



THE EFFECT OF TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES ON EMPLOYEE-PERFORMANCE; THE CASE OF GHANA'S FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY

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Collective bargaining, Employee-Performance, Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), Ghana, Trade Union

ABSTRACT

This study assesses the effect of the activities of the trade union of Ghana's Food and Drugs Authority (FDA) on employee-performance. Three objectives were developed to streamline the survey, the first of which was to identify the activities of the FDA from literature and from respondents (employees of the FDA). The second and third objectives were to determine the effects of trade union activities on employee performance and to identify the challenges and constraints of trade union activities within the FDA, respectively. Information was collected from FDA employees who are active members of the trade union. The FDA was selected purposively for the survey because of the presence of an active trade union within it. Information was collected from selected respondents who are active members of the trade union. Respondents mostly agreed that affiliated unions should be assisted to undertake collective bargaining on behalf of workers and that workers must be unionized under a united trade union movement. They also intimated that affiliated unions must support each other to lobby for improved wages, shorter work hours and create better working conditions. The majority of respondents also strongly agreed with the assertion that the trade union protects members from victimization. Communication between management and employees, as fostered by the trade union, was seen to have the most significant effect on employee-performance. Challenges identified as being detrimental to the running of the trade union include unfavourable government interference, lack of cooperation among union members, high records of nominal membership and low productivity. Lack of equitable participation of employees in management and lack of membership-drive were ranked as the most pressing constraints of the activities of the trade union. The study recommends that government must ensure the autonomy of the trade union, unions must ensure the security of workers and effective communication should be encouraged between management and employees.

BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Trade unions are organizations of workers that are set up to fight for the rights of members and to lobby for better working conditions for member employees. Buchmueller and DiNardo(2002) also define a trade union in the context of a certain commonality within the trade of members, which is to say that the trade union comprises members of the same or similar trade who come together as a single unit with the objective of fighting for a common purpose. The trade union primarily consists of employees whose principal activities are geared towards negotiating for employee-welfare. A trade union is also *an alliance of workers to strengthen their efforts in bargaining with their correspondents* (TUC-RLF, 2012).

The formation of trade unions was necessitated by the existing unfavorable master-servant relationship between employers and employees. Also, workers being paid 'slave wages' (Baah, 2000) to keep them in the employ of business owners was deemed inhumane and a necessary catalyst for the formation of a union to champion the rights of employees, especially in the absence of labour laws. This led to the emergence of trade unions in the Gold Coast in the early 1900s. These unions started off as craft unions in urban centres that gradually metamorphosed into industrial and national trade unions (TUC-RLF, 2012).

The trade union in Ghana is an association that is established under the Labour Act 651 of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, and is made up of workers whose primary aim is to form a formidable front that promotes both their economic and social interests (Amoako-Asiedu, 2013). Under its mother organization, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) of Ghana, the trade union seeks to unite all workers in Ghana under a united trade union movement so as to lobby for social, economic and political equity for workers. Other reasons attributed to the formation of the trades union of Ghana include forced labour, poor health and safety standards, long working hours, and the inability of workers to participate in decision-making in the workplace.

The subject matter of trade unionism and organisations in Ghana is of interest to both the government, employees and employers. Trade unionism, which includes the activities of associations of workers in a workplace, have been accepted and recognized as a necessary action.

In its transition over the years, the Trade Union Congress has been able to better define its objectives, some of which include uniting all workers under one movement, securing social, economic and political justice, and lobbying for better wages and better working conditions for all workers. These are to encourage worker participation and performance at the workplace and as a result increase efficiency and productivity (Amoako-Asiedu, 2013). These objectives govern the individual trade unions under the TUC.

The TUC governs a number of trade unions which span across a diverse profile of occupations including the agriculture, transport, finance and insurance, construction, mining, utility, communications, education, health, manufacturing, civil and local government sectors.

