



ABSTRACT

Craftsmen productivity refers to the efficiency and output of skilled artisans and craftsmen in various trades. It is a measure of how effectively these individuals or small-scale workshops can create high quality, handcrafted goods. The productivity level of craftsmen in Nigeria is low and this paper attempts to discuss the implications or consequences of this low level of productivity on the craftsmen themselves and on the nation as a whole. The paper also looks at the different factors that can affect craftsmen productivity in

FACTORS AFFECTING CRAFTSMEN PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

Craftsmanship can be seen as the art of making things or items by hand by a skilled manual worker and these items can be for functional or decorative purposes. Craftsmanship has always been an integral part of the Nigerian culture, encompassing various forms like weaving, carving, pottery and many more. These crafts serve as a means of preserving the country's rich heritage and traditions. The importance of craftsmanship in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized as it plays a significant role in promoting and sustaining the nation's culture and economy. In view of the much needed foreign exchange earning in Nigeria, the craft industry can go a long way in improving the foreign exchange earnings of the nation as crafts form part of the products in high demand in some foreign countries. Craftsmen productivity involves optimizing various factors to improve the efficiency and output of skilled artisans. Over the years, the productivity of the craft sector of the Nigerian economy has been diminishing due to neglect, lack of access to capital and equipments for craftsmen, lack of skilled craftsmen and many other reasons. This has resulted in loss of substantial revenue for the country, the craftsmen themselves and other stakeholders, because these crafts were not just a means of creative expression but also played a crucial role in the local economy. This may also lead to loss or lack of knowledge of the rich Nigerian heritage on the part of the younger generation, because these arts and crafts help to remind or teach the young ones about the rich heritage of the Nigerian culture and when these crafts are no longer around, it becomes difficult for them to understand or to even visualize what the culture is or was like before their day.



Nigeria including skill and expertise, market demand, tools and equipment, materials, resources and so on. It also discusses the different types of craftsmanship in Nigeria which include pottery, weaving, bead making, wood carving etc., the significance of crafts and the many benefits of crafts in the Nigerian economy. The paper also highlights the relationship between some identified factors and how they affect the productivity of craftsmen. Recommendations were also made on how craftsmen can increase or enhance their productivity and the benefits they stand to gain when their productivity improves.

Key Terms: Craftsman, Productivity, Craftsmen Productivity, Economy, Eco-Friendly, Craft Industry, Work Environment.

CRAFTSMAN

A craftsman is a skilled manual worker who makes items by hand that may be functional or strictly decorative

PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity is the efficiency and effectiveness with which inputs (land, capital, labour, material, time, energy etc.) are combined and utilized in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner to produce quality goods and services for the satisfaction of human needs.

Productivity is also an attitude of the mind that seeks to continually improve on what already exists, no matter how good it may appear.

It is the mentality of progress and constant adaptation to change. It is also a belief that one can do things better today than yesterday, and better tomorrow than today. (Bamiduro G. 2014).

CRAFTSMEN PRODUCTIVITY

Craftsmen Productivity refers to the efficiency and output of individuals or teams engaged in craftsmanship or skilled manual work. It often involves creating products or performing tasks that require a high level of skill, precision and attention to detail. The productivity of craftsmen in this context may be measured by factors such as the quality and quantity of the crafted items produced within a given timeframe and improving it will optimizing workflows, enhancing skills and utilizing tools or technology that aid in the production process.

ECONOMY

An economy consists of consumers who buy products and services, businesses who employ workers and make goods and services and the government at various levels, who buy products, employ labour, levy taxes and make policies that affect both businesses and the people. Their collective interactions make up the economy. (Future Learn 2012).

ECO-FRIENDLY

Eco-friendly means earth-friendly or not harmful to the environment. It refers to products that help in conserving resources like water and energy. Products that help prevent contributions to air, water and land pollution. (Daniel H. 2023)



CRAFT INDUSTRY.

The craft industry encompasses goods that are handmade by artisans or those skilled in a particular trade, small and big businesses engaged in the craft trade, from art galleries to handmade textiles, to culinary products and the entrepreneurs who operate independently and are not franchised. (Clare Archer 2023).

WORK ENVIRONMENT

A work environment refers to the conditions, atmosphere and surroundings in which people work. It includes physical factors like the office layout, equipment as well as social factors like organizational culture and interpersonal relationships among colleagues.

