

Impact of National Holidays on Job Performance of Commercial Banks Employees in Anyigba, Nigeria

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Abstract. This paper examined the impact of national holidays on job performance of commercial bank employees in Anyigba, Nigeria. The study adopts cross sectional survey research design. It also utilized multi-stage sampling approach and purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using semi-structured questionnaire and oral interviews. The data collected through questionnaire were analysed using descriptive techniques such as frequency counts and percentages while the data obtained through interviews were content analysed. Results of the study showed that respondents have high level of job performance and this was found to be due to national holidays' which had positively impacted on the respondents. Based on these findings, the study recommends that the Federal Government of Nigeria should create more holidays for workers as this will not only give them opportunity to recover from work strain but also help to ensure their long term workability with improve performance.

Keywords: National holidays, Job performance, Commercial banks, Anyigba, Nigeria

1. Introduction

The word holiday has different meanings in many regions of the world. For instance, in the United States of America, the word is used exclusively to refer to the nationally, religiously or culturally observed days of rest, celebration or the events themselves. In the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth nations, the word holiday refers to the period of time where leave from one's duties has been agreed/approved, and is used as a synonym to the United States preferred vacation (which is the time set aside for rest, travel or participation in recreational activities). Holiday is of various forms

and one of such is national holiday. National holidays are holidays that are legally established by national government rather than by state government. In other words, national holiday are holidays that are observed throughout a nation in which most businesses and other institutions are closed. Historically, national holiday tradition goes back to millennial era when governments/rulers promote religious observances; and that is carries on through to today (Congressional Research Services, 2004).

National holidays are celebrated worldwide but in different day depending on the country. In Nigeria, national holidays are designed to commemorate a particular aspect of Nigerian heritage or to celebrate an event in Nigerian history. Examples of national holidays in Nigeria include Independence Day (to commemorates the independence of Nigeria from Britain), Christmas day (a religious holiday meant to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ), Boxing day (used to commemorate the day after Christmas), New year day (to marks the beginning of a new year), Easter holidays (these comprises of good Friday, Easter Sunday and Monday; these holidays are used to commemorates the crucifixion and rresurrection of Jesus Christ), democracy day (used to commemorates the return to democracy in Nigeria), Eid el-Fitr holiday (a religious holiday meant to celebrate the end of Islamic fasting), Eid el-Kabir holiday (a religious holiday meant to commemorates the birth of Prophet Mohammed), and workers' day (use to ccommemorate workers' labour movement internationally) (Ikenuwa, 2020).

National holidays are important as it does not only helps to promote a sense of nationhood and common community but also affords increased opportunities for families to be together especially those families of which various members were separated by distances;

enables citizens to enjoy a wide range of recreational activities since they would be afforded more time to travel; provides increased opportunities for pilgrimages to visit the historic sites thereby increasing participation in commemoration of historical events; affords greater opportunity for leisure at home thereby enable citizens to enjoy further participation in hobbies as well as educational and cultural activities (United States of America Congress, 1968; Martz & Osberg, 2006; Shen, Wang, Ye & Liu, 2018; Manoj, 2019) .

As regards to the relationships between national holidays and job performance (the level of productivity of an individual employee relative to his/her peers on several job related behaviours and outcome), Ernst & Young (2006) cited in Boyd (2014:2) found that for each extra ten hours of holiday that employee took, annual performance ratings went up by eight percent on average and that employees who took regular holidays were much less likely to leave the business. These means that holiday, apart from increasing workers performance, also helped to slow down employee's turnover. Other studies such as that of Kuhnel & Sonnentag (2012); Zenger & Folkman (2015); Przystanski (2017) also found a positive relationship between holidays and job performance. In spite of these however, Botes (2017) found organizations to always experience reduced production/services on public holiday. In addition, Mohammed, Karlsson, Haddad, Cederberg, Jernberg, Lindahl, Frobert, Koul & Erlinge (2018) also found national holiday most especially Christmas and mid sumer holidays to be associated with higher risk of myocardial infarction. It is against the foregoing that this paper is conceived. The paper will however focus on commercial banks (financial institution which performs the functions of accepting deposits from the general public and giving loans for investment with the aim of earning profits) employees.