Since its enactment by law, the TUC has recorded issues and unpleasant situations that have arisen in labour relations within trade unions (TUC-RLF, 2012). Some of these disputes have arisen from issues pertaining to collective bargaining, privatization of public enterprises, and in recent times, policies such as the Single Spine Pay Policy (Amoako-Asiedu, 2013). These disputes are likely to take a toll on the cohesion that exists within these unions and adversely affect employer-employee relations (Boateng, 2001). The spillover effect of this is an adverse effect on employee-performance, and this could affect the productivity and efficiency of firms. It is imperative therefore that studies are conducted to examine the effect of trade union activities on the performance of workers within organizations.

The Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), formerly the Food and Drugs Board (FDB), was established in 1997 under the Food and Drugs Law, PNDC Law 1992, and runs on a standing trade union. The authority is recognized as the National Regulatory Authority mandated

by the Public Health Act, 2012 (Acts 851) to regulate goods and products including drugs, food, food supplements, medicines, cosmetics, medical devices, tobacco and tobacco products, and mostly products that are ingested. In realizing its objective of providing and enforcing standards for the sale of foods, medicines and other ingestible products, it is crucial that workers are kept *happy* so that they are not easily swayed by bribes and other incentives to turn a blind eye to harmful products, both imported and locally manufactured and/or purveyed.

Trade unions are an important part of industry as they facilitate the smooth running of business entities and enterprises by ensuring that both employees and employers are satisfied with work conditions, culminating in productive and profitable businesses.

One of the problems that was and still is a constant constraint to employee-welfare in an organization is the lack of employee-participation in decision-making within the firm. This invariably tells negatively on the performance of the employee and is detrimental to all the parties involved, and the business at large.

Other problems that are detrimental to organizational success and employee-performance are a lack of effective communication within the organization and a lack of employee-discipline due to a breakdown of decorum within the workspace, resulting in a fall in productivity. These arise when the activities of trade unions are taken for granted (TUC-RLF, 2012).

Especially for an organization like the Food and Drugs Authority that renders services that are considered sensitive and vital, it has become increasingly important to ensure the effectiveness of its trade union to further ensure that compromises are avoided or drastically reduced. Unfortunately, there are reported cases of such compromises, for example IMANI-Ghana (a reputable research organization) in 2013 blamed the FDA for failing to live up to the responsibility of ensuring that local pharmaceutical companies abide by quality standards and regulations.

There is little or no work done on the effects of the trade union activities of the FDA on the performance of its employees towards the attainment of optimum work objectives and goals. The aim of the study, therefore, is to assess the effect of trade union activities on the performance of workers and to identify the merits and demerits of the current trade union on current employee-performance within the FDA.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

There are a diverse number of theories advanced by different scholars that govern the formation and subsequent operations of trade unions and the general labour movement. Even though these theories are numerous, no single one accounts for the structure and functions of trade unions (Jepkorir, 2014). This study is governed by two major theoretical views; the industrial democracy theory and the standard economic theory.

Industrial Democracy Theory

The industrial democracy theory of the trade unions was developed in the 19th century, around 1897, by Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb. The theory viewed trade unions as being an extension of democracy from politics to industry (Devinatz, 2011). The theory therefore considers trade unions as vehicles through which employees exercise their self-determination in terms of gaining good working conditions, better labour contracts and good remuneration.

Collective bargaining is undertaken by the representatives of workers who are elected into executive positions of the union. These representatives lobby on behalf of workers to promote their welfare and well-being. Trade unions, as instruments of democracy, are categorized under pressure groups whose method of articulating the interests of workers is based on democratic practices. Collective

bargaining and engaging in strikes and demonstrations are some of the instruments of democracy used by trade unions to achieve their aims and objectives.

The process of collective bargaining is one method of strengthening the labour force, and trade unions provide the avenues through which labour engages capital in constructive working negotiations for the mutual benefit of employees and employers (Devinat, 2011; Jepkorir, 2014).

In a democratic system of governance, decision-making is not based on the opinions of one person but on the opinions of all stakeholders. These consultations are carried out with the stakeholders in order to ensure that the policies and decisions that are agreed on benefit all members of the group. The trade unions therefore provide the avenue for dialogue, discussions and negotiations between employees and employers that lead to beneficial deals for all stakeholders.

