

## **WORK ENVIRONMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF PHARMACEUTICAL FIRMS IN ENUGU STATE NIGERIA**

**ONWUZULIGBO L.T. Ph.D.**

Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

**Nwobodo, V.O. M.Sc**

Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

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**Abstract:** *This study specifically sought to ascertain the relationship between personal protective equipment and employee output via commitment. Survey design method was adopted. The population comprised of 416 employees of three largest pharmaceutical manufacturing firms in Enugu State, Nigeria. Complete enumeration sampling technique was used to collect the data with a 5 point likert scaled structured instrument. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Spearman- Brown co-efficient reliability test. The coefficient test result was 0.991. The hypothesis was tested with Pearson's product moment correlation co efficient using SPSS, Ver. 20. The findings show there is a significant positive relationship between the variables of the study. This study concludes that work environment has significant implication on employee's performance and recommends that management provision of conducive work environment will significantly improve Organizational output.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Work environment is often perceived as consisting of the work space, equipments, tools and other technological infrastructure of the place of work. Oludeyi (2015) noted that there are other elements like workplace settings, situations, conditions and circumstances. Truly Work environment is a broad concept that connotes the totality of factors tangible and intangible that affects organizational participants positively or negatively. It includes characteristics of the place of work and the job

itself like organizational culture, offensive, or choking odor, heat, cold, noise, workload, task complexity, leadership style, Supervisor support, work place conflict and so on.

Workers are not disembodied spirits. They are flesh and blood entities that physically, mentally, spatially and socially interact with other elements of the work place to consume input and to produce output towards attainment of organizational goals.

Manufacturing Firms expect and demand of their employees to generate higher rates of

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**ONWUZULIGBO L.T. Ph.D.and Nwobodo, V.O. M.Sc**

productivity in terms of output. Employers are usually positively disposed towards such high performing employees. In the same vain employees enjoy such positive disposition from their employers. More often than not employers feel disappointed when their high expectations fail to materialize. Their negative reactions toward employees for failing to meet their expectations compound issues as the employees performance further nosedives due to seeming insensitivity to the employee plights on the part of employers. Examples of this, clearly showed up in various States of Nigeria, where covid '19 infections was ravaging The State governments expected patriotism and commitment from the Medical personnel to contain the covid '19 pandemic that was not forthcoming, instead they were embarking on industrial action as a result of perceived insensitivity on the part of the government having lost a number of highly dedicated Medical Personnel to death and many are ill due to covid '19 infections If employers are positively disposed towards high performing employees and employees appreciate such positive disposition, why doesn't a worker work hard to obtain what they enjoy? Is it possible that certain elements of the work environment not readily perceived by employers constrain the performance of their employees?

#### **Objective of the Study:**

To ascertain the relationship between personal protective equipment and employee commitment.

#### **Hypothesis of the Study**

There is a significant positive relationship between Personal protective equipment and employee commitment thus physical work environment and employee performance.

#### **Literature Review**

##### **Work Environment:**

Many scholars have attempted conceptualizing the work environment, Perhaps it may be defined in its simplest form as the settings, situations, conditions and circumstances under which people work (Oludeyi, 2015). It is further elaborated by Briner, (2000) as a very broad category that encompasses the physical setting (e.g. heat, equipments etc.), characteristics of the job itself (e.g. workload, task complexity), broader organizational features (e.g. culture, history) and even aspects of the extra organizational setting (e.g. local labour and market conditions, industry sector, work-home relationships). Kohun (2002), defines work environment as comprising the totality of forces, inter personal relationship of the work place, and other influential factors that and or constrain employee's activities and performance. It means that work environment is the sum of the interrelationships of the workplace, physical, spati, technical and other elements of the environment in which the employees work which includes technical, human and organizational environment.

Opperman (2002) was quoted in Yusuf and Metiboba, (2012), as defining workplace environment as composition of three major sub-environments which include the technical environment, the human environment and the organizational environment. According to them technical environment refers to tools, equipment, technological infrastructure and other physical or technical elements of the workplace. The human environment includes the peers, others with whom employees relate, team and work groups, interactional issues, the