Generally, commercial banks employees deal with people from all walks of life and in all kinds of financial shape. Their responsibilities include managing clients bank accounts including opening and closing accounts; overseeing transactions, processing deposits, payment and withdrawal; authorizing and evaluating overdrafts and loans as well as handling other transactions such as writing cashier checks or money orders, when necessary. These however come with large amount of stress which they sometimes ward off through national holidays. This paper thus has as its specific objectives an investigation of commercial banks' employees views about their job, their level of job performance

and the impact which national holidays have on their level of job performance. It is believed that this study will provide necessary information that may be useful to government and industrial policy makers on the impact of national holidays on workers performance. The findings from the study will also be useful for further studies relating to impact of national holidays on job performance of workers in other sectors.

Theoretical framework

This study adopted social action theory. Social action theory began with the work of Max Weber in his book titled "*Economy and Society*" published in 1922 and revised in 1978. Weber in the book defines action that is social as actions to which the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to his behavior-be it overt/covert, omission/acquiescence. Action is social, according to Weber, in so far as its subjective meaning takes account of the behavior of others and is thereby oriented in its course.

Weber identified four forms of social action namely rational action (individuals have expectations about the behavior of others and act to take account of these expectations in order to attain their own rationality chosen outcomes), evaluative action (individuals take account of absolute values-beliefs, ethics, aesthetics or other forms of behavior-entirely for their own sake and independently of any prospects of external benefit or success), emotional action (action based on feelings and emotions of the individual and other actors), and finally traditional action (action that is based on long-established and habitually practiced traditional expectations).

In applying the theory to this study, national holidays lie within the domain of both traditional and rational actions. Traditional action because national holidays rests on a belief in the rightness of established customs and tradition that must be observed as at when due; and rational action because national holidays are product of carefully weighted, analysed and calculated idea seen to have greatest amount of benefits for both the employee and employer as employee will have enough time to relax, refresh and thereby become more energetic which is good for high job performance needed by employer to break even.

2. Methodology

This study was conducted in Anyigba town between February and March, 2020. Anyigba is a town in Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, and is located between latitude 7°15'N-7°29'N and longitude 7°11'E-7°32'E and has an estimated population of

189,976 persons (Ifatimehin, Falola & Odogbo, 2014). The study adopted cross sectional survey design. The design is considered appropriate since the study focuses on different commercial banking institutions in the study area. The study population comprised of commercial bank employees in Anyigba.

With regards to sample size and sampling technique, the study used multi-stage sampling design. First, all the eight (8) commercial banks in the study area were chosen for the study using purposive sampling technique. These banks are Zenith Bank Plc, First Bank Plc, EcoBank Plc, Union Bank Plc, First City Monument Bank Plc, Access Bank Plc, Polaris Bank Limited, and United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc. Second, a total of two hundred and fifty six (256)

respondents were selected using stratified random sampling technique from a total population of two hundred and eighty eight (288). Data were collected using semi structured questionnaire and oral interviews. The data collected through questionnaire were analysed using descriptive techniques such as frequency counts and percentages while the data obtained through interviews were content analysed.

3. Results and Discussion

A total of two hundred and fifty six (256) copies of questionnaire were administered, out of which two hundred and forty seven (247) representing 96.5 percent were suitable for analysis while the remaining nine (9) representing 3.5 percent were invalid and not used in the analysis.

Table 1: Respondents' Socio-demographic Characteristics

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	137	55.5
	Female	110	44.5
	Total	247	100.0
Age (in years)	Less than 20	01	0.4
	20-29	57	23.0
	30-39	77	31.2
	40-49	73	29.6
	50 and over	39	15.8
	Total	247	100.0
Marital status	Married	130	52.6
	Never married	64	25.9
	Divorced	15	6.1
	Separated	16	6.5
	Widowed	22	8.9
	Total	247	100.0
Years of working experience	Less than 5years	52	21.1
	5-10years	80	32.4
	11-15years	74	29.9
	16-20years	24	9.7
	>20 years	17	6.9
	Total	247	100.0
Educational level	ND/NCE Certificate	103	41.7
	HND/Degree Cert.	93	37.7
	Masters (MA, M.SC, M.ED) Certificate	49	19.8
	Ph.D Certificate	02	0.8
	Total	247	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 1 above shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. From the table a little more than half (55.5%) of the respondents were male while the remaining (44.5%) were female. This finding implies that there are more male than female bank employees in the study area. This may be attributed to the fact that bank works are hectic in nature which many women may not be able to cope with, hence the reason for their limited numbers in the banks in the study area.

