

From Time to Output: How Work Environment Mediates the Relationship Between Time Management and Employee Performance Under Stress

By

Rimamnde Rikwentishe PhD¹, AGYO, Atswenbuma PhD¹, MUSA, Leah PhD¹, TIMOTHY, Fanya PhD², AKENZE Philo PhD², ADI Daniel David³, IBRAHIM Maliki³ & AMANA, Tessy Owokipu³

¹¹²³³Department of Business Administration, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria,

²Federal College of Education

¹atswenbuma@fuwukari.edu.ng, ¹Newmtn2@gmail.com, ²timothy.fanya@gmail.com,

²philoakaeze@yahoo.com, ³adid@fuwakari.edu.ng & ³milikiibrahim@fuwukari.edu.ng

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Abstract

Employee performance remains a critical success factor for organizational sustainability, particularly in the manufacturing sector. For firms like Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Ltd, achieving optimal performance requires more than technical competence—it involves managing time effectively and fostering a productive work environment. Thus, understanding how employee performance is influenced by time management and mediated by the work environment becomes imperative. This paper examined the effect of time management on employee performance, and the mediating role of the work environment. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to gather, analyze, and interpret data from staff of Mambilla Beverages in Taraba State, Nigeria. A sample of 250 employees was determined using the Taro Yamane statistical formula and selected through a stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which was subjected to face validation by three experts. Convergent validity was established using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while measurement reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability scores. Responses were gathered both in print and electronically, and analyzed using SmartPLS v4 structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings revealed that time management has no significant direct effect on employee performance. However, time management significantly impacts the work environment, which in turn has a strong positive effect on employee performance. Furthermore, the work environment mediates the relationship between time management and performance. Based on these findings, the study recommends that management at Mambilla Beverages should not only promote time management practices but also enhance the organizational work environment through supportive policies, resource availability, and effective communication to improve overall employee performance.

Keywords: Work environment, Time Management, Employee Performance & Stress management

INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive and fast-paced organizational landscape, employee performance stands as a critical determinant of organizational success, innovation, and sustainability. High-performing employees not only drive productivity but also foster workplace excellence, customer satisfaction, and institutional growth (Mensah & Tawiah, 2022). As organizations strive to remain relevant in the dynamic business environment,

their ability to harness and sustain employee performance has become more crucial than ever. However, despite growing investments in employee training, motivation, and digital resources, many organizations still grapple with persistent performance issues—largely tied to stress-induced inefficiencies within the workplace (Nwachukwu et al., 2023).

One of the significant challenges to employee performance is workplace stress, which continues to undermine productivity and

organizational morale. Stress arises from several organizational factors, including workload pressures, ambiguous roles, tight deadlines, and poor interpersonal relations. When unmanaged, such stress not only deteriorates employees' physical and mental well-being but also hampers their engagement, decision-making ability, and overall job output (Akingbola & Akinyele, 2021). Particularly, stress triggered by disorganized schedules and poor time allocation tends to diminish an employee's sense of control and accomplishment, leading to a steep decline in performance. This highlights the need to explore specific dimensions of stress management that can empower employees to function optimally in high-demand environments.

Time management has emerged as a vital component of stress management strategies in the contemporary workplace. It also defined as the ability to plan and exercise conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific tasks to increase effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity (Chinyere & Ezech, 2022), time management enables employees to organize priorities, meet deadlines, and reduce psychological strain. Research has increasingly shown that individuals with strong time management skills are better equipped to handle pressure, allocate resources judiciously, and maintain consistent performance levels (Ogunleye & Falola, 2023). However, the effect of time management is not isolated it interacts with other organizational variables, such as the work environment, to determine whether performance outcomes are fully realized.

This study is underpinned by the Person–Environment Fit Theory (P-E Fit Theory), which posits that performance outcomes and psychological well-being are highest when there is alignment between an individual's characteristics (e.g., time management ability) and the attributes of their work environment (e.g., organizational structure, support, and clarity of roles). According to Kristof-Brown et al. (2005), when employees perceive a good fit between their personal competencies and environmental conditions, they are more likely to be motivated, satisfied, and high-performing. Conversely, a misalignment, such as strong time management skills in a chaotic or rigid

environment, can frustrate performance and elevate stress levels. This theory provides a relevant lens through which to explore the mediating influence of the work environment in the relationship between time management and employee performance.

