

**RECREATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF CAMEROON CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION****Dr. Thierry ALOUMEDJO ZAM****DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.1307390****Keywords:** Workplace Recreation; Job Satisfaction; employee well-being and organizational performance.**Abstract**

The Purpose of this paper is to explain the effects of recreation on the well-being and performance of employees in the Cameroon Customs administration and how it can be implemented efficiently. The study covered aspects of employee well-being; productivity; organizational performance and job satisfaction. The study used a mixed approach qualitative and quantitative to explain the possible link in between recreation and organizational performance. It has been ascertained by scholars that workplace recreation was always profitable for workers in terms of relax mind, health, job satisfaction and performance. Findings bring out the importance of the benefits of recreation in the human resource management process. It is assumed from the studies carried out that organizational performance can only be the fruit of a skillfully enhanced policy comprising a number of factors among which workplace recreation which should be put in place following standards , otherwise it could lead to disarray, lack of focus and indiscipline. The sample for the study is comprised of 270 employees draw from the 3895 personnel constituting the Cameroon Customs administration. A total of 260 questionnaires were distributed to selected employees. Out of these, 250 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. 10 questionnaires distributed were not returned. We assert the response rate to 88 %. The responses were coded and analyzed using quantitative methods including means, percentages, standard deviations, frequency distributions, Pearson correlation, coefficient of variation, and detailed tests. The analyzed results were presented in the form of tables and figures. The Practical implications of the paper are that it provides professionals and theoreticians with another approach about the link in between the two concepts above-mentioned in a Cameroonian context where the priority most often is survival due to lack of means and proper social policy and furthermore with the tools to implement such a difficult task that need follow-up and assessment with workers not always motivated. The originality of this research is that it tends to demonstrate that the Cameroon Customs Revenue can pass from \$827.9 million a year to \$ 4232, 7 million (Aloumedjo Zam, 2018)¹, which represents almost half of the Cameroon State budget provided that adequate hr management is applied alongside effective workplace recreational activities.

Introduction

The term “recreation” is polysemous. However based on the English Cambridge Dictionary, we can define it as “Something done for pleasure or to relax, or such activities generally ». It also means creating something afresh. Among the activities that constitute workplace recreation, we can refer to sports, membership in associations, cultural, social activities and music (author in 17), according to (author in 8), such activities could also include therapeutic, pharmacotherapy, promotion and counseling classes or programmes. These activities aim at increasing morale, motivate employees, and enhance their job satisfaction (author in 2). If workplace recreation makes the unanimity as far as its virtues are concerned such as health (Wattles and Harris, 2003); high productivity (author in 11), and lower absenteeism as asserted by (author in 4), However one of the crucial issues is how to implement a workplace recreation policy in an organization, especially in the developing world where organizations usually face lack of means due to poverty and governance issues. Attracting and retaining competent staff is a challenge for most organizations (author in 18), in that vein there is a need to enhance performance in harmony with leisure requirements that are vital for the well-being of human resource which is the center of any organization. The Customs administration in its organizational chart has made provision for a unit in charge of human resource and social action. But in between the legal dispositions and the actions done on the field there is a gap as the said administration seems seriously to face social climate and Hr management challenges. The objectives of our study are to demonstrate how workforce recreation can properly be



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implemented and its benefits for the administration financially, technically and socially. In other words how can workforce recreation are effectively implemented in the Customs administration? What are the challenges facing the Customs department in that regard? What are the benefits of workforce recreation for the well-being of the Customs administration?

Can this type of policy be implemented in other public bodies? The significance of this study is that it aims at providing concrete proposals to practitioners for the enhancement of the organizational performance of the Customs department as it secures the well-being of customs agents with the objective of passing the Cameroon Customs Revenue from \$827.9 million a year to \$ 4232, 7 million (author in 3), which represents almost half of the Cameroon State budget.

The Empirical review

2.1. Workplace recreation

Workplace recreation generally refers to sports and employee fitness, mental health and entertainment. In that vein, (author in 9), established a link between employee fitness programmes and organizational performance. (Author in 10), conducted a study on the effects of workplace. Recreation on employee's mental health. Furthermore (author in 27), confirmed the positive effect of social and physical recreation programmes on employee health. The proposal reported that the recreation programmes reduced health care costs for employers by reducing sick leave, health costs. Similarly, the World Health Organization (2003) reported that workplace physical activities reduced sick leave by 32%, health care costs by 50 %, and improve productivity by 52%.

