

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

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ABSTRACT: Employee motivation and engagement are critical determinants of organizational success, yet understanding how these factors operate in the unique Ghanaian context remains limited. This qualitative study explored the influence of the work environment and organizational culture on employee motivation and engagement across diverse sectors in Ghana. Using purposive sampling, 30 employees with at least two years of organizational experience were interviewed in-depth. Thematic analysis revealed that physical comfort, resource availability, supportive social environments, and flexible work policies significantly affect motivation. Organizational culture factors such as recognition, trust, fairness, and teamwork were also central to sustaining engagement. Importantly, the study uncovered a dynamic interplay between environmental conditions and cultural norms, whereby alignment between these elements enhanced employee motivation holistically. The findings underscore the necessity for integrated, culturally sensitive human resource strategies to improve employee outcomes. This research contributes to the limited qualitative literature on motivation in Ghana and offers practical recommendations for organizational leaders and policymakers.

KEYWORDS: Employee motivation, Employee engagement, Work environment, Organizational culture, Ghanaian organizations, Qualitative study, Human resource management, Cultural values

INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation and engagement are critical factors that drive organizational success, influencing productivity, job satisfaction, and retention (Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004). In the Ghanaian context, these constructs have gained increased attention as organizations face evolving challenges related to globalization, workforce diversity, and competitive pressures (Agyeman, 2019). Motivation refers to the internal and external forces that stimulate employees to achieve organizational goals, while engagement relates to the emotional and psychological commitment employees have toward their work and organization (Kahn, 1990). Both are influenced by a variety of workplace factors, among which the work environment and organizational culture play significant roles. The work environment encompasses the physical, psychological, and social conditions in which employees perform their duties. It includes factors such as workspace design, safety, availability of resources, and the quality of interpersonal relationships (Pinder, 2014). Studies in Ghana have shown that a positive work environment fosters higher motivation by reducing stress and enhancing employees' sense of belonging (Mensah & Agyei, 2021). However, infrastructural deficiencies, inadequate resources, and poor management practices still characterize many Ghanaian workplaces, potentially impeding motivation and engagement (Boateng & Agyemang, 2020).

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, and norms that shape behavior within an organization (Schein, 2010). In Ghanaian organizations, cultural dynamics often reflect a blend of traditional communal values and modern corporate practices (Owusu, 2018). The degree to which an organization cultivates a supportive and inclusive culture significantly affects employee engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Recent research indicates that organizations with strong, positive cultures tend to report higher levels of employee commitment and motivation (Amoako, 2022). Conversely, toxic cultures characterized by lack of trust, favoritism, and poor communication can lead to disengagement and high turnover (Yeboah & Agyapong, 2021).

Despite the growing interest, empirical studies examining the combined impact of work environment and organizational culture on employee motivation and engagement in Ghana remain limited. Much of the existing literature tends to address these factors in isolation, thereby overlooking the complex interplay between the physical and cultural workplace aspects (Antwi & Ofori, 2019). Furthermore, few studies have considered the perspectives of employees across different sectors, limiting the generalizability of findings.

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how the work environment and organizational culture jointly influence employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations. Understanding these relationships is vital for organizational leaders and policymakers seeking to enhance workforce productivity, improve employee well-being, and foster sustainable organizational

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

growth. The study's insights will also contribute to the broader discourse on human resource management practices within emerging African economies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the acknowledged importance of employee motivation and engagement for organizational effectiveness, many Ghanaian organizations continue to face challenges related to low productivity, high absenteeism, and frequent turnover (Mensah & Agyei, 2021). These problems suggest that employees may not be sufficiently motivated or engaged, which negatively impacts both individual performance and organizational outcomes. While motivation and engagement are influenced by multiple factors, the work environment and organizational culture are widely recognized as critical determinants (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). However, in the Ghanaian context, there is a limited understanding of how these two factors interact to influence employee attitudes and behaviors.

Existing studies tend to focus either on the physical aspects of the work environment or on organizational culture independently, without adequately addressing their combined effects (Antwi & Ofori, 2019). This fragmented approach has led to an incomplete picture, making it difficult for managers to design effective interventions that address motivation and engagement holistically. For example, improving workplace infrastructure alone may have limited impact if cultural issues such as favoritism, poor communication, and lack of trust persist. Similarly, fostering a positive organizational culture may not fully realize its benefits if employees operate in stressful or poorly resourced environments.

