



JOB SHARING AND EMPLOYEES' PRODUCTIVITY IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN UGANDA: THE CASE OF EAST HOTEL

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Abstract

*This main purpose of this paper was to examine the influence of job sharing on employees' productivity in the hospitality industry in Uganda; the case of East Hotel. Comprehensive literature review was carried out (Klindzic & Marić, 2019; Mwebi & Kadaga, 2015; Bliss & Thornton, 2010; Loan et al., 2010). The researcher employed correlational and cross sectional research designs and used self-administered questionnaires and interview guides to collect quantitative and qualitative data from a sample of 80 respondents. The data was analysed using correlation and regression analyses using the statistical package for social scientists (SPSS Vs 20). Findings revealed a strong positive correlation between job sharing and employees' productivity ($r=0.811^{**}$). The study concluded that effectiveness of job sharing enables hotels to effectively attain employee productivity in Uganda with emphasis to its institutionalization in the human resources manuals of the organization. The researcher recommends that management of East Hotel should design job sharing in a manner that maximizes autonomy, learning and skills variety. This will enable the individual employees to utilize their full potential when it's their turn to work. The management of East Hotel should also create a work environment with individual employee customised technology to support job sharing where two employees are able to carry out the tasks of a full-time job by alternating.*

KEYWORDS: *Flexible work schedules, employee productivity, job sharing*

INTRODUCTION

Globally, organizations strive to achieve their aims and objectives while focusing on meeting stakeholders' unending demand for capital appreciation, increasing market share, continued survival in the industry and sustained retention of valuable workers (Jackson, 2017). All of these are indicators of achieving optimal employee productivity, since they require the services of people who will help navigate the affairs of the organizations.

In most African countries, workers are regularly burdened with the dilemma of how to distribute their time among several competing needs such as attending to family issues, socio-political events and many other activities that sometimes conflict with organizational goals (Fapohunda, 2015). This situation often creates work-life conflict amongst workers whose private life is threatened by the disparity in the time they invest in their office work as against time spent at home. This affects the organization and individual employees as well as the society as a whole (Fapohunda, 2015). For the organizations, the negative impact could be in the form of incessant absenteeism or inefficiency of some workers whereas the employee could experience increased marital conflicts, separation, divorce, and /or even ineffective parenting among to their issues (Vlems, 2018).

The hospitality industry in Uganda faces many problems affecting employee productivity (McCourt & Derek, 2013). In 2010, East Hotel sought to address the problems by introducing employee service reforms like job sharing to enable employee work from home.

Although most organizations in Uganda, in line with government retrenched its employees by 30%, productivity had not improved (Opiyo, 2016). The problem is caused by working for long hours and lack of time to attend to employees' personal responsibilities (Cooper, 2018). These constraints have had some effects on employees' productivity especially in the service sector. According to Galinsky, Sakai, & Wigton (2011) workers prefer jobs with a bit of flexibility for instance, having freedom to choose when to report

and leave work. This has been necessitated by the trend of adopting “non-standard work” schedule as compared to normal working schedules (Jacobs, Gerson, and Gornick, 2014).

Presently the implementation of flexible work schedules, despite its benefits, has not been adopted by most organizations in Uganda. Even the few organizations that have adopted these schedules cannot boast of its benefits on employee productivity. Flexible schedules like job sharing, remote working among others have been introduced and implemented in private sector for instance MTN Uganda in 2012 and ECO Bank in 2013 (Kamau *et al.*, 2015). Malic (2011) has stated that organizations using flexible work practices seems to have more gains. Using flexible work practices give job satisfaction; however, studies have indicated double benefits of work-life balance (Pedersen and Lewis, 2012). Nonetheless, very few studies have been done to establish the influence of job sharing on employees` productivity.

Job sharing within East Hotel are those common schedules used in response to various challenges resulting from work environmental changes. These programs have been designed by employer of the organization to allow employees have more scheduling freedom to enable them perform the obligations required of their positions (Management Report, 2018) with the aim of achieving increased productivity in terms of quality work, timely delivery, work-life balance and improved overall organizational performance. These schedules have included flexible working hours, flexi-time, part-timework, overtime, job sharing, teleworking and flexible leave schedules. Despite all the above, East Hotel has not achieved its desired goals.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by two theories, namely: the goal setting theory by Locke & Latham (2006) and Reinforcement theory by Skinner (2012).