leadership and management. The human environment can be interpreted as the network of formal and informal interaction among colleagues; teams as well as boss-subordinate relationship that exist within the framework of organizations. Such interaction (especially the informal interaction), presumably, provides avenue for dissemination of information and knowledge as well as cross fertilization of ideas among employees. Of course, it has been established in other studies that workers' interpersonal relations at workplace tend to influence their morale (see Clement, 2000; Stanley, 2003). Hypothetically, whatever affects morale on the job is likely to affect job commitment. According to Yusuf and Metiboba (2012) the third type of work environment, organizational environment includes systems, procedures, practices, values and philosophies which operate under the control of management. In the words of Akintayo (2012) organizational environment refers to the immediate task and national environment where an organization draws its inputs, processes and returns the outputs in form of products or services for public consumption. The task and national environment includes factors such as supplier's influence, the customer's role, the stakeholders, socio-cultural factors, the national economy, technology, legislations, managerial policies and philosophies. All these go a long way in influencing people's psych and attitude towards work.

In the study of Kyko (2005), employee personality profile at work is influenced by the working environment; he posits that employee personality profile is not static. It is dynamic and changes with the working experiences in the

organization environment. Hence, many authors classify the work environment into conducive and toxic environments (see Akinyele, 2010; Yusuf & Metiboba, 2012; Assaf, & Alswalha, 2013). Conducive workplace environments give pleasurable experiences to the employees and help them actualize in the dimensions of personality profile while toxic workplace environments give painful experiences and de-actualize employees' behaviour. Kyko believes that irresponsible or uncommitted employees can change to be responsible and be more committed to job in conducive work environment because such environments reinforce the self-actualizing traits in them. While reverse may be the case under toxic environment. It is these two kinds of workplace environment that serves as conceptual framework of this study. Workplace environment is thus defined in this study as sum of the interrelationships between employees, employers and the work' environment in which they operate which may be conducive or toxic.

### **Physical work Environment**

Stup (2003), observes that physical workplace environment is the environment where human beings are fit with their job. The physical work environment might include the light, ventilation and temperature. Result of the employees' performance can be increased from five to ten percent depending on the improvement of the physical workplace design at their workplace (Brill, 1992). According to Amir (2010) there are elements that relate to the physical environment.

### **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:**

As earlier intimated Work Environments consist of several sub systems which include some or all of the following; technical environments, the

organizational environment and the human environment. Interrelationships and interactions of the elements of these subsystems both positively and negatively affect worker psychology, morale and performance. Unsafe work environment and unsafe work place behavior have potential for industrial hazards, risks and accidents according to Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and wright (2004). Safety of employees in the workplace ordinarily is one of the major goals of industrial concerns Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart wright (2005). Safety of employees in the workplace demands provision of conducive work environment which includes personal protective equipments. Labour Laws provide for the safety of employees in the workplace according to Noe et al and Pattanayak (2012). Appropriate regulatory agencies in each industry are in place to check for compliance or non-compliance of firms to extant policies and laws. Non-compliance attract sanctions and litigation which have short and long term implications for a firms.

Personal protective equipments are provisions made for the protection, mitigation of industrial injury, accidents or exposure to infections arising from health or safety risks at work. They are designed to minimize exposure to variety of hazards. They are also worn to reduce exposure and create barrier between the wearer and injurious or hazardous elements saving them from injuries, germs and infections especially in the laboratories and hospitals. Personal protective equipment include categories for the protection of the head, eyes, face, ears, nose, hands, feet ad body. While helmets and hardhats are for the head and scalp protection, eye protection is provided with goggle, spectacles,

shield and visors, ears are protected by earmuffs and ear plugs, respiratory protection is provided with disposable cartridges, airlie, half or full face mask, Hand, arm and foot are protected by gloves, cream barriers, safety booth or canvas, while the body is protected with overalls and body suits.

### **Employee Performance:**

Armstrong (2006) defines performance as the development of quantified objectives. Performance is not only a matter of what people achieve but how they achieve it. 'Organizations need highly performing employees in order to meet their goals and to deliver the products and services they are specialized in and finally to achieve a competitive advantage. However, one of the most important dependent variables is the employees' performance (Borman, 2004). It is easier to influence the performance of production equipment because it performs according to what you instruct it, needing no additional incentives unlike the employees who are complex and need a combination of factors to influence their performance; both physical and psychological factors. Ushie, Agba, Ogaboh and Okorie (2015) posit that human beings are very complex in their psychological make-up and hence, managers cannot influence employees' inner state directly, they can however create work environment and policies that encourage quality performance. Most managers especially in Nigeria are of the view that employees are influenced to perform better through pay; how much they get from the organization. In the view of Onwuka (2002), many managers and supervisors labour under the mistaken impression that the level of employees' performance on the job is proportional to the size

of the employees pay package. It is important to note however that some employees may be motivated by money but the effect does not last and so needing order kinds of motivators. Onwuka (2002) opines that in fact, salary increases and bonuses for performance in many instances have a very limited short term effect. The extra money soon comes to be regarded not as an incentive but as an entitlement.

