

Cellular Phone Usage and Productivity among Employees in A Ghanaian SME: An Assessment

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Abstract

The use of mobile phones in the manufacturing set up may be considered by some people as a distraction from work which may negatively affect productivity. Some also may be of the view that it will improve communication and as such impact productivity positively. A structured questionnaire with closed and opened ended question was used in collection of primary data. The questionnaire was validated by pre-testing it on a sample size of 10 staff. Sampling was aimed at 75 percent of the total workforce of 40 people. The questionnaire was administered to 30 employees of the company (both junior and senior ranks) that were available during the time of survey. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS version 12 software. Appropriate percentages and frequencies were computed to assist in analyzing the data. The survey results showed that the percentage of workers of Omega Beverages Ltd. who claimed their work output was not affected by making or receiving calls with their cell phones represented 86.7 percent and only 13.3 percent said cell phone usage during work impacted their output. The number of outgoing and incoming calls and the duration of calls made on mobile phones and the duration of calls translated into a considerable amount of time that was lost through cell phone conversations. This pointed to a negative impact of cell phone usage on productivity at Omega Beverages Ltd.

KEYWORDS: CELLULAR PHONE, PRODUCTIVITY, GHANA, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SCALE ENTERPRISES

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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of mobile telecommunication is growing so fast in a very distinctive way across the length and breadth of Africa and the demand for cell phones have exceeded the projections made by manufacturers particularly in Africa

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(Scott et al. 2004). The emergence of the use of mobile phones in the Africa was limited to the elite and wealthy upper class businessmen who could afford them. The high rate of diffusion of the mobile phone was attributed to the mass-market technology (Jagun et al. 2008). The price of cell phone was very high at the time of its introduction and only a few could afford it. The introduction of newer and more portable models of mobile phones and introduction of additional features like short text messaging, the radio, camera etc., caused the price drop of the older models which were generally bulky and could not be carried in the pocket. The fall in price and introduction of the cheap prepaid plans by mobile operators and improvement in service quality, have made the cell phone accessible and more affordable to a number of low income people. (Scott et al., 2004; Prieger, 2004; Chan et al, 2006)

There have been some interesting sociological researches but few successful studies on the economic impacts of mobile telecommunication on the individual, businesses and overall economic activity.

Omega Beverages Ltd. is a newly established company which started commercial production in February 2008. The company was set up to produce world class premium fruit juices, fruit drinks and cocoa beverages in Ghana. The company which is a new entrant into an already vibrant market of fruit juices and beverage had to adopt a strategy of least cost of production through the use of advanced high speed and high volume technology and to attain the economics of scale a great deal of money was invested. The staff of Omega Beverages Ltd. is made up of both high skilled professionals and unskilled workers. The professionals are made up of engineers trained on Tetra Pak machines, food scientists, Technicians, machine operators, microbiologist, accountants and administrators. The unskilled workforce who form the majority of workers in Omega Beverages Ltd., are made up of loaders, line packers, cleaners and laborers. The use of cell phones in Omega beverages is not regulated by any company policy and the workers make and receive calls irrespective of position or rank in the organization. The rampant and uncontrolled use of cell phones by everybody has raised some concerns among the managers and hence the study.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives include assessing the impact of mobile phone usage on productivity by the workforce of the company, investigating the extent of mobile phone usage in Omega, establishing the factors contributing to using mobile phones at the work place and suggesting measures to control the unproductive use of mobile phones at work places.

3. MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

Research in this area is necessary because a number of enterprises in Ghana are trying to derive down their cost of production in order to beat the competition they face with cheap imported goods. For a manufacturing company such as Omega, whose products face a lot of competition from these imported products, eliminating waste in all forms, including time wasted in making unproductive cell phone calls will help in the company's drive to become the least cost producer. It is important for management to find out if the use of the mobile phones was having any positive or negative impact on the business process, hence this research.

4. CELL PHONE USAGE IN AFRICA

Even though the use of cell phones in Africa has not been as widespread as in other areas of the world, as at 2007, analysts had put the number of mobile phone users in Africa at 250 million with 65million additional subscribers added in year 2007. Africa now has the fastest growth rate of mobile subscribers. (Nnamdi, 2008)

A study by Vodafone (2005) makes the assertions that "The first cellular call in Africa was made in Zaire in 1987 and by the year 2005 there were over 52 million mobile users on the continent and in 19 African countries mobile phones accounted for at least three quarters of all telephones. The rapid spread of mobile in so many of its countries is a remarkable phenomenon especially in the context of their huge economic and social challenges".

The history of mobile telecommunications in Africa and the developing world has been a successful one in the sense that it is one area of investments that continues to be profitable to t investors. Investments in large infrastructure have provided mobile communication service to t poor, a tool that has enabled millions of people to communicate better. The innovative and entrepreneurial use to which cell phone have been put in Africa has reached unimaginable height since the time of introduction of the gadget. It now extends beyond individual ownership to

revenue generation, (Vodafone, 2005). A typical example is 'mobile to mobile' business in Ghana where individual allow the use of their cell phones for a fee. It may seem that extent which the poor in Africa access telecommunication services may be low because of low Tele-density figures in Africa. However, the sharing of phones and access to public facilities makes the extent e access of telecom services high.