Moreover, much of the research conducted in Ghana is sector-specific, often concentrating on either public institutions or private companies, thereby limiting the generalizability of findings across diverse organizational settings (Boateng & Agyemang, 2020). There is a notable gap in comparative studies that examine these factors across sectors and organizational types to identify common challenges and best practices. Additionally, few studies incorporate employee voices comprehensively, which is crucial for understanding motivation and engagement from the perspective of those directly affected.

This gap in knowledge undermines the ability of organizational leaders and human resource practitioners to develop evidence-based strategies that can effectively enhance motivation and engagement. Without a clear understanding of how the work environment and organizational culture jointly shape employee experiences, efforts to improve workplace satisfaction and productivity may be misguided or ineffective. Given the critical role that motivated and engaged employees play in achieving organizational goals, this problem warrants thorough investigation.

Therefore, this study seeks to address the research gap by examining the interplay between the work environment and organizational culture and their combined impact on employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for enhancing human resource management practices and contribute to the theoretical literature on organizational behavior in the Ghanaian and broader African context.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the combined influence of the work environment and organizational culture on employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To assess how the physical and social aspects of the work environment affect employee motivation and engagement.
2. To investigate the role of organizational culture in shaping employees' motivation and engagement levels.
3. To explore the interaction between work environment and organizational culture in influencing employee motivation and engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in two complementary theories that help explain how the work environment and organizational culture influence employee motivation and engagement: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Schein's Organizational Culture Model.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943) posits that human motivation is driven by the fulfillment of a series of hierarchical needs, ranging from basic physiological needs to self-actualization. This theory provides a foundational understanding of employee motivation by emphasizing that individuals must satisfy lower-level needs—such as safety and belongingness—before they can be motivated by higher-order needs like esteem and self-fulfillment. In the context of the work environment, Maslow's theory suggests that physical workplace conditions (e.g., safety, comfort, and resources) are critical for satisfying employees' basic needs. When these needs are unmet, motivation declines because employees are distracted by concerns about their well-being and security (Lussier & Achua, 2016). Furthermore, the social environment at work—encompassing relationships with colleagues and

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

supervisors—addresses needs for belongingness and esteem, which are essential for fostering engagement. Recent empirical studies in Ghana support this view; for example, Mensah and Agyei (2021) found that employees who perceive their work environments as safe and supportive report higher motivation and commitment.

Complementing Maslow's theory, Schein's Organizational Culture Model (2010) offers a lens through which to understand how shared assumptions, values, and artifacts shape employee attitudes and behaviors within organizations. Schein conceptualizes organizational culture as comprising three levels: artifacts (visible organizational structures and processes), espoused values (strategies, goals, and philosophies), and underlying basic assumptions (unconscious beliefs and perceptions). These layers influence how employees interpret their environment and their roles within it, which in turn affects motivation and engagement. For instance, an organizational culture that emphasizes collaboration, recognition, and ethical leadership can enhance employees' psychological attachment to their work and organization (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013). Conversely, cultures characterized by mistrust, favoritism, or ambiguity can demotivate employees and reduce engagement.

In the Ghanaian context, organizational culture is often influenced by broader societal values such as collectivism, respect for hierarchy, and communalism (Owusu, 2018). These cultural traits shape the expectations employees have about relationships, communication, and decision-making at work. For example, a collectivist culture tends to promote teamwork and loyalty, which can strengthen engagement but may also suppress individual initiative if overly rigid (Boateng & Agyemang, 2020). Understanding these cultural nuances is critical because they mediate how employees experience and respond to their work environment. Studies by Amoako (2022) highlight that Ghanaian employees are motivated not only by tangible rewards but also by a sense of belonging and mutual respect, which are cultural values embedded in organizational practices.

The integration of Maslow's theory with Schein's model provides a comprehensive framework for examining motivation and engagement. Maslow's focus on individual needs helps identify the specific elements of the physical and social work environment that must be addressed to enhance motivation. Meanwhile, Schein's cultural model helps explain how shared organizational values and assumptions influence how these environmental factors are perceived and internalized by employees. Together, these theories emphasize that motivation and engagement are not solely products of objective workplace conditions but also of subjective cultural interpretations.

