

Employability Skills and Career Success of Bank Managers in Rivers State, Nigeria

Alagbogu Ezinwanne Martins¹ and B. Chima Onuoha²

¹Doctoral Student, Department of Management, University of Port Harcourt

²Professor of Management, Department of Management, University of Port Harcourt

Abstract: *The aim of this study is to ascertain the relationship between employability skills and career success of bank managers in Rivers State. The study used a survey design and a total of one hundred and sixty (160) managers of different deposit money banks were covered. The study adopted a convenience sampling method and copies of questionnaire were used in data collection. The Spearman Rank Order was used to analyze and test the formulated hypotheses. From the results generated, it showed that there exist a significant and positive correlation between the dimensions of employability skills (problem solving skills and leadership skills) and the measures of career success (career adaptability and career resilience). In conclusion, employability skills in the areas of problem-solving and leadership are crucial to the career success of deposit money bank managers. We therefore recommend that in order to enable staff members to achieve career adaptability, management teams should regularly implement training programs to enhance their staff members' leadership abilities.*

Keywords: *Problem Solving Skills, Leadership Skills, Career Adaptability, Career Resilience.*

1.0 Introduction

In the age of technological upheaval and globalisation, employability skills are absolutely essential. Employers frequently express concern about the workers' lack of skills (Mourshed, Farrell, & Barton, 2013). There are over 75 million young people without jobs in emerging nations, and in most countries, youth unemployment rates are 2 to 4 times higher than adults. Additionally, in order to help them become productive and employable by the industry, education providers must provide them with information and abilities, either soft or hard talents, relevant to the world of work. Employers need candidates with a variety of talents, including technical knowledge, cooperation, problem-solving aptitude, and critical thinking, in addition to technical proficiency. As a result, more than 80% of job searchers were unsuccessful in finding employment (World B. Group 2015). More than 50% of stakeholders were unable to match job seekers' competencies to the openings they announced.

Career flexibility is becoming a requirement for employment, notably in the banking business, as a result of the responsibility of ensuring that bank personnel are properly managed to achieve optimal performance. Similar to Coetzee and Potgieter (2014), who held that people who have a flexible career and a favourable view of their career opportunities and tend to be committed to their jobs, Seibert, Kraimer, and Heslin (2016) noted that career adaptability is the ability to steadily make advancement concerning a certain career goals. Career adaptability, according to

Kwon (2019), demonstrates a person's capacity to change how they think, act, and feel in response to uncertainty. Employable skills are now a crucial component for employees in the banking sector because they are available for individuals who are qualified to meet job and industry demands in competitive industries like the banking sector. Rehman and Mehmood (2014) observed that unique abilities are needed to fit into shifting employment conditions because there is a risk that changes in the organization's structure and the nature of the job would occur. It is evident that banks in Nigeria have client losses, which have a negative impact on profitability, as a result of their staff members' poor adaptation traits. When in contrast to other developed countries' banks, Nigerian banks are having more trouble having the necessary capacity to handle the strain and changes brought on by technological advancements and changing customer demands in the banking industry. Many studies have ascribed these to banks excellent employability skills, notably it's problem solving skills, leadership skills, adaptability skills which will eventually lead to career adaptability of the firm (Ebere, & Onuoha, 2022; Koe, 2022; Tandiyuk, Susanto, & Bellani, 2022). In all this studies, it is discovered that none existed on employability skills and career success. Hence, this is our existing knowledge gap and hence forms our point of departure.

