

## **LEADERSHIP STYLES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS (EVIDENCE FROM RIVERS STATE)**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examines the significant relationship between Leadership styles and organizational performance in deposit money banks operating in Rivers State. Five banks were investigated in this study. The study is quasi-experimental and adopted the structured questionnaire in data generation with analysis carried out on the study variables using the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient which was used to test a total of 7 hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study reveals that a significant relationship exists between leadership styles and the dimensions of organizational performance. Based on these findings, all 7 null hypotheses were rejected and their alternatives accepted. This study recommends that management in commercial banks should employ a flexible approach towards leadership by taking into consideration individual and contextual variables in order to optimally achieve the organizational performance goals of profitability, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The undisputable role played by continuous performance as a yardstick for organisational growth and survival has placed it top on management priority list. According to Baum (2002), “Organizational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (goals and objectives). It is a broad construct which captures what organizations do, produce, and accomplish for the various constituencies with which they interact”.

In the measurement of organizational performance, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction stand out as the non-financial measures most often used. Kantabutra and Avery (2004) stated that these indices are used based on the fact that customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction are usually resultant responses to leadership styles employed in any organisation even in a shorter time frame than when financial measures are used. According to them, employee satisfaction can be linked strongly with customer satisfaction which could also act as a pointer for more noticeable dimensions of business performance which include profit, market share, growth and customer loyalty.

The inseparable nature of organizational performance from Leadership makes it imperative for leadership to be flexible enough to adapt, evolve and co-develop in-line with organizational needs. The Leadership concept is as old as the existence of humans on the earth. In the words of Dwight (2003), "Leadership is simply the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it". In the words of Mehra, Smith, Dixon, and Robertson (2006), “When organisations seek efficient ways to enable them outperform others, a long standing approach is to focus on the effects of leadership”. This leader-focused point of view has over the years, offered a clearer appreciation of the true nature of relations existing amid leadership and overall performance levels in the workplace. As opined by Michael (2010), “leadership has a direct cause and effect relationship upon organizations and their success”. Groups are basically majorly influenced by their leaders who have the power to either boost morale and achievements among team members or on the other hand, dampen motivation and innovation, as leadership remains the key element that shapes group behaviour. The role of leadership here therefore, is reflected in the words of Obiwuru (2011), as that of “enhancing or retarding the interest and commitment of the individuals in the organization”, which is vital to determining performance levels within any organisation. According to Jeremy, M., Melinde, C. & Ciller, V. (2012), “The relationships between the leader and employee, as well as the quality of employees’ performance, are significantly influenced by the leadership style adopted by the leader”.

The banking sector will always stand out as a machinery which hugely influences the growth and progress of the Nigerian economy. According to Oloyede and Adeyeye (2006),

*Survival and growth in any bank is a function of the ability of its leadership to properly direct and control its workforce towards the achievement of its set goals. The earning power of banks depends on the management’s decision regarding the allocation of bank funds. Where a bank’s funds are misappropriated by its leadership, it is bound to face distress challenge.*

The above reveals the crucial role leadership plays in the survival of any organisation with commercial banks as our focus.

To further buttress this point, we consider the words of Ojo (2006) thus:

*“... people aspire to develop and enjoy the benefits derivable from sustained growth. But the speed and stage of development attainable ... will depend not only on the available factors of production, but mainly on the quality of the human resources in skilfully combining the factors ... and leadership ...”*

In the modern approach to leadership, various approaches to leadership have been identified, all of which can be categorized under the two major leadership dimensions used in this study which are the Task-Oriented Dimension (focusing on the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of work) and the People-Oriented Dimension (focusing on the ‘who’ and ‘why’). It should be noted however that individual approaches may not be solely sufficient in particular situations and a blend of more than one approach may be necessary during application based on considerations of three critical determinants which are: the forces in the leader, the forces in the subordinate and the forces in the situation.

Previous studies on the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance have failed to focus jointly on all the aspects of organizational performance measurements which includes a correlation of both financial measurements (profitability) and non-financial measurements (customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction). In most cases, just one of the two aspects is usually employed which has led to a narrow and insufficient analysis of the leadership - organisational performance relationship. This study aims at bridging the gap by considering both financial and non-financial measures of organisational performance so as to gain a more adequate and sufficient examination of the relationship between leadership styles and organisational performance with evidence from banks in Rivers State.

### **1.1 Aim of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship between task-oriented leadership style and profitability?
2. What is the relationship between task-oriented leadership style and customer satisfaction?
3. What is the relationship between task-oriented leadership style and employee satisfaction?
4. What is the relationship between people-oriented leadership style and profitability?
5. What is the relationship between people-oriented leadership style and customer satisfaction?
6. What is the relationship between people-oriented leadership style and employee satisfaction?

