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Evaluating digital marketing as a tool for moonlighting among public servants in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The Nigerian economic situation has affected the people's job preferences badly, and this situation necessitated their engagement in the moonlighting practice. Despite efforts by the government to alleviate poverty, which is ravaging the people, it is becoming alarming that individuals who are earning decent income have embraced moonlighting. The study examined the effect of small and medium enterprises moonlighting on the service delivery of employees in Kwara State public service. A survey research design was used, while the target population is 844, from which a sample size of 271 was obtained through the Taro Yamane (1967) formula. A multistage sampling technique was adopted, and a primary source was used to collect data with the aid of a well-structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale that consists of five items. Data were analyzed using the generalized linear model (GLM) and the business predictive model (BPM). On the basis of the individual statistical significance of the variables as indicated by the p-values in the model, all dimensions of SMEs passed their test of significance at 5% levels with respect to the task accomplishment ($p<0.05$) and service delivery ($p<0.05$) of employees involved in SMEs moonlighting. Thus, efficiency is greatly lost for moonlighters engaged in small and medium enterprises. About 44.8% reduction in task accomplishment ($\beta=0.448$, $t_{0.05}>1.96$). The study concluded that moonlighters who engaged in SMEs activities impacted significant improvements in employee efficiency.

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INTRODUCTION

Moonlighting is a form of double-job holding and has been an old human resource practice in both developed and developing countries. There is no doubting the fact that many employees engage in moonlighting for pecuniary reasons; however, non-pecuniary priorities may arise from the modern lifestyle of the people. Recently, digital moonlighting practice has increased and has since become an important human resource phenomenon. This is so because of the work-life balance issues that are developing in the entrepreneurship sector (Ashwini et al., 2023).

The development of digitalization and the rise in the shadow economy have created a situation where conventional employment arrangements are being compromised while contemporary jobs, including freelancing, online sales, and point-of terminals (POS), have grown to become alternative sources of income for people who have primary jobs (Nwanaka & Samuel, 2011). Increasing instability in the job market is believed to motivate employees to edging against uncertainties and get a stable source of income through modern employment opportunities (Pouliakas & Conen, 2023). Smart crowd digital platform is one of the operating strategies of moonlighting, wherein employees strive to maintain employment security as well as financial security (Fountain, 2024; Seema et al., 2021). The development of digitalization, therefore, has engendered the mushrooming of various online sales platforms that provide opportunities for multiple jobs. This is due to the nature of the flexibility of the jobs that they created, and most significant is the crowdwork

and other similar types of rewards attached to their kind of work (Pouliakas & Conen, 2023). Moonlighting practice started with the working class, followed by partial moonlighting, and later graduated to full-time moonlighting depending on the person's motive (Auray et al., 2021; Folorunso & Adewale, 2022; Tabassum & Dilshad, 2022). Partial moonlighting occurs when a few hours are spent on the additional job when an employee has left the primary job. However, when such an individual increases the moonlighting time, then his action can be converted into half moonlighting. This means that the employee spends about 50 percent of his working hours on the secondary job. Lastly, an individual can make a final call to shift his career status from primary to secondary, but dedicate all his working hours to the secondary job while maintaining the primary job and consider it a shock absorber in case the secondary job fails to deliver the desired result (Sangwan, 2014). It was also noted that the nature of moonlighting tends towards over engagements of employees in movement from one job place to another, working in various places for relatively short periods of time. This practice is commonly referred to as peripatetic activity in the private and public sectors.

Moonlighting has its monetary benefits, networking, and job enrichment. It also has negative consequences, which include excessive work load, physical stress, and poor service delivery. Amini-Philips (2020) observed that side-hustle practice has its attendant effect on the primary job, and this effect is negative in nature and becomes obvious when performance is below the set standard of the organization. It is against this background that the present study examined digital moonlighting and its impact on service delivery among employees in Kwara State public service.

The abundant natural resources, specifically oil and gas, that are the mainstay of sustaining Nigeria as a nation, have not been able to sustain the individual employees who are on the payroll of the government. Ironically and unfortunately, employees in the present-day dispensation and who are in permanent and pensionable appointments in public service are presented with little or no option but to engage in moonlight practices, in view of labor market fluctuations (Ashwini et al., 2023).