Trade unions, through tools of democracy, are a vital medium through which employees can lobby for appropriate corporate governance and a good working environment to ensure optimum employee-performance at the workplace.

Standard Economic Theory

The Standard Economic theory, also known as the Utility theory, was proposed in the 18th Century by Gabriel Cramer and Daniel Bernoulli. The theory was later expanded and expounded on by Oskar Morgenstern and John von Neumann in the 20th Century (Jepkorir, 2014). The theory recognizes that human beings are self-centred and demonstrate a preference for certain goods and services over others, and avoid pain by staying clear of risks. The theory also holds that human beings are rational in their decision-making and seek optimization of satisfaction in the face of limited resources.

Trade unions, according to the Standard Economic Theory, exist to fight and solicit for the welfare of employees and particularly for better remuneration and good working conditions (Hafford and Koops, 2009). Trade unions are therefore mandated to lobby for better salaries and wages to meet and satisfy the economic needs of members.

In 1944, Henry Simons explained that the theory, vis-à-vis the operations of trade unions, make the unions out as dangerous because they act as organized monopolies whose activities may lead to adverse effects on society. In his study, Simons posited that trade unions limit the productivity of organizations and lead to unnecessary increases in production costs. This, he believes, arises from the fact that trade unions enjoy a lot of freedom and are able to resort to violence and sabotage to achieve their aims.

Simons also argued that trade unions are able to put industrial capital under siege and eventually destroy the industry by increasing labour cost. This leads to the overexploitation of employers to meet the insatiable needs of employees. Simons states further that this has an adverse effect on consumers who may bear the brunt of the inconveniences that arise, especially by paying relatively higher prices for goods and services (Simons, 1944).

The monopolistic view of trade unions is that firms respond to increased wage demands by adjusting capital and other production inputs and this adjustment is done until marginal labour equals the wage rate determined by the trade unions (Williams, 2004). This puts a strain on the organization by increasing production costs, and introduces the risk of running out of business once employee-performance does not match up to labour cost. This buttresses the arguments raised by Simons.

The Standard Economic Theory puts forward a number of assumptions regarding how human beings work at attaining socio-economic benefits. Based on the theory, for instance, there is the assumption that a lot more workers would prefer to join trade unions in order to ensure for themselves better social and economic conditions. The specific objectives of achieving these conditions

are through salary increments, better work benefits and shorter working hours. By joining trade unions, workers avoid the risks of being outside of the union and not enjoying the merits thereof. Through the mechanism of the trade unions, the Standard Economic theory assumes therefore that members are able to better their lot in the work environment.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Employee-Performance

According to Aguinis and Kraiger (2009), employee-performance primarily refers to the behavior of employees at the workplace and not necessarily what the outcomes of their work are. Performance is therefore the utilization of effort and ability that is guided by organizational policies as well as its objectives, to achieve certain goals. Employee-performance also encompasses behaviour at the workplace (Campbell, 1990) and is to be differentiated from outcomes. However, outcomes are the result of an individual's performance and could be influenced by other factors such as the availability of time, resources, etc.

Several variables can be used to determine employee-performance and are classified as general determinants of performance. An employee's professional qualification can influence his/her performance, as is indicated by Ajibola (2018) where professional qualification is seen to significantly impact the job performance of some sampled accountants in Nigeria. Qualification encompasses one's education, training and development towards the acquisition of a certain level of expertise and this enhances his/her working ability, *ceteris paribus*.

Experience can also improve employees' performance. Bhargava and Anbazhagan (2014) investigated the effect of work experience (number of years on the job) and education on the performance levels of workers in an Indian sugar factory. Their results showed that experience and education affected performance to varying degrees and workers with medium to high experience levels always performed better, collectively and individually, than workers with fewer years of experience.

