

# Effect of Employee Competencies on Competitiveness of Selected Deposit Money Banks in Makurdi-Benue State

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**Abstract:** *This study examined the effect of employee competencies on competitiveness of money deposit banks in Makurdi-Benue State. The specific objectives formulated were to: examine the effect of employees' experience on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks and to determine the effect of employees' commitment on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis. In pursuit of the objectives, the study utilized the survey research design, with questionnaire as instrument for data collection using stratified sampling method. The deposit money banks selected for this study had a population of 231 staff upon which a sample size of 146 was determined using the formula by Taro Yamane. Data were collected using questionnaire, and thereafter they were analyzed using descriptive statistics consisting of frequencies and percentage; while multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Findings of the study indicated that employee experience had significant/ positive effect on competitiveness ( $P=0.004$ ,  $t=7.990$ ,  $Beta=0.881$ ) and employee commitment had significant/ positive effect on competitiveness ( $P=0.003$ ,  $t=6.908$ ,  $Beta=0.807$ ) in deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that employee competencies practices can be employed to achieve better competitiveness in the deposit money banks. The study recommended amongst others that management of deposit money banks should embrace and emphasize a more responsive posture of attracting experienced employees, as it will enhance their business understanding of the environment towards delivering quality services.*

**Keywords:** *Employment Protection Laws, Employee Performance, Job Security, Dispute Resolution, Deposit Money Banks.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Organizations around the world depend intensely on knowledge, skill, capabilities and different attributes of their workers, which are the hallmark of employee competencies, for accomplishing their objectives. An enabled workforce that has the applicable learning, aptitudes and abilities can deliver magnificent organizational outcomes (Ong'ango, 2019). In our increasingly dynamic global business environment, competencies have emerged as one of the fastest routes/platforms for operating in new markets, and attracting new resources, including human. It is imperative for any organization to align its employees' behavior to its strategic objectives for sustained success. The company's long-term viability is dependent on its ability to remain competitive. Hence, competencies become an imperative for competitiveness in organizations (Katuse and Gaur, 2020; Igudia, 2021; Mebom and Amaehule, 2022; Obaro *et al.*, 2023).

Recent changes in economic, political and social transformation have resulted to deposit money banks in Nigeria emphasizing on employee competence to achieve set goals and objectives. Mebom and Amaehule (2022) averred that the banking industry requires quality and competent human resources to steer its day to day operations in order to achieve the organization's objective

because the availability of competent and efficient labour force does not happen by gambling but through an articulated human resources management practices. As a result, Hasan and Lukman (2020) averred that deposit money banks have implemented training and development programs, restructuring, regulatory and policy reforms, business process reengineering, team building, employee engagement; as ways of increasing their competitiveness in their subsequent branches. They further noted that corporate identity and culture has also changed with the focus of enhancing banks competitiveness. Aduku *et al.* (2021) observed that the changing nature of business with the indulgence of strategic information system and digitalization has increased the demand for high competence level of employees. These changes, they noted, are as a result of swift developments and advancement in technologies, globalization and political instability. It has, however, heightened the level of competitiveness, making it increasingly challenging for businesses to attain and sustain their competitiveness (Obaro *et al.*, 2023). So how do you stand out from the crowd and build client loyalty when your customers have a short-term memory and an endless number of alternatives at their disposal; necessitates the essence for building a competence centric employee base.

Banking environment is characterized by different banking products, increased choices, security and accessibility. In this regard Katuse and Gaur (2020) posits that players in this sector have experienced increased competition over the last few years resulting from increased innovations among the players and new entrants into the market. Thus, the ability of deposit money banks to effectively and efficiently deliver products and services key to their competitiveness is hinged on their competencies (Faloye *et al.*, 2020). Besides survival of commercial banks in Nigeria, relies on the adoption of rare and non imitable organizational competencies as a competitive strategy to establish sustainable and profitable position against their competitors. Identification of competitive business strategies has become a priority to the banks' management since these have become an integral component of any business venture, in order for it to survive within an industry (Olajide, 2014). Some deposit money banks have managed to secure an advantageous competitive position while others have not (Faloye *et al.*, 2020). However there is still enormous untapped potential by banks that can enhance Nigeria's economy further through exploring competencies embedded in employees.