Despite the huge chunk of staff salaries represented on the recurrent expenditure items of the government's budget and the first-line charge on a monthly basis, many workers on the negotiated minimum wage, including those with high incomes, can no longer sustain themselves and are therefore engaged in one form of moonlighting or another to augment their living standard. Hence, moonlighting becomes a necessity for public and private employees to embrace.

As the economic crisis worsens, governments adopt various economic and administrative measures to edge against the falling gross domestic product (GDP). Rising prices of goods and services, shortages of foods arising from insurgency and flooding, and devaluation of the naira account for the major external factors responsible for why the salaries of public servants were reduced to mere pittances and, hence, why the monthly salaries of public servants cannot sustain them any longer. It is equally important to know that the Kwara State government has consistently been faced with the problem of a huge wage bill, which is believed to constitute about 81.3% of its monthly allocation from the federal government and for which there is no evidence of productivity considering the volume of labor in the state. Similarly, public service in Nigeria is characterized by various challenges, prominent among which is the lack of integrity of work, the inability to meet service deadlines, and instilling productivity in the form of effective service delivery (Eneiga, 2023).

However, the World Bank (2022) reported that the public service in developing countries is very important to socio-economic and political developments. Unfortunately, there is strong evidence to show that employee service delivery in Africa is detriorating (Oyelaran-Oyeyinka & Lal, 2016). This development cannot be separated from the consequences to which moonlighting has facilitated. Therefore, the study seeks to address the moderating effect of moonlighting between digital marketing (freelancing, POS, and online sales) and the service delivery of employees in Kwara State Public Service.

A review of various studies on entrepreneurial motivation for moonlighting showed that different industries need an extensive moonlighting practice before initiating their own ventures in order to gain the requisite risk-taking strategy necessary for handling skills and expertise. All the studies reviewed on organizational commitment and moonlighting practices did not suggest that if organizations do not make provisions for appropriate retention of moonlighters in digital marketing, employers will lose the employees' service delivery both in terms of customer satisfaction and organization productivity, irrespective of employees' demographic backgrounds and tendency to hold moonlighting.

This study is anchored on innovation theory. The spillover theory of entrepreneurship, the new knowledge outcome in business opportunities, and the ability of entrepreneurs to exploit the available opportunities enable the entrepreneur to convert the new knowledge into innovative products. This theory provides evidence that entrepreneurship moderates the transformation of new knowledge into innovations. However, the innovative region with a higher level of entrepreneurship is believed to perform economically better on the job. Entrepreneurship is a catalyst for the disruption of the static circular flow of the economy and should therefore initiate and sustain the process of growth and development (Hofmann, 2019). An entrepreneur needs to embark on a new combination of factors of production that can move the economy to a

higher level of development (Pegoraro et al., 2022). Moreover, this innovation is believed to be an important tool of digital marketing since it is viewed as a creative activity. However, relating this theory of innovation to moonlighting practices, it is obvious that some public servants engage in digital moonlighting to harness the benefits associated with digital marketing, one of which is innovation. Digital marketing variables are associated with moonlighting and are therefore adopted as the independent variable of the study (Block & Landgraf, 2016).

The study examined the effect of small and medium enterprises moonlighting on the service delivery of employees in Kwara State public service. The research attempts to give a broader insight into the topic discussed and hopefully becomes a reference for future relevant research.