Other variables that affect employee-performance include the style of employee-supervision, the work environment, tools and equipment used in the performance of duties, support from colleagues, availability of production materials, job security and compensation/motivation (Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009). A survey conducted by Boamah (2014) on employee-performance in the educational directorate of the Bono region of Ghana revealed that motivation had a positive correlation with performance as workers indicated that on the average, they performed better on the job when incentives such as bonuses and better salaries were given them. Campbell (1990), and Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) suggested that individual differences on performance are a function of (dependent on) three main determinants, namely, declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivation. Declarative knowledge refers to knowledge about facts, principles, and objects. It represents the knowledge of a given task's requirements. Procedural Knowledge is possessing skills of knowing what to do and how to do it. The employee thus requires some specific technical skills to be able to accomplish a given task. Procedural knowledge also relates to an employee's physical ability and intelligence level. An organization can better access these merits if these positive variables are built into the very fiber and *modus operandi* of its trade union.

Motivation is one of the main driving forces behind every human activity. It is "a combined effect from three choice behaviours - choice to expend effort, choice of level of effort to expend effort, and choice to persist in the expenditure of that level of effort" (Campbell, 1990). All three determinants of performance must be present for optimal employee-performance. It is imperative that the trade union encompasses all of these ideals in ensuring optimum employee-performance and productivity. A zero-value accorded any of the determinants results in a zero-value for performance (Boamah, 2014).

$$\text{Performance} = \text{Declarative knowledge} \times \text{Procedural knowledge} \times \text{Motivation}$$

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In addressing its objectives, the study adopted a design which examines the qualities of entities, and the processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured. This aspect of the study followed three key elements in its design (Chenail, 1997).

1. **The Naturalistic design** which looked at the real-world situations as pertains to the activities of the trade union within the FDA and how it unfolds naturally (without manipulation from the researchers).
2. **The Emergent design** which encompassed the acceptance of adapting inquiry as understanding deepens or the situation surrounding trade unions vis-à-vis employee-performance changes.
3. **The Purposive design** which ensured that respondent selected for the study are rich in information pertaining to the issues under investigation by the study.

The study adopted a quantitative approach to analyzing its objectives. It did this by using statistical, mathematical and numerical analytic methods to glean relevant information from data collected.

Population-Selection and Sampling

The research exclusively targeted staff of the Food and Drugs Authority. The population comprised all active members of FDA's trade union. Samples were taken from each department within the Authority to ensure equitable distribution and receipt of questionnaires and information, and to avoid collection of data that was lopsided, skewed or biased. Well-structured questionnaires with both open and close-ended questions were issued out to respondents. The study adopted a multistage sampling technique comprising two main methods of data sampling. First of all, the FDA was purposively selected owing to the fact that it has an active trade union in operation. A simple random sampling method was then used to select an equal number of respondents from each department of the FDA. Twenty (20) workers were thus selected as respondents for the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

The study adopted quantitative methods to address its objectives. The study used descriptive tools such as narratives, graphs, charts and diagrams to describe the demographic characteristics of respondents as well as to establish the linkages between trade union activities and employee-performance. Respondents were presented with some questions pertaining to their opinions on the activities of the trade union and its effect on their performance. A five-point Likert scale was used to address these questions.

A constraint analysis was then conducted to ascertain the challenges faced by the trade union and the employees in the performance of their duties. Respondents were given a number of constraints to rank and Kendall's coefficient of concordance was used to assess the agreement within the ranks so as to arrive at a sound conclusion on the constraints that are most pressing to the stakeholders involved. Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) is specified as;

$$W = \frac{12[\sum T^2 - (\sum T)^2 / n]}{nm^2(n^2 - 1)}$$

where T denotes sum of ranks for each constraint, m denotes number of respondents sampled, and n denotes number of constraints

being ranked. The value of the Coefficient of Concordance (W) was interpreted as follows; $W = 0$ means there is no agreement in the assessments and as such the variables presented do not collectively adversely affect employee-performance. Hence, the following hypotheses were postulated:

H_0 : $W = 0$, there is no agreement within the constraints ranked by the respondents.