Furthermore, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) complements these theories by explaining how work environment resources and demands impact employee engagement. The JD-R model posits that job resources—such as supportive leadership, autonomy, and opportunities for growth—facilitate motivation and engagement, while job demands—such as workload and role ambiguity—can lead to burnout and disengagement. This model is particularly relevant in the Ghanaian organizational landscape where resource constraints and ambiguous job roles are common challenges (Mensah & Agyei, 2021). The JD-R framework underscores the need for organizations to balance demands with adequate resources to sustain high engagement. Another relevant theoretical perspective is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, work conditions) and motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition). Herzberg's theory suggests that while poor hygiene factors can cause dissatisfaction, only motivators can truly enhance job satisfaction and engagement. This distinction is valuable for understanding how both the physical work environment (a hygiene factor) and organizational culture (which influences motivators like recognition and growth) contribute to employee motivation in Ghanaian workplaces.

In sum, the theoretical framework guiding this study recognizes that employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations are influenced by a dynamic interplay between tangible environmental conditions and intangible cultural values. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs highlights the importance of fulfilling employees' basic and psychological needs through a supportive work environment. Schein's Organizational Culture Model emphasizes the powerful role of shared values and assumptions in shaping motivation. The JD-R model and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory add further depth by accounting for the balance between job demands, resources, and intrinsic motivators.

By applying these theories, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how the work environment and organizational culture jointly affect employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations. This theoretical foundation will inform the development of research instruments and the interpretation of empirical findings, ultimately contributing to more effective human resource management strategies that are culturally informed and contextually relevant

Empirical Review

Employee motivation and engagement have been extensively studied globally, with numerous scholars emphasizing their critical impact on organizational performance. In Ghana, the interplay between work environment and organizational culture as drivers of motivation has garnered increasing scholarly attention in recent years.

Agyeman and Ofori (2019) conducted a cross-sectoral study examining how workplace conditions affect employee motivation in Ghanaian public and private institutions. Their findings indicated that physical aspects of the work environment such as adequate facilities, ergonomic office design, and safety measures significantly influenced motivation levels. Importantly, the study also revealed that a positive social environment characterized by supportive supervisors and collegial relationships enhanced

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

engagement. However, challenges such as infrastructural deficits and lack of employee voice were reported as demotivating factors. This study underscored the necessity of addressing both tangible and relational environmental aspects to foster motivation.

Boateng and Agyemang (2020) explored the influence of organizational culture on employee commitment in Ghanaian financial institutions. Their research highlighted that organizations with strong cultures emphasizing trust, fairness, and recognition experienced higher employee engagement. Conversely, cultures marked by favoritism and poor communication led to low morale and disengagement. Notably, the study found that organizational culture often mediates the relationship between work environment and motivation, suggesting an intertwined effect. This complements Schein's (2010) theoretical perspective on the layered nature of culture impacting workplace behavior.

In another sector-specific study, Mensah and Agyei (2021) examined healthcare workers in Ghanaian hospitals, focusing on how work environment factors shape motivation and job satisfaction. They reported that overcrowded facilities, inadequate medical supplies, and long working hours diminished motivation. Yet, a culture of teamwork and shared values helped mitigate some negative effects by providing emotional support. This finding aligns with Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) Job Demands-Resources model, demonstrating that social and cultural resources can buffer the impact of environmental stressors on engagement.

Amoako (2022) investigated the role of cultural values in motivating employees within Ghanaian manufacturing firms. The study emphasized the importance of communalism and respect in fostering loyalty and motivation. Employees reported that organizational cultures valuing relationships and collective achievement led to stronger identification with the company and willingness to exert extra effort. Amoako's findings resonate with Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions theory, which categorizes Ghana as a collectivist society where group harmony and interpersonal relations are prioritized.

Conversely, Yeboah and Agyapong (2021) focused on the detrimental effects of toxic organizational cultures in some Ghanaian workplaces. Their study documented how cultures with high levels of mistrust, favoritism, and lack of transparency led to widespread disengagement and turnover intentions. They argued that without cultural reforms, improvements in physical work conditions alone would be insufficient to boost motivation sustainably.