Research shows that as at 2003, up to 80% of households made regular use of phones in some remote areas of Africa. (McKemey et. al. 2003). In other parts of the world such as Bangladesh cell phones have been put to economic use, whereby farmers use the cell phones to get the best price for their crops and live stock thus improving their income and wellbeing. Similarly, in Africa cell phones are put to economic use in Cote d'Ivoire, where farmers are able to monitor the price changes for coffee with the use of mobile phones and se their produce when the coffee price was best for them. (Ahmed F, 2000; Lopez, 2000)

Scott et al., (2004) provide the following statistics on the growing market for cellular phones i Africa, they claim that in 200 I access to telephone by Africans was less than 3 percent of the population and by 2004 the percentage had increased to 7percent. They put the growth rate of the cell phone subscribers at 35 percent per annum. The liberal regulatory environments, where operator have been given the freedom to respond to customer requirements is one of the reasons given for the fast growing usage of mobile phones in Africa. The need to be constantly accessible and connected to friends and colleagues is one of the main reasons for mobile phone addiction in the youth in a study conducted in India (Chakraborty, 2006), even though there are no such studies in Africa the same assertion can be said of the youth in Africa. The youth in Africa are notable for "flashing/beeping", text messaging and multimedia such as playing music, and listening to radio.

5. USE OF CELL PHONES AND PRODUCTIVITY

It is recognized that the use of cell phones can be very useful for small businesses. The phones help the business owner to be in contact with clients and suppliers without always having to be on the job physically. However, most employers also tend to believe that constant use of the cell phones by their employees especially on the job tends to distract them and lower productivity (Thompson, 2006). Thompson in his research paper the effect of cellular phone use in the modern workplace contends that most of the calls received by employees while on the job have nothing to do with business. According to him, the mere receipt of a call, irrespective of whether the receiver picks it up or not may negatively impact productivity. This he says is because, deciding whether or not to pick up a call in itself can make an employee lose concentration (Thompson, 2006). This lose of concentration has more serious consequences if the employee is engaged in some production line activity. Thompson goes on to quote a research by Basex (2005) which found that American companies lost \$ 588 billion that year due to interruptions from cell phones and other electronic technological gadgets. The interruptions amongst other things caused workers to lose focus which consequently could lead them into not meeting deadlines. In his research, using different categories of workers, Thompson found that approximately 47 percent of his respondents found mobile phone calls disruptive. Majority of those who said they did not find it disruptive however admitted that they had put measures, such as putting their cell phones off in place. This confirmed that unconsciously, they did know that mobile phone calls could be disruptive (Thompson, 2006). Thompson does concede however that some available research suggests that not all phone interruptions are detrimental to productivity. He states that in cases where there is the need for immediate information to address a pressing issue, mobile phone calls may actually enhance productivity.

Youngbin et al (1991), identified productivity as a major reason for using cell phones by commuters who spend more than two hour on the road while convenience was given as reason for people who travelled less than two hours in their cars. They also gave the following statistics for the usage of cellular phones. Heavy use of cell phone for business was 71.8 percent among respondents and for personal activities 28.2 percent. Their survey also indicated the primary reason for getting a cellular phone associated with productivity was 36.7 percent and with convenience was 34.0 percent.

Research has shown a positive impact of cell phone communication on economic growth (Baliamoune, 2002). Reduction in transaction cost, widening of markets and becoming substitutes for expensive travels and better information flow are some of the economic benefits associated with cell phone. However, the face-to-face societal interaction has rather been on the decline thereby reshaping the culture. Diego (2007) The other areas of increasing

importance of mobile phones in Africa were identified as, improving efficiency of markets, promoting investment, improving government revenue through payment of taxes by mobile operator (Nigel et al., 2004).

A survey by Frempong et al. (2007), found that micro entrepreneurs in Ghana used the phones for checking of prices, ordering materials, contacting their clients and suppliers and checking customer orders. The frequency of use of the cell phones for business purposes though was low among the micro entrepreneurs, using the cell phones for the above business activities contribute to increased marginal profits, by cutting down on transportation cost, having easy access to their suppliers and clients.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The staff strength of the company stands at 40 employees and attempt was made to administer the questionnaire to at least 30 employees, which makes the sample size about 75 percent of the population. A structured questionnaire with closed and open ended questions was used in the collection of primary data. Questionnaire was designed to gather demographic data of the employees of Omega Beverages Ltd, to sample workers views on effect of mobile phone usage on their output and performance.

Demographic data collected was on gender and age. In an attempt to get data on the usage of cell phones by the staff of Omega Beverages Ltd., respondents were asked questions on the whether they owned mobile phone, the frequency at which the workers receive and make calls during their work hours, the average time that they spend making or receiving calls, how much time they spend on the average making call. What other uses they put their phones to.