Competencies are individual capabilities that can be linked to enhanced performance by individuals or teams. According to Sanghi (2016) competencies are what make your organization unique and are the skills your organization possesses that set it apart from its peers. They are the sources of competitive advantage and the building blocks to future opportunities. Competence is a bundle of skills rather than a discrete skill. Competency is an integration of skills, abilities, knowledge and capabilities. Understanding and developing employees' competencies is necessary to enable the organization to exploit the opportunities they provide. Competencies may be considered as talent-based interpretations of business needs. This view defines competencies as demonstrable characteristics of the person, including knowledge, skills and behaviors that enable performance (Chen *et al.*, 2019). Also these competencies are skills that help place a firm in close proximity to its customers. The competency level of employees is used to integrate selection, training, appraisal and compensation. On the other hand, competencies are used as a strategy to strengthen the link with organizational culture, results, and individual performance by emphasizing competencies that are needed across occupational specialties. Hence the need for examining the effect of employee competencies on the competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Observations are that with the changes in the environment, deposit money banks in Nigeria and Benue State in particular have been responding aggressively so as to gain competitive advantage. The banks consider their employee competence as the most important factor in improving their competitiveness. Also observed is that banks have implemented programs for training and developing their employees aimed at delivering bank growth, increased productivity and driving efficiency, rationalizing costs, enhancing stakeholder value and improving competitiveness, yet there seems to be mixed results for these organizations. The issue now is whether the programs are built on enhancing the core competencies for the employee on the job or for enhancing companies overall performance. Thus this study seeks to examine the effect of employee competence on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis of Benue State, Nigeria.

Also, several studies (examples; Alex, 2015; Nimsith *et al.*, 2016; Ong'ango, 2019; Katuse and Kaur, 2020) have been carried out linking employees competencies with sustainability, efficiency, corporate performance, etc; and were carried out in developed economies; thus creating a dearth in empirical, which this study seeks to fill by examining the effect of employees' competencies on banks competitiveness in Makurdi, Benue State-Nigeria.

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The broad objective of this study is to examine the effect of employee competencies on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis. The specific objectives are; to

- i. examine the effect of employees' experience on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis.
- ii. determine the effect of employees' commitment on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions are put forward

- i. What is the effect of employees' experience on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis?
- ii. What effect does employees' commitment have on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis?

## **1.5 Statement of Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study

- H<sub>01</sub>:** Employees' experience has no significant effect on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** Employees' commitment has no significant effect on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi metropolis.

## **2.0**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Concept of Employee Competencies**

Competency, according to Chizoba *et al.* (2018), is everything that can directly or indirectly impact how well a person does their work. He went on to define competence as a component of a job that a worker is capable of performing, including actions that support efficient job performance. According to Ida (2018), competencies are a combination of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that are reflected in the habit of thinking and acting. Meanwhile, competencies are the characteristic of an employee who can make a significant contribution to the successful implementation of work and achievement of organizational performance. Boulter *et al.* (2003) argue competency is a basic characteristic of a person who enables it to deliver superior performance in a job.

Boyatzis (2008) defined competencies as an underlying characteristic of a person that could be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge which they use. Taylor (2017) provides yet another definition of competencies as a means of being able to perform a work role to a defined standard with reference to real working environments. Competencies have been defined as the ability to perform and conduct a job or a task on the basis of skills, knowledge and work attitude demanded by the job (Wibowo *et al.*, 2019; Saban *et al.*, 2020). Saragih *et al.* (2017) have broken down employee competence into its major components. These competencies are:

- a. Knowledge an individual requires fulfilling the responsibilities of the job task,
- b. Skills that is the effort of an individual to achieve the quality in the assigned task,
- c. Attitudes and values which frame the personal characteristic of a person to have the dedication and mindset to accomplish the task in accurate manner.

### **2.2 Dimensions of Employee Competencies**

The dimensions of employee competencies ranges from knowledge, ability, legal / ethical requirement, self-awareness bias, commitment, experience, capabilities, attitudes, amongst others; as have been stated and used by several authors (amongst whom are Wibowo *et al.* 2019; Ong'ango, 2019; Hasan and Lukman, 2020; Katuse and Gaur, 2020; Saban *et al.*, 2020). Thus, the following dimensions are used in this study, which are experience and commitment.

#### **(i)Employee Commitment**

Commitment is specific type of psychological bond between an individual and a target (Abosede and Adesanya, 2017). Employee commitment is often referred to as organizational commitment (Colquitt *et al.*, 2009). According to Colquitt *et al.* (2009) commitment is a relative strength of the individual in identifying his or her involvement in the organization. Commitment is an attitude that reflects employees' loyalty to an organization in which members of the organization express their concern for the organization and their continued success and progress (Ezenwanfor and Enemuo, 2016).