Sinha (2001), opine that employee performance depends on the willingness and openness, the employee himself. Further he states that by having this willingness and openness of the employees in doing his job, could increase the employees' productivity which adds up to the organizational performance. An employees' performance can also be determined as a person's ability to perform, the opportunity and willingness to perform. The meaning of willingness to perform means that the desire of the employee in putting as much effort towards his job. (Eysenck, 1998). Platt and Sobotka (2010) assert that employee performance is the combined result of effort, ability and perception of tasks. The factors that affect the level of individual performance are motivation, ability and opportunity to participate (Armstrong, 2009). He perceives performance as a function of ability and motivation.

#### **Employee Commitment:**

Commitment is viewed as an attitude towards the organization that links the identity of the individual to the entity. According to Meyer and Allen (1991) commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organization. He extends the meaning of

commitment as referring to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization, and the employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization taking into consideration the costs that the employee associates with leaving it. Dixit, and Bhati, (2012) revealed that the concept of organizational commitment was derived from Whyte's article in 1956, *The Organization Man*, which states that commitment comes into being when a person links extraneous interests with a consistent line of activity by making a side bet. They insist that organizational commitment is used synonymously with job commitment both of which connote more psychological conceptualization. Yusuf and Metiboba, (2012) submits that job commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationships with the organization; and has implications for the decision to continue or discontinue membership in the organization. Job commitment therefore entails attitude or orientation towards the organization which links or attaches the individual or worker to the establishment. It is a process whereby the goals of the individual or worker are increasingly integrated with that of the organization. Job commitment entails three components – workers' readiness to exert effort on behalf of the organization; workers' acceptance of organizational goals and values; and workers desire to remain with the organization (Ogaboh, Nkpoyen & Ushie, 2010). The concept of job commitment would not be sufficiently meaningful without defining it in the manner that Meyer and Allen did. Job commitment according to them is defined as the force that binds an individual to a course of action relevant

to one or more targets on the job. Employees are therefore believed to experience this commitment in three bases, or mind sets that play a role in shaping behaviour: affective, normative, and continuance, (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Yusuf & Metiboba 2012). Employee commitment is viewed as being a key prerequisite for the effective execution of projects, operational processes and the successful implementation of organizational programmes. It has particular significance for the successful accomplishment of all types of projects. Work commitment-is defined as the employee's positive emotional connection to the employer or organization.

There are three different components of work commitment suggests by Meyer and Allen, (1991) that match up with diverse psychological states. He developed an integrated approach, utilizing the concepts put forward by various researchers and have defined commitment as consisting of three components:

1. An affective component: This refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization. Those with strong affective commitment continue employment with the project team or the organization because they genuinely want to do so. They see the organization or project team as being part of themselves.

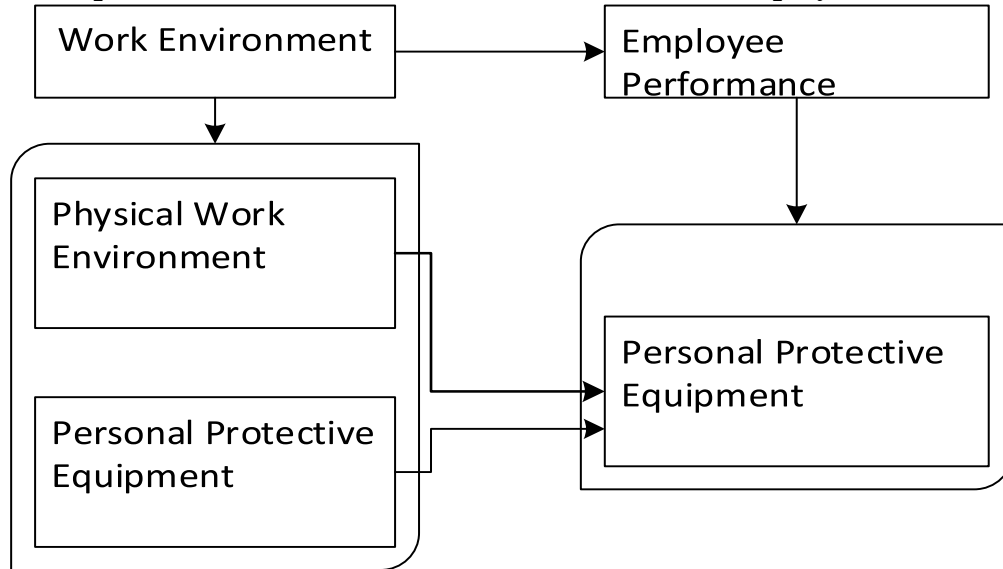
2. A continuance component: This refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the project team or organization. Employees whose primary link to the entity is based on continuance commitment remain with a project team or an