A key objective of this study, therefore, is to examine the effect of time management on the work environment. Time management, when properly institutionalized, promotes orderly routines, reduces chaos, and fosters professionalism in organizational culture. It can enhance the structure and rhythm of operations, creating a more predictable, calm, and focused work atmosphere. At Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Limited, strengthening time management across departments could help reduce operational lags, minimize interdepartmental friction, and improve communication patterns—ultimately creating a more enabling and less stressful work environment.

A second objective is to investigate the effect of the work environment on employee performance. The organizational environment—including physical workspace conditions, managerial attitudes, communication systems, and cultural norms—has a direct impact on how employees function and respond to stress. A well-structured and supportive work environment can buffer stress, encourage creativity, and boost output, while a poor one may demotivate workers and degrade performance (Adebayo & Oni, 2023). Within Mambilla Beverages, where productivity targets are high and deadlines tight, the quality of the work environment could significantly determine whether employees thrive or struggle under pressure.

Thus, this study seeks to assess the effect of time management on employee performance. Existing evidence suggests that time-conscious employees are generally more efficient, task-focused, and results-driven. They are less prone to burnout and absenteeism and more likely to complete their assignments within schedule (Uche & Bello, 2024). However, in a high-demand production setting like Mambilla Beverages, time management could be even more critical. Employees who manage their time effectively may be better positioned to

handle peak workloads, shift schedules, and production targets—making time management a core competency for achieving high performance in such contexts.

Despite these conceptual linkages, there remains a limited body of empirical research that simultaneously examines these three relationships in an integrated model—particularly within indigenous, agro-industrial firms in Nigeria. This gap is especially evident in studies that consider how the work environment mediates the link between time management and employee performance. Guided by the P-E Fit Theory, this study seeks to bridge that gap by exploring whether the alignment between employee time-use behavior and organizational environment significantly influences performance outcomes at Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Limited.

Problem Statement

The problem motivating this study lies in the inconsistent performance of employees across organizational settings, often linked to stress factors that go unaddressed or poorly managed. Although time management is widely acknowledged as a critical stress-buffering strategy, its influence on employee performance may not yield optimal results in the absence of a conducive work environment. The Person–Environment Fit Theory suggests that without a supportive and well-aligned environment, even highly competent employees may struggle to perform. In the context of Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Limited, this misalignment could explain the recurring gaps in staff productivity despite staff competence and training interventions.

Without a clear understanding of how the work environment mediates the relationship between time management and employee performance, organizational efforts at performance improvement risk being fragmented or ineffective. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the mediating role of the work environment in the relationship between time management and employee performance within the theoretical framework of stress management and the P-E Fit Theory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Time Management

The nature of modern work has become increasingly demanding, often characterized by tight deadlines, multitasking, and continuous pressure to meet performance targets. These conditions create significant stress for employees, making stress management a vital aspect of organizational effectiveness. Among the behavioral strategies employed to manage stress, time management has gained prominence as both a preventive and corrective mechanism for maintaining productivity and mental well-being (Okechukwu & Adebayo, 2022).

Stress management refers to a set of strategies aimed at minimizing the negative physical and psychological impact of stressors. Rather than merely responding to stress after it manifests, time management allows employees to structure their daily responsibilities in a way that minimizes stress before it escalates. In this regard, time management is not simply about task completion; it is a strategic approach that equips employees with tools to proactively manage pressure and workload (Okon & Musa, 2023; Daniel et al., 2025).

Time management has been defined as the ability to plan and control how much time is spent on specific tasks to enhance effectiveness and reduce stress. It involves deliberate activities such as setting goals, prioritizing responsibilities, allocating time to tasks, avoiding delays, and monitoring progress (Chinyere & Ezech, 2022). Employees who manage their time effectively are often better organized, more focused, and less overwhelmed by competing demands. Studies have shown that strong time management skills are associated with lower stress levels and higher work engagement (Eze & Umeh, 2023; Bello & Ayoola, 2022).

To understand time management in both academic and practical terms, scholars have identified several core indicators that define its practice. One key indicator is goal setting, which refers to establishing clear short-term and long-term objectives. Goal setting helps employees stay focused and align their daily actions with broader outcomes. Another vital

component is task prioritization, which involves sorting tasks based on urgency and importance. This prevents the common workplace issue of focusing on trivial activities at the expense of more critical ones (Uche & Bello, 2024).