The age of the respondents' shows that 31.2 percent were between age 30-39 years, 29.6 percent were between ages 40-49 years, 23.0 percent were between ages 20-29 years, 15.8 percent were between age 50 years and over while the remaining 0.4 percent were less than 20 years. Situations where there are more respondents between ages 30-39 years indicate that most of the respondents were young. It also means that bank in the study area have younger workforce. Younger workforce is associated with high energy which is good for job performance.

As regards the marital status of the respondents, majority (52.6%) of the respondents is still married, 25.9 percent never married/single, 8.9 percent have lost their partners due to death (widowed), 6.5 percent were separated while the remaining 6.1 percent were divorced. The high numbers of the married respondents indicate that banks in the study area prefer a more matured and responsible adults/workers.

With regards to the respondents year of working experience, most (32.4%) of the respondents have between 5-10 years of working experience, 29.9 percent have between 11-15 years of working experience, 21.1 percent have less than 5 years of working experience, 9.7 percent have between 16-20 years of working experience while the remaining 6.9 percent have more than 20 years of working experience. These results show that most of the respondents working in banks in the study area have acquired huge amount of knowledge to make their work a success.

The educational level of the respondents shows that majority (41.7%) of them have National Diploma (ND)/National Certificate of Education (NCE), 37.7 percent have Bachelor Degree/Higher National Diploma (HND) Certificate, 19.8 percent have Master Degree Certificate, while the remaining 0.8 percent have Doctorate Degree Certificate. Further enquiries were made from the respondents on whether they have professional qualifications in addition to their academic qualifications. The results of the enquiries show that majority of the respondents answered in affirmative, and they claimed to possess professional qualification such as Associate Certified Accountant (ACA) Certificate, Associate National Accountant of Nigeria (ANAN) Certificate, Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered) Certificate, etc. These suggest that bank employees in the study area

are highly literate. High literacy level of workers has direct implication on their work attitude and performance as it does not only make them to take direct control of their work as an individual in their workplace but also make them to perform well. Respondents' general feelings about their work

Before finding out from the respondents about the feeling they have towards their work efforts were first of all made to get information from them on the time/year they started their working career, reasons for working, numbers of their working days in a week, as well as their opening and closing time. The results of the enquiries show that majority (77.3%) of the respondents started their working career immediately after graduation from tertiary institutions while the remaining (22.7%) respondents had started working before graduation from tertiary institutions. On the reasons for working, most (29.6%) of the respondents responded that they are working to earn a living. Other reasons given by the respondents for working include: for self-fulfillment (27.9%), to supplement husband's earning (17.4%), because I'm a graduate and I cannot waste learning (15.8%), and the need to leave home (9.3%). With regards to the respondent's number of working days in a week, all the respondents mentioned five (5) working days i.e. Monday to Friday. As regards the opening and closing hours, the respondents said they resumed by 7.00am but opened to customers by 8.00am and closed by 3.00pm or 4.00pm to customers (depending on the banks) and then start balancing and reconciling their account. This account balancing and reconciliation, according to the respondents, sometimes last till 7.00pm or beyond.

With regards to respondents feeling about their work the results of the enquiries made is presented in table 2 below:

Table 2: Respondents' feelings about their work

Respondents feelings	Frequency	Percent %
My job require that I work very hard	83	33.6
I never seem to have enough time to get my work done	18	7.3
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment	74	30.0
I find my work enjoyable and challenging	72	29.1
Total	247	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 2 above shows respondents' feelings about their work. From the table, most (33.6%) of the respondents felt their job require that they work very hard, 30.0 percent of them felt that their work gave them a feeling of personal accomplishment, 29.1 percent found their work enjoyable and challenging while the remaining 7.3 percent never seem to have enough time to get their work done. These findings show that the respondents have different feelings towards their work which in one way or the other has influence their work attitude and performance.