OVERVIEW OF THE CRAFT INDUSTRY IN NIGERIA

Nigerian artisans create traditional crafts using indigenous materials like wood, pottery, leather, cloth and metal. These crafts serve various purposes like religious, cultural and art purposes and they reflect diverse cultural heritages of different regions in Nigeria. The craft industry is a significant sector of the Nigerian economy, providing employment to millions of people. The industry also generates substantial revenue for the country and contributes to the promotion of Nigerian culture abroad.

There are various types of crafts and they include:-

POTTERY- Pottery is one of the oldest traditional crafts in Nigeria. It involves the shaping of clay into different forms using a potters' wheel and firing it in a kiln. The pottery produced in Nigeria is of high quality and they are used for functional purposes like cooking and storing water. Some of the major potteries producing areas in Nigeria are Shonga in Kwara state, Giri in the federal capital territory and Ladi Kwali Pottery Centre in Abuja.

WOOD CARVING- Nigeria has a long history of wood carving which dates back to pre-colonial times. Wood carving is a significant traditional craft that is used for functional and artistic purposes. Nigerian wood carvers produce things like masks, figurines, drums and furniture. Some of the woodcarving centers are in Oyo and Ondo states.

WEAVING- Weaving is another traditional craft in Nigeria. Nigerians use different materials to weave fabrics including raffia, cotton and silk. The fabrics produced are intricately designed and woven in different patterns. Some of the major weaving centers in Nigeria are Kano, Benue, Ogun and Abia states. (Nicholas Idoko 2023)

SIGNIFICANCE OF CRAFTS IN NIGERIA CULTURE

Traditional Nigerian crafts are significant in Nigerian culture as they reflect Nigeria's cultural heritage. The crafts tell the stories about the Nigerian peoples' way of life, beliefs and customs. They are also used for different purposes like religious, cultural and art purposes. The crafts also serve to connect the present generation to their past, as a reminder of the sacrifices, creativity and ingenuity of their forefathers. Moreover, traditional Nigerian crafts are an essential aspect of Nigeria's cultural heritage. They show the diversity, creativity and ingenuity of the Nigerian people. They are not just for decorative purposes; they also serve functional and symbolic purposes. It is



therefore crucial for Nigeria to value and preserve their traditional crafts as they are part of what makes Nigeria unique and outstanding.

THE BENEFITS OF CRAFTS IN THE NIGERIAN ECONOMY

The rising interest in craft goods comes as people increasingly seek out artistic products. Some of the benefits of craft work in the Nigerian economy are:-

- 1) **JOB CREATION.** There will be more jobs created as more artisans go into craft production thereby reducing unemployment.
- 2) **BOOSTS THE LOCAL ECONOMY-** Crafts tend to be made locally and for local consumption, though there is export of craft work. This is good for the local economy as it will boost it.
- 3) **QUALITY WORK-** Crafts are made to be savored. People who are interested in craft work tend to appreciate high quality work. This reduces the tendency for shoddy jobs and encourages high quality work.
- 4) **VARIETY-** There is variety in art work more than in automated production, so people have a variety of products to choose from.
- 5) **ECO-FRIENDLY-** Craft works are more environmentally friendly as their method of production hardly affects the environment negatively. Moreover there is less waste of energy and resources and more skill in the production of craft works.
- 6) **BEAUTY-** Most craft works depict beauty which appeal to their buyers (Paul Hawken 2023).
- 7) **REVENUE GENERATION-** Many of the craft works are exported to other countries, generating significant revenue for the Nigerian economy.

Moreover, craftsmanship is an essential part of Nigeria's tourism industry, attracting visitors from all over the world who are interested in experiencing the country's rich cultural heritage.

Also, Nigeria's rich history of craftsmanship is a testament to the creativity, skill and ingenuity of its people.

FACTORS AFFECTING CRAFTSMEN PRODUCTIVITY

Craftsmen productivity can be influenced by a variety of factors including:-

- 1) **SKILL AND EXPERIENCE**
Craftsmen with more training and experience tend to be more productive as they have honed their skills over time. When the skill and/or experience is not there, these craftsmen end up doing shoddy jobs which will in turn discourage both current and potential customers.
- 2) **TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT**
The quality and availability of tools and equipments can greatly impact productivity of craftsmen. Well maintained and modern tools can make tasks easier and faster. With better tools and equipment, the craft work becomes less stressful, more fun and those who love to be involved in craftsmanship will no longer be scared away by tedious manual labour.
- 3) **WORK ENVIRONMENT**
A safe, organized and comfortable work environment can boost productivity by reducing distractions and minimizing downtime. Craftsmanship is a kind of job that requires



concentration and attention to detail, so any form of distraction should be avoided at all costs.

4) MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Outside the tools and equipments needed for the craft work, the materials like wood for carved work, clay for pottery and other materials are very essential for the craft industry to thrive. The quality and availability of these materials and resources needed for a project can affect productivity. Delays and shortages can slow down work significantly.

5) TASK COMPLEXITY

More complex projects often take longer time to complete, thereby reducing overall productivity compared to simpler tasks. Though craft works always look complex to the untrained eye, some are not very complex, and when the craftsman acquires more knowledge and skill, even the complex ones become easier.

6) PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Just like in every endeavor, planning plays a very important role in the craft industry. Planning helps you know what needs to be done, when and how it should be done and in the required order of priority. Effective project planning, scheduling and task organization can improve productivity by reducing wasted time and effort.

7) HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The physical and mental health of craftsmen plays a significant role in productivity. Seeing that craftsmanship requires concentration, attention to detail and sometimes, long hours of continuous work, the health of craftsmen should be of utmost importance to the craftsmen and their employees. Fatigue, illness or stress can lead to decreased productivity.

8) WORKLOAD AND WORKFORCE

The number of tasks to complete and the size of workforce can impact productivity. An overworked or over burdened worker soon becomes stressed out and unable to perform optimally, hence an appropriate balance is crucial.

9) EXTERNAL FACTORS

There are some factors affecting craftsmen productivity that may not be under their control. These factors include weather conditions, regulatory requirements and unexpected events like supply chain disruptions, accidents. All these have their effects and impacts on the overall productivity of the craftsman.

10) MOTIVATION AND MORALE

Craftsmen who are motivated and have high morale tend to be more productive. Recognition and positive work culture can contribute to this. The impact of motivation on productivity of workers cannot be over emphasized because a motivated worker can go out of his way to make sure that the work is done properly and on time too.

11) TRAINING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing training and skill development can enhance productivity by keeping craftsmen up to date with the latest techniques and technologies.

12) COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Effective communication and collaboration among team members can reduce misunderstanding and improve overall efficiency.

13) TECHNOLOGY

The adoption of technology such as software for design, project management and automation can streamline processes and increase productivity.

Understanding and addressing these factors can help craftsmen and their employers optimize productivity and deliver high quality work.



14) MARKET DEMAND

The level of demand for handmade crafts can affect craftsmen productivity, as higher demand may require increased output. When the demand is low, craftsmen will not be motivated to produce more, because they will not be making their expected profit due to low demand and patronage which will in turn reduce their output and the desire to even improve on their skills.

15) QUALITY CONTROL

Maintaining strict quality control standards can impact productivity by ensuring that each item produced meets the required quality criteria. Without a strict quality control in place, workers may do shoddy jobs.

HOW TO ENHANCE CRAFTSMEN PRODUCTIVITY

Enhancing craftsmen productivity involves optimizing various factors to improve the efficiency and output of skilled artisans. Below are some of the factors that can enhance craftsmen productivity.

- **SKILL DEVELOPMENT**- Continuous training and skill development programs can improve craftsmen techniques, making them more proficient and productive.
- **TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT**- Providing craftsmen with modern and high quality tools and equipment can significantly speed up the production process and improve the quality of their work.
- **WORKSPACE DESIGN**- A well organized and ergonomic workspace can facilitate smoother workflows, reducing wasted time and efforts.
- **WORKFLOW OPTIMIZATION**- Analyzing and streamlining the production process can eliminate bottlenecks and improve overall efficiency. This helps in making work easier and less stressful.
- **MATERIALS MANAGEMENT**- Efficient handling and storage of materials can prevent delays and reduce material wastage. It also helps in planning, especially inventory planning.
- **QUALITY CONTROL**- Implementing rigorous quality control measures can reduce rework and ensure that products meet or exceed quality standards.
- **TIME MANAGEMENT**- Effective time management techniques, such as setting priorities and deadlines can boost productivity. Prioritizing tasks helps the worker know what to do at each point in time, hence doing the most important things first. It helps reduce time wastage.
- **COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK**- Encouraging collaboration among craftsmen and providing a supportive team environment can lead to collective productivity gains.
- **MARKET RESEARCH**- Understanding market trends and customer preferences can help craftsmen focus on products with higher demand, increasing sales and productivity.
- **TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**- Embracing technology where applicable, such as using software for design or inventory management can streamline processes and boost productivity.