#### **(ii) Employee Experience**

Employee experience is a worker's perceptions about his or her journey through all touch points at a particular company, starting with job candidacy through to the exit from the company (Katuse and Gaur, 2020). The company's physical workspace, culture and technology are all important components of the employee experience. Mebom and Amaehule (2022) posited that strengthening the employees experience has numerous benefits that are associated with employee job satisfaction leading to enhance competitiveness.

## **2.3 Concept of Competitiveness**

Competitiveness is viewed as the ability of a business or a firm to deliver better value to customers than others (Hanagandi and Melo, 2018). Competitiveness linked to the organization, is seen as the ability of organizations to maintain, advance, respond and work according to the principles of business understanding, efficiency and effectiveness, to surpass the competition (Cho *et al.*, 2016). The secret of sustainable competitive advantage lies in performing every step in the value chain in an appropriate way. The internal resources and capabilities of an organization play very important role in building competitive advantage. The organizations that want to build competitive advantages, which cannot be eroded, must make linkages between the advantage and the capabilities underlying it as impenetrable and as confusing as possible. Also the most important part of the competitive advantage stems from a capability that is impossible to replicate (Nwankoby *et al.*, 2019).

### **2.2.4 Measures of Competitiveness**

Different views have been held by different authors on what constitutes competitiveness dimensions or indicators or characteristics with major focus on measuring forms. The following measures, are carefully reviewed as supported by Asree *et al.* (2010), Borza (2014) Hanagandi and Melo (2018), amongst others.

#### **(i) Organizational Responsiveness**

The response capability dimension emphasizes agility in terms of change-enabling capabilities, which are embedded in organizational processes (Borza, 2014). Responsiveness refers to ability of recognizing changes and quickly taking advantage and benefiting from them (Hanagandi and Melo, 2018). Responsiveness is the ability of a firm to respond to customers' needs in terms of quality, speed and flexibility and it is characterized by combined goals such as time, quality and flexibility (Asree *et al.*, 2010). An organization's competitiveness is often determined by its ability to respond quickly to changes in the business environment. Responsiveness enables organizations to detect market changes quickly, reconfigure their processes to meet new market requirements, share information across organizational units, take maximum advantage of information processing systems, and adopt new product and process technologies ahead of competitors (Hoyt *et al.*, 2007). The level of uncertainty in the operating environment of firms supports the assertion that responsiveness is a key determinant of competitiveness. It is an essential condition that allows firms to develop competitive advantage (Gaveau *et al.*, 2010; Bocken *et al.*, 2014; Tolkampa *et al.*, 2018).

#### **(ii) Business Understanding**

Business understanding is viewed as consisting of a precise specification of the problem together with the methods of evaluating the achievement of the goal (Mardiros, 2011). For successful business performance, it needs to build employees' competency around a sound strategic understating of an organization's business to enable them know how to deliver timely, relevant, complete, accurate, and useful services to the customers (Owen *et al.*, 2001). Employees should understand the organization's mission, objectives and goals. It is also these employees who can identify customers' problems within their work environment and bring forth immediate solutions. Customers do not want to do business with staffs that do not know the answers to their questions or handle their requests and problems unempathetically (Zolkiewski *et al.*, 2017).



### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

The competency theory is carefully reviewed as related to this study.

#### **Competence theory**

Competence theory is actually the most tangible and reasonable alternative to dominant strategic model of industrial organization. Introduced at a pioneering level by Bain (1959) and successively developed by Porter (1985). They argue that by concentrating excessive attention on product market strategies, the Porter framework neglects the cost of developing the basis of and implementing those very strategies. Resources must be acquired or built before a product market strategy may be implemented. Again, instead of an exclusive outward orientation toward market niches and advantageous cost-revenue combinations, the competence-based perspective also puts emphasis on building up resources and organizational routines within the firm itself. Organization and production are emphasized, as well as the market.