Scheduling is another major aspect of time management, and it entails assigning specific time slots to particular tasks to ensure consistent workflow. Complementing scheduling is delegation, which refers to the ability to assign appropriate tasks to others to avoid work overload. Delegation is particularly important in collaborative work settings, where efficiency depends on effective team functioning (Falola & Ogunleye, 2021; Daniel et al., 2025).

Meeting deadlines is an additional indicator and serves as a practical measure of time discipline. Employees who meet deadlines regularly are seen as more dependable and are less likely to encounter stress associated with unfinished work. Lastly, avoidance of procrastination is a crucial dimension. Procrastination has been shown to correlate strongly with workplace stress, as delayed tasks often accumulate, increasing pressure and anxiety (Okechukwu & Adebayo, 2022).

These indicators are commonly measured using structured instruments such as Likert-scale questionnaires, productivity logs, or the Time Management Behavior Scale (TMBS), which assess how frequently individuals plan, schedule, and meet their time-related commitments (Nwachukwu et al., 2023). For example, employees may respond to items like, "I make a daily to-do list and follow it," or "I complete my tasks before deadlines," allowing researchers to gauge time management behavior in quantifiable terms.

Importantly, the literature establishes that strong performance in these indicators correlates with lower stress levels. Adekunle et al. (2021) found that employees in Nigerian manufacturing firms who demonstrated goal setting, prioritization, and scheduling practices experienced less burnout and were more productive. Similarly, Uche and Bello (2024) observed that when time management practices are consistent, employees are better positioned

to cope with high-pressure work conditions and report higher satisfaction.

However, several studies caution that time management alone may not be sufficient in combating workplace stress. Its effectiveness often depends on external factors such as the quality of the work environment, the level of managerial support, and the presence of clear communication systems. Adebayo and Oni (2023) noted that even well-organized employees may struggle with time management if their work environment is chaotic or unsupportive. Interruptions, poor delegation culture, or lack of autonomy can easily frustrate employees' attempts to adhere to planned schedules.

Work Environment

The work environment plays a foundational role in shaping employee behavior, well-being, and performance. It encompasses the physical setting, organizational culture, interpersonal relationships, resource availability, and managerial practices that define an employee's experience at work. As global work dynamics evolve, organizations are increasingly recognizing that productivity is not driven solely by individual competencies like time management, but also by the quality of the environment in which employees operate (Bassey & Ogundele, 2023).

A positive work environment fosters employee engagement, reduces job-related stress, and supports better task execution. It includes factors such as adequate lighting, ventilation, ergonomically arranged spaces, effective communication channels, fair supervisory practices, and supportive team dynamics. These elements combine to either enhance or inhibit an employee's ability to work efficiently (Okafor & Adegbite, 2022). More importantly, they determine the extent to which personal capacities like time management can be effectively translated into high performance outcomes.

Research indicates that the effectiveness of time management is contingent upon the enabling features of the work environment. Employees may possess strong time management skills such as scheduling, prioritizing, and goal

setting—but if they operate in a disorganized, unsupportive, or conflict-ridden environment, their ability to implement those skills becomes compromised (Ezeani & Okoro, 2021). For instance, poorly defined roles, frequent interruptions, and lack of resources may disrupt schedules and delay task execution, thereby undermining the stress-relieving and productivity-enhancing benefits of time management.

Falola and Ogunleye (2022) argue that the work environment serves as a contextual enabler that allows personal competencies like time management to thrive. This view aligns with the systems theory in organizational behavior, which holds that individual attributes and environmental conditions must interact harmoniously to produce optimal outcomes. In a study on Nigerian beverage firms, Adekunle et al. (2021) found that time

Employees' Performance

Employee performance is a central construct in organizational behavior, often viewed as the ultimate measure of individual and organizational success. It refers to the degree to which an employee effectively executes assigned roles, achieves objectives, and contributes to organizational goals. As an outcome variable, employee performance reflects the combined influence of personal competencies, motivational levels, managerial strategies, and environmental factors (Okeke & Ogundipe, 2022; Daniel et al., 2025).