H_a : $W \neq 0$, there is agreement within the ranked constraints

The Predictive Analytic Software (PASW)/SPSS version 24 and Microsoft Excel 2016 were used to analyze the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study profiled the sample in order to identify the characteristic traits of the respondents. The variables assessed include gender, ethnicity, marital status, religion, and educational level, the results of which are presented in Table 1. The results of the analysis show that data was collected from an equal number of males as females (10 each) ensuring that across genders, the information collected was not likely to be biased or seen to be better suited to one gender than the other.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:		
Male	10	50
Female	10	50
Marital status:		
Single	5	25
Married	14	70
Divorced	1	5
Religion:		
Christian	19	95
Muslim	1	5
Educational level:		
SHS	2	10
Tertiary	18	90

Source: Survey data (2018)

Majority of the respondents (70%) were married, 25 percent single and 5 percent divorced. Ninety-five percent of respondents indicated that they were Christians while 5 percent were Muslims. Most of the respondents are highly educated, 90 percent having attained tertiary education and 10 percent being senior high school graduates. The average number of years spent to attain the different levels of education was approximately 20 years giving an indication that the sample comprised *educated* people and therefore the respondents could provide intelligent answers to questions posed to them.

From Table 2, the average age of respondents was recorded as about 35 years with the youngest respondent being 23 and the oldest being 52 years old. This is indicative of a relatively young sample. Also, the average respondent was seen to have spent approximately 1.5 years as a member of the trade union. Even though this period of participation is relatively short, it is long enough to give members requisite knowledge about the activities of the trade union.

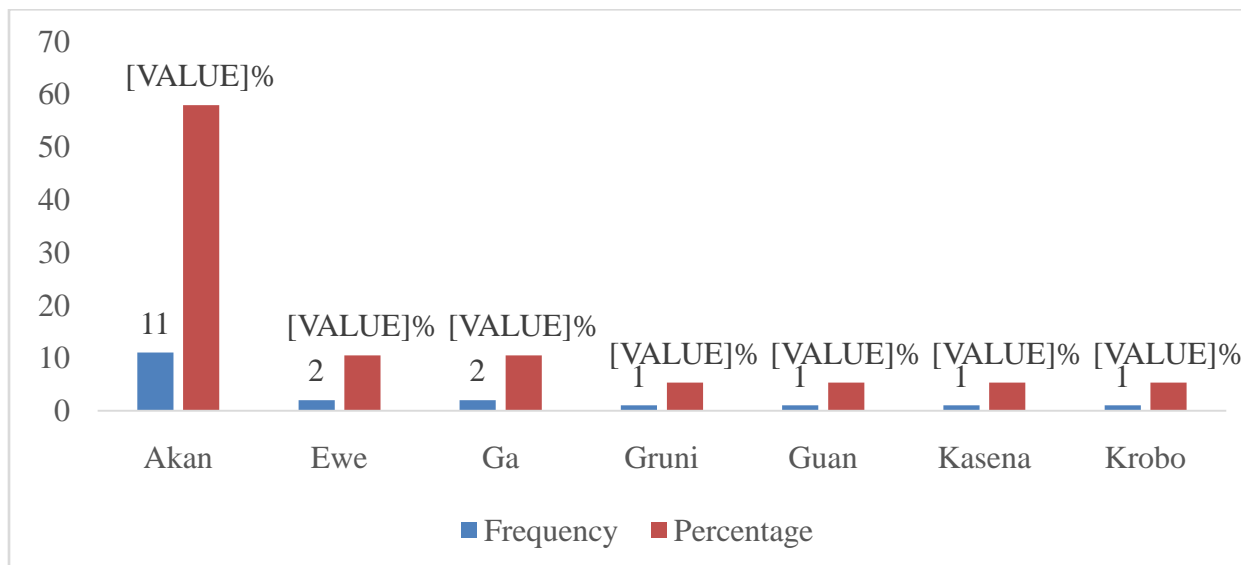
Table 2: Other demographic characteristics of respondents

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Age of respondent	23	52	35.3
Number of years spent to attain educational level	16	24	19.8
Number of years as a member of the trade union	1	3	1.5

Source: Survey data (2018)

Respondents came from 7 ethnic groups in Ghana with the majority of them (57.8%) being Akan (Figure 1). This is to be expected as Akans form the largest ethnic group in the Greater Accra region (the capital) of Ghana and so chances of sampling more Akans in the region is relatively higher.