The Goal Setting Theory

The theory was developed by Locke and Latham (2006). In today’s ever-changing environment, maintaining well-motivated employees assures the attainment of business objectives. Motivated workforce is likely to remain productive and, increase organizational performance and ultimately contribute for the attainment of stakeholders’ satisfaction. To enhance productivity, organizations set individual and organizational goals. These goals among others, serve to reinforce performance which triggers employee productivity and in return increase employee organizational commitment (Locke & Latham, 2006). According to Locke & Latham (2006), specific goals, accompanied by challenging performance targets are likely to improve performance results as compared to simple and ambiguous goals. The setting of goal by itself gives some kind of emotional urgency, and capable to provoke energy and attention. (Locke & Latham, 2006). The achievement of goal ultimately creates satisfaction, whereas unaccomplished goals are likely to trigger dissatisfaction, and leave stakeholders with emotional distress (Lunenburg, 2011).

Reinforcement Theory

The Reinforcement Theory is one of the oldest theories of motivation which describe behavior and how we act (Skinner, 2012). This theory can be called as “behaviorism” or “operant conditioning” that is taught in the today’s world of psychology. This theory is all about: "an individual’s behavior is a function of its consequences" (Management Study Guide 2013). Reinforcement theory is an instrument used by managers to increase or decrease employees’ behaviors. As performance and effectiveness are more emphasized nowadays, it is essential to understand and motivate staff. Positive reinforcement is the most effective way of motivating a team to perform better in organizations. Employees are encouraged to do better as they know that they will be rewarded when each desired behaviour is shown. The rewards can be intrinsic or extrinsic, or a combination of both. Rewards can be bonuses based on performance, additional benefits, verbal encouragement, and empowerment (Skinner, 2012). Employees feel satisfied when their work is recognized, and their hard work is paid off. Punishment is another technique applied to reduce or remove specific behavior. Those who are given penalties show better discipline. However, punishment is often not favored as it may bring down some of them. Managers should be able to decide strategically which method to use when eliciting or removing a behavior. A consequence-based technique is very effective in managing an individual or even a team of staff. According to Wiard (2012), to keep your employees engaged and have good performance, you must give them positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is designed to increase desirable behaviors, so in the workplace, positive reinforcement encourages better performances, increased productivity, and approving results.

Literature Review

Branine (2003), defines job sharing as the work arrangement option that allows two employees to alternate work responsibilities. Each employee works on half time basis, for instance, one employee reporting in the morning and the other in the afternoon. However, the employees need to have complementary skills (Kossek & Lee, 2005). Organizations practicing this form of flexibility work arrangement to have the advantage of sourcing employees’ skills and experience in one job; enables tapping of employees’ talents; learning from each other; reliefs employees while away; Job sharers are able to maintain their jobs on full time basis (Miller, 2007).

Accordingly, flexible work schedules (FWSs) mean a work environment and schedules that are not subject to the normal restrictions of traditional work (Ochieng & Kamau, 2020). These arrangements consider employees’ needs particularly in as far as balancing work

and personal life. Productivity at work, mainly refers to the amount of work done in a given work environment over a period of time (Ochieng & Kamau, 2020). With the advancement in information and communication technology and development of software and applications, FWSs have been enabled. There are now human resource software and applications that have become popular among organizations. The technology has enabled the human resource managers to easily manage and monitor job sharing (Ochieng & Kamau, 2020). Further, the technology has enabled the employees to record the total working hours, as the managers monitor.

The outbreak of Covid-19 in 2019 made the FWSs more popular. As many governments made directives for people to stay at home, many organizations adopted flexible work policies (Allain-Dupré, 2020). The only exceptions was for organizations that provided crucial services. In developing countries like Uganda, many employers were caught unprepared with the stay-home orders. They had to make policies that accommodate and allow for flexible work schedules. This become more popular in most economies that still had the traditional working arrangement mentality (Kiconco, 2020). However, as the vaccination campaign drive was taking shape globally and economies resuming to normality, employees in great numbers were demanding for flexible work schedules. This was seen as the new normal. Many employees realized how beneficial it was in allowing them to balance personal and work life (Kiconco, 2020).

