



## Enhancing Employees' Punctuality: The Role of High Performance Work System

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of high performance work system on punctuality of civil servants in the ministries of culture and tourism in South-South States of Nigeria. The predictor variable is high performance work system (as a dimension of work systems) and the criterion variables is punctuality as a measure of workplace spirituality. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design with individual employees as the unit of analysis with structured questionnaire as the research instrument which was distributed to 359 civil servants within the ministry of culture and tourism in the south-south region of Nigeria. Out of the 359 questionnaire distributed, 339 questionnaire were useful for data analysis. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation with 0.05 level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The outcome of the data analysis showed that high performance work system has positive significant effect on punctuality. We therefore, recommended that the ministry of culture and tourism in the South-South, Nigeria should emphasize on high performance work system to enhance employee punctuality.*

**Keywords:** *High Performance Work System; Punctuality*

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### Introduction

Time is one major parameter of organization life. Organizational interactions would be impossible if workers lacks the ability to relate the interactions with time. Thus, workplace processes demands that human activities be synchronized in time. Therefore, punctuality is of utmost importance to any organization be it private or public organizations; thus, in the words of Dishon and Koslowsky (2002), punctuality is the soul of any business establishment. This implies every business organization needs to pay particular attention to how early or late its employees show up to work. Accordingly, punctuality is one of the principal organizational virtues that workers must exhibit for organizational survival. There are diverse advantages of punctuality as punctual employees may be less likely to engage in withdrawal behaviour linked with bad mindset toward work and the establishment, like low commitment, low satisfaction, and low job involvement (Dishon & Koslowsky, 2002). It also has positive consequences in the establishment especially in group setting, the smooth functioning of all members may be directly proportional to punctual behaviour. Whether it involves arriving at a decision that requires everyone's input or simply creating the correct climate or working conditions, punctual behaviour may have a good interpersonal impact within the work group.

Furthermore, the employee's late arrival may disrupt the day's work schedule, because appointments may not take place on early because the job of other workers who depend on, or are linked with, the late employee may be held up. The potential adverse consequences of employee lateness highlight the positive results of employee punctuality. Late employees can reduce organizational productivity, mainly if they are not atoning for lost work time by the time their shifts has ended (DeLonzor, 2007). Additionally, it hurts the values and work ethic of other employees who might resent that the late arrivers are not getting called out or disciplined for their lateness and consequently it might even encourage other employees to start showing up late to the office especially if there are no obvious consequence for the bad behaviour.

Organizations over the years have sought means of improving employee resource management specifically with the interest of reducing the rate of employees' lateness and work absenteeism to maintain low level of workers turnover (Subramony & Pugh, 2015) through the use of work systems such as the high performance work system. Accordingly, Singh (2009) expressed that high performance work system affect the norms and anticipations of the workers that encourages them to go beyond the specific behaviour. Gupta and Singh (2010) also expressed that high performance work system might send message to employees that their organizations have trust in them, taking cares of their well-being. By holding these reciprocity sentiments, employees will improve their personal efforts and contributions and consequently become more punctual in their attendance. Hence, using social exchange theory, a favourable relationship between high performance work system and employee service related behaviours such as punctuality could be expected.

A number of high performance work system practices like participation, training and communication can influence employee behaviours (punctuality) and other spiritual behaviours. Employees that are fully involved in the firm are mostly committed employees and committed workers have a very high tendency to be punctual to work (Mishra, Boynton & Mishra, 2014). Thus, high performance work system that encourage employee participation and engagement can encourage employee punctuality as employees sees it as duty and a requirement to be early to work execute an assigned task on time. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship that exist between high performance work system and punctuality of employees in Ministries of Culture and Tourism in South-South States of Nigeria. Consequently, the research question and hypothesis are: What is the relationship between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria? And, there is no significant relationship between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

### **Concept of High Performance Work System**

High performance work system is not a recent construct in human resource practice as the notion of successfully managing people existed long ago. Nonetheless, to attain an enhanced productive workforce, organization's managers must give priority to employees than ever before in nowadays modern business environment. Because a worker that is motivated in his work would generally want to perform optimally just as a well-greased machine works in a production process

(Patel & Conklin, 2012). This need brought about high-performance work function as it covers those practices such as (training, communication and job involvement) human resources managers adopt to improve workers performance in the firm (Aston & Sung, 2002). Thus, it centered on creating and executing bundles of complementary practices which as an integrated whole make a much powerful impact on performance than been carried out separately.

High performance work system can also be referred to as high performance work practices, high performance work organization, high commitment management and progressive human resource practices (Patel & Conklin, 2012; Kalleberg, Marsden, Reynolds & Knoke, 2006; Purcell, 2006). According to Tamkin (2004), it is a system that has to do with formalized procedures utilized in testing the efficacy of human resources on organization's performance. Also, Sung, Ashton and Britain (2005) expressed that it is a process of harmonizing work practices that covers high employee involvement practices and reward and commitment practices. It is a work system that ensures that workers are managed effectively to become highly productive in the firm. It involves practices that raises the degree of confidence in workplaces and increases workers' intrinsic reward and subsequently enhances positive work behaviour (Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg & Kalleberg, 2000). Thus, it is a collection of separate human resources practices combined together to improve both firm and workers performance.