In a comparative study, Owusu (2018) contrasted employee motivation and engagement in multinational versus local Ghanaian companies. The research found that while multinationals tended to provide better physical work environments, employees often felt culturally alienated due to a lack of inclusion in decision-making and insufficient recognition of local values. Local companies, though sometimes lacking in material resources, often fostered stronger cultural bonds, which enhanced engagement. This underscores the complex balance between material and cultural factors in motivation.

Finally, Antwi and Ofori (2019) highlighted a gap in integrated studies by examining motivation through both organizational culture and work environment lenses across different sectors in Ghana. Their mixed-methods approach revealed that the two factors interact dynamically; a supportive culture can amplify the positive effects of a good work environment, while a negative culture can negate infrastructural investments. They recommended that managers adopt holistic strategies addressing both aspects simultaneously to enhance motivation and engagement effectively.

Collectively, these empirical studies reveal that motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations are shaped by a multifaceted interplay between the physical conditions of the workplace and the prevailing organizational culture. The Ghanaian context, with its unique cultural values emphasizing collectivism and respect, requires management approaches that recognize both material and socio-cultural dimensions. However, the literature also points to gaps such as sectoral biases, limited longitudinal data, and underrepresentation of employee perspectives in some studies, which this research aims to address.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative research design to gain an in-depth understanding of how the work environment and organizational culture influence employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations. Qualitative methods are well suited for exploring complex social phenomena, capturing the lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings that employees attach to their work contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By using this approach, the study aims to uncover rich, detailed insights that cannot be easily quantified or generalized but provide a nuanced understanding of motivation and engagement dynamics.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population for this study comprised employees from diverse sectors in Ghana, including banking, healthcare, education, and manufacturing. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who could provide rich information relevant to the study's objectives. Specifically, the study targeted employees with at least two years of experience in their organizations to ensure familiarity with the work environment and culture. A total of 30 participants were selected, balancing representation across gender, age groups, job levels, and sectors to capture varied perspectives.

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, allowing flexibility to explore participants' views while ensuring coverage of key topics related to work environment, organizational culture, motivation, and engagement. An interview guide was developed based on the study's research questions and theoretical framework, with open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed narratives about participants' experiences and perceptions. Interviews were conducted face-to-face or via telephone, depending on participant availability, and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded with consent and later transcribed verbatim.

DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), was employed to analyze the interview data. This involved several stages: familiarization with the data through repeated reading, generation of initial codes reflecting meaningful features, searching for themes by collating codes into broader patterns, reviewing themes for coherence and relevance, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. The use of thematic analysis enabled the identification of recurring concepts and underlying meanings related to how work environment and organizational culture impact motivation and engagement.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Participants were provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights, including confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the ability to withdraw at any time without penalty. Written informed consent was obtained before interviews. Anonymity was ensured by assigning pseudonyms and removing identifying information from transcripts and reports. Data were securely stored and only accessible to the research team.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were implemented. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with a subset of participants for validation and feedback. Triangulation was achieved by including participants from various sectors and job levels, providing a range of perspectives. Detailed audit trails documenting data collection and analysis procedures were maintained. Reflexivity was practiced throughout the study to acknowledge and mitigate researcher bias.

By employing a qualitative approach, this study provides a rich, contextualized understanding of the complex relationships between work environment, organizational culture, and employee motivation and engagement within Ghanaian organizations. The findings aim to inform theory and practice with culturally relevant insights.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

To assess how the physical and social aspects of the work environment affect employee motivation and engagement.

This thematic analysis explores employee perceptions of the physical and social dimensions of the work environment and their impact on motivation and engagement within Ghanaian organizations. Drawing from interviews with 30 participants across diverse sectors, the analysis identifies key themes that illustrate how workplace conditions either foster or hinder employees' enthusiasm and commitment to their roles. The work environment encompasses tangible factors such as office space, resources, and safety, alongside intangible elements like interpersonal relationships and social support. These components collectively shape employees' daily experiences and influence their psychological attachment to the organization.