In 2020, Flexi Jobs survey indicated that over eighty percent of employees in the United States of America had developed trust and loyalty to employers who allowed job sharing (Ochieng & Kamau, 2020). This study showed that the key factor considered by job seekers in America was its ability to accommodate flexible work schedules. Particularly, the survey showed that many employees were looking at the ability of the work to allow the balance between work and personal life. Thus, it can only be fair to add that organizations with job sharing policy attract many people, and increase diversity and ethical behavior. This is based on the factor that the potential employees are likely to come from different background and the employer trusts them to work together. Also, such arrangement helps in inspiring loyalty to the organization (Mas and Pallais, 2017).

Correspondingly, Bliss and Thornton (2010), opine that job sharing enables two employees to carry out the tasks of full-time job by alternating. Job sharing came into existence in mid 1960s. This was meant to provide solutions for those jobs which could not be divided into two part time jobs. Job sharing enables organization to maintain jobs in their full-time capacity and still get the benefit of employees' expertise (Gliss, 2000).

Branine (2003), asserts that job sharing option allows two employees to alternate work responsibilities. Each employee works on half time basis, for instance, one employee reporting in the morning and the other in the afternoon. However, the employees need to have complementary skills (Kossek, *et al*, 2016). Organizations practicing this form of flexibility have the advantage of sourcing employees' skills and experience in one job; enables tapping of employees' talents; learning from each other; reliefs employees while away; Job sharers are able to maintain their jobs on full time basis (Miller, 2007).

It is worth noting that, job sharing may be appropriate where opportunities for part time jobs or other arrangements are limited (Loan *et al.*, 2010). Apart from the obvious advantage of allowing employees more time for other commitments including family responsibilities, job sharing also facilitates the development of partnerships where job sharers can learn from each other while providing mutual support. The arrangement also provides coverage of duties when one partner goes on vacation leave or sick leave hence performance is not compromised (Loan *et al.*, 2010). This can benefit employers as well by providing staff retention, increasing productivity and combining a wider range of skills and experience in a single job.

In regard to businesses with substantial numbers of administrative, maintenance, or customer facing employees, offering flexible working conditions can be a problematic. Where the hours of work are customer driven, most organizations face limitations on flexibility for employees but with job sharing this is when family-friendly programs such as child care would be of most benefit (Loan, *et al*, 2010).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study employed the self-administered questionnaires to collect primary data using positive statements from a sample of 92 respondents. The study utilized both probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling techniques; that is, top management, director's office, internal audit department and finance department were selected using purposive sampling and operations and programs department were selected using stratified and simple random sampling. Data was then analyzed quantitatively using SPSS to obtain frequencies, standard deviation, mean, correlations and regression. The overall response rate was 65.2 % and a non-response rate of 34.8 %.

Data Quality and Analysis:

A content validity index was used to check for clarity, simplicity, ambiguity and relevance of the instruments. Experts in the field were consulted about the content of the instruments, ambiguity of question items and their relevancy. There after the instrument was given to raters who rated the relevancy of each item and a content validity index was computed. The results were as follows;

CVI = $\frac{\text{Number of items rated relevant by expert}}{\text{Total number of items in the instrument}}$

Total number of items in the instrument

For the instrument to be valid, the C.V.I should be at least 0.7. (Amin, 2005)

CVI = 28/32= 0.875

The minimum CVI recommended in the survey studies is 0.7 (Amin, 2005: 288). The CVI of 0.875 renders the questionnaire valid and therefore reliable to collect data for the study.

In this study, reliability of the measurement items was completed by running a reliability analysis utilizing SPSS v22 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) in order to obtain the Cronbach Alpha for each scale and checking the item to total correlations. The research questionnaire was checked for item consistence basing on Cronbach's alpha test. The results are displayed in the table below.