The relevance of employee performance in today's competitive business landscape cannot be overstated. It is directly linked to organizational productivity, customer satisfaction, and long-term sustainability. Performance outcomes are typically evaluated based on parameters such as task completion, quality of work, adherence to timelines, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving abilities (Ibrahim & Dikko, 2023). In both manufacturing and service sectors, organizations with high-performing employees are better positioned to adapt to market changes, meet stakeholder expectations, and sustain operational efficiency.

Recent literature emphasizes that employee performance does not occur in isolation. It is the product of multiple interacting variables, including individual behavior and organizational context. For example, time management—a behavioral competence—has been positively linked to performance. Employees who plan, schedule, and prioritize tasks efficiently tend to experience reduced pressure, make fewer errors, and complete work faster (Uche & Bello, 2024). A study by Eze & Umeh (2023) confirmed that employees with effective time management skills in Nigerian public-sector institutions reported significantly higher levels of output compared to their counterparts with poor time discipline.

However, the capacity of time management to influence performance is often shaped by the quality of the work environment. A supportive environment—with clear expectations, necessary tools, and psychological safety—amplifies the performance impact of time-conscious behavior. Conversely, in a toxic or poorly resourced setting, even highly skilled individuals may struggle to meet performance expectations. This observation supports the argument for modeling work environment as a mediating variable between time management and employee performance (Bassey & Ogundele, 2023; Adebayo & Oni, 2023).

As an outcome variable, employee performance is frequently measured using both subjective and objective metrics. Subjective measures include supervisor evaluations, peer ratings, and self-assessments, often captured using Likert-scale instruments. Objective metrics involve quantifiable indicators such as task turnaround time, error rates, sales volume, or units produced per hour (Okon & Musa, 2023). Increasingly, scholars advocate for multi-source evaluation systems to minimize bias and improve measurement reliability.

Moreover, contemporary organizational research has shifted from viewing performance solely in terms of output to recognizing multidimensional aspects such as contextual performance (helping behavior, initiative) and adaptive performance (coping with change and new demands). This broader view allows a more comprehensive assessment of how variables like stress management, time use, and

work conditions influence employee effectiveness over time (Falola & Ogunleye, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design to examine the relationship between time management, work environment, and employee performance at Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Limited. A total of 250 employees were selected using the Taro Yamane formula and a simple random sampling technique to ensure fair representation across departments. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire titled “Time Management, Work Environment, and Employee Performance Scale” (TIME-WEPS), developed from established literature and validated by three experts in organizational studies. Convergent validity was confirmed through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with all constructs exceeding the 0.50 threshold. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha and Composite Reliability

(CR), with all coefficients above 0.70, confirming internal consistency. Data collection occurred through both in-person and email-based distribution to accommodate staff accessibility. The responses were analysed using SmartPLS v4 structural equation modeling (SEM), which enabled the examination of both direct and indirect effects in the hypothesized model, aligning with the study’s theoretical foundation in Person–Environment Fit Theory.

Results and Discussions

The quality of the variables in this paper was assessed by evaluating the measurement and structural models.

a. Assessment of the Measurement Model

The measuring process began with assessing the factor loadings, which was followed by determining the Cronbach and composite reliability coefficients and the validity of the constructs using the average variance extracted (AVE) and variance inflation factor (VIF) to determine multicollinearity, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Factor Loading, Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variables	Outer loadings	A	CR	AVE	VIF
Time Management		0.79	0.75	0.58	
TM 1	0.45				1.99
TM 2	0.56				1.46
TM 3	0.43				2.02
TM 4	0.57				1.76
TM 5	0.53				2.95
TM 6	0.89				13.58
TM 7	0.64				1.89
TM 8	0.89				15.83
TM 9	0.52				1.55
TM 10	0.51				1.89
Work Environment		0.89	0.91	0.52	
WE1	0.54				2.39
WE2	0.81				3.76
WE3	0.68				1.73

WE4	0.73	3.73
WE5	0.74	4.14
WE6	0.66	2.58
WE7	0.73	2.54
WE8	0.80	3.78
WE9	0.75	5.16
WE10	0.72	3.17
Employee Performance	0.92 0.93 0.59	
EP1	0.76	3.50
EP2	0.78	2.70
EP3	0.85	4.65
EP4	0.72	4.23
EP5	0.71	4.11
EP6	0.84	3.44
EP7	0.68	2.87
EP8	0.83	6.74
EP9	0.75	5.06
EP10	0.72	3.76