The category of people they call to distinguish the work related calls from social calls. They were also asked questions on whether mobile phone calls disrupt their work. What do they do when their work is disrupted by receiving mobile phone call? The questionnaire was validated by pre-testing it on a sample of the 10 staff. Sampling was aimed at 75 percent of the total workforce of 40 people. The structured questionnaires were administered to the 30 employees of the company (both junior and senior ranks) that were available during the time of survey. Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 12 was used to analyze the data.

7.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 DEMOGRAPHY

Demographic data collected from respondents for the survey shows that there were more males (63.3%) than females (36.7%) working at Omega beverages ltd. This is attributable to the nature of work that is available at time of the survey. The operations at Omega Beverages Ltd. can be classified into beverage production process, which involve mixing machine operation, processing machine operation, filling machine operation, packaging machine operation and palletizing of finished product. The computerization and automation of these equipments require people with electrical and mechanical background, who must have good trouble shooting skills in programmable logic controllers (PLC). Warehousing, Sales, Administration and Accounting constitute the other sectors of Omega Beverages Operations. Some of the female employees work in the Quality Assurance department as analyst and a majority of them on the packaging lines, where finished products are packed into cartons and arranged on pallets. Females are also engaged in cleaning and sanitation within the factory and outside the factory premise. The male employees in Omega Beverages Ltd. are mostly managers, machine operators, drivers and casual workers. The casual workers do manual works like palletizing, loading and offloading of trucks and drivers for some of the company's vehicles.

The ages of the respondents range from 19 to 45 years with the modal age group being 19 25years. Over 53.57 percent of the respondents fall within the age bracket 19 - 25 years and 25 percent are within the 26-30 years age group. Over 75 percent of the workforce are below 30 years of age and can therefore be described as young and dynamic work force

7.2 JOB CLASSIFICATION AND CONDITIONS OF WORK

The majority of respondents were casual workers and they form 66.7 percent of the work force and they clearly outnumber the rest of the employees put together. They are followed by the 'others' which include drivers, machine operators and administrative staff, whose responsibilities were not defined and they form 20 percent of the respondents may represent a group made up of the administrative and support staff.

Whereas managers form just 6.7 percent, supervisors constitute 6.7 percent. It is obvious from these that the organizational structure is broad based and pyramidal with majority of worker at the bottom of the pyramid. The organizational structure is closer to a flat type of organization than a lean structure. The Flat organizational structure has its advantage over the other organizational structures and the choice of organizational structure also depend the size and age of the organization. As the organization grows, a flat organization may tend to become hierarchical in nature, resulting in bureaucratic and complex systems. With a wrong organizational setup, jobs may not get completed on time within the limited budgetary resources of the company and it also affects the company's response time to changing conditions and customers reactions. An effective organizational structure will facilitate good working relationship between the various departments thus avoiding the bureaucracies associated with large institutions and hence enhances efficiency in the organization (Wikipedia.org).

7.3 DURATION OF WORK (WORK HOURS)

The respondents were asked to state the number of hours they worked in a day and this was to determine if work extended beyond the normal eight hours which could be due to delays caused by stoppages of machine as a result of breakdown, interruption due to call made or received etc.

Forty percent (40 %) of respondents answering the question claim they work more than eight hours per day and this can increase the companies overhead cost in running equipments on electricity, water and other amenities as well as increasing its wage bill by way of overtime payments. However, 60% claimed they worked 8 hours or less.

7.4 CELL PHONE OWNERSHIP AND USAGE

The answers to the question, whether the workers owned cell phones has shown that 96.7 percent of the sampled workers owned cell phones. This means that there was a high teledensity among the workers. The workers were not limited in assessing telecommunication. The workers were accessible to each other even when they were not at their desk or workstation and this will ensure the smooth flow of information and directives at the right time.

In response to the question whether those who own cell phone switched off their phones during work hours, it was revealed that the majority of the respondents representing 80 percent kept their phones on while at work and 20 percent of the workers claimed they switched off their phones while at work. This indicates that 80 percent of the workers were likely to be making or receiving calls at the expense of company time or will be engaged in productive communication to enhance efficiency and productivity.

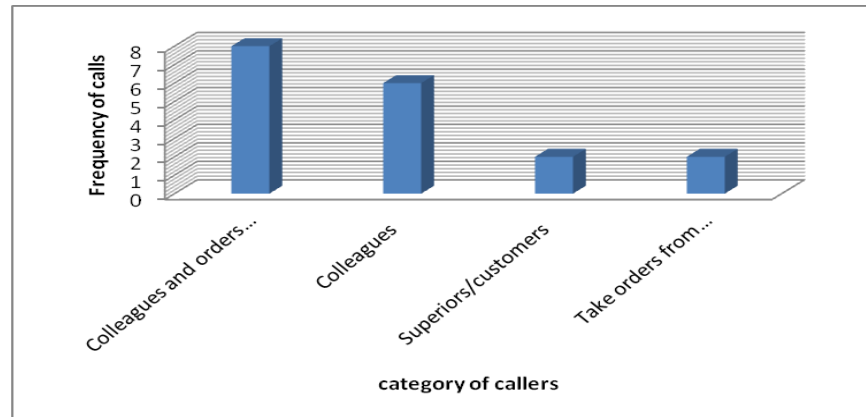
When asked further if the use of cell phone was necessary for the performance of their work, about forty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that the cell phone was necessary for the performance of their work. This means that this group of workers may be relying on information from other people to get their job done. The other fifty-three percent of respondents claimed the use of cell phones was not necessary for their work, which implies that their phone was for purposes other than communicating on work related issues.