Table A: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient

Item	Cronbach Alpha Value	Number of Items
Job Sharing	0.938	8
Overall for the questionnaire	0.938	8

Source: Primary data 2022

According to Amin (2005) if the reliability is 0.7 and above, then the questionnaire is reliable for research. The instrument was deemed reliable since it scored 0.972.

Research Findings

The parameters that were highlighted during the analysis of the collected were twofold, namely, Whether East Hotel had put in place appropriate job sharing strategies to improve employee productivity and also whether the hospitality industry ensured that the policies are strongly adhered to by East Hotel to improve employees` productivity. These parameters were key in assessing whether East hotel had put in place proper policies in job sharing in order to improve employees` productivity.

Table B: Descriptive Statistics on Job sharing

Statement		1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (NS)	4 (A)	5(SA)	Mean	Std Dev
Job sharing enables two employees to carry out the tasks of full-time job by alternating at East Hotel	%	13.3	15.0	23.3	31.7	16.7	3.23	1.288
Job sharing usually provides solutions for those jobs which could not be divided into two part time jobs	%	5.0	13.3	18.3	46.7	16.7	3.57	1.079
Job sharing enables East hotel to maintain jobs in their full-time capacity and still get the benefit of employees expertise	%	1.7	21.7	16.7	45.0	15.0	3.50	1.050
Employees are allowed to work half time basis at East Hotel whenever need arises	%	11.7	16.7	25.0	33.3	13.3	3.20	1.219
At East Hotel job sharing is designed to maximize autonomy , learning and skills variety	%	8.3	20.0	23.3	36.7	11.7	3.23	1.155
At East Hotel , job sharing enables me to learn from my colleagues	%	6.7	16.7	13.3	40.0	23.3	3.57	1.212
In East Hotel job sharing enables the employees to utilize their full potential when it's their turn to work.	%	6.7	15.0	15.0	41.7	21.7	3.57	1.184
East Hotel has created a work environment supportive of job sharing	%	6.7	21.7	20.0	30.0	21.7	3.38	1.236
Overall Mean/SD							3.41	1.178

Source: Primary data, (2022)

The study revealed an overall score mean value of 3.41 indicating that most of the respondents agreed that job sharing is in place and has an effect on employees` productivity in East Hotel.

Results of the Correlation Analysis:

The table C below presents the results from the correlation analysis of job sharing and employees` productivity.

Table C: Correlation of Job Sharing and Employees` Productivity

Variable	Measure	Correlations	
		Job sharing	Employees` Productivity
Job Sharing	Pearson Correlation	1	.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Employees` Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.811**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

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

Source: Primary data (2022)

Table C above shows Pearson`s correlation coefficient of $r = 0.811$ between job sharing and employees` productivity. It shows that there is a strong relationship between job sharing and employees` productivity. This means that changes in one variable are strongly correlated with changes in the second variable that is to say changes in job sharing are strongly correlated with changes in employees` productivity. Pearson`s $r = 0.811$ and is positive which means that as one variable increases in value, the second variable also increase in value. Similarly, as one variable decreases in value, the second variable also decreases in value. Pearson`s r is positive; therefore, when East Hotel improves its job sharing its ability to improve employees` productivity will also increase significantly.

The Sig. (2-Tailed) is 0.00. This value is less than .05 which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between job sharing and employee performance at East Hotel. Therefore, it shows that there is statistically significant very strong positive relationship between job sharing and employees` productivity in nonprofit organizations in Uganda.

Simple Regression Analysis on Job Sharing and Employees` Productivity of East Hotel

A regression analysis test was carried on job sharing and employees` productivity to confirm the results extracted from the descriptive statistics as well as testing the direction of the relationship; the following results were obtained.

Table D: Model Summary of Job Sharing and Employee Productivity

Model Summary						Change Statistics			
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.811 ^a	.658	.652	.617	.658	111.714	1	58	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Job sharing

b. Dependent Variable: Employees` productivity

Source: Primary data (2022)

Table D above illustrates that there is a significant positive relationship between job sharing and employee productivity in non- profit organizations with R square = 0.658 and the adjusted R square of 0.652. The adjusted R value is 0.652 implying that 65.2% of employee productivity is due to job sharing and therefore 34.8 % of variation in employees` productivity is due to other factors like teleworking.