According to Porter and Kramer (2006) competence theory proposes to bring, to the strategic reflection, new answers to the “longitudinal problem”, which consists of the individualization of the conditions that permit a firm to reach and hold on to a favourable competitive position over time. This problem, however, cannot be separated from the “cross-sectional problem”, aimed at understanding the causes at the base of the firm’s superior performance at a precise instance in time. Montgomery and Collis (2009) believe that the industry or business must remain the principal unit of analysis, as the possession of determinate resources or competencies should be, in any case, compared with those of the competitors: it follows that the firm profitability depends both on the attractiveness of the industry in which the firm competes and on its relative position in that industry. Then, if “the essence of strategy is choosing to perform activities differently than rivals do”, the core competencies enable the choice of diversity to be followed, furthermore firms are able to carry out activities at a lower cost or in such a way as to create a greater value for the customer lies in that which Porter calls “drivers” (Porter, 1996).

So, firms need, according to the analogy made by Porter (1996), to be “capabilities predators”, means to move rapidly from one business to another, copying capacities, developing them so as to assume the role of leader, and this is possible with the aid of flexible human resources and transversal management of the firm.

#### **(i) Employee Experience and competitiveness.**

Employee experience is a new trend and is being adopted by many people centric organizations which focus on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Employee experience is categorized in the same way as customer experience, into three categories namely, emotional, accessible and functional (Temkin, 2014). The functional experience of employee relates them to system and processes of work which gives them ease of engagement and task accomplishment speed. The accessible experience gives access to culture which develops an understanding of how the work is done (Katusse and Gaur, 2020). The accumulated number of years working in a certain field and gaining exposure helps the employee to understand the culture of the organization. Understanding the nature of the work and working in the team culture makes an individual gain the experience of the working pattern of the team and organization (Poel *et al.*, 2004). Experience enhances the knowledge of an individual and makes the person skilled and a trained professional which increases the performance and efficiency of an individual (Bajzikova *et al.*, 2013). Emotional employee experience deals with the feeling of employee about the organization, colleagues and the leaders. Emotional experience is not about an instance but it is an overall experience which forms an impression of the workplace on an individual’s mind and is the crucial of all the three

domains (Lucia-Palacios *et al.*, 2020). If the emotional experience is positive, it leads to the increase in productivity and efficiency of employees and vice versa.

**(ii) Employee Commitment and competitiveness.**

It is observed from other researches that employee commitment is related to the worker's attachment for organizations in which they are employed (Lišková and Tomšík, 2013; Bocken *et al.*, 2014; Jao *et al.*, 2019). Employee commitment relays the nature of employee being loyal to or dubious for their organization (Abosede and Adesanya, 2017). Jaros (2007) discussed an approach of employee commitment and mentioned three multidimensional components. These are; effectiveness, continuance and normative commitment. The study brings forth the connection between employee and workforce commitment and sustainable competitiveness. Employees' commitment ensures a psychological attachment of employee to the organization, therefore an individual employees' commitment is related to their positive relation to the work place (Forrier *et al.*, 2009). The employer expects total employee commitment which is directly related to less turnovers and increased productivity which enhances firm competitiveness in the sector (Cho *et al.*, 2016). For sustainable competitiveness therefore, employee commitment is an important component and should be part of the job description.

**2.3 Review of Related Empirical Studies**

Ibegbulam *et al.* (2023) study focused on the effect of competence based management system on competitive advantage of deposit money banks in South-South and South- East zones in Nigeria. The study concluded that leadership capability competence influence competitive advantage. Enhancing the leadership competences along the organizational structure is very vital for making the banks attractive to work and compete on regional and international level. Banks are highly encouraged to develop a clear strategy for enhancing a leadership competency in order to improve its performance and get the most out of its capabilities. Nwinyokpugi and Dinee (2022) study examined employee competence and business sustainability in the banking sector in Rivers State. The findings of the study revealed the positive correlation significance of the tested dimensions of employee competence and sustainability of the banking business in Rivers State.

Mengesha (2021) examined the effects of employees' competencies on customer satisfaction in private organizations in eastern Ethiopia. The study shows that there is a significant positive relationship between employees' competency and customer satisfaction. The research identifies basic competency deficiencies of Ethiopian employees in handling customers' and has managerial implication of how to staff the work force with the skills, area of knowledge, attitudes and abilities that distinguish high performer to deliver quality service. Ekweozor and Obara (2020) examined Worker Competence Development and Organizational Responsiveness of Selected Deposit Money Banks n Rivers State. It was therefore concluded in this that competence development is a very significant factor in the responsiveness deposit money banks to the changes in their operational environment.