### **Concept of Punctuality**

Punctuality has to do with a strict observance in keeping engagements and promptness (Kanekar & Naz, 2013). Also, punctuality is the feature of being able to execute a required task or fulfil an obligation before or at a previously-designated time (Bacal, 2002). Thus, being punctual not only refers to coming to work or for meetings or appointments whilst at work on time, but also being ready and prepared on arrival. Punctuality shows a person's regard for other people and their time. In a scheduled appointment, the late-comer usually gives an impression that he/she doesn't value the other person's time or considers his/her time to be more valuable than that of others. Attendance in the work environment usually goes alongside with punctuality which is also focused on staying at work until ones given task is finished for the day.

The aim of punctuality is to ensure that workers attend workplace at the proper time and also complete their working hours. Hence, it is an endearing values or virtues of a worker that managers admired and respect. Punctuality is a good trait not just in employees, but in people in general. No one is excited of been kept waiting. Waiting for an individual to show up can be exasperating and downright irritating. But in the work setting, punctuality has considerable effects. When someone is late, they might cause meetings to be pushed out, impacting colleagues' schedules. They may also miss important tasks, adding an extra task to other team member's to-do list. Punctuality is very crucial at the workplace because a worker's performance is often measured based on his or her punctuality and employees are required to be punctual and dependable in order to accomplish the goals and objective of their department particularly and the establishment generally including the show of expertise which helps one to be seen as trustworthy and faithful employee (Aloumedjo, 2018). Thus, it helps build employee's repute and dependability.

When a worker is punctual, it means that the individual cares about the establishment's members, takes his job seriously as is very concerned about meeting deadlines. However, while

punctuality is a job requirement, some workers must be taught the rules of punctuality. To illustrate, if the job description highlights that the hours for work begin at 7:00am that does not imply that the worker should walk into the office at 8:00am but sign in the time-book that he or she is at their desk ready to start working at 7:00am. Managers including employees can profit from the ability to predict punctuality behaviour. Such knowledge is especially crucial in jobs where even one incident of lateness may have dire consequences. In such scenario, one wishes to identify in advance individuals who are constantly punctual.

Employees that are punctual are precious assets to any organization as their contributions is very important to the establishment's productivity. Contrarily, employees who disrespects punctuality (that is tardy employees) increases the burdens of the establishment and contribute less to the entire organizational productivity. Late workers impact negatively on productivity and co-worker morale, particularly for other employees who depend on them or those to help provide cover (Coughlan, 2004). Employee lateness is the arrival at work when it's past the time agreed upon by employer and employee. It is a happening that manifests itself in many establishments. It has effects for the individual worker including the establishment entirely as it leads to substantial financial consequences for the establishment such as loss of efficiency for the late employee as well as fellow workers who depends on his or her work.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design with individual employees as the unit of analysis of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria. The South-South region of Nigeria include Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa-Ibom and Cross River State. Additionally, the research used questionnaire as the research instrument which was distributed to 359 civil servants within the ministry of culture and tourism in the south-south region of Nigeria. Furthermore, the choice of respondents from each ministry was determined via cluster sampling technique with each ministry representing a cluster. Out of the 359-questionnaire distributed, 339 questionnaire were useful for data analysis. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation with 0.05 level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The research instrument consists of four respond choices with point scales ranging from 1 to 5 indicating strongly disagree, disagree, indifference, agree and strongly disagree respectively. The independent variable is high performance work system as a dimension of work system (Alter, 2013); it is thus used as a uni-dimensional variable while the dependent variables used is punctuality as a measure of workplace spirituality (Petchsawanga & Duchon, 2009); it is thus used as a uni-dimensional variable. We used face and content validity to make sure the instrument measured what it intended to measure while the reliability of the instrument was done through Cronbach Alpha and the result reveals 0.975 and 0.895 for high performance work system and punctuality respectively.

### **Data Analysis and Result**

#### **High Performance Work System and Punctuality**

The analysis below shows the relationship between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria.