Figure 1: Ethnicity of respondents



Source: Survey data (2018)

Activities of the FDA's Trade Union

As one of its objectives, the study sought to identify from members of the trade union, what the union's activities are within the FDA. Respondents revealed that all employees were automatic members of the union. Some of the activities of the union as outlined by the respondents include the provision of better negotiations between employees and management, bridging the communication gap between staff and management and ensuring economic well-being through collective bargaining and lobbying by the union executives on behalf of workers. Others also mentioned that the union helps them build a formidable front by forming liaisons with the trade unions of other firms to fight for the rights and welfare of workers.

Table 3 presents the perception of workers on trade union activities within the FDA. Workers demonstrated varying degrees of knowledge on the activities of the Trade Union but generally seemed to be in the know about the duties of the union. This is consistent with a study carried out by Abedi *et al.* (2011) which found out that about 94% of workers of MTN Ghana (Kumasi) were familiar with the activities of the trade union.

The activity that respondents agreed the strongest with was that affiliated unions are assisted to undertake collective bargaining on behalf of workers (42.1%). Respondents also agreed that all workers are unionized under a united trade union movement (57.9%) and affiliated unions are supported to improve wages, shorten hours of work and create better working conditions (44.4%). Respondents were the most neutral to the statement that promotion of work efficiency and productivity in the work place (42.1%) is an important activity of the union.

Respondents disagreed strongly with the notion that unionization of all workers under a united trade union movement constitutes an important activity carried out by the trade union (10.5%). Approximately 22.2 percent disagreed with the statement that the trade union, as part of its mandate, ensures that affiliated unions are supported to improve wages, shorten hours of work and create better working conditions (Table 3).

Table 3: Respondents' perception on the activities of the Trade Union

Activity of the Trade Union	(%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
All workers are unionized under a united trade union movement	10.5	15.8	10.5	57.9	5.3
Workers benefit from secure social, political and economic justice through collective action	5.3	5.3	21.1	42.1	26.3
Affiliated unions are supported to improve wages, shorten hours of work and create better working conditions	0	22.2	16.7	44.4	16.7
Affiliated unions are assisted to undertake collective bargaining on behalf of workers	5.3	0	5.3	47.4	42.1
Promotion of work efficiency and productivity in the work place	5.3	21.1	42.1	21.1	10.5
Protection, strengthening, preservation and development of traditions and institutions to safeguard the rights and liberties of workers	5.0	5.0	30.0	35.0	25.0
Promotion of national freedom, human rights and world peace.	5.0	5.0	30.0	45.0	15.0
Ensuring that ILO and other international conventions are ratified and implemented	5.0	0	40	55	0

Source: Survey data (2018)

The employees were asked to register their levels of agreement with a number of functions that are carried out or expected to be carried out by the trade union. Approximately 26.3 percent and 20 percent respectively strongly agreed with the trade union performing functions of protection of workers from victimization/injustice and aiding workers to achieve higher wages and better working conditions (Table 4). These results are in line with the findings of Boamah (2014) where 32.2% of the respondents strongly agreed with the ability of the trade union to protect its members. This is not very encouraging as one of the primary duties of the trade union is to protect workers (Hafford and Koops, 2009) and this should be evident to all stakeholders.

The employees mostly disagreed with the notion that the union ensures that adequate welfare measures are taken to boost the morale of workers (10.5%) and that through their activities, there is improved discipline among workers (10.5%). Respondents were also mostly neutral about the statements that the union ensures the welfare of workers to boost morale (26.3%) and that the activities of the union improve discipline among workers (26.3%).