organization because they need to do so and have no other viable alternative.

3. A normative component: This refers to the employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization. Employees with high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the project team or organization because they are grateful to it.

In simple terms, these three dimensions of job commitment implies emotional ties (affective) perceived sunk costs in relation to a target (continuance) and perceived obligation (normative). With affective commitment, employees are committed to the job because they "want to". With continuance commitment employees are committed to the job because they have to". With normative commitment, they are committed because they "ought to" These three types of commitments begs for application to, and empirical testing among employees of pharmaceutical manufacturing firms. Research suggests that affective, continuance and normative commitment are all related to employee retention. Given that an employee with strong affective and normative commitment feels an emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization, and has a feeling of obligation to remain with the organization, then this individual is likely to have a higher motivation level to contribute meaningfully to the project or organization than would an employee with weak affective and normative commitment.

Conceptual Framework of Work Environment and Employee Performance



Source: Researchers View (2019)

From the figure above, work environment is seen to be the determinant of employee performance, physical work environment, personal protective equipment, supervisors' support and workplace incentives seen immediately below work environment are components of work environment that determine employee commitment, job satisfaction and employee loyalty in an organization.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on Work Adjustment Theory (WAT) by Dawes and. Lofquist in (1964). Work Adjustment Theory as propounded by Rene V. Dawis and Lloyd H. Lofquist (1964). Rene V. Dawis and Lloyd H. Lofquist were early proponents of the psychological nature of work adjustment, and from their research they developed Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA). Dawis and Lofquist (1964) defined work adjustment as a "continuous and dynamic

process by which a worker seeks to achieve and maintain correspondence with a work environment". This correspondence is the reciprocal process between the worker's satisfaction and the employer's satisfaction (Eggerth, 2008; Zunker, 2006). A worker's satisfaction relies on reinforcers or environmental variables (e.g., compensation, company policies, independence, security, or recognition) that meet a worker's psychological needs (Degges-White & Shoffner, 2002). Work is perceived as an interaction between an individual and a work environment. This work environment requires that certain tasks are performed, and the individual brings up the needed skills to perform the tasks. As an exchange relationship (between the individual and the workplace environment), the individual also requires certain compensation or rewards for work performance and certain preferred

conditions, such as a safe and comfortable place to work. For the interaction to be maintained and job to continue, the workplace environment and the individual must continue to meet each other's requirements (Dawis & Lofquist, 1964). The degree to which the requirements of both are met is called correspondence. This is why Work Adjustment Theory is also known as Person-Environment Correspondence Theory. Where employees perceive some factors in the physical workplace environment as uncondusive, then such environment may be termed as being unhealthy and unsafe or toxic. However, for an environment to be perceived as conducive, the Person-Environment relationship must be corresponding (i.e. the requirement of person and environment must be met). Where there is a lack of correspondence, it means that commitment and loyalty may be affected. This underlies the relevance of the theory to the study.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

This study adopted survey design to ascertain if there is a relationship between the variables of

the study. The study was carried out at three Pharmaceutical Manufacturing companies in Enugu State. Whereas there are Nine Pharmaceutical Manufacturing firms in Enugu State, the three largest firms in terms of the number of employees were chosen. They are namely Juhel Nigeria Limited with 156 employees, Nemel Pharmaceutical Nigeria with 140 employees and Michelle Laboratory Limited with 120 employees. The rest six Pharmaceutical manufacturing firms have number of employees between 62 and 32. Complete enumeration sampling technique was adopted since 416 as the population is modest. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed on five point likert scale. Face and content validity were used to validate the instrument. Spearman-Brown coefficient reliability test of the instrument was obtained. The result was .991.

The hypothesis was subjected to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient using SPSS, ver. 20.