2.2. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to how a worker is satisfied with his job or aspects related to it (author in 27), One of the most widely used definitions in organizational research is that of Locke who defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences Locke (author in 24), lists 14 common facets of job satisfaction which are: Appreciation, Communication, Coworkers, Fringe benefits, Job conditions, Nature of the work, Organization, Personal growth, Policies and procedures, Promotion opportunities, Recognition, Security, and Supervision.

2.3. Employee well being

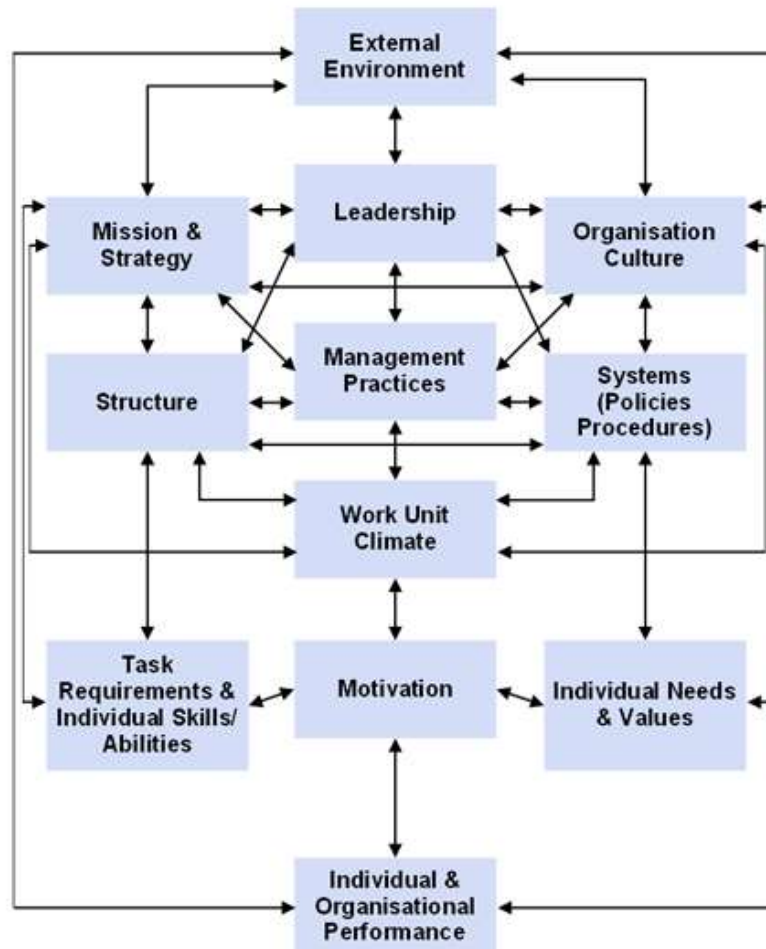
Carol Ryff's multidimensional model of psychological well-being proposed six factors which are key for well-being:

1. Self-acceptance
2. Personal growth
3. Purpose in life
4. Environmental mastery
5. Autonomy
6. Positive relations with others.

In a nutshell, employee well being or wellness refers to diverse and interconnected dimensions of physical, mental, and social well-being that extend beyond the traditional definition of health. It includes choices and activities aimed at achieving physical vitality, mental alacrity, social satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment, and personal fulfillment (author in 20),

2.4. Organizational performance

Organizational performance encompasses areas such as Firm outcomes (author in 20), customer service, social responsibility, employee stewardship, organizational performance (author in 25),Performance measurement systems (author in 25),Performance improvement, organizational engineering and performance measuring. The Causal Model of Organizational Performance and Change here below, also known as the Burke & Litwin Model, suggests linkages that hypothesize how performance is affected by internal and external factors. It provides a framework to assess organizational and environmental dimensions that are keys to successful change and it demonstrates how these dimensions should be linked causally to achieve a change in performance.



Source: Move

The Theoretical review

3.1 Maslow's concept of self-actualization

According to Abraham Maslow, the basic needs of humans must be met (e.g. food, shelter, warmth, security, sense of belonging) before a person can achieve self-actualization. The need to be good, to be fully alive and to find meaning in life. He argued that reaching a state of true self-actualization in everyday society was fairly rare. It is asserted by Kurt Goldstein that when people live lives that are different from their true nature and capabilities, they are less likely to be happy than those whose goals and lives match. The concept was brought most fully to prominence in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory as the final level of psychological development that can be achieved when all basic and mental needs are essentially fulfilled.