About forty-seven percent of the respondents did not think the cell phone was necessary for the performance of their work. This group of people depends on their cell phones to perform their job. It may be inferred that they use their cell phones to engage in productive communication like taking orders from customers, giving and receiving feedback from colleagues and superiors and issuing out of directives.

44.5 percent of the respondents who claim their mobile phone help them with their work use their phones to

communicate with their colleagues on the job and also make calls to their customers to take orders. 33.3 percent of the respondents communicate with their colleagues on the job, an indication that there is some level of coordination and team work at play for quick and easy resolution of issues that may come up during the course of their work (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Frequency of calls per call category that help with work performance



Source: Field Data

Of those respondents that said the use of the cell phone enhanced their work, 27.8 percent use their phones to communicate with their colleagues and give feedback to their superiors implying that the communication channel is both lateral and vertical which is essential for easy flow of information, clarity of instruction and for fast execution of job. Reaching out to their clients was very important for the sales team in the execution of their job. The number of respondents who made calls solely for the purpose of taking orders from customers represented 11.1 percent of respondents. The productivity of respondents who use their phones purposely to take orders from customers depended on the number of orders taken and successfully executed.

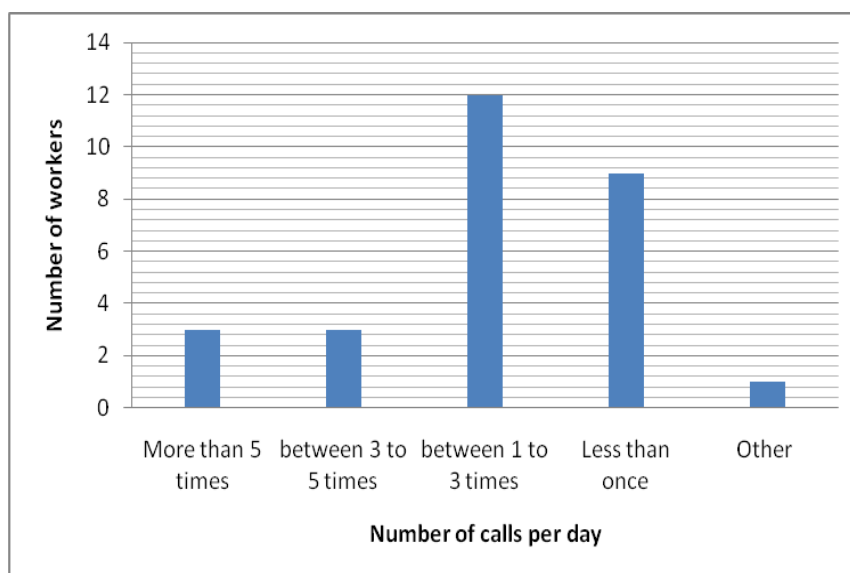
7.5 AVERAGE NUMBER OF OUTGOING CALLS PER DAY

Figure 2 shows that the percentage of respondents who made between 1 to 3 calls in a day, was 42 percent of the workers with cell phones. Respondents who claimed they make only one call or none at all were 32.1 percent. 10.7 percent of the respondents make more than five calls in a day. The percentage of respondents who made between three and five calls was 10.7 percent.

The rest of the respondents who could not estimate the frequency and amount of time they spend on the cell phone form only 3.57 percent.

It can be deduced from Figure 2 that the frequency of mobile phone usage was moderately high among the workers of Omega beverages Ltd, and if these calls are not work related or calls that will improve the productivity of the workers involved, then the allocated time for effective job performance for these individuals will be adversely affected and daily targets may not be met.

