rule.

H_{03} : Workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with customer service health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.

Table 3: Correlation of Workplace Virtual Meeting System and Customer Service Health

		Workplace Virtual Meeting System	Customer Service Health
Spearman's rho	Workplace Virtual Meeting System	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.856**
		N	.000
			390
	Customer Service Health	Correlation Coefficient	.856**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.000
			390

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SPSS Output, 2022

Table 3 above reveals r value of 0.856 at a $P=0.00<0.05$ for the hypothesis relating workplace virtual meeting system and customer service health. Since the significance value 0.00 is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) which states that workplace virtual meeting system does not have any significant relationship with customer service health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State was rejected and the alternate (H_{a3}) was accepted. This implies that workplace virtual meeting system has a very high positive relationship with customer service health of Hospitality Industry Operators in Rivers State.

Workplace Virtual Meeting System and Organizational Health

The test of hypotheses four, five and six revealed that workplace virtual meeting system has a significant positive relationship with organizational health of hospitality industry operators in Rivers

State. This is noted from the fact that the ability of hospitality industry operators to improve in their current form of holding meeting virtually in their workplace through the adoption of zoom, Microsoft team and google meet, necessitate high advancement of organizational health in terms of communication health (timely notification, timely feedback and timely information access), operational efficiency (financial operational efficiency, human operational efficiency and material resource maximization) and customer service health (customer compliant resolution, service reliability and smooth booking management). The finding above is in agreement with the findings of Berg et al. (2018) that the advent of virtual technologies in applications and gadgets have made hosting of meetings and conferences a lot easier for persons who are not physically situated. Employees, management, clients, and customers do not need to physically come together always for smooth flow of data, information, ideas, etc. for optimization of communication health. Gone are the days when the workplace was merely a network of employees, management, and machines/tools in a physical space. Today's connected, instant access environment has blurred the lines between the physical office and the place where work actually happens. As the distinction between professional and personal life dissolves, and the work environment becomes truly digital, management and employees are communicating and collaborating in unprecedented ways. This enhances the health of an organization such as a hospitality firm. Customers get served better; operational and human resources are maximized due to unrestricted interaction and relationships established through online conferences and meetings; and obviously, there is timely feedback, notifications, and information access as a result of constant communication that is facilitated by the presence of Workplace virtual meeting system.

Similarly, Balogun (2016) found that due to advances in technology, the notion of a Workplace virtual meeting system has now become a reality and further developments will continue to have an effect as the work system evolves. Business organizations such as Hospitality Industry Operators now have Zoom meeting, Microsoft Teams, and Google meet that they use to communicate with all stakeholders across-the-board. This allows seamless flow of business operations for the organization, thereby enhancing the health of the organization. Specifically, the era of Covid-19 as it looks like it has come to stay just like malaria, has pushed many organizations to go beyond holding meetings and conferences beyond physically located destinations. This has contributed earnestly to organizational health such as communication health (timely notification, timely feedback and timely information access), operational efficiency (financial operational efficiency, human operational efficiency and material resource maximization) and customer service health (customer compliant resolution, service reliability and smooth booking management).

CONCLUSIONS

Base on the analyses and discussion of findings, the study concludes that workplace virtual meeting system has a significant positive relationship with organizational health of Hospitality This implies that getting workplace virtual meeting transformation right is vital for sustainable business success in a new digital business world. Hospitality industry operators in Rivers State who fail to digitalized their workplace, might find it really challenging to attain a healthy organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of hospitality industry should periodically offer their workers digital incentives such as smart phones, laptop etc. to facilitates virtual meeting in their organization.
2. Management of hospitality industry should endeavour their workers are trained and retrained on how to virtualize their workplace to enable official meeting irrespective of their location.
3. Management of hospitality industry should ensure availability of free wifi within the organization and free subscription of individual's gadget for effective practice of virtual meeting.

4. Management of hospitality industry should ensure that every unit in their organization have an official whatsapp platform.

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