3.2 Rogers' concept of the fully functioning person

Carl Rogers agreed with the main assumptions of Abraham Maslow, but added that for a person to "grow", they need an environment that provides them with genuineness (openness and self-disclosure), acceptance (being seen with unconditional positive regard), and empathy (being listened to and understood). Rogers believed that every person could achieve their goals, wishes, and desires in life. When they reach that stage, they are called fully functioning people. This means that the person is in touch with the here and now, his or her subjective experiences and feelings, continually growing and changing.



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Rogers identified five characteristics of the fully functioning person:

1. **Open to experience:** both positive and negative emotions accepted. Negative feelings are not denied, but worked through (rather than resorting to ego defense mechanisms).
2. **Existential living:** in touch with different experiences as they occur in life, avoiding prejudging and preconceptions. Being able to live and fully appreciate the present, not always looking back to the past or forward to the future (i.e., living for the moment).
3. **Trust feelings:** feeling, instincts, and gut-reactions are paid attention to and trusted. People's own decisions are the right ones, and we should trust ourselves to make the right choices.
4. **Creativity:** creative thinking and risk-taking are features of a person's life. A person does not play safe all the time. This involves the ability to adjust and change and seek new experiences.
5. **Fulfilled life:** a person is happy and satisfied with life, and always looking for new challenges and experiences.

3.3 Jung's concept of individuation

Jung's process of attaining individuation, Came about through Jung's development analytical psychology. That process looks like this:



The next step in the process is the integration of the ego (consciousness) with the personal and collective self.

1. The ego
2. Personal unconscious
3. Collective unconscious

In Jungian psychology, also called analytical psychology, individuation is the process in which the individual self develops out of an undifferentiated unconscious – seen as a developmental psychic process during which innate elements of personality, the components of the immature psyche, and the experiences of the person's life become, if the process is more or less successful, integrated over time into a well-functioning whole.

3.4 Allport's concept of maturity

Often referred to as the founder of the trait theory of personality, Gordon Allport made extensive studies of maturity. He identified 06 criteria as the basis of maturity. They are:

1. **Extension of the sense of self.** Mature people care about other people as much as they care about themselves. Immature people are self-absorbed and ego-centric.
2. **Warm relating of self to others.** Mature people can be intimately involved with others without being possessive or jealous or controlling. They accept people for who they are.
3. **Emotional security.** Mature people can control their appetites. They have a sense of proportion. Immature people seem at the mercy of their drives, desires and appetites. They over-react to threats and disappointments.
4. **Realistic perception of skills.** Immature people pursue goals that are unrealistic relative to their talents and



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see the world in self-seeking ways. Mature people are more accurate in their appraisal of others and also their own strengths and limitations.

5. **Self-insight.** Mature people see themselves more or less as others see them contrarily to immature people and mature people also have a sense of humor.

6. **A unifying philosophy of life.** This is a clear sense of what life is all about. It could be religious but need not be as a commitment to a cause, a quest, a search or a goal will serve the same need. Having something to live for beyond them is a key to possessing maturity according to Allport.

3.5 Herzberg's two factors theory

The two-factor theory (also known as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and dual-factor theory) states that there are certain factors in the workplace that cause job satisfaction, while a separate set of factors cause dissatisfaction. Two-factor theory distinguishes between:

- Motivators (e.g. challenging work, recognition for one's achievement, responsibility, opportunity to do something meaningful, involvement in decision making, sense of importance to an organization) that give positive satisfaction, and
- Hygiene factors (e.g. status, job security, salary, fringe benefits, work conditions, good pay, paid insurance, vacations) that do not give positive satisfaction or lead to higher motivation, though dissatisfaction results from their absence. The term "hygiene" is used in the sense that these are maintenance factors.

According to the Two-Factor Theory there are four possible combinations:

1. High Hygiene + High Motivation: The ideal situation where employees are highly motivated and have few complaints.
2. High Hygiene + Low Motivation: Employees have few complaints but are not highly motivated. The job is viewed as a paycheck.
3. Low Hygiene + High Motivation: Employees are motivated but have a lot of complaints. A situation where the job is exciting and challenging but salaries and work conditions are not up to expectations.
4. Low Hygiene + Low Motivation: This is the worst situation where employees are not motivated and have many complaints.