Figure 2: Number of outgoing calls per day



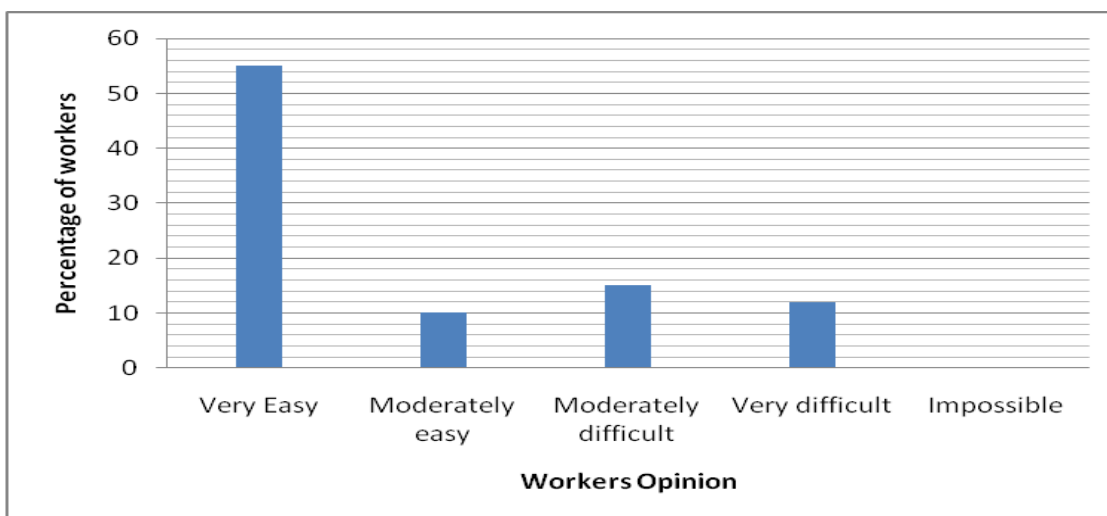
Source: Field data

7.6 MEASURE OF DIFFICULTY OF JOB PERFORMANCE WITHOUT CELL PHONE

The question of how difficult it was to perform ones duties without a cell phone was asked to identify cell phone users whose use of their phones aid their effectiveness and efficiency thereby contributing to higher productivity. Majority of respondents, Figure 3 representing 56.6 percent were capable of working without their cell phone. The remaining respondents depended on their cell phone to perform their work. 16.6 percent would find it moderately difficult to perform their duties and 13.3 percent will find it very difficult to perform their work and 10 percent of the respondents said it was moderately easy to work without their cell phone.

3.3 percent of the respondents would find it impossible to work at all without their cell phones. It was obvious that cell phones were not necessary for those who did not have any difficulty in working without their cell phones in the performance of their work. Likewise those who found it moderately easy could do without the cell phones in their job performance. These categories of people i.e. those who found it moderately easy and very easy to work without their cell phone constitute over 60 percent of respondents that took part in the survey. However, this did not mean that those who said they used their cell phone to work were entirely telling the truth.

Figure 3: Workers opinion on difficulty of working without the cell phone



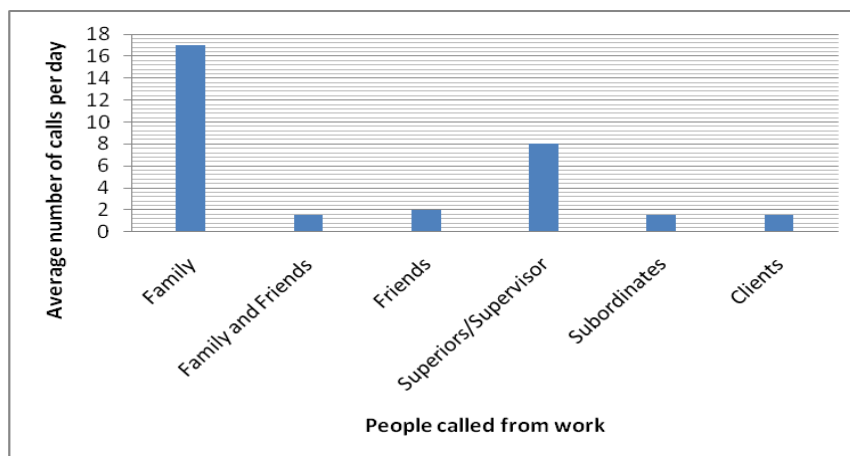
Source: Field Data

Those who found it moderately difficult, very difficult and impossible to work without their cell phones put together represent about 33 percent of respondents and this implies that cell phone usage could positively impact productivity in the job performance of only these respondents. The answers to this question were to confirm the responses to the earlier question of whether cell phones were necessary for the performance of job. The 46.7 percent of respondents who said the mobile phones were necessary for the performance of their job was in agreement with the 43.4 percent of respondents who found it moderately easy to impossible to work without their cell phones.

7.7 CATEGORIZATION OF PEOPLE CALLED AT WORK

Grouping the responses to the question “which category of people do you call from work with your cell phone?” into social and job related calls, the data gathered indicate that calls made to only families accounted for 58.6 percent, family and friends accounted for 3.4 percent. Respondents who called their friends only constitute 6.9 percent and the job related calls make up to 30.9% of the total calls made (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Number of Calls per category of people called from work



Source: Field Data

Making a call is most of the time at a person’s convenience. Unlike the process of making calls, receiving calls can be disruptive to a person’s chain of thought and concentration on a job. Unwanted disruptions can cause interruptions in work flow if not managed properly. Some interruptions are believed to provide timely information for job execution and real-time data for timely decision making (Thompson, 2006). Thompson suggests that it can take the knowledge worker up to 15 minute to return to the same level of productivity and in some cases of interruption, the work never gets completed. Most of the calls received were social call i.e. calls to family and friends put together constitute 68.96% and these calls can cause a great deal of distraction or disturb the chain of thought and thereby affect efficiencies that may lead to shortfall in productivity.