METHOD

The study used the survey design method and included 8,625 participants. The population figure comprises all the employees in the main stream of Kwara State Civil Service (KWCSC) deployed to all 22 ministries, whose staff draw their salaries directly from the Federal Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) of the Kwara State Government. The population is made up of senior officers who are involved in the performance appraisal of all the employees in the 22 ministries and were noted for engaging in moonlighting activities. The Taro Yamane (1967) sample size formula was used to obtain 382 public servants from the employment database of the Kwara State Government. Also, the use of nonprobability sampling techniques (i.e., purposive sampling) was employed. The sampling technique specifically uses homogenous purposive sampling of senior staff from grades 12 and above that share the same set of characteristics in rank and by gender. This helps to filter out irrelevant responses that do not fit into the context of the study. Primary data was used through the administration of a closed-ended and well-structured questionnaire from selected employees, copies of which were sent to the research assistant handling dispatch schedules in the office of the Head of Service in the 22 Ministries. Meanwhile, freelancers, online marketers, and POS were the three (3) dimensions used for measuring the moonlight digital marketers adapted for the study. Service delivery is measured through employee efficiency on a five-point Likert scale. The total number of items in the study constructs is twelve. The nexus between digital moonlighting and employee service delivery was analyzed using multiple regression and macroprocess statistical techniques with the aid of SPSS. Also, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was incorporated into the model to investigate whether the variables used were valid. The model is specified as follows:

$SRVD = f(freelancing, online\ sale, POS)$.....(i)

$Y=\beta_0+\beta_1X_1+\beta_2X_2+\beta_3X_3+\varepsilon_0$ ..... (ii)

Where,

Y = SRVD (subjective measure through "service quality")

β_0 = Constant/the intercept point of the regression line and the y-axis

β_1- β_3= the slope/gradient of the regression line;

X_1 = freelancing= (Measure through "increase digital platform")

X_2 =online sale= (measure through "internet service")

X_3 = POS= (Measure through "secured transaction")

ε_0 = stochastic term (that revealed the strength of $\beta_1X_1+ \ldots+\beta_3X_3$;if $\varepsilon_0$is low, this means that the number of unexplained factors is low, and the residual R and R^2 will also be high and vice versa.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Questionnaire Distribution Results

Number of Distributed Questionnaires	Number of Completed Ones	Number of Incomplete Ones	Response Rate
382	337	45	88.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2. Generalized ANOVA Tests Between Direct Effects of Digital Marketing and Service Delivery

Source	Type III Total Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	123.201[a]	3	41.067	224.410	.001
Freelancing	10.948	1	10.948	59.825	.000
Online Sale	13.072	1	13.072	71.432	.000
P.O.S	7.553	1	7.553	41.273	.003
Error	60.964	334	.183		
Total	92.537	337			
Corrected Total	30.664	334			

a. R Squared = .495 (Adjusted R Squared = .498)
b. Dependent variable: Service Delivery

Source: SPSS Computation (2024)

The underneath values of R2 = 0.495 in Table 2 indicate the explained variation of dimensions of digital marketing affecting employee service delivery in the model. The dimensions of digital marketing include freelancing, online sales, and POS. The R squared =.495, is a coefficient of determination for the explained variance of 49.5% increase in service delivery that was jointly caused by a unit increase in any of the dimensions of digital marketing activities in the selected area, and that the remaining 50.5% was accounted for by other unexplained factors that this econometric model failed to uncover. Thus, the relationship between digital marketing and service delivery exists at 5%. This is specified in the p-values<0.05, which fall in the rejection region of the Fisher-test ($F_{0.05}$=224.410 >3.84), and by implication, there is a high level of significance between digital marketing and service delivery at a 95% confidence level.

Table 2. Hierarchical Linear Regression Model HLM) Showing Direct Effect of Digital Marketing and Employee Service Delivery

Parameters	B	Std. Error	T	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	*Upper Bound*
Intercept	-.319	.125	-2.552	.001	-3.248	1.344
Freelancing	.479	.077	6.221	.000	.246	10.087
Online Sale	.333	.051	6.529	.000	.775	9.321
P.O.S	.606	.035	17.314	.003	.534	.645

Dependent variable: Service Delivery

Source: SPSS Computation (2024)