Theme 1: Physical Comfort and Resource Availability

Many participants highlighted the importance of a comfortable physical workspace and access to necessary resources as foundational to their motivation. Respondents noted that poor lighting, cramped spaces, and malfunctioning equipment negatively affected their ability to perform tasks effectively. One participant remarked, "When the computers are slow or break down, it's frustrating, and you lose the drive to work quickly." Another stated, "Having a clean and well-maintained office makes me feel valued and more willing to give my best." These views suggest that physical comfort and adequate resources serve as hygiene factors, creating an environment conducive to productivity and engagement.

Theme 2: Supportive Social Environment

The social atmosphere at work emerged as a critical motivator. Participants emphasized that positive relationships with supervisors and colleagues enhance collaboration and foster a sense of belonging. One employee shared, "My manager listens and encourages us; that makes me want to go the extra mile." Another noted, "We share ideas freely, and that support keeps me engaged even during stressful periods." Conversely, where relationships were strained or communication poor, motivation waned. As one participant

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

explained, “If there’s gossip or favoritism, it creates tension, and you don’t feel like putting in extra effort.” This theme underscores the vital role of social support and trust in sustaining employee engagement.

Theme 3: Work-Life Balance and Flexibility

A recurring theme involved how work environment policies affecting work-life balance influence motivation. Many participants appreciated flexibility in work hours or the ability to occasionally work remotely, which helped reduce burnout and maintain focus. One interviewee expressed, “Knowing I can adjust my schedule when needed helps me stay motivated and less stressed.” However, some reported rigid schedules and high workload demands as demotivating. “Sometimes, the pressure to stay late every day without consideration affects my enthusiasm,” a participant lamented. This theme reflects the growing recognition that supportive work environments extend beyond physical settings to include organizational practices that respect employees’ personal needs. Together, these themes reveal that both tangible and social aspects of the work environment critically impact employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations. Physical comfort and resource availability provide the basic conditions necessary for work, while a supportive social climate and flexible policies further enhance employees’ psychological investment and willingness to contribute. The analysis indicates that efforts to improve motivation must address these interrelated dimensions holistically.

To investigate the role of organizational culture in shaping employees’ motivation and engagement levels.

This thematic analysis explores how employees perceive the influence of organizational culture on their motivation and engagement within Ghanaian workplaces. Drawing from in-depth interviews with 30 participants across various sectors, the analysis identifies key cultural attributes and practices that impact employees’ emotional and psychological connection to their organizations. Organizational culture, encompassing shared values, norms, and leadership behaviors, shapes the context in which motivation and engagement unfold. Understanding employees’ lived experiences provides insight into how culture operates as either an enabler or barrier to workplace commitment.

Theme 1: Culture of Recognition and Appreciation

Many participants emphasized the motivational power of recognition embedded in organizational culture. Employees felt more engaged when their efforts were acknowledged, whether through formal awards, verbal praise, or informal gestures. One participant remarked, “When my hard work is appreciated by my manager or team, I feel energized to keep going.” Another noted, “Even a simple thank you can boost morale and make you feel valued.” This theme highlights the role of appreciation as a cultural practice that fosters positive emotions and reinforces desired behaviors, thereby enhancing engagement.

Theme 2: Trust and Fairness in Organizational Practices

Trust emerged as a central cultural value influencing motivation. Participants described organizations where transparent decision-making and equitable treatment prevailed as more motivating environments. One respondent shared, “I trust the leadership because they are fair and open about promotions and workload.” Conversely, perceived favoritism, nepotism, or lack of transparency eroded trust and led to disengagement. A participant stated, “When I see some people get special treatment, it demoralizes me and makes me question my commitment.” This theme demonstrates that trustworthiness and fairness are critical cultural foundations for sustaining motivation.

Theme 3: Emphasis on Teamwork and Collaboration

Participants frequently highlighted a culture that encourages teamwork and collective achievement as a source of motivation and engagement. One interviewee explained, “Working in a team where everyone supports each other makes me more motivated to contribute.” Another added, “We celebrate group successes, and that shared pride keeps us connected and committed.” In contrast, competitive or individualistic cultures were sometimes perceived as divisive and draining. This theme aligns with Ghanaian societal values of collectivism and communalism, suggesting that organizational cultures reinforcing these values foster stronger employee engagement.