7.8 NUMBER OF CALLS RECEIVED IN A DAY PER CALL DURATION

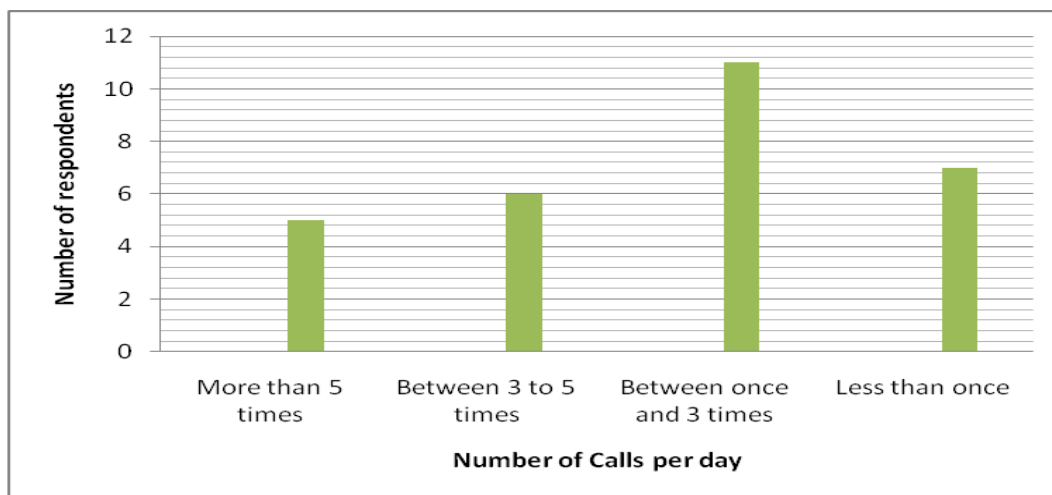
Analysis of the data shows that 37.9 percent of respondents receive between 1 and 3 calls in a day, 24 percent receive less than one call in a day, 20.7 percent receive between 3 to 5 calls in a day and 17.2 percent of respondents receive more than 5 calls in a day as shown in the data Figure 5 below

The number of calls received can be directly linked to work interruptions caused by receiving cell phone calls. Some of the calls received may be useful for job performance but some may not be useful and may negatively impact productivity. Over 50 percent of calls were coming from family and friends which means that these calls may not be contributing to efficiency improvement. Tying the responses of this question to the difficulty of working without cell phones and bearing in mind that most of the calls were social calls with modal call rate of 1 to 3 times of calls per day, a lot of time may be wasted in receiving calls. Time is a valuable resource that

cannot be regained. Drucker (2007) said “One cannot buy, rent or hire more time. The supply of time is totally inelastic. No matter how high the demand, the supply will not go up.

There is no price for it. Time is totally perishable and cannot be stored. Yesterday’s time is gone forever, and will never come back. Time is always in short supply. There is no substitute for time. Everything requires time. All work takes place in, and uses up time. Yet most people take for granted this unique, irreplaceable and necessary resource.”

Figure 5: Number of Calls received in a day per call duration



Source: Field data

7.9 ACTIONS TAKEN TO AVOID INTERRUPTIONS

The question „what do you do when you receive a call“ was asked in order to ascertain how the workers handle their calls to avoid interruptions and to know if making or receiving calls can cause a stop in the work flow. Figure 6 shows that 13.7 percent or 4 of the respondents stop work in order to receive or make calls especially with the casual workers who are engaged in manual work on the packing lines. Thompson (2006) indicated that an intrusion is an interruption which temporarily stops the work flow and this has a bearing on productivity since it has some great deal of impact on how a worker will manage his time. Sixty-six percent (65.5%) or 19 of the respondents claim they continue to work whenever they make or receive calls. These respondents fall into the class of workers who handle automated equipments or may be using earpieces to receive or make calls. About 20.7 percent or 6 of the respondents do not stop work but ask their colleagues to cover up for them whenever they have to receive or make calls whilst at work. This means that the work does not suffer any hold ups with the making and receiving of calls. The rest of the respondents actually have to stop their work to make or receive calls and they constitute

13.7 percent of the respondents. The time spent on making cellular phone calls can be translated into loss of profit. (Thompson 2006). Most of the workers spend between one to three minutes making calls in a day.

The percentage of respondents spending between 1 to 3 minutes on their cell phones making calls in a day was as high as 60 percent or 18 respondents. 23 percent or seven of the staff who took the survey spend less than 1 minute on the phone in a day. Two of the respondents representing 6.7 percent spend more than 5 minute in

making calls. Relating the amount of time with the frequency of making and receiving calls it became apparent that a considerable amount of time is spent on making and receiving cell phone calls which most of the time are call made to family and friends.

