

Transformational Leadership and Employee Engagement of Deposit Money Banks in South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examined the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria. A survey design was adopted and 467 employees of 21 deposit money banks in South-south were covered as the population of the study. A sample of 214 respondents were derived from the population and the simple random sampling technique was used. Data were collected using copies of questionnaire. The bivariate hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation. The outcome of the analysis depicts a strong and favourable correlation between the two components of transformative leadership (inspiring drive and idealised influence) with the measures of employee engagement (absorption and dedication). It was concluded that the dedication of employees in terms of absorption and dedication can be greatly enhanced when the leaders display a transformational leadership style. The study among others recommended that the managers of the deposit money banks should display a transformational leadership style which inspires the employees as such will help enhance the engagement of the employees.

Keywords: Absorption, Dedication, Employee Engagement, Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Transformational Leadershi

1.0 Introduction

The stiff rivalry among firms in the sector have become more intense in recent years and this have made the issue of enhancing the engagement of the employees more critical so as to stay adaptable and stay competitive in the industry. In alignment with the above thought, Khalid, Butt and Satti (2021) posited that employee engagement is paramount in achieving and sustaining competitive advantage of an organisation. The authors remarked that employee engagement helps in enhancing smooth and effective functioning of the organisation and in boosting the effectiveness of the organisation. In line with the above assertion, Reissova and Papay (2021) maintained that employees are motivated and also focused on achieving predetermined goals of the organisation when they are engaged. Employee engagement can be defined as the positive and fulfilling state of mind of employees in the organisation which is defined by intensity, devotion, and immersion (De-la-calle-Duran & Rodriguez-Sanchez, 2021).

Some scholars measured employee engagement using vigour, dedication and absorption (De-la-Calle-Duran & Rodriguez, 2021; Akhigbe & Osita-Ejikeme, 2021; Nurcholis & Budi, 2019). Marin (2021) remarked that there are basically two factors that increases total engagement of employees which include; the adherence to the organisational values and the resources made available by the organisation. When the workforce is actively engaged, they become more psychologically committed, more loyal and are willing to stay in the organisation (McCarthy, 2021). Akpa, Asikhia and Okusanya (2021) remarked that many organisations are suffering misappropriation, low employee performance, high turnover and absence of motivation to yet

involved in the work as a consequence of the unwillingness of the organisation to get a time-tested and effective leader. The authors posited that the ability of the leaders to display the right leadership style will help them get high loyalty and engagement of the workers. Wurani et al (2021) further contended that leadership in the organisation influences, inspires and motivates employees in the organisation towards bringing positive organisational change.

In alignment with the thought of Ahme, Yang, Yang, Rahoo and Mahmood (2021), the type of leadership style utilised by any manager in the organisation must align with the values, beliefs, norms, culture and preferences of the organisation. The employees in the workplace are often seen as the key asset because of the tacit knowledge embedded in them. However, the best of the employees can be achieved when the right leadership style is displayed in the workplace. Transformational leadership is a form of leadership style in which the leader sees himself as an agent of change. Work has been carried out by scholars in an attempt to enhance engagement. John (2021) did a study on how psychological capital influences employee engagement. The study posited that engagement of workers is positively influenced by psychological capital. Furthermore, a critical analysis on how transformational leadership do impact the engagement of workers was carried out by Jayanto and Babbeth (2021) where he observed a significant impact of transformational leadership on employee engagement. There is paucity of work on how transformational leadership relate with employee engagement of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria. This study intends to bridge this observe gap.

Statement of the Problem

Employees are continuously in search of better opportunities where they can achieve desired goals and this unending quest have further intensified their rate of low engagement in the workplace. The performance level of the employees in the deposit money banks have reduce drastically owing to the poor engagement level of the employees. Some of the employees are emotional and psychological disengaged and thus causes strain among the workers Akhigbe & Osita-Ejikeme, (2021). Considering the stiff nature of the competition in the deposit money banks, when there is low engagement of the workers, such could negatively impact on the competitive ability and resilience of the organisation. Clement and Eketu (2019) noted that low engagement can also manifest in low profitability, productivity and goal congruence in the organisation. Low engagement of the employees in organisations have led to lose of profitability and if not address, it could result in the liquidation of the firm in the long run. It is of utmost important to guarantee that the leaders of the organisation display a leadership style that will influence the attitude and behaviour of the employees in order to enhance their engagement. It is on this note that this work investigates the connection between transformational leadership and employee engagement of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to investigate into the relationship between;

- I. Idealized influence and absorption.
- II. Idealized influence and dedication.
- III. Inspirational motivation and absorption.
- IV. Inspirational motivation and dedication.

Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses are given thus;

HO1: There is no significant relationship between idealized influence and absorption of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria.

HO2: There is no significant relationship between idealized influence and dedication of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria.

HO3: There is no significant relationship between inspirational motivation and absorption of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria.

HO4: There is no significant relationship between inspirational motivation and dedication of deposit money banks in South-South, Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

This theory is founded on the expectancy theory. This study is based on the expectancy theory by Vroom (1964), suggests that behaviour is motivated by anticipated results or consequences. Vroom proposed that behaviour in a particular way is dependent on the anticipated outcome of the chosen behaviour. People will, for instance, be more eager to put in more effort if they believe it will be compensated. Expectancy theory suggests that people are more motivated to work hard if they feel that their efforts will be noticed and rewarded (Vroom, 1964). Expectancy theory is categorised as a process theory of motivation because it places a strong emphasis on how individuals perceive their surroundings and succeeding interactions arising because of personal expectations. This theory is relevant to this study because when the expectations of the workers are satisfied such will enhance their engagement in the organization.

Conceptual Framework



Figure 1: A conceptual framework showing the link between transformational leadership and employee engagement.

Source: Adapted from Khajeh (2018); Akhigbe and Osita-Ejikeme (2021).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership describe the exceptional association between leaders and followers that produce an extraordinary performance and accomplishments in the individual, followers, and the organisation (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Yammarino & Dubinsky, 1994). The Transformational Leadership was first introduced by Burns (1978), it was developed in the work of Bass (1985) who built on Burns' original concept of transforming leaders. Burns (1978) outlined the idea of transformative leadership in his study on political leaders and it has become a term used in the field of Organisational Psychology. In order to enhance the formal notion of transformative leadership, Bass and Avolio (Bass, 1985) expanded on Burns' (1978) opinions (Tims et al., 2010). Transformational leaders recognise that workers have a variety of needs and the degree to which they eventually perform in the workplace is determined by the extent to which their requirements are fulfilled. Pfeffer (2005) in support of Maslow (1999) postulates that once the lower-level needs of safety and security have been fulfilled, the higher-order needs such as affiliation and recognition become essential and would need to be achieved for an employee to remain motivated. Transformational leadership is a motivational leadership style which involves presenting a clear organizational vision and inspiring employees to contribute to the realisation of this vision by

building relationships with them, learning about their requirements, and assisting them in achieving their potential and contributes to excellent outcomes for an organization (Rao, 2014). According to Burns (1978), transformational leaders look for possible drives in followers, aims to delight higher-order needs and aims to engage the follower's entire being in order to move past the follower's basic needs to the deeper issues of follower development and purpose.

Idealised influence

This is the capacity of the leader to create visual authority that is utilised to persuade followers to become emotional attachment to the vision of the organisation, and this more than being a good influence but showing people who they can be considering the task ahead of them. (Ramseu, 2022). This is the persuasive element of transformational leadership where leaders are placed in a high position and the followers deliberately follow the leaders' footsteps to know their potential (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transformational leaders that display idealised influence portray that the benefits of a group are more vital than benefits of the individual. These leaders demonstrate high principle that makes them become a role model for their subordinates (Bono & Judge, 2004). This implied an authentic trust between leaders and followers as it is defined by high moral and ethical standards. The high regard of the leaders arouse loyalty from their followers. The transformational leader that places emphases on fostering personal connections, introducing confidence, and conviction rather than acting on irrational impulses are leaders that personifies Idealized influence. Leaders should know that answerability is highly significant as to gain trust and respect.

Inspirational Motivation

Transformational leaders inspire their workers through thoughtful motivation that improve employee's commitment and dedication to work to achieve organizational goals. Inspirational motivation refers to leaders with a strong vision for the future based on certain values and ideals and the ability to inspire followers by being optimistic and enthusiastic about the future and communicating attractive vision of the future through symbols to articulate the vision (Bono & Judge, 2004). Bass and Riggio (2006) suggest that transformational leaders engage their followers in imagining appealing future states, they set up expectations that are plainly articulated and that their followers desire to attain, and they also show dedication to their objectives and the group's shared vision, thereby building confidence and inspire followers by using persuasive language and symbolic actions. According to Ray (2022), Inspirational motivation involves being clear about vision and express one's vision in a manner that excites and drives higher levels of performance. Understanding the distinction between internal and extrinsic motivators is crucial for inspiring others effectively. Intrinsic refers to doing things that are personally satisfying and rewarding and bring a sense of intangible internal satisfaction and desire for optimal execution while, extrinsic motivation is linked to an external outcome or reward such as a bonus, promotion, prize, or prestige to inspire others to realize the vision. It is therefore vital for a leader; to learn how to tap into the vision of the team members to understand their intrinsic motivators and knows what drives them and what matters to them.