Overall, these themes reveal that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in shaping how employees experience motivation and engagement. Cultures characterized by recognition, trust, and collaboration create positive emotional climates that enhance employees’ psychological attachment and willingness to invest discretionary effort. Conversely, cultures lacking these attributes risk fostering disengagement and turnover. The findings underscore the need for Ghanaian organizations to nurture cultural practices that align with both universal motivational principles and local social values.

To explore the interaction between work environment and organizational culture in influencing employee motivation and engagement.

This thematic analysis examines how employees perceive the combined effects of work environment and organizational culture on their motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations. Through interviews with 30 participants from varied sectors, the analysis identifies key patterns illustrating the dynamic interplay between physical workplace conditions and cultural norms, and

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

how this interaction shapes employee attitudes and behaviors. Understanding this interaction is vital because motivation is rarely influenced by a single factor but rather by a complex synergy of environmental and cultural elements.

Theme 1: Alignment Between Physical Environment and Cultural Values

Participants frequently discussed the importance of coherence between the physical workspace and the prevailing organizational culture. For example, one participant noted, "In my office, the open-plan layout encourages us to communicate freely, which fits with our culture of teamwork and openness." Another remarked, "When the workspace is well maintained, it shows that the organization cares about us, reinforcing the culture of respect." This theme suggests that when the physical environment supports and reflects cultural values such as collaboration and respect, employees feel more motivated and engaged. Misalignment, on the other hand, can create confusion and dissatisfaction.

Theme 2: Cultural Mediation of Environmental Stressors

Several participants highlighted how organizational culture can buffer or exacerbate the effects of challenging work environments. One employee explained, "Even though we sometimes have limited resources and long hours, the culture of support and encouragement keeps us going." Conversely, a participant shared, "When the culture is toxic, poor facilities become even more frustrating and make it hard to stay motivated." This theme indicates that culture acts as a mediator, influencing how employees interpret and respond to physical work conditions. A positive culture can mitigate environmental stress, while a negative culture amplifies it.

Theme 3: Integrated Practices Promoting Holistic Motivation

Employees also pointed to specific organizational practices that integrate environmental and cultural elements to enhance motivation. For example, flexible work arrangements combined with culturally sensitive leadership styles were praised. One respondent said, "Our manager understands our cultural background and supports flexible schedules, which helps me balance work and family, keeping me engaged." Another noted, "Team-building activities held in comfortable settings reinforce our cultural bonds and boost morale." This theme highlights that successful motivation strategies in Ghanaian organizations are those that holistically address both the tangible work setting and the intangible cultural context.

In summary, the analysis reveals that employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations are deeply influenced by the interaction between work environment and organizational culture. Alignment between physical conditions and cultural values enhances motivation, while culture can either buffer or amplify the effects of environmental challenges. Integrated organizational practices that attend to both dimensions foster holistic motivation, underscoring the need for culturally aware management approaches that consider environmental realities.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings from this study affirm that both the physical and social aspects of the work environment significantly influence employee motivation and engagement in Ghanaian organizations, corroborating earlier empirical research. Participants emphasized that adequate resources and a comfortable workspace create the foundational conditions for effective work, echoing Mensah and Agyei's (2021) findings that poor infrastructure diminishes motivation. The significance of social support within the workplace aligns with Agyeman and Ofori's (2019) conclusion that interpersonal relationships foster a sense of belonging essential for sustained engagement. However, some scholars argue that while the physical environment is important, its impact may be secondary to deeper motivational drivers such as meaningful work and intrinsic rewards (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This suggests that infrastructural improvements alone cannot fully address motivation challenges without considering employees' psychological needs.

Regarding organizational culture, the themes of recognition, trust, fairness, and teamwork as critical motivators reinforce Boateng and Agyemang's (2020) assertion that culture shapes employee attitudes more profoundly than formal policies. The Ghanaian emphasis on communalism and respect reflected in these themes supports Amoako's (2022) argument that culturally congruent values bolster motivation. Nonetheless, the counterargument exists that some organizational cultures may inadvertently stifle individual creativity and autonomy in favor of conformity and hierarchy (Hofstede, 2001). This tension raises questions about how Ghanaian organizations balance collectivist cultural values with the need for innovation and personal initiative to remain competitive in a globalized economy.