The regression parameters in Table 3 show the effect of digital marketing on service delivery using multiple regression and a t-test at the 5% level, and it was found that freelancing (β = 0.606; p = 0.003<0.05) is most contributing to service delivery at the 95% confidence level. This means that a 1% increase in P.O.S. activities causes about a 60.6% increase in employee service delivery. This was followed by freelancing (β=0.479; p=0.000<0.05) and online sales (β=0.333; p=0.000<0.05), in that order. However, the vector error correction (intercept, c = -0.195) was equally significant but with a negative (-) sign, which signifies a necessary condition for all the variables to be co-integrated. That is, if peradventure digital marketing = 0, i.e., marketing activities that include freelancing, online sales, and POS are collectively ignored in a selected area, service delivery will reduce significantly by 31.9%, which means that digital marketing predicts service delivery with modest improvement at the 5% level of significance (t =--2.552<-1.64; p = 0.001<0.05). Therefore, the effect of digital marketing should be retained for the model improvement on service delivery. Hence, the direct effect of digital marketing on service delivery is supported at the 5% level of significance. However, the moderate effect of moonlighting changes the perception of digital marketing and service delivery, as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3. The Moderate Effect of Moonlighting Changes the Perception of Digital Marketing and Service Delivery

Direct effect	**B**	**Std. Error**	**T**		**Sig.**
$FL \rightarrow SRVD$	.479	.077	6.221		.000
$OS \rightarrow SRVD$	.333	.051	6.529		.000
$POS \rightarrow SRVD$	.606	.035	17.314		.003
Moonlight → SRVD, DM (Controlled)	.689	.044	15.659		.000
Moderating effect and significance using the normal distribution					
	B	***Std. Error***	***LL95CI***	***UL95CI***	***Z***
Sobel	.3300	.0357	.1781	.3956	9.244
	.2294	.0691	.1333	.3192	3.320
	.4175	.0538	.2315	.4899	7.760
Bootstrap results for Moderating effects					
	Mean	***Std. Error***	***LL95CI***	***UL95CI***	***Sig.***
Effect	.3411	.0359	.1688	.3895	.000
	.2354	.0694	.1320	.3231	.000
	.4210	.0541	.2308	.4857	.000

Note. FL = Freelancing; OS = Online Sale; POS= Point of Sale Terminal; DM=Digital Marketing; SRVD=Service Delivery
N = 337; Number of Bootstrap Resamples = 5000; LL = Lower Limit, CI = Confidence Interval; UL = Upper Limit; β = Unstandardized Coefficient.

Source: Macro PROCESS & SPSS Computation (2024)

Hayes (2022) suggestions are used to examine the moderating effects of moonlighting on digital marketing (DM) and service delivery (SRVD). The moderating effect is authenticated by applying the Sobel test using the PROCESS macro for SPSS. As seen in Table 4, the *z*-values are 9.244, 3.320, and 7.760, and the moderating effect values are 0.3411, 0.2354, and 0.4210, indicating that the moderate effect of moonlighters exists. Bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) were examined in order to truly verify the results of the moderating effect using the Sobel test at 95% CI, which reached significant levels ($p < 0.05$). Hence, both the direct and moderate effects of moonlighting are significant at the 5% level. The moderating effect of digital moonlighters on service delivery was 0.689, which provides support for the hypothesis. Accordingly, moonlighting is predicted to moderatethe relationship between digital marketing and service delivery. The direct effect of digital marketing on service delivery is compared with the moderating effect between them. In Table 4, Moonlighters is included in the regression analysis between digital marketing and service delivery. The results are significant (β_1 = 0.3411; β_2 =0.2354; β_3 =0.4210; $p < 0.05$), thus service delivery decreased, which implies that there was only a partial moderating effect. Similarly, it is noticeable that the effect of all variables has a t-statistic greater than the t-table (1.645), with a significance value (*p*-values) smaller than 0.05. Therefore, this model provides support for the alternate hypothesis by demonstrating that digital moonlighters have a significant effect on service delivery at a 95% confidence level. This result aligns with previous works by Ashwini et al. (2023).

CONCLUSION

The study suggests that moonlighting practices are prevalent among digital marketers in Nigeria, negatively impacting the relationship between digital marketing and service delivery. The study found that a decrease in service delivery is often interpreted as authentic performances, and that a partial moderation of moonlighting has a strong negative effect on service delivery. The study recommends organizations formulate robust policies to manage ethical concerns and ensure a win-win situation for both employees and employers. Employers should be cautious about recruiting a large number of moonlighters in digital marketing to avoid jeopardizing service delivery and customer satisfaction on virtual platforms.

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