- **INCENTIVES AND RECOGNITION-** Providing incentives, rewards and recognition for high performing craftsmen can motivate them to be more productive.
- **WASTE REDUCTION-** Minimizing material wastage and adopting sustainable practices can improve resource efficiency and reduce costs.
- **CUSTOMER FEEDBACK-** Gathering and incorporating customer feedback can lead to product improvements and increased customer satisfaction, potentially driving higher sales.
- **MARKET EXPANSION-** Exploring new markets or channels of distribution can create opportunities for increased sales and production. This increases profitability and encourages the craftsman to produce more.
- **WORK-LIFE BALANCE-** Ensuring that craftsmen have a healthy work-life balance can help prevent burnout and maintain consistent productivity levels.

Enhancing craftsmen productivity often requires a combination of these factors tailored to the specific craft and business context. Continuous improvement and adaptation to changing market conditions is the key to long term success of craftsmen.

ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THESE FACTORS AND PRODUCTIVITY

The productivity of craftsmen is influenced by a complex interplay of economic, social, labour and technological factors. Below is a brief description of the relationship between these factors and the productivity of craftsmen.

ECONOMIC FACTOR RELATIONSHIP

Market Demand: The demand for crafted products directly affects the work available for craftsmen. Higher demand can lead to increased productivity as craftsmen take on more projects.
Pricing and Income: Craftsmen income is tied to the prices they can charge for their products. Economic conditions that affect pricing can affect their earning and in turn, productivity.
Access to Capital: Craftsmen may require capital for materials, tools and equipment. Economic forces such as interest rate and access to financing can influence their ability to invest in productivity-enhancing resources.

SOCIAL FACTOR RELATIONSHIP

Education and Training: The level of education and training available to craftsmen can significantly impact their skills and consequently, their productivity.
Social support: Craftsmen benefit from a supportive community and network which can lead to collaborations and knowledge sharing, thereby enhancing productivity.
Cultural and Artistic Trends: Societal preferences for certain types of craftsmanship and design styles can influence craftsmen choice of work and marketability.

LABOUR FACTOR RELATIONSHIP

Workforce Skills: The skill level and experience of craftsmen play a vital role in productivity. Highly skilled craftsmen are generally more efficient.
Workforce Size and Composition: The number and mix of craftsmen on a project can affect productivity. Efficient teamwork and coordination are essential.



Work Conditions: Factors like working hours, safety and labour regulations can influence craftsmen productivity and well-being.

TECHNOLOGICAL FACTOR RELATIONSHIP

Tools and Equipment: The availability and quality of tools and equipment can greatly affect craftsmen productivity. Modern efficient tools can streamline processes.

Automation and Innovation: technological advancements in crafting processes can lead to increased productivity through automation and improved techniques.

Digital Presence: Craftsmen's online presence and e-commerce capabilities can broaden their market reach and in turn, their productivity.

In summary, the productivity of craftsmen is influenced by a complex interplay of economic conditions, societal factors, labour-related variables and technological advancements. The specific impact of these factors can vary depending on the type of craftsmanship and the local context in which craftsmen operate. Adaptation to changing conditions and continuous skill development are essential for craftsmen to enhance their productivity in a dynamic environment.

CURRENT PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL OF CRAFTSMEN IN NIGERIA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The productivity of craftsmen in Nigeria is currently very low and this is as a result of some of the factors mentioned above. This low level of productivity has consequences and implications to the craftsmen themselves and to the Nigerian economy as a whole.

A low level of craftsmen productivity can result to a decreased income for the craftsmen, job dissatisfaction and reduced motivation. All these can also lead to decline in the overall quality of craftsmanship, potentially leading to loss of competitive advantage in the global market. On a broader scale, a drop in craftsmen productivity can contribute to economic slowdown, reduced competitiveness and hindered economic growth, potentially affecting various industries and overall national development.

CONCLUSION

Overall, exploring the rich history of craftsmanship in Nigeria is crucial for understanding the country's cultural heritage and identity. Continuing to preserve Nigerian craftsmanship not only helps to sustain culture, but also provides economic opportunities for artisans and promotes Nigeria's unique creative industries. It is essential therefore, to support local artisans, promote traditional crafts and create educational programmes to pass on skills for preserving Nigerian craftsmanship. Recognizing and celebrating skills and craftsmanship passed down through generations is vital for Nigeria's rich heritage. In so doing, we can honor Nigeria's history and create a brighter future for its artisans and creative industries.

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