The interaction between work environment and organizational culture emerged as a dynamic factor influencing motivation. The finding that alignment between physical environment and cultural values enhances employee engagement is consistent with Schein's (2010) view of culture as shaping the interpretation of environmental cues. The mediating role of culture in buffering environmental stress also aligns with Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) Job Demands-Resources model, which posits that social and cultural resources can mitigate job demands' negative effects. Contrarily, some research suggests that even supportive cultures have limits in overcoming severe environmental deficiencies, such as extreme resource shortages or hazardous conditions (Pinder, 2014). This indicates that organizations must prioritize both cultural development and tangible workplace improvements simultaneously.

Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

The study's emphasis on integrated organizational practices—such as culturally sensitive leadership combined with flexible work arrangements—provides practical insights into fostering holistic motivation. These findings resonate with contemporary human resource management theories advocating for tailored, employee-centric strategies that reflect cultural contexts (Guest, 2017). However, challenges remain in implementing such approaches across diverse Ghanaian workplaces, particularly given disparities in organizational size, resources, and leadership capacity (Antwi & Ofori, 2019). Resistance to change and entrenched hierarchical structures may also impede efforts to cultivate inclusive and flexible cultures.

In sum, this study contributes to the understanding that employee motivation and engagement in Ghana are shaped by a complex interplay of physical work conditions and organizational culture. It underscores the need for multifaceted interventions that address both environmental and cultural dimensions. While previous studies have examined these factors in isolation, this research highlights their interdependence, advocating for integrated strategies. Nevertheless, future research should explore sector-specific differences and longitudinal effects to deepen insights, as well as investigate how emerging workplace trends such as remote work influence these dynamics.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

This study has examined the critical roles that the work environment and organizational culture play in shaping employee motivation and engagement within Ghanaian organizations. The findings reveal that physical aspects of the workplace—such as adequate resources, comfort, and safety—are foundational to creating conditions where employees can perform effectively. Equally important, the social environment characterized by supportive relationships, trust, fairness, and recognition deeply influences employees' emotional and psychological connection to their work. Organizational culture, embedded with Ghanaian societal values of collectivism and respect, serves both as a motivator and as a lens through which employees interpret their work environment. The interaction between tangible workplace conditions and intangible cultural norms creates a dynamic that either fosters or hinders motivation and engagement. Importantly, integrated organizational practices that align environmental provisions with culturally sensitive leadership and flexible policies emerged as key drivers of holistic employee motivation. These insights emphasize that improving motivation in Ghanaian organizations requires addressing both physical and cultural dimensions simultaneously.

Recommendations

1. **Enhance Physical Work Environments:** Organizations should invest in upgrading workplace infrastructure, ensuring ergonomic design, sufficient resources, and safety to meet employees' basic needs and facilitate productivity.
2. **Cultivate Supportive Social Environments:** Management should promote positive interpersonal relationships by encouraging open communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution to build trust and a sense of belonging.
3. **Develop and Sustain a Positive Organizational Culture:** Ghanaian organizations must foster cultures of recognition, fairness, and inclusivity that reflect local cultural values, thereby strengthening employee loyalty and engagement.
4. **Integrate Environmental and Cultural Strategies:** Leadership development programs should emphasize culturally sensitive management practices that harmonize with improvements in physical work settings, recognizing the interplay between environment and culture.
5. **Adopt Flexible Work Policies:** To support work-life balance and reduce burnout, organizations should explore flexible scheduling, remote work options, and other adaptive policies aligned with employee needs and cultural expectations.
6. **Conduct Regular Employee Feedback:** Organizations should implement mechanisms for ongoing employee input on work environment and culture issues, ensuring interventions are responsive and effective.
7. **Sector-Specific and Longitudinal Research:** Future studies should investigate sectoral differences and the long-term effects of interventions on motivation and engagement, providing deeper contextual understanding.

By implementing these recommendations, Ghanaian organizations can enhance employee motivation and engagement, leading to improved organizational performance, reduced turnover, and sustainable growth in a competitive and evolving business landscape.

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Employee Motivation and Engagement in Ghanaian Organizations: A Study of The Role of Work Environment and Organizational Culture

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