Problem Statement

The high rate of unemployment is sometimes attributed to the educational system's failure to produce graduates who are backed by employability skills and high levels of competitiveness. The reason for rising unemployment among job seekers is a lack of knowledge. If a job seeker's lack of abilities is tied to the educational system, the issue of education quality is also involved. Due to the issues, financial institutions must train their staff members so that they possess both technical and employable abilities. The largest issue facing banks today is the overabundance of employees that have little to no passive involvement in banking and are only employed for employment purposes. Over time, their enthusiasm for the job wanes.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to ascertain the empirical relationship between employability skills and career success of bank managers in Rivers State. However, the specific objectives are to;

- i. Learn the relationship between problem solving skills and career success of bank managers in Rivers State
- ii. Determine the relationship between leadership skills and career success of bank managers in Rivers State

Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions;

- i. To what extent does a problem solving skill enhance career success of bank managers in Rivers State?
- ii. To what extent does a leadership skill enhance career success of bank managers in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between problem solving skills and career adaptability of bank managers in Rivers State

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between problem solving skills and career resilience of bank managers in Rivers State

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between leadership skills and career adaptability of bank managers in Rivers State

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between leadership skills and career resilience of bank managers in Rivers State

2.0 Review of Related Literature

Theory underpinning this study is the Fit Theory which describes the compatibility of individuals with particular organizational contexts (Bretz and Judge, 1994). It is known as fit theory. Researchers and practitioners are paying close attention to fit theory to better understand employees' attitudes and behaviours (Chuang et al., 2005). The investigation into whether it mediates the link between employability skills and career success is the main subject of this study. According to Edwards (1991), person-job fit is the alignment of a person's skills with the requirements of a work or between their wants and what a job offers. This is similar to complimentary fit (Boon et al., 2011). This study fills the vacuum in the literature by applying fit theory, particularly with an emphasis on person-job fit.

Operational framework

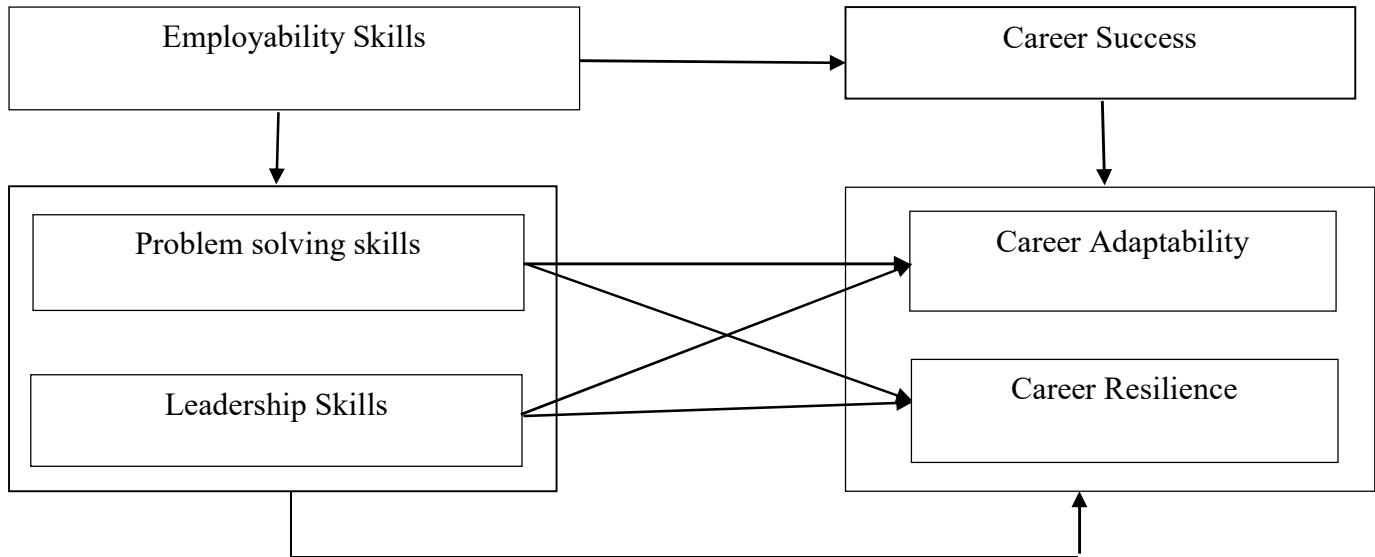


Fig. 1.1 Operational Framework of employability skills and career success

Source: Adapted from Orji (2013); Singh and Singh (2008)