4. Impact of National Holidays on the Respondents

To know the impact national holidays have on the respondents, efforts were first of all made to extract information from respondents on whether their workplace observe national holiday, the level of observance of such national holidays, and the goodness of national holidays. With regards to the observance of the national holidays by commercial banks in the study area, all the respondents said yes, that their workplaces always observe national holidays whenever is declared by the federal Government of Nigeria, and that the level of compliance, according to the respondents, is very high. On the goodness of the national holidays, a little more than half (51.0%) of the respondents belief national holiday is good because according to them it always help to promote a sense of nationhood and common community, 48.2% sees it as very good because it always remind and guide them about the value and message associated with a particular holiday, while the remaining 0.8 percent said national holidays are bad. Further enquiries were made from the respondents that saw national holidays as bad on why they think so. The results of the enquiries show their major reasons to be that national holidays always reduce economic activity/output.

With regards to the impact of national holidays on the respondents, the result of the enquiries made is presented in table 3 below:

Table 3: Impact of National Holidays on the Respondents

No in the Questionnaire	Nature of the impact	Strongly Agree 4	Agree 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1	\bar{X}	Rank
1	It makes me to be more creative/have new ideas of doing my work	122	122	1	2	3.47	1 st
5	It gives me better mental health which is good for job performance	130	107	1	9	3.44	2 nd
2	It always makes me relaxed, more energetic and less stress than I was before holidays	112	128	1	6	3.40	3 rd
3	It always make me more resilient, productive and engaged at work	111	129	1	6	3.39	4 th
4	It always make me more refreshed and excited to get back to my job	104	130	1	12	3.31	5 th

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 3 show the impact of national holidays on the respondents. From the table, it can be seen that majority of the respondents strongly agreed/agreed that national holidays ‘makes them to be more creative and have new ideas of doing their work’, ‘gives them better mental health which is good for job performance’, ‘makes them relaxed, more energetic and less stress than they were before holidays’, ‘makes them more resilient, productive and engaged at work’, and ‘make them more refreshed and excited to get back to their job’.

From among the impact which national holidays have on the respondents as listed in table 3 above, ‘it makes me to be more creative and have new ideas of doing my work’ was the most common, with an overall weighted mean of 3.47, while ‘it makes me more refreshed and excited to get back to my job’ ranked last with a weighted mean value of 3.31. These indicate that national holidays invigorate commercial bank workers to work harder.

5. Impact of National Holidays on Respondents Level of Job Performance

Efforts were also made to understand the impact of national holidays on respondents’ job performance by first of all find out the level of job performance of the respondents. With regards to the respondents’ level of job performance, the results of the enquiries made show that 57.3 percent indicated very high performance, 37.5 percent chose high performance, 3.2 percent picked low performance while the remaining 2.0 percent signified very low performance. However, by collapsing the respondents’ response into two groups of (i) low, and (ii) high, respondents who reported high performance are more than those who reported low performance. Based on this, respondents in the sampled commercial banks are found to have high level of job performance.

In view of the foregoing, efforts were then made to find out how much impact national holidays had on the respondents’ level of job performance. The results of this inquiry are presented in table 4 below:

Table 4: Impact of National Holidays on Respondents' Level of Job Performance

How much impact do you think national holidays have on your level of job performance?	Frequency	Percent %
A lot	205	83.0
Some	38	15.4
A little	03	1.2
No impact	01	0.4
Total	247	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2020

Table 4 shows the impact of national holidays on the respondents' level of job performance. From the table, majority (83.0%) of the respondents indicated a lot of impact, 15.4 percent signified some impact, 1.2 percent indicated a little impact while the remaining 0.4 percent picked no impact. Situation where many respondents signified a lot of impact means that national holiday have positive impact on respondents' level of job performance. These findings contradicted that of Botes (2017); and Mohammed, *et al* (2018). These scholars in their various studies found inverse relationship between national holidays and job performance. The difference in findings may however be attributed to differences in research setting.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the impact of national holidays on job performance of commercial bank employees in Anyigba with the specific objectives of investigating commercial bank employees' views about their job, their level of job performance and the impact which national holidays have on their level of job performance. Results of the study show that most of the respondents felt their job required they work very hard. The study further discovered that respondents have high level of job performance and this was found to be significantly influenced by national holidays. In view of these findings, the study conclude that national holidays though have its own demerits are more beneficial to employees. Arising from this conclusion, the study make case for more national holidays for workers as this will not only provide opportunity for them to recover from work strain but also help to ensure their long term workability with improved performance needed by employers to break even

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