The Conceptual frameworks

4.1. Hypotheses

From the above-mentioned, the following hypotheses can be drawn:

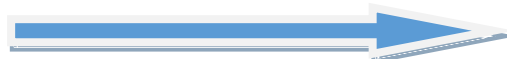
- Ho1: Implementing an effective Workplace recreation policy in the Customs administration will lead to organizational performance.
- Ho2: Implementing an effective Workplace recreation policy in the Customs administration will not lead to organizational performance.
- Ho3: Implementing an effective Workplace recreation policy in the Customs administration is not possible considering the environment.
- Ho4: Implementing an effective Workplace recreation policy in the Customs administration is possible notwithstanding the unfavorable environment.

4.2. The Variables

Independent variables

Workplace
recreation

Affects



dependent variable

Organizational
performance



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The research methodology

Research methods used for this study was a mixed method implying quantitative (Sample Size; Determination; Hypothesis Testing) and qualitative methods such as (Direct observation ;Open-ended surveys; Focus group; In-depth interviews; history; Content; Ethnographic observation and Participant observation).The researcher also verified the validity and reliability of the data collected and analyzed through the sampling validity and constructs validity and followed the under mentioned procedure to guarantee validity of the survey:

- He used broad sampling;
- He emphasized on important content;
- He wrote questions to measure the appropriate skills;
- He involved a panel of experts for his study.

For the range of the reliability coefficient that is from 0 to 1. Rule of thumb for preferred levels of the coefficient:

- For high stakes tests > 0.85. Some authors suggest this figure should be above .90.
- For low stakes tests > 0.70. Some authors suggest this figure should be above 0.80

The coefficient being above 0.8 for both the dependent and independent variables that were subsequently defined and measured, the reliability permitted us to rely on the quality of the analyses.

Sampling and demographic information

(Author in 16) define a population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurements. On the other hand, (author in 23),defined target population as all members of a real or hypothetical set of subjects, people or events in which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of a study. The researcher targeted the personnel of the Cameroon Customs Administration from 2010 to 2016.The figures of the said staff is tabulated below:

Table 1: The personnel of the Cameroon Customs Administration from 2010 to 2016

year	Total Category A	Total Category B	Total Category C	Total Category D	Total others	Total	Evolution in %
2016	534	510	1036	1543	484	4107	66
2015	498	482	421	571	495	2467	14
2014	464	449	287	442	504	2146	-0.14
2013	464	449	287	428	521	2149	04
2012	424	418	287	424	502	2055	10
2011	381	378	287	407	412	1865	03
2010	344	346	287	395	423	1795	

Source: Service of personnel of the Cameroon Customs Administration.

The category A personnel were targeted because they are the senior staff in charge of directing and conceiving the policy of the Customs administration. The category B personnel are in charge of applying at a high level the policy conceived whereby they are also chosen as target. The category C was targeted due to the fact that they are in charge of the basic application of decision taking. Hence in the retention of personnel, each and every one of these play an important role that deserve to be peruse with attention.



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In this study, the researcher used both probability and non probability sampling designs to select facilities and respondents to be included in the sample. Sampling in our study was therefore necessary in order to be cost and time effective.

Sample is defined as a part of a large population (author in 21) which is thought to be representative of the larger population. This is the reason why the above-mentioned sampling frame was chosen.

The sample for the study is comprised of 200 employees draw from the 3895 personnel constituting the Cameroon Customs administration. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to selected employees. Out of these, 150 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. 50 questionnaires distributed were not returned. We assert the response rate to 80 % around.

Research findings

Single factor analysis (ANOVA)

$$s^2 = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{N}$$

Regression Model for organizational performance

Regression models involve the following parameters and variables:

- The unknown parameters, denoted as β , which may represent a scalar or a vector;
- The dependent variable, denoted as, X ;
- The independent variable, denoted as Y .

In various fields of application, different terminologies are used in place of dependent and independent variables. A regression model relates Y to a function of X and β .



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Table 2: Workplace recreations and organizational performance

Aspects of Job Satisfaction	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Correlation
Recreational activities Provide a means of pleasure and enjoyment.	30	60	5.7	-	-	4,5	0,68
Participation in recreational activities is useful in the management of work life balance.	40	40	4	-	-	4,3	0,82
Recreational activities like staff parties provide a suitable opportunity for feedback on individual and organizational performance	20	10	22.7		0,89	3,8	0,81
Recreational activities provide a good opportunity for recognizing employee achievements thus meeting some of employees social needs	10	10	15		17,5	4	0,53
Recreation in a way influences employees' aspiration to be identified	20,8	10	20		20,6	2,5	0,45



with the organization.							
Engagement in organizational recreational activities provides a good forum for self development.	29.2	20	15,9		19,2	3,75	0.59