Concept of Employability Skills

Singh and Singh (2008) contended that employability skills are not restricted to a specific job, but they are skills which cut horizontally across various industries and cut vertically across job from the lowest level to chief executive level. Buntat, Jabor, Saud, Mansor and Mustaffa (2013) posited that employability skills are the basic skills relevant in getting a job, keeping it and doing well in the given job. Employability skills are the character traits that make it easier for people to get work and support their careers. technical proficiency, higher level cognitive capacity, interpersonal and social skills, general skills, and self-perceived employability skills are all included in this set of abilities needed to accomplish a specific profession. People's career progress may be hampered by a lack of employability skills, which can also lead to unemployment. In addition to technical skills, individuals require a combination of employability skills to succeed in their careers. It is crucial that people possess those abilities. Technology advancement could affect the necessary employability abilities. People must therefore update their abilities in line with workplace requirements if they want to participate in their desired field of employment or business (Pengnate, 2018; Wagaskar et. al 2017; Singh, & Singh, 2017; Misra, & Khurana, 2017). Employability abilities are non-technical abilities required to enter the workforce, to stay afloat and develop a career at work or for professional advancement in a new place of employment (Munadi et. al. 2018). Following a review of the literature, authors discovered that the most frequently studied

employability abilities and characteristics are critical thinking, teamwork, communication, information technology (IT), innovation, interpersonal, leadership, and self-management (Osmani et al., 2015; Harris and King, 2015). Abas-Mastura et al. (2016) state that employability skills are correlated with people who should exhibit positive traits including a high sense of self, a strong sense of task tenacity, productive, creative, and competitive. There has been an endless debate in the literature about which model ensures the achievement of ideal employability level and which skills are preferable by employers.

Problem Solving Skill

Problem solving skills according to Wohamed, Omar and Romli (2010) is one of the main skills needed by industry in this era of globalization. The authors argued that the problem solving skill is pivotal considering the changes in the workplace as a result of changes in technological, economic and organizational changes. The ability to resolve an ill-structured or complex work problem in the organization is a distinct skill required by a highly performing organization (Wohamed et al, 2010). When organizations are faced with ill-structured problem, such problems are often not well known neither is there any lay-down solution to such problems. When such problem persists for a long period, such could truncate the success of the firm. Abosede and Adesanya (2017) emphasized that resolving issues is the gradual process of actualizing a goal, however, the path towards achieving it is often uncertain. Khan, Hafewez and Saeed (2012) remarked that problems occur in organization on daily basis, but a problem solving skill is required to properly provide solution to the problem. Individuals that have problems solving skills are rare and employer's ability to identify them and attract them to organization can help enhance the fortune of the firm.

Leadership Skills

Leadership skills refer to the ability to lead and coach others. It is important for employers when select fresh graduates (Finch et al., 2013). Leadership skills help drive others to achieve firms and personal success. Aibieye (2014) maintained that leadership skills are a form of leadership behaviour which is been manifested by the leader in the workplace. The author posited that leadership skills covers; technical skills, human skills, conceptual skills. Leadership skill enable an individual to make decisions effectively that affect the total organizations. Johnson (2008) argued that effective leaders in the workplace are effective owing to the fact that they offer a metal model which provides a valid way of handling the complex issues in the organizations. Leadership skills are indisputable because they play a vital role in ensuring the coordination of effort to tackle the challenges of a rapid changing business world (Pricellas, Niez, Nierra & Tubis, 2016).