7.10 STAFF OPINION ON WHETHER CELL PHONES CALLS DISTURB THEIR EFFICIENCY

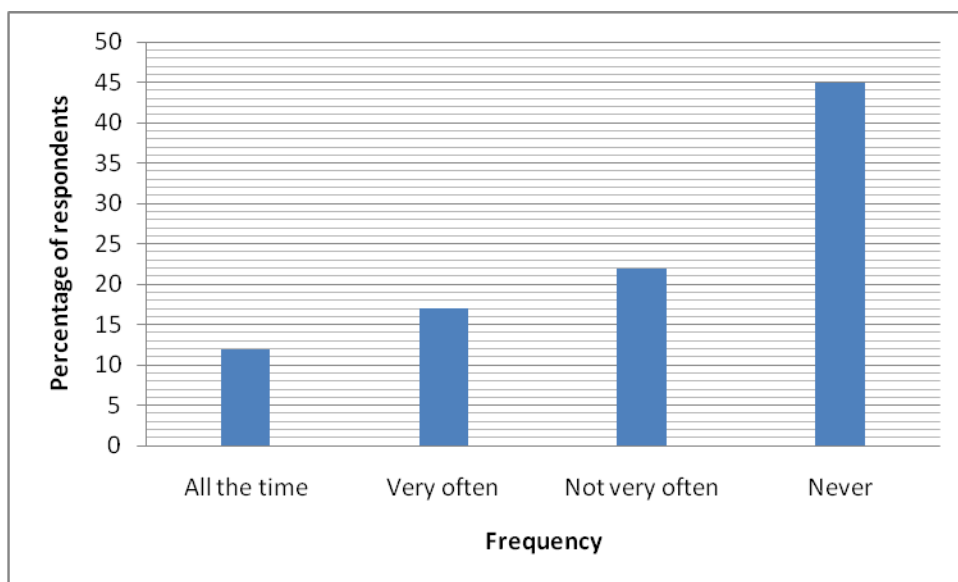
In the opinion of 40 percent of respondents, cellular phone calls did not disturb their efficiency that often which means that there are times their efficiency was affected. 10 percent of the respondents said receiving call on their cell phone disturbs their efficiency or output all the time.

3.3 percent of the respondents said the use of cellular phone very often disturbs their efficiency and or their output. An example could be when worker is called to his or her bosses" office irrespective of what the subordinate was doing. A good number of the respondents said that receiving cell phone calls did not affect their efficiency at all. The respondents making this claim represent 46.7 percent of the work force that took part in the survey.

7.11 STAFF OPINION ON WHETHER CELL PHONE CALLS IMPROVES THEIR EFFICIENCY OR OUTPUT

In the opinion of 10 percent of the respondents, making or receiving call improves their efficiency. This was comparable to the 10 percent of respondents who said cell phone calls disturb their efficiency or output.

Figure 6: Workers opinion on whether cell phone improved their efficiency



Source: Field data

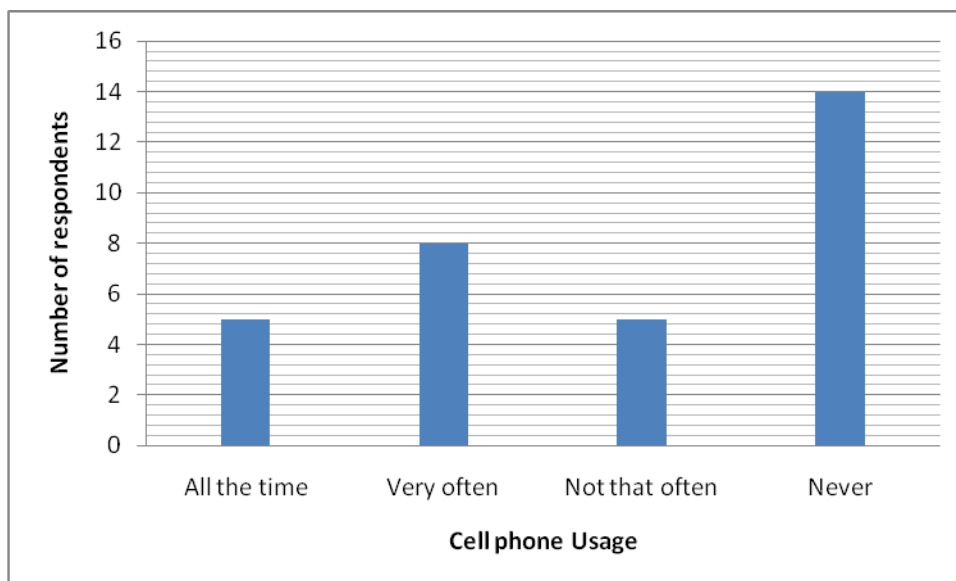
43.3 percent claim the usage of the cell phone never improved their output or efficiency. This is comparable to 46.7 percent of respondents who said cell phone calls did not disturb their work output (see figure 6). 23.3 percent of respondents said the phone calls did not very often improve their output or efficiency and 20 percent said their efficiency was improved very often by the use of the cell phone compared to the 3.3 percent who said

cell phone calls often disturb their efficiency. 10 percent of the respondents were of the view that it improves their efficiency all the time.