Table 4: Functions of the Trade Union towards achievement of union objectives

Functions of the Trade Union	(%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Workers are aided to achieve higher wages and better working conditions	10	5	15	50	20
The socio-economic status of workers is raised	5	15	25	45	10
Workers are protected from victimization and injustice	5.3	10.5	0	57.9	26.3
Welfare measures taken are adequate to boost morale of workers	10.5	10.5	26.3	47.4	5.3
Improved self-confidence among workers	5	15	10	60	10
Improved discipline among workers	10.5	15.8	26.3	47.4	0
Better opportunities for promotion and growth	10	25	25	35	5
Female workers are protected from discrimination	5	0	45	35	15

Source: Survey data (2018)

The Effects of Trade Union Activities on Employee-Performance

Primarily, the study set out to assess the effect of trade union activities on employee-performance. The most significant effect of the trade union on employee-performance, as per the perception of the workers, was improved communication between employees and management (35%) leading to a better work ethic and higher productivity. Gunderson *et al.* (2005) state that management/labour communication increases morale and improves worker attitudes towards work. A high percentage of the workers (45%) also agreed that trade union activities give security and enable them work under little pressure, thereby increasing their productivity and efficiency (Table 5). This is consistent with the findings of Abedi *et al.* (2011), as pertains to the case of MTN, where workers agreed that security fosters performance.

Workers were the most neutral about trade union activities improving employee-skill due to on-the-job incentives (45%). Out of the percentage of employees who disagreed with one effect or the other, the majority (15%) revealed that trade union activities do not affect their punctuality (does not positively impact punctuality), do not lead to less complaints from clients due to increase in efficiency (15%) and do not better align employee-objectives with organization's objectives (Management by Objectives (MBO) is not effective) (15%).

Table 5: Effects of trade union activities on employee-performance

Effects of Trade Union activities	(%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Gives security and enables work under little pressure, increases productivity and effi-	5	25	20	45	5

ciency					
Improved communication between employees and management	0	0	5	60	35
Improved employee-skill due to on-the-job incentives	5	30	45	10	10
Job security leading to higher dedication	5	15	30	40	10
Punctuality to work	15	30	30	20	5
Better alignment of employee-objectives with organization's objectives (more effective MBO)	15	15	35	30	5
Client needs are met more effectively	5	30	25	30	10
Less complaints from clients due to increase in efficiency	15	20	35	20	10

Source: Survey data (2018)

Respondents mentioned some other positive effects of the trade union as motivation to work extra hours and to attend to clients with a lot more zest and commitment. Other positive effects on employee-performance include an obligation to communicate better with management and a feeling of belonging which is fostered by management's decision to include them in decision-making, which then promotes positive attitudes towards work.

Challenges and Constraints of Trade Union Activities Within the FDA

Respondents identified a number of challenges inimical to the operations of the nationwide Trade Union Congress. Some of these challenges include unfavourable government interferences that set back the activities of the union, lack of cooperation from some union members leading to the obstruction of the official work of the union. Low productivity as a result of some opposition from management in the union's line of duty does not promote effectiveness. The union is also characterized by nominal membership by some staff. These were also outlined in the study conducted by Boamah (2014) as problems that delimit the achievement of the objectives of the union. This is sadly detrimental to the progress of the union and poses a threat to the meeting of its goals and objectives.

Respondents also identified some challenges that plague the trade union of the FDA, some of which include lack of funds to undertake some projects, apathy towards union activities by members and fear of loss of favor with management after attaining the status of 'member of the union'. Also, some decisions taken by management without consulting the trade union pose a huge challenge to the running of the union. Other notable challenges identified by the respondents include lack of effective collective bargaining leading to low salaries and staff dissatisfaction, lack of cooperation with union executives by members and lack of confidence in union executives. It is worth noting however that the FDA's trade union is relatively young and so yet to be fully supported by all employees.

Some respondents feel that membership should be optional and that this not being the case is a challenge. The members also feel that there is slow dissemination of information and the union is seldom able to take management to task on different administrative

decisions such as terms of staff transfers, which has led to great discrimination in the transfer of members of staff.

Respondents were given a list of constraints, affecting the trade union in the performance of its duties, to rank in order of severity. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance was then used to assess the agreements within the ranked constraints.