Concept of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement in work settings has become an increasingly important research topic as it addresses human strengths and optimal performance instead of dwelling on flaws and dysfunction (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Employee engagement is the effort one exerted on tasks and the emotional and intellectual commitment of employees towards the organisation (Baumruk, 2004) and the capacity and readiness of employees to help their company succeed, through provision of flexible sustainable effort and exercising great enthusiasm in working towards the success of the organisation (Seijts & Crim, 2006). It describes an individual wholly involved in and excited and feeling contented with their job. (Harter & Schmidt, 2008). Many organizations focused on employee engagement. An busy worker enjoys working and look forward to coming to work, have knowledge of their job responsibilities, and comprehend their efforts contribution to the success of the firm, support their company to outperform competitors in profitability, stock performance, and brand awareness.

Absorption

Absorption is the cognitive aspect of engagement by Schaufeli et al. (2002) that describe Engagement as a happy, contented mental state that is characterised by zeal, commitment, and immersion at work (Shuck & Reio, 2013). Absorption describes the mental state in which workers are happily immersed in their task, extremely focused, and aware of how rapidly time flies. Absorption is described by total attention on task where it provides overall happiness and degree to which an employee loses track of time. Employees with a solid bond and comfortable with their job are positively engaged in their job and determined to take up even the most challenging task. Meanwhile, disengaged employees, are the defiant types that violates the company rules and constantly find fault in the organization.

Dedication

Dedication is a sense of enthusiasm, inspiration and pride. It is the act of being devoted at workplace. Dedicated employees are what every employer wants while the employee wants a feeling to be engaged at work. Employers describe workers who propel their companies ahead as **dedicated worker**. Dedication is an exceptionally solid attitude of devotion and backing for an individual or thing and dedication is essential in successful enterprise (Akhigbe & Osita-Ejikeme, 2021). The organisations must have dedicated employees to carry out their activities. **Dedication** is among the three characteristics of an engaged workforce; the other two being vigour and **absorption**. Loving one's work is feeling immersed while doing it, be purpose driven, and involved with work.

Empirical Review

Ndethiu (2014) studied “the impact of different leadership philosophies on worker engagement in a prominent international bank operating in Kenya”. The research used a descriptive survey approach. The target population for this study consisted of 683 employees from the bank’s various units in its Head Office in Nairobi. The research utilised stratified random sampling. design where

the researcher selected 205 respondents. A questionnaire was used as a sole data collection tool to collect primary data. A multivariate regression model was applied to determine the relative importance of each of the variables within the engagement of employees. Finally, the research reveals that leadership styles impact the engagement of employees in the workplace.

Mangundjava (2017) studied the role of charismatic leadership in employee engagement through work ethics. The study was carried out at two Insurance companies with 290 respondents, using questionnaires for data collection and SEM for data analysis. The findings indicated that engaging employees was directly impacted by charismatic leadership. The results also indicated that the association between charismatic leadership and employee engagement is somewhat mediated by work ethics. Unconventional behaviour is the best metric for determining charismatic leadership. These findings strengthened the influence of leadership, particularly charismatic leadership, on worker morale. The study found that engaging employees was positively impacted by charismatic leadership both directly and indirectly via ethical behaviour at work. Results indicated that the charismatic leadership quality, which includes unusual behaviours and attention to the needs of the members are extremely effective dimensions in representing transformational leadership.