Nnamani *et al.* (2020) examined the impact of entrepreneurial competencies on profitability of firms in Nigeria manufacturing industry. The study concludes that there is positive insignificant impact of entrepreneurial competencies on profitability of firms in Nigeria manufacturing industry. The study also concludes that entrepreneurial competencies; production competencies, production competencies, human resources competencies, marketing competencies and entrepreneurial competencies affect the profitability of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Katuse and Gaur (2020) examined the effect of employee competencies on sustainable efficiency in the context of the United Arab Emirates. The study found out that, skill, employee experience and employee

commitment are important components for the attainment of sustainable efficiency in an organization.

Adefe *et al.* (2019) examined how competency frameworks influence business performance in the Nigerian banking sector. The findings revealed that competency-based management frameworks are being used and that indeed they are a key management tool within the selected Nigerian banks. Importantly, the findings clearly suggest the adopted competency frameworks are having a positive impact on the banks' performance. Ong'ango (2019) examined the influence of employee competencies on employee performance in commercial banks in Kenya. The research identifies basic competency deficiencies of Ethiopian employees in handling customers' and has managerial implication of how to staff the work force with the skills, area of knowledge, attitudes and abilities that distinguish high performer to deliver quality service.

Makinde *et al.* (2018) examined the effect of between employee engagement and educational qualification on employee productivity in selected deposit money banks in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study revealed that employee engagement and educational qualification had significant positive effect on employee productivity in banking industry in Nigeria.

Nimsith *et al.* (2016) examined the impact of core competency on competitive advantage of banking firms in Sri Lanka. The findings revealed that different banking firms have different areas which they consider as their core competencies; there is significant relationship between core competencies and competitive advantage among Sri Lankan banking firms. This study also proved that, the core competencies had significant impact on competitive advantage. It concludes that banking firms achieve competitive advantage, which is considered significantly successful, and sustain the success by proper use of their core competencies.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the survey research design approach.

The study population comprised of four deposit money banks employees (management staff, senior staff and junior staff) operating in Makurdi, which are; First bank (65), United bank for Africa (62), Guaranty Trust bank (51), and Zenith Bank (53), which sums up to 231. The choice of these deposit money banks is on the premise of their spread in branch network, high number of staff/employees and as well as high customer base.

The Taro Yamane (1964) formula for sample size determination was employed to select from the population of the selected banks to be surveyed.

∴ The sample size for this study is 146

The individual sample size for each bank was computed using the Bouley's (1967, as cited in Akabike, 2020) proportion allocation formula for individual sampling size determination method was employed.

The sampling technique adopted for this study is simple random sampling. This is to ensure that all elements of the population have equal chances of being selected, and is most appropriate when all the members of the population under study share a relatively homogenous characteristic. The data for this study were collected through questionnaire administration. Structured questionnaire has been designed to collect responses from the participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections (Section A and section B) for ease of administration and convenience. To ensure the research instrument (questionnaire) measures what it is intended to measure, the instrument was validated by professional experts for face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was conducted by means of Crombach Alpha test statistic. The questionnaire was pretested on 40



respondents at one of the deposit money banks in Makurdi. The objective was to allow for modification and to clear off shortcomings.

Primary data was utilized for this study. This was obtained by use of questionnaire administered to the selected respondents of the study. The variables in this study are employee competence (independent variable) and the dependable variable (competitiveness). Employee competence, the independent variable is made up of four dimensions namely; employee experience and employee commitment. Competitiveness is proxy as responsiveness and business understanding.

The model employed for this study is multiple regression, which involved the explanatory variable (organizational competitiveness) and two dimensions of the independent variable. Therefore the model specifying the relationship between the variables is:

$$OC = f(EC)$$

The model for this research is given as

$$OC = f(EC) = (EEX, ECO)$$

Where

OC = Organization Competitiveness

EC = Employee Competence

EEX = Employee Experience

ECO = Employee Commitment

The regression model, thus is given as

$$OC = x + \beta_1 EEX + \beta_2 ECO + e$$

Where

X = Intercept of the regression

$\beta_1 - \beta_2$  = Parameter estimates

e = error term

Regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses, using t-statistic and p-values generated from the regression analysis, in order to determine the effect of employee competence on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi town.

The decision rule is that we accept the alternate hypothesis if t-calculated is higher than t-tabulated (1.96) and p-values less than 0.05. If otherwise, we accept the null hypothesis

## **6.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

A total of one hundred and forty six (146) questionnaires were distributed to respondents in the selected deposit money banks chosen for this study, out of which one hundred and forty two (142) were successfully filled and returned.