**Table 1: Relationship between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria.**

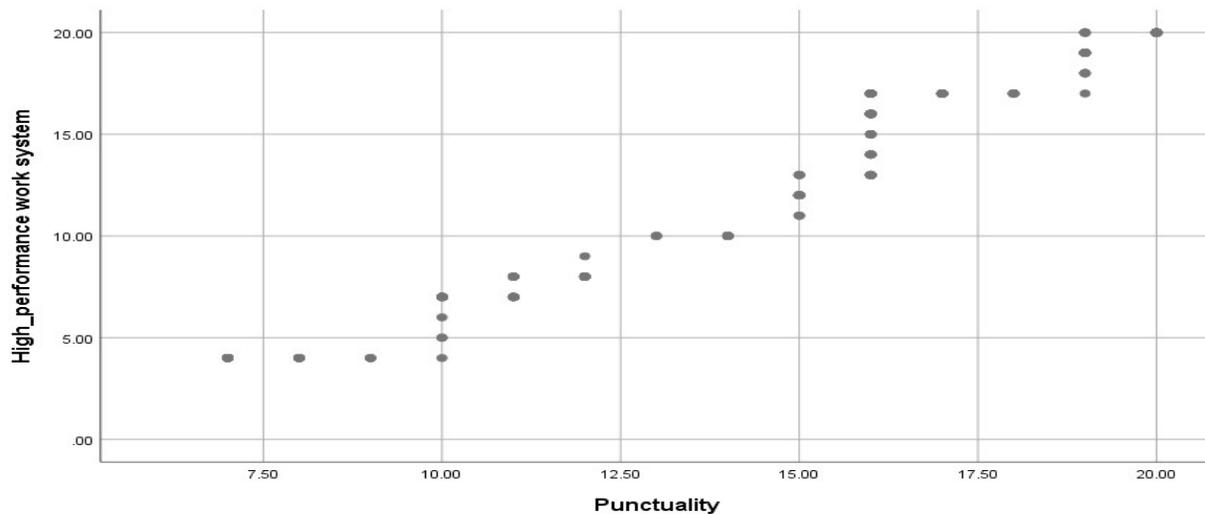
variables	n	r	df	crt.r	p-value	Remarks
High performance	339	0.970	337	.1045	0.000	Significant

**Punctuality**

*P < 0.05; significant at 0.05 level of significance*

**Source: Field Survey Data, 2021.**

Table 1 revealed the nexus between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria. The outcomes revealed a very strong and positive nexus between high performance work system and punctuality with  $r(337) = 0.970$ ,  $\text{crit.} = .1045$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ . It means a direct connection exist between high performance work system and punctuality. Consequently, stated hypothesis is rejected, thus, there is strong/significant connection between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria. The corresponding scattered graph is shown below:



*Figure 1: Scattered Graph of high performance work system and punctuality.*

**Discussion of Findings**

From the empirical analysis between high performance work system and punctuality in table 1, showed that high performance work system has a Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient ( $\rho$ ) = 0.970 and a P-value of 0.000 which is  $P < 0.05$  on punctuality which means that a very strong positive and significant relationship exist between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria. Thus, Singh (2009) expressed that high performance work system affect the norms and anticipations of the workers that encourages them to go beyond the specific behaviour. Gupta and Singh (2010) also expressed that high performance work system might send message to

employees that their organizations have trust on them, taking cares of their well-being. By holding these reciprocity sentiments, employees will improve their personal efforts and contributions and consequently become more punctual in their attendance. Hence, using social exchange theory, a favourable relationship between high performance work system and employee service related behaviours such as punctuality could be expected.

A number of high performance work system practices like participation, training and communication can influence employee behaviours (punctuality) and other spiritual behaviours. Employees that are fully involved in the firm are mostly committed employees and committed workers have a very high tendency to be punctual to work (Mishra *et al.*, 2014). Thus, high performance work system that encourage employee participation and engagement can encourage employee punctuality as employees sees it as duty and a requirement to be early to work execute an assigned task on time.

Furthermore, effective communication as a practice of high performance work system can also be crucial in enhancing employee's punctuality. Thus, Cooke, Cooper, Bartram, Wang & Mei (2016) articulated that the primary step to take in reducing employee tardiness is to have a clear, good and well communicated attendance policy that specify what it means to be absent or tardy. Communication flow is crucial to workers: workers need to feel secure that they will receive truthful and updated information from superiors as inadequate, inefficient and insensitive communication severely impacts employee motivation (Liao, Toya, Lepak, & Hong, 2009) that subsequently drives the workers decision to arrive at work each day early. Poor communication is also connected to rising stress levels in workplaces leading to tardiness (Guest, 2011). Also training is essential in equipping the employees on the essence of punctuality since their productivity and task accomplished is reliant on punctuality.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The outcome of the data analysis in this study provides a positive and significant relationship between high performance work system and punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria. Based on the findings, it is apparent to conclude that high performance work system is very essential in enhancing workplace spirituality vis-à-vis punctuality of civil servants within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in the South-South Region of Nigeria. Therefore, for employees to improve their personal efforts and contributions and consequently become more punctual in their attendance, high performance work system must be in place in the organization. Irrespective of the sentience of the adversative effect of lateness on the general organizational productivity and performance, the degree of punctuality among civil servants in Nigerian is still very low. Hence, the necessity to employ a work system-high performance work system that are further concentrated on the workers in other to advance their morals and stimulate them to be further committed.

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