Source: Smart PLS v4 algorithm

As shown in Table 1, confirmatory factor analysis was used to identify factor loadings for each item in the paper's underlying constructs. Factor loadings represent the degree of connection between each item in the correlation matrix and the designated principal component. The factor loadings range from -1.0 to +1.0, with higher absolute values indicating a greater connection between the item and the underlying factor (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2022). The result showed that all items (except TM 1 and 3) had factor loadings greater than the

requirement of 0.50. The Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability results demonstrate that all constructs (TM, WE, and EP) have high-reliability coefficients, indicating that all exhibit internal consistency in measuring what they are designed to evaluate. In this case, the factor loadings with coefficients less than 0.50 were not removed. The average variance extracted (AVE) for the three constructs varies from 0.58, 0.52, and 0.59, demonstrating good convergent validity.

Table 2: Result of Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	TM	WE	EP
TM	0.72		
WE	0.45	0.73	
EP	0.42	0.72	0.77

Source: Smart PLS v4 Algorithm

The outcome of the Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity is presented in Table 2. Discriminant validity denotes the degree of differentiation between the underlying constructs. The Fornell and Larcker criterion is calculated by comparing the square roots of AVE to the correlation matrix. The diagonals (0.72, 0.73, and 0.77) in Table 2 exceeded the corresponding correlation coefficients, suggesting that the constructs under consideration are distinct.

b. Assessment of the Structural Model

To analyse the structural model, we utilised the coefficient of determination, which was assessed by measuring the standardised root mean squared residual (SRMR). Subsequently, we proceeded to examine the path coefficient. The choice of (SRMR) was made because it is the most suitable for a variance-based structural equation model. As per scholarly consensus, a model is deemed to have a good fit when the values are less than 0.08 (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2022).

Table 3: Model Fit (Fit Summary) or Coefficient of Determination

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.069	0.069
d_ULS	11.786	11.786
d_G	n/a	n/a
Chi-square	∞	∞
NFI	n/a	n/a

Source: Smart PLS v4 Algorithm

According to the results in Table 3, the obtained (SRMR) value was 0.069, which is lower than the stated requirement of 0.08. As a result, it

was determined that the study's model has a high degree of model fit.

Table 4: Path Coefficient of Direct and Indirect Relationship

Hypothesis	β	$\bar{x}$	STDEV	T statistics	P values	Sig
H01 TM -> EP	0.164	0.189	0.116	1.414	0.16	S
H02 TM -> WE	0.425	0.459	0.109	3.903	0.00	S
H03 WE -> EP	0.659	0.643	0.054	12.156	0.00	S
H04 TM -> WE -> EP	0.28	0.294	0.071	3.975	0.00	S