Table E: ANOVA Value of Job Sharing and Employees` Productivity

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.591	1	42.591	111.714	.000 ^a
	Residual	22.112	58	.381		
	Total	64.703	59			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Sharing

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	42.591	1	42.591	111.714	.000 ^a
	Residual	22.112	58	.381		
	Total	64.703	59			

b. Dependent Variable: Employees` Productivity

Source: Primary data (2022)

Findings basing on the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table E above indicated that there is a very significant relationship between job sharing and employee productivity with the sig- value = .000. D is the degree of freedom associated with the source of variance. The study shows the F value of 111.714 which is significant (P value of $0.000 < 0.05$). Since our value is less than 0.05, it confirms that there is a relationship between job sharing and employees` productivity at East Hotel. Therefore job sharing is a predictor of employee productivity.

Table F: Coefficients of Job Sharing and Employees` Productivity

		Coefficients						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	95% Confidence Interval for B			
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.871	.289		3.009	.004	.292	1.451
	Job sharing	.864	.082	.811	10.569	.000	.700	1.027

a. Dependent Variable: Employees` productivity

Source: Primary data (2022)

From the table above, regression beta coefficient 0.811 and this value is positive implying that for every one-unit increase in job sharing, employees` productivity will increase by the standardized beta coefficient value of 0.811. Basing on the equation $Y = \beta X + C$, where Y= employees` productivity (dependent variable), X= job sharing (independent variable), then $\beta = 0.811$ and C= constant. The equation is employee productivity = 0.811 job sharing + Constant.

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the findings, the overall mean was 3.41 and the standard deviation was 1.178 implying that most of the respondents agreed that job sharing are in place in East Hotel and has an effect on employee productivity and that most components of job sharing are practiced and are functioning properly as evidenced in chapter six.

The findings illustrate that there is very strong positive relationship between job sharing and employees` productivity at East Hotel with pearson`s correlation coefficient of $r = 0.811^{**}$, this relationship was Significant at $0.00 < 0.05$. This means that changes in job sharing are strongly correlated with changes in employees` productivity. Similarly, as one variable decreases in value, the second variable also decreases in value. Therefore, when East Hotel improves its practices in job sharing, its ability to improve employees` productivity will also increase significantly.

In relation the adjusted R square value of 0.652 indicates that job sharing contributes 65.2% in influencing employee productivity which means that 34.8% of employee productivity is influenced by other factors which include teleworking and compressed work weeks among others.

The study also shows the Anova F value of 111.714 which was significant (p value of $0.000 < 0.05$), implying that job sharing positively influences employees` productivity at East Hotel.

Finally regression beta coefficient 0.811 and this value is positive implying that for every one-unit increase in job sharing, employees` productivity will increase by the standardized beta coefficient value of 0.811. Basing on the equation $Y = \beta X + C$, where Y= employees` productivity (dependent variable), X= job sharing (independent variable), then $\beta = 0.811$ and C= constant. The equation is employees` productivity = 0.811 job sharing+ Constant.

The study recommends that the management of East Hotel should design job sharing in a manner that maximizes autonomy, learning and skills variety. This will enable the employees to utilize their full potential when it`s their turn to work. The management of East Hotel should also create a work environment with new technology to support job sharing where two employees are able to carry out the tasks of a full-time job by alternating. The management should work together with employees to ensure they fully promote teamwork and build trust amongst themselves. The management should ensure trust is maintained always.

Conclusions

From the study findings, it can confidently be concluded that job sharing greatly influences employee productivity in the hospitality industry in Uganda. This is basically due to the fact that the findings show that there is a very strong positive relationship between job sharing and employee productivity at East Hotel of $r=0.811^{**}$. This relationship was statistically significant at $0.000 < 0.05$. This relationship was predictive whereby if East Hotel uses job sharing appropriately, its ability to improve employee productivity will increase significantly. The conclusion is that job sharing has a very strong positive relationship with employees' productivity at East Hotel.

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