Mozammel and Haan (2016) studied “Transformational leadership and employee engagement in the banking sector in Bangladesh”. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the relationship between transformative leadership and employee engagement in Bangladesh's banking industry. A correlational research design was employed because it established a relationship between the transformational leadership styles and engagement among employees (Burns & Grove, 2005). Although the national language is Bengali, English is used in the banking sector as the main mode of communication. Therefore, the instruments did not need to be translated. Sample Employees of the banking industry in Bangladesh, comprising branch managers and staff members, made up the population for this study. It is important to highlight that the businesses that took part in this research study remained anonymous. Samples from the banking sectors were drawn from within the various banks in Bangladesh for the purpose of this study. The study used a random sampling plan. A sample size calculation using G*Power determined a required minimum sample size of 128 participants. There were 128 sample participants (64 branch managers and 64 branch employees) gathered for the study. If the participating samples were below 128 participants, there would be a decrease on the strength of the analysis. Furthermore, the generalizability as well as validity of the findings would be decreased. To be included in this study, the participants were with the bank for at least three years. This was done to guarantee that branch managers and staff members were knowledgeable about employee engagement. Consequently, they were capable to pinpoint their interaction with the organization. There were two questionnaires for this study: the MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004) and the UWES-9 (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2003). The MLQ (Avolio & Bass, 2004) measured the transformational leadership present in the respective organizations of the participants involved in this study. Data Collection An online questionnaire was used for data collection. Banks in Bangladesh were recruited for this study. After acquiring the permission of the banks in Bangladesh, a directory of managers’ and employees’ work e-mail addresses was used. In order to find prospective participants, this information was utilised in sending them an invitation letter and a copy of the informed consent form. The informed consent that was sent to the work e-mail address explains purpose, scope, limitation, delimitations of the study, and the assurance of their anonymity. Prior to redirection to the survey instrument, the participants were first required to agree to participate for study by completing the informed consent form.

Participants were directed to respond to each of the survey questions by selecting the most appropriate response that reflected their perceptions on transformational leadership and employee engagement. The findings of this study showed that employing a transformational leadership style does not ensure that workers will be totally engaged. However, the results of the current study are not aligned with the existing body of literature on transformational leadership and employee engagement.

Rakatu et al. (2021) studied linking transformational leadership with employee engagement through organizational commitment and organizational Culture. The paper intends to understand the employee engagement methods within the organization through the presence of organizational culture and each competency of an improved organizational commitment. Data have been analyzed using smart PLS-SEM software program for a sample of 412 bank employees from public and private sector banks in Chhattisgarh, India. The tools of analysis such as mean, standard deviation, tabulations, have used. Correlations, bootstrapping, discriminant validity, goodness of fit, reliability, standardized root mean square residual are performed to test the hypotheses. Checking for the presence of bias, a confirmatory factor-analytic approach is used in the research for the Harman one factor trial. The findings reveal that transformational leadership is one of the important internal changes through resources, time allocation and organizational commitment enables the high level of employee engagement within a culture and commitment, which shows an impact on the employee job satisfaction.

3.0 Methodology

A survey design was adopted in this inquiry and 467 employees of 21 deposit money banks in South-south were covered as the population of the study. The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula was utilize in arriving at a sample of 214 respondents. Copies of questionnaires were used in gathering data and the simple random sampling technique was used. Idealised influence and motivating inspiration were used to gauge the effectiveness of transformational leadership, as stated in (Burns, 1978). 5 items were utilized in measuring idealized influence (my Leader is a role model) and 5 items were used in measuring inspirational motivation (In my organization, my leader expresses confidence that goals will be achieved). Employees engagement was operationalized using absorption and dedication as given in Akhigbe and Osita-Ejikeme (2021). 6 items were used in measuring absorption (When I am working, I forget everything else around me) and 5 items were used in measuring dedication (I am enthusiastic about my job). The data were analyzed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation in order to ascertain the relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement.

4.0 Results

From the 214 copies administered, only 196 copies were retrieved and used for the study and the analysis was at 95% confidence level.

Table 1: Idealized Influence and Measures of Employee Engagement

		Idealized Influence	Absorption	Dedication	
Spearman's rho	Idealized Influence	Correlation	1.000	.722	.586
		Coefficient			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
	Absorption	N	196	196	196
		Correlation	.722	1.000	.030
		Coefficient			
	Dedication	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.422
		N	196	196	196
		Correlation	.586	.030	1.000
	Dedication	Coefficient			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.422	.
		N	196	196	196

The outcome of hypothesis one and two in table 1 showed that idealized influence has a significant and positive relationship with absorption and dedication given a P-value of 0.000 and a rho value of 0.722 and P-value of 0.000 and rho value of 0.586 respectively. The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate accepted

Table 2: Inspirational Motivation and Measures of Employee Engagement

		Inspirational Motivation	Absorption	Dedication	
Spearman's rho	Inspirational Motivation	Correlation	1.000	.536	.871
		Coefficient			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
	Absorption	N	196	196	196
		Correlation	.536	1.000	.030
		Coefficient			
	Dedication	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.232
		N	196	196	196
		Correlation	.871	.030	1.000
	Dedication	Coefficient			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.232	.
		N	196	196	196

The outcome of hypotheses three and four based on the analysis as shown in table 2, the result on how inspirational motivation relates with absorption and dedication. The outcome depict a P-value of 0.000 which was less than the level of significance of 0.05 and the correlational value was 0.536 between inspirational motivation and absorption. The P-value of 0.000 and rho value of 0.871 was observed between inspirational motivation and dedication. The null hypotheses were rejected and the alternate hypotheses were accepted.