### **Regression Analysis**

The model used to test the hypotheses designed for this study, explores the effect of employees' competencies on competitiveness of selected deposit money banks in Makurdi-Benue State.

**Table 1: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adj.R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Durbin Watson
1	.8871 <sup>a</sup>	.7869	.7800	0.9540	2.09

a: Predictors (constant), Employees' Experience, Employees' Commitment.

b. Dependent variable: Organization Competitiveness

Source: SPSS printout (Version 25.0 for windows output), 2023

**Table 2: Regression Coefficient Result**

Model	Beta	T	Sig
1 (Constant)	1.247	14.94	.000
Experience	.881	7.990	.004
Commitment	.807	6.908	.003

Dependent variable: Organizational Competitiveness

Source: SPSS regression print out (version 25.0 for windows output), 2023.

**Table 3: ANOVA<sup>b</sup> for the overall significance of the model**

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	104.184	2	52.092	23.65	.001 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	17.220	140	0.123		
Total	121.404	142			

a. Predictors: (constant); EEX, ECO.

Dependent variable: COM

## Hypotheses Testing

### Hypothesis one:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Employees' experience has no significant effect on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi-Benue State.

From table 1, the ( $R^2$ ) statistic was 0 .7869. Taking into the record the contribution of the explanatory variable in competitiveness, from table 2, the beta value for employees' experience was 0.881. The beta value apparently indicated that the predictor variable of employees' experience had a positive effect on competitiveness (t-computed 7.990 > t-critical 1.960,  $P=0.004 < .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings of this investigation agree with Ibegbula *et al.* (2023), Nnamani *et al.* (2020), Katuse and Gaur (2020), Ong'ango (2019), Makinde *et al.* (2018); amongst others; who all avers that the functional experience of employee relates them to system and processes of work which gives them ease of engagement and task accomplishment speed towards responding to customer needs. The experience helps them develop an understanding of recognizing and evaluating problems, understanding nature of work and enhances the knowledge of an individual and which increases the performance and efficiency of an individual. Thus, it helps the employee to deliver superior services to customers and hence enhance competitiveness. Therefore this study concludes that there is

a positive/significant effect of employees' experience on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi.

## **Hypothesis Two**

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Employees' commitment has no significant effect on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi-Benue State.

From table 1, the ( $R^2$ ) statistic was 0 .7869. Taking into the record the contribution of the explanatory variable in competitiveness, from table 2, the beta value for employees' commitment was 0.807. The beta value apparently indicated that the predictor variable of employees' commitment had a positive effect on competitiveness (t-computed 6.908 > t-critical 1.960,  $P=0.003 < .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings of this investigation agree with that of Nwinyokpugi *et al.* (2023), Mengesha (2021), Ekweozor and Obara (2020), Adefe *et al.* (2018), Nimsith *et al.* (2016), amongst others; as they argue and affirm that employee commitment is related to the worker's attachment for organizations in which they are employed and relays the nature of employee being loyal to their organization. This finding aligns as employees' commitment ensures a psychological attachment of employee to the organization, therefore an individual employees' commitment is related to their positive relation to the work place. Thus, acceptance of organizations value by staff and their active involvement in organizations affairs bestows them the ability to get the best out of them. Therefore this study concludes that there is a positive/significant effect of employees' commitment on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi.

## **Conclusion**

Employee competencies have been identified as an important factor that significantly affects firm competitiveness among deposit money banks in Makurdi. The study concludes that employee competencies (employee experience and employee commitment) are inevitably a veritable tool/vehicle that can accelerate and sustain deposit money banks competitiveness. As the potentials for enhancing/sustaining competitiveness of banks in delivering better value to customers, responding and working according to principles of business understanding and getting the best out of oneself; requires employees' to be experienced and committed to deliver. Employee competencies can be seen to have potentials for retention of quality personnel and engaging ready to deliver personnel towards meeting pace with the dynamism in the industry by retaining existing customers as well as attracting new ones. Hence, employee competencies has positive and significant effect on competitiveness of deposit money banks in Makurdi

## **Recommendations**

Sequel to the findings and conclusions above, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Management of deposit money banks should embrace and emphasize a more responsive posture of attracting experienced employees in to their fold, as it will expand their talent pool base and broaden their knowledge base of the sector and enhance their business understanding of the environment.
- ii. Management of deposit money banks should focus more on creating and promoting a culture of commitment by employees within the organization as this will help improve interaction with customers and thus enhance firm responsiveness to service delivery and customer satisfaction.

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