Source: Smart PLS v4 Bootstrapping

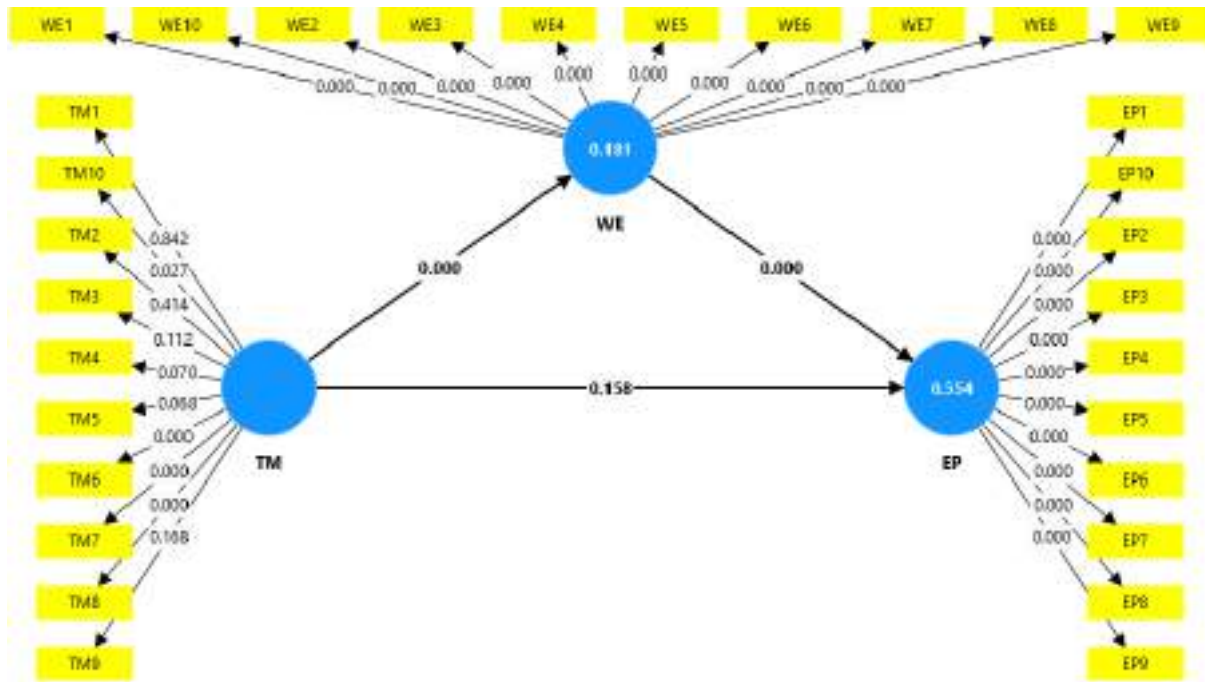


Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Direct and Indirect Relationships

The study examined the relationship between time management, work environment, and employee performance at Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Ltd, focusing on direct and indirect effects. The results from the structural equation modelling using Smart PLS provided insightful outcomes aligned with the four hypotheses that guided the research.

The first hypothesis (H01) tested the direct relationship between time management and employee performance and revealed a positive but statistically insignificant path coefficient ($\beta = 0.164$, $p = 0.16$). This suggests that although time management may influence employee performance, it does not do so significantly when considered in isolation within the context of Mambilla Beverages. This may be due to organisational or operational factors that moderate the impact of individual time management efforts on performance outcomes.

In contrast, the second hypothesis (H02), which assessed the effect of time management on the work environment, returned a significant and positive result ($\beta = 0.425$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that effective time management practices among employees contribute meaningfully to fostering a more structured and efficient work environment. It suggests that when employees manage their time well, it positively reflects in the overall organisation of

tasks, communication flow, and operational orderliness.

The third hypothesis (H03) examined the relationship between the work environment and employee performance. The findings revealed a strong and statistically significant effect ($\beta = 0.659$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that the work environment is a critical determinant of employee performance at Mambilla Beverages. This implies that a well-organized, supportive, and conducive work setting enables employees to perform at higher levels.

Finally, the fourth hypothesis (H04) tested the mediating effect of the work environment on the relationship between time management and employee performance. The result showed a significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.280$, $p < 0.01$), confirming that the work environment plays a mediating role. This means that while time management alone does not significantly enhance employee performance, it can do so indirectly by improving the work environment, which in turn boosts performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings highlight that within Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Ltd, the work environment plays a crucial mediating role in the relationship between time management and employee

performance. Management should therefore focus on creating a structured and supportive work environment as a means of amplifying the positive effects of time management practices. Emphasis should also be placed on capacity building and process improvements that reinforce good time use and workplace efficiency. Thus, the study recommends that:

- i. Since time management does not directly predict employee performance (H01), it should be supported with organisational structures like clear job roles, feedback, and manageable workloads.
- ii. As time management significantly affects the work environment (H02), the company should promote time-use training, monitoring tools, and best practices to enhance workplace organisation.
- iii. Given that the work environment significantly influences employee performance (H03), management should improve physical conditions, safety, communication, and staff support systems.
- iv. Because the work environment mediates the relationship between time management and employee performance (H04), a combined strategy of enhancing both time management skills and workplace conditions is essential for optimal performance.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge by offering empirical insights into the complex interplay between time management, work environment, and employee performance within the context of Mambilla Beverages Nigeria Ltd—an area that has received limited academic attention, particularly within the Nigerian manufacturing sector. The research challenges the commonly held assumption that time management alone directly enhances employee performance, revealing instead that its impact is largely indirect and mediated by the quality of the work environment. This nuanced finding enriches the theoretical understanding of performance management by emphasizing the significance of environmental factors as enablers of

effective time use. Additionally, the study validates a structural model using Smart PLS that can be replicated in similar organisational settings, thus providing a practical analytical framework for future research. By highlighting the mediating role of the work environment, the study offers valuable direction for managers and HR professionals seeking to improve productivity through integrated organizational strategies.

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