7.12 DISSEMINATION OF JOB RELATED INFORMATION BY CELL PHONE

26.7 percent of the respondents very often use their phone for disseminating job information and 16.7 percent of the respondents do not do this very often. 10 percent of the survey respondents use cell phones to disseminate or receive information pertaining to work during working hours all the time. Less than half of the respondents (46.7%) do not in any way use their cell phone to send or receive job related information. This category of workers who form the majority may not be taking part in any decision making process. They represent the casual or temporal workers who are given verbal directives and are not communicated to by their superiors by cell phones. In addition, the respondents who use their cell phones to disseminate or receive information pertaining to their job all the time (10%) and very often (26.7%) are the ones that use their phones productively (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Number of respondents who use cell phones to disseminate job related information



Source: Field data

7.13 OTHER USES OF CELL PHONES AMONG OMEGA BEVERAGE WORKERS

Cell phones are constantly evolving with the latest gadgets having added and improved functions with more and attractive and sleek designs (Thompson 2006). The earlier designs were meant for cars and did not have text messaging functions, radios, calculators, calendars, music and video players. Some of these new features on cell phones if not used in a controlled manner can lead to serious neglect of assigned duties. Using cell phones to do calculations was very common among the respondents with 34.5 percent of them using the cell phones for this other purpose apart from making calls. Using the cell phone as radio ranked second with 17.2 percent of respondents using the phones for that other purpose only. 10.3 percent of respondents were using the cell phones for text message only apart from making calls. 6.9 percent of respondents use their cell phones to listen to the radio and text messaging. Text messaging is an immediate and yet non intrusive form of communication

where the recipients of the text message will respond at their own convenience. However, 10.3 percent of them also use it for text messages and calculations.

7.14 MODE OF MEASUREMENT OF WORK OUTPUT

The question as to how work output was measured was asked to ascertain whether figures were put on work output or performance and to find out if the worker were conscious of what was expected of them by the close of work. 25 of the respondents representing 83.3 percent were able to indicate how their output was measured. The significance is that the workers were aware of their employer's expectation of them at the end of the day and were not likely to hide and indulge in lengthy phone calls that will affect their performance at the end of the day. Most of the respondents' performance was assessed by number of cartons packed in a day and they represent 48 percent of respondents. Delivery time as a performance indicator was used by 20 percent of the respondents as a mode of measuring their work performance. 20 percent of respondents were also assessed using number of dispatches as the mode of measurement.

"Can your work output be affected by receiving or making phone calls?" was a question asked differently to confirm their first response to the question whether cell phone in their opinion affected their efficiency and the majority of the respondents representing 86.7 percent said making or receiving calls did not affect their work output. Only 13.3 percent of the respondents said their work output was affected by making or receiving call with their cell phones. These responses confirm the earlier responses given to the question whether cell phone in their opinion affected their efficiency.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the survey conducted at Omega Beverages Ltd. have shown that a considerable amount of time is spent in making cell phone calls. The number of cell phones calls and the time spent on calls that are not work related outnumber the calls that are work related. The cell phones were used for other activities like listening to music and the radio on their phones, doing calculations, sending text messages etc. The number of respondents who claim their work output is not affected by making or receiving cell phone calls represented 86.7% of respondents and only 13.3% said their work output was affected by cell phone calls. However, a high percentage of respondents representing 42.85 percent made calls at a rate of 1 to 3 times in a day and most of the calls made last between 1 to 3 minutes per call. Likewise, the number of respondents receiving calls at a rate of 1 to 3 calls per day represents 37.9 percent. The number of call outgoing and incoming and the duration of the calls translate into a considerable amount of time that is lost through cell phone conversations. The findings from the study point to the fact that over 60 percent of these calls were social calls that are made to friends and family and these calls do not help in improving business communication and the sharing of job related information to improve efficiency. It became obvious that the cell phones in the hands of a greater number of workers, the majority of whom were casuals were not being put to any beneficial use to the company. The percentage of respondents who found it very difficult to work without their cell phones was 13.3 percent. Those who found it impossible to work without the cell phone were 3.3 percent. These two categories of workers depended on their cell phones to work and their productivity is positively influenced by the use of cell phones but they rather fall in the minority of respondents.

It is obvious from the study conducted on the workers of Omega Beverages Ltd., that the extent of use of mobile phones at the work place was wide spread. The usage of the mobile phone ran through the whole organization. The majority of calls made or received with cell phones were social calls that were made to family and friends and only 30.9 percent of calls were job related. A few respondents representing 3.3 percent found it impossible to work without their cell phones which implied that only this group of workers actually used their phones productively. It can therefore be concluded that since the unproductive use of cell phones outweigh productive

use, the use of mobile phones at Omega Beverages Ltd. may not contribute positively to productivity gains.

The policy suggestions made by the workers if implemented will go a long way to curb the abuse of cell phones in the company. A total ban of the use of cell phones when driving will be highly recommended since other studies cited suggest that the use of mobile phones while driving have resulted in a number of fatal accidents. Some suggestions made by respondents on cell phone policy for the company include:

1. Key personnel like operators of vital equipments, supervisors, managers, sales and marketing personnel should be the only persons allowed to use cell phones while at work.
2. The other workers were to switch off their phones and only switch them on during their break periods and emergencies.
3. Company drivers were to make use of earpieces while driving and they should park off the road when they have to receive and make calls.
4. Putting off all cell phones or putting them on vibration mode during meetings

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