Career Success

Career success is defined as the accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes over time (Arthur et al., 2005). According to theory, there are two types of career success: subjective and objective (Spurk, Hirschi, & Dries, 2018). Heslin (2005), subjective career success is the self-assessment of one's career development and emotions of fulfilment and achievement. According

to Arthur et al. (2005), objective professional success refers to measurable and verifiable markers of a person's career such as salary, bureaucratic position, promotions, and prestige. Additionally, a recent analysis of theoretical perspectives on professional success demonstrated that past career success can assist people in achieving future career goals (Spurk et al., 2018). More precisely, mid-level career achievement can serve as an indication of worth to others and positively affect how young employees are treated by their environment, thus enhancing their employability as a consequence of prior career success experiences (Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, & Westman, 2018). Actually, compared to persons who are less successful, successful people frequently acquire novel possibilities for job advancement (Singh, Ragins, & Tharenou, 2009). Young professionals' opinions of potential work chances are therefore likely to be influenced by the subjective and objective career success they have earned thus far.

Career Adaptability

According to Bimrose and Hearne (2012), career adaptability can be defined as the readiness to adjust or cope with the predictable tasks of preparing for and participating in the work role, as well as the unprecedented adjustments brought about by changes in the firm's working conditions. Career adaptability, according to Seibert, Kraimer, and Heslin (2016), is the process of reformulating objectives and tactics for adapting to or deal with career realities. According to Akca, Ozer, and Kakycioglu (2018), career adaptability is a person's ability to deal with job challenges when switching jobs. According to Yousefi et al. (2011), career adaptability is a psychological structure that aids in the acquisition of skills and readiness for an individual's current and future occupational responsibilities, changes in working conditions, or overcoming personal stress. According to Savickas and Porfeli (2013), an individual's strategies and resources for enhancing career adaptability and overcoming events that may occur while pursuing a career goal include trust, curiosity, anxiety, and control.

Career Resilience

A person's ability to deal with a stressful situation is what is meant by the term resilience. Organizational resilience provides a deeper comprehension of the concept of employee resilience (Naswall et al., 2013). The notion of organisational resilience is a result of an organization's total awareness of circumstance, control of cardinal weaknesses, and adaptive capacity in a multifaceted, changing, and linked environment (McManus et al., 2008). Nevertheless, Naswall et al. (2013), Resilience in the workplace is defined as an employee's capacity, encouraged and supported by the organisation, utilizing resources to continuously adapt and thrive at work, especially if/when faced with trying conditions. According to Wagnild and Young's (1993) research, the original theory held that employee resilience is a fixed behavioral component. Luthans (2002) argued that employee resilience is a "developable capacity" in contrast to this prevalent notion.

Relationship between Employability Skills and Career Success

In organizations, employees encounter challenges in the form of problems that could likely thwart or disrupt an individual career success. However, the ability to tackle such problems through problem solving skills may thus help to enhance the career adaptability of such employees. In

alignment with the above Kim, Choi, Sung and Park (2018) noted that problem solving skills of an individual is a proven key factor in achieving personal career success. The authors argued that problem solving skills drives sustainable growth, industry development and innovation. Problem solving skills facilitates learning ability in the workplace (Rausch, 2013). Abosede and Adasanya (2017) observed that job performance of employees can be enhanced through problem solving skills. An effective leader is dedicated, has high relational and communication skills, achieve superior goal and have a global view of handling issues (Hopkins, O'Neil & Bilimoria, 2006). Leadership skills enable one to respond to situations and exhibit behaviour that contribute immensely to their career roles (Sidiropoulous-Dimakakou, Argyropoulou, Drosos, Kaliris & Mikedaki, 2015). Career adaptability is a critical factor towards achieving career success. Meeks found that soft skills are essential in achieving success in organization. Leadership skills covered numerous soft skills which may be relevant in boosting career adaptability of individuals.

Abbasi et. al. (2018) analyzed the perception of the banking industry's managers regarding employability skills and showed a gap between the skills possessed by the graduates and the skills demanded by bank officials. The gaps were found significant in critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, analytical skills, interpersonal skills, and numeracy skills, etc. Preez et al. (2019) identified those employability skills in great demand by the banks and other consumer service sectors. The study results showed differences in the views of employers and freshly graduated employees in terms of various employability skills such as time management skills, communication skills, and problem-solving skills.