Discussion of Findings

This study inquired into the link between transformational leadership and employee’s engagement of deposit money banks in Rivers State. A detailed discussion of the outcome is given below;

Idealized Influence and Employee Engagement

The idealized influence had a significant relationship with absorption where P -value was 0.000 and the rho value was 0.722. Owing to the decision rule, the P -value was less than the level of significance which depicts that idealized influence relates substantially with absorption. Employees get more absorbed in the workplace when the leaders display a leadership style where their followers see them as role models. The ability of the leader to have a positive influence on the employees will make them have a more vested interest towards enhancing the well-being of the organization in terms of increased engagement. The correlational value between idealized influence and absorption was 0.722 and the coefficient of determination was 0.52. This implies that a unit change in idealized influence will result to up to 52% change in absorption of the employees. Furthermore, a P -value of 0.000 was observed between idealized influence and dedication. The dedication of the employees in the organization is thus influenced by the idealized influence of the leaders in the organization. The correlational value between idealized influence and dedication was 0.586 and the coefficient of determination was 0.34. A unit change in idealized influence will account for 34% variation in dedication. This finding aligns with that of Mozammel and Haan (2016) where they maintained that transformational leadership significantly relates with employee engagement in the banking sector in Bangladesh. The quality of association amid workforces with their supervisors is vital in enhancing engagement (Tyman et al., 2011).

Inspirational Motivation and Employee Engagement

The outcome of the third hypothesis depicts a significant relationship between inspirational motivation and absorption with a P -value of 0.000. This indicates that inspirational motivation is relevant in enhancing the absorption of employees in the workplace. The correlation was 0.536 which implies that a moderate and significant relationship exists amongst the variables. The absorption level of workers is thus enhanced by the inspirational motivation displayed by the leaders in the workplace. Similarly, the result of the fourth hypothesis revealed a significant and positive relationship between inspirational motivation and dedication with a P -value of 0.000. Hence, the higher the inspirational motivation, the more dedicated the employees are more likely to be. This suggests that a manager that wishes to have a dedicated employee should know how to display inspirational motivation. The rho value was 0.871 which implies that a strong link exists between inspirational motivation and dedication. The coefficient of determination was 0.759. Hence, 75.9% variation in dedication in the deposit money banks can be explained by a unit change in inspirational motivation. This finding agrees with that of Ndethiu (2014) which maintained that leadership styles play a key role in impacting employee engagement in an international bank with substantial operations in Kenya. Thus, increasing transformational leadership style in terms of inspirational motivation will help boost engagement of the employees.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Leaders in organization play a vital role in persuading and influencing the followers and their influence in the organization does have an impact on the whole organization. Transformational leadership has a positive relationship with absorption and dedication of employees in the workplace. This implies that when the leaders in the deposit money banks display

transformational leadership style, such as help enhance the engagement of the employees in the workplace. A transformational leader always seeks to identify the variety of needs of the employees and the leaders also proceed to seek for possible means to fulfil those needs with the aim of enhancing the engagement of the employees in terms of absorption and dedication.

A transformational leader also has a feeling of being a change agent who is into the organization to change the workplace positively which ultimately results in the increase of employee engagement. A transformational leader does display a sense of style, flair and confidence which he/she uses to influence the employees to get more engaged in the organization. Conclusively, the dedication of employees in terms of absorption and dedication can be greatly enhanced when the leaders display a transformational leadership style. It is thus recommended that;

- i. The managers of the deposit money banks should display a transformational leadership style which inspires the employees as such will help enhance the engagement of the employees.
- ii. The managers of the deposit money banks should always act beyond self-interest for the good of the organization as such will enhance the affective engagement of the employees.
- iii. The managers and supervisors of the deposit money banks should also act as a positive role model in order to enhance the cognitive engagement of the employees.
- iv. The managers of the deposit money banks should display a leadership style that encourages employee development as such will help enhance their engagement.

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