### **1.3 Research Hypotheses**

To answer the above research questions, the following null hypotheses were proposed:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between task-oriented leadership style and profitability.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between task-oriented leadership style and customer satisfaction.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between task-oriented leadership style and employee satisfaction.

Ho<sub>4</sub>: There is no significant relationship between people-oriented leadership style and profitability.

Ho<sub>5</sub>: There is no significant relationship between people-oriented leadership style and customer satisfaction.

Ho<sub>6</sub>: There is no significant relationship between people-oriented leadership style and employee satisfaction.

The findings of this study will be of great importance to policy makers, bank managers, researchers, the academia and all seeking to understand the effect of leadership on organisational performance in Nigerian banks.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 The Leadership Concept

A notable scholar in the field of leadership, James McGregor (1978) stated that “leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” (p.12).

*Over the years, leadership has been studied extensively in various contexts and theoretical foundations. In some cases, leadership has been described as a process, but most theories and research on leadership look at a person to gain understanding (Homer, 1997).*

Various definitions exist presently in various literatures about the concept of leadership; however, Leadership can simply be defined as the act of influencing, guiding and inspiring people in a group towards the achievement of set objectives. “Leadership is a reciprocal process of social influence, in which leaders and subordinates influence each other in order to achieve organisational goals” Ngodo (2008). Wehrich and Koontz (1994) also gave another definition of leadership to be “the process of influencing people so that they make an effort by their own will and enthusiasm towards obtaining the group’s goals” (p.14). According to (Bryman, 1992), “Leadership as seen from the New perspective is purpose-driven action that brings about change or transformation based on values, ideals, vision, symbols, and emotional exchanges”(p.5).

Despite the differences in opinions as regards the most appropriate definition of the term, all the above definitions of leadership possess three distinct characteristics in common:

- First is the leader’s use of influence (not power) to get things done;
- Second is that a leader requires others to work with towards accomplishing set goals;
- Thirdly, they all reflect a common aim in leadership which is the achievement of something.

*“Most leadership scholars would likely agree, at least in principle, that leadership can be defined in terms of (a) an influencing process—and its resultant outcomes—that occurs between a leader and followers and (b) how this influencing process is explained by the leader’s dispositional characteristics and behaviours, follower perceptions and attributions of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurs” (Day, D.V).*

As aptly stated by Hersey et al. (2001) and also clearly seen in the various definitions given above, “the core of leadership remains primarily the realization of pre-set goals with people and through people”. In the words of Kotter (1996), “without leadership, the probability of mistakes occurring increases and the opportunities for success become more and more reduced”.

## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for discussion of leadership styles is embedded in the four core theories of leadership. The first is the Trait Theory of Leadership also referred to as The Trait-Based angle of Leadership, concentrates on the personality of a good leader. Researchers in the field refocused their efforts on *what* leaders do, while trying to point out some peculiar behavioural traits associated with leaders. Although the trait theory puts forward key traits such as leadership drive, intelligence, integrity, creativity, sense of responsibility, self-confidence and job-relevant knowledge as determinants for identifying great leaders, it fails to give a clear answer as regards the traits which were consistently linked with superb leadership and the relations between each traits.

Next is the Behavioural theory of Leadership which focused more on leadership behaviours as opposed to merely physical, social or personal characteristics. As aptly put by Allen 1998, “behavioural theorists developed training programs to change managers’ leadership behaviours and assume that the best styles of leadership could be learned” (p.12). Despite this progress made towards person development and goal achievement in leadership, there still arose crises resulting from an inability to clearly outline a universally acceptable leadership style necessary for success in all situations and work tasks.

The third theory is the Contingency Theory of Leadership also called the situational theories of leadership. The work of Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) lent great credence to this theory as they emerged with conclusions which showed that “diverse situations could place decidedly different burdens on leaders”. This goes on to infer that that there are no particular characteristics that specifically differentiate leaders from others or that universally determine success in leadership; rather, leadership traits are only useful to the extent to which it relates to the particular situation at hand. The above points to the fact that the successful leadership is hinged on the capability of the leader to understand his followers and work environment, and respond to both while keeping in view situational changes.

Finally, the fourth theory which is the Power and Influence Theories of leadership takes a whole new dimension. This is because they were founded on the manner in which power and influence are employed by leaders so as to achieve set objectives and the leadership outcomes which are borne in the process. Theorists here view leadership basically as a product of the form of relationships and interactions which exist among individuals as influenced by the power