Table 6: Constraints of Trade Union activities within the FDA

Constraints	Mean Rank	Rank
Lack of equitable participation of employees in management	5.81	1 st
Lack of membership drive	5.28	2 nd
Lack of effective collective bargaining skills	4.81	3 rd
Ineffective/inadequate communication within the organization	4.56	4 th
Ineffective/inadequate negotiations on behalf of employees	4.31	5 th
Employee-indiscipline	4.25	6 th
Ineffective/inadequate handling of employee grievances	3.83	7 th
Ineffective running of the union	3.17	8 th

Source: Survey data (2018)

The results, presented on Table 6, reveal that respondents ranked lack of equitable participation of employees in management as the most pressing constraint to the activities of the FDA's trade union. Lack of membership drive and lack of effective collective bargaining skills were also ranked as the second and third most severe constraints respectively. Other factors deemed constraining to the effective undertaking of the activities of the trade union include ineffective communication within the organization (ranked 4th), ineffective negotiations on behalf of employees (ranked 5th), prevalent employee-indiscipline (ranked 6th) and ineffective handling of employee grievances (ranked 7th).

These results are in line with the findings of Nimoh (2015) which showed that among other constraints such as labour unrests and disruptions in work due to demonstrations and so on, ineffective communication, negotiations and high levels of employee-indiscipline arising from an inefficiently ran trade union can be extremely detrimental to employee-performance.

The least most severe constraint was identified as the ineffective running of the union (ranked 8th). This indicates therefore that respondents do not consider this constraint as much of a hindrance to the carrying out of the activities/mandate of the trade union as much as the other constraints.

The test statistic after analyzing the constraints show that there is about 14.9 percent (approximately 15%) agreement within the ranked constraints (Table 7). This low percentage of concordance indicates that to a large extent, respondents did not agree with each other on the ranking of these constraints. There is therefore very little concordance within the ranks and this could be because of the diverging views of respondents on which factors are actually constraining on the performance of the trade union. The asymptotic significance of 0.009 however indicates that the results are statistically significant at 1 percent.

Table 7: Test statistics for Kendall's constraint analysis

N	20
Kendall's W ^a	.149
df	7
Asymp. Sig.	.009

a. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance

The value of the Coefficient of Concordance (W) is not equal to zero ($W \neq 0$) and so we reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternate hypothesis: there is some significant agreement within the ranked constraints.

Conclusion

The most important function of the trade union, according to employees, is for them to represent and lobby for them effectively so as to ensure better conditions of service. They expect that this be done especially through effective collective bargaining. This, they believe, will affect key socio-economic characteristics such as their incomes (salaries) and in turn serve as motivation for improved work attitudes. In achieving this, workers are calling for a stronger union and cohesion among member unions under a united trade union movement. Through synergistic efforts, employees expect that leadership of these unions ensure that affiliated unions are supported to improve wages and fight for better working conditions for members.

Workers agree also that communication is key to ensuring optimum employee-performance. Workers, via the trade union, want to feel that they are a part of decision-making, to foster a good working environment for all and sundry. The ineffective running of the union does not tell positively on punctuality, employee-performance and client satisfaction.

The activities of the nationwide trade union are riddled with some challenges that take a toll on the effectiveness of the union. Similarly, FDA's trade union faces challenges that have taken a toll on the effective running of the union. Lack of equitable participation of employees in management and lack of membership drive are the most severe constraints to the activities of FDA's trade union and invariably affect the performance of member employees. To ensure the smooth running of the nationwide trade union, Government must ensure that the union is truly autonomous. There should therefore be very little or no government interference in the union's activities. This will foster support for improvement in wages and better working conditions for union members.

Unions must ensure the security of members so as to ensure increased performance leading to increased output and productivity, as well as effect change in employee-attitudes such as punctuality and efficiency of service-provision (as pertains to the FDA). Regular and effective communication should be encouraged between management and employees to positively influence employee-performance. Issues of punctuality and client satisfaction should be looked at and strategies developed to ensure that the activities of the trade union foster these positive employee-attributes.

Union heads must explore alternative ways of raising funds for union activities, whipping up member-interest in union activities and ensuring optimum performance of its duties according to its mandate as a representative of employee-interests and an efficient liaison/envoy between workers and management. In the performance of their duties, executives of the FDA's trade union must ensure that there is equitable participation of employees in management. Employee-grievances must also be handled with the utmost can-

dor and urgency to avoid any compromise in quality of work.

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