#### **DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.**

##### **Data Presentation:**

S/N	Pharmaceutical Firms	Distributed	Retrieved	Analyzed
1.	Juhel	156	149	144
2.	Nemel	140	134	131
3.	Michelle	120	117	116
	Total (Percentage)	416	400 (96%)	319 (94%)

Source: Field survey (2019).

#### **TEST OF HYPOTHESIS**

H<sub>1</sub> There is a Significant Positive relationship between Personal Protective equipment and employee Commitment.

Correlation	(JUHEL)	
	PSLPTVEQT	EMPCOMT



PSLPTVEQT	Person Correlation Sign. (2 toiled) N	1  144	.983 .000 144
EMPCOMT	Persons Correlation Sign. (2-toiled) N	.983 .000 144	1  144

Source: Field survey (2019).

### TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE

N	Cal r	DF	Crit. R	Remark
144	.983	142	0.250	Significant

Source: Field Survey 2019

Correlation		(NEMEL)	
		PSLPTVEQT	EMPCOMT
PSLPTVEQT	Person Correlation Sign. (2 toiled) N	1  131	.973** .000 131
EMPCOMT	Persons Correlation Sign. (2-toiled) N	.973** .000 131	1  131

Source: Field survey 2019.

### TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE

N	Cal r	DF	Crit. R	Remark
131	.973	129	0.250	Significant

Source: Field Survey 2019

Correlation		(MICHELLE)	
		PSLPTVEQT	EMPCOMT
PSLPTVEQT	Person Correlation Sign. (2 toiled) N	1  116	.963** .000 116

EMPCOMT	Persons Correlation Sign. (2-toiled) N	.963** .000 116	1  116
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Source: Field survey 2019.

**TEST OF SIGNIFICANCE**

N	Cal r	DF	Crit. R	Remark
116	.963	114	0.273	Significant

Source: Field Survey 2019

The hypothesis of study subjected to Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient showed a significant positive relationship of the dependent variable on the independent variable as employee commitment is positively and significantly related to personal protective equipment in a hazardous work environment.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS:**

The result of the hypothesis in Juhel Nigeria Limited, Nemel Pharmaceutical Nigeria Limited and Michelle Laboratory Limited revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between physical work environment and employee commitment. It was indicated that the calculated value  $r$  (.983, .973, .963) is greater than the critical value  $r$  (.250, .250, .273) respectively, showing a significant positive relationship between physical work environment and employee commitment. This goes to show that unsafe and unhealthy physical work environment negatively affects employee commitment. The more employees stay closer with the unsafe and unhealthy nature (vibration of the machines, excessive noise, heat and poor ventilation (release of toxic chemicals) of physical components of the work environment without necessary provision for work shift policy/safety measures by the organization, the more employee commitment tends to reduce.

This result is in line with the findings of Roelofsen (2002), who observed that improving the working environment reduces complaints, turnover and absenteeism of employees and the result indicated a significant positive relationship between work environment and employee performance. Roelofsen (2002), observed that improving the working environment reduces complaints, turnover and absenteeism of employees. He also explained that the effect of physical components of work environment (vibration of the machines, release of toxic chemicals, excessive noise and heat) significantly affects employee mood and attitude. This was further explained by Jeffess (2000), who observed that unexpected release of toxic reactive or flammable liquids and gases in pharmaceutical processes including hazardous chemicals have been reported for many years in Nigeria pharmaceutical companies. Similarly Kyko (2005) observed that working conditions that constitute unsafe and toxic environment includes hot and noisy environment, dirty work environment, old technology and machinery. In addition, Nnamani and Ajagu (2014) studied the effect of environmental factors and organizational performance in Nigeria. The study revealed that unsafe and unhealthy work place, poor motivation (remuneration), lack of

innovation, and high cultural interference affect organizational output. The result showed that there is relationship between employees and their work environment, that workplace factor play a significant role on employee performance. Iheanacho and Ebitu (2016), conducted a study on the effect of industrial safety and health on employee job performance.

### **CONCLUSION:**

This study concludes that Work environment plays a crucial role in determining the performance level of employees. That Management holds the key for positive or negative performance of the employees by their management of Work-environment.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Management of organizations, will maximize the output of employees by ensuring that all safety measures and Personal protective equipment's are provided for the employees, since inadequate or unavailability of safety measures and personal projective equipment's makes the work place unsafe and unhealthy thereby generate murmuring, complaints, nonchalant attitude to work, job dissatisfaction, demotivation, absenteeism and employee turnover.

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