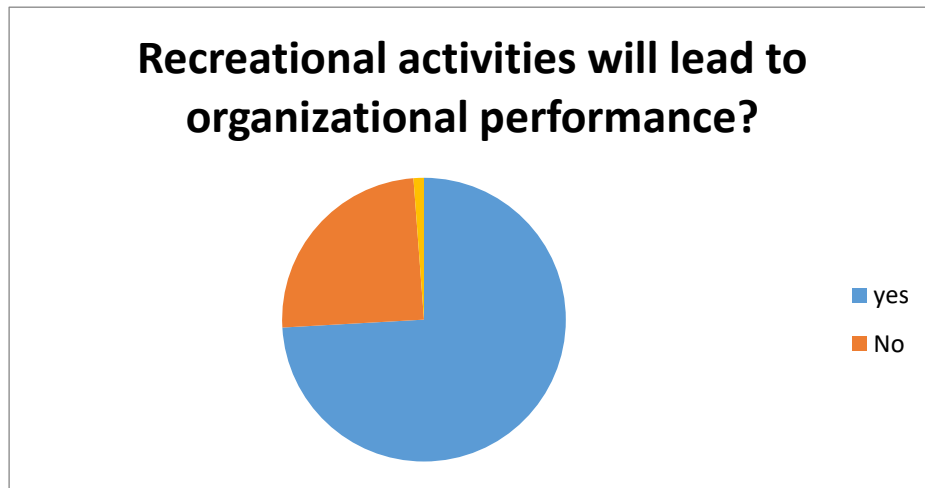


Figure 1: Recreational Activities and organizational performance

It appears from the above illustrations that the overall regression model (Model 1 in table) is significant. Based on the respondents’ belief about implementing an effective Workplace recreation policy and its effects in the Customs administration. It was found that notwithstanding the unfavorable environment, a workplace recreation policy can successfully be implemented and this will lead to organizational performance. In fact Majority of the respondents (75%) were of the opinion that recreation affects employee productivity as shown in Figure 1.

Limitations of the research

Although this research was carefully prepared, I am still aware of its limitations and shortcomings. First of all, the research was conducted in the developing world context where access to information is still very limited; Second, the population of the experimental group does not systematically represent the majority of opinions on the topic at hand; Thirdly, the research in this area is scarce in Africa in general and in Cameroon in particular, the country of the researcher. Finally since the assessment of the pretest and post test was conducted by the author himself, it is possible to find in this study, certain degree of subjectivity.

Discussion

Our research led us to the results according to which Implementing an effective Workplace recreation policy in the Customs administration will lead to organizational performance. This goes in line with authors in [1], [2], [3], [4], [5] and [6], according to who recreational activities increase morale, motivate employees, and enhance



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their job satisfaction and organizational performance. We can deduct from the above mentioned that if properly implemented, the incumbent performance of the customs administration will be able to move from \$827.9 million a year to \$ 4232, 7 million as stated by the author in a previous article entitled: “ A comparative study in between the management of a football team and the Cameroon Customs administration”. We therefore make the hypothesis according to which Cameroon Customs administration could be the most productive department of Cameroon even before taxation if only proper hr management including workplace recreation is effectively implemented.

Conclusions

The aim of this *study* was to explore the range and nature of workplace recreation and its impact on organizational performance. In that regard we appraised the concepts of employee well-being; productivity; organizational performance and job satisfaction. The theories of Maslow’s concept of self-actualization; Rogers’ concept of the fully functioning person; Allport’s concept of maturity and Herzberg’s two factors theory. The statistical inferences lead to the fact that Majority of the respondents (75%) were of the opinion that recreation affects employee productivity as shown in Figure 1 against 25% who were against.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended on the basis of the above-mentioned that the Customs department and indeed other organizations should create workplace recreational facilities where all cadres of staff meet and interact in an informal setting that are of interest to employees bearing in mind their different tastes, gender, age and among others. Moreover the unit in charge of HR and social affairs must be enhanced with means to carry out effectively its missions. An information system of the Customs administration must be set and motivational and personal development programmes as well as frequent training and development sessions must be held, assessed and followed up. To that effect balance in between private life and work must be guaranteed. We can gain more from others, in that vein the partnership with other corporations must be intensified. In addition a conducive working environment and motivation measures must be put in place. The possibility of an insurance policy covering health and educational purposes must be studied. Finally the Government of Cameroon should develop a policy framework to help establish and institutionalize workplace recreation as part of employee benefits and welfare programme.

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