3.0 Methodology

The study used a survey design, which made it possible to collect data from the study's target population within a set amount of time. A total of one hundred and sixty (160) managers of different deposit money banks were covered. The study adopted a convenience sampling method and copies of questionnaire were used in data collection. The content and face validity were used and the Crombach alpha was used in examining the reliability of the instrument. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Co-efficient was used to analyze and test the formulated hypotheses.

4.0 Results

Problem solving skills and dimensions of Career Succ

| | | Problem solving skills | career adaptability | career resilience |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Problem solving skills | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .873** | .894** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 160 | 160 | 160 |
| career adaptability | Correlation Coefficient | .873** | 1.000 | .792** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . | .000 |
| | N | 160 | 160 | 160 |
| career resilience | Correlation Coefficient | .894** | .792** | 1.000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | . |
| | N | 160 | 160 | 160 |

The result shows that Problem solving skills has a strong significant relationship and positively correlates with career adaptability at a Rho = 0.873 and a Pv = 0.000 and Problem solving skills further contributes strong and positive correlation towards career resilience at a Rho = 0.894 and a Pv = 0.000. The result presents Problem solving skills as having a significant and positive impact on the two measures of career success on bank managers ability to maintain and keep its business flowing. Therefore, we reject null hypotheses one and two relating to Problem solving skills and career adaptability and career resilience, because the Pv (0.000) < 0.05 level of significance.

Leadership Skills and Career Success

H03: There is no significant relationship between leadership skills and career adaptability of bank managers in Rivers State

H04: There is no significant relationship between leadership skills and career resilience of bank managers in Rivers State

| | | | leadership skills | career adaptability | career resilience |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Spearman's rho | leadership skills | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .861** | .821** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 | .000 |
| | | N | 160 | 160 | 160 |
| | career adaptability | Correlation Coefficient | .861** | 1.000 | .821** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . | .000 |
| | | N | 160 | 160 | 160 |
| | career resilience | Correlation Coefficient | .787** | .821** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | . |
| | | N | 160 | 160 | 160 |

The result shows that leadership skills has a strong significant relationship and positively correlates with career adaptability at a Rho = 0.861 and a Pv = 0.000 and leadership skills further contributes strong and positive correlation towards ccareer resilience at a Rho = 0.821 and a Pv = 0.000. The result presents leadership skills as having a significant and positive impact on the two measures of career success and as such contributing significantly towards the bank managers ability to maintain and keep its business flowing. Therefore, we reject null hypotheses one and two relating to leadership skills and career adaptability and career resilience, because the Pv (0.000) <0.05 level of significance.

Discussion of Findings

From the results generated via all the hypotheses, it showed that there exist a significant and positive correlation between the variables under study since their correlations from the SPSS table were *0.873, *0.894, *0.861, *0.821. From the result, it was apparent that all the dimensions of employability skills had positive correlation with career success of bank managers in Rivers State. The first and second hypothesis indicated that problem solving skills has a positive linear notable correlation with career success based on the P-value less than 0.05 (P-value = 0.000 <0.05) which implies that both variables have direct positive relationship which moves in the same positive

direction. The third and fourth hypothesis showed that leadership skills has a positive linear notable correlation with career success based on the P-value less than 0.05 (P-value = 0.000 <0.05) which implies that both variables have direct positive relationship which moves in the same positive direction. Similarly, the positive correlation is attuned with the findings of previous studies like Abbasi et. al. (2018); Preez et al. (2019); Abosede and Adasanya (2017).

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, employability skills in the areas of problem-solving and leadership are crucial to the career success of deposit money bank managers. Therefore, in accordance with the finding and conclusion, the following suggestions are made:

- i. For career success, management teams should prioritize problem-solving skills.
- ii. The bank managers should continuousness update their skills so as to remain relevant and employable in the global business domain.
- iii. In order to enable staff members to achieve career adaptability, management teams should regularly implement training programs to enhance their staff members' leadership abilities.
- iv. Bank managers with leadership skills are bound to be more successful in their careers than those lacking leadership skill, hence banks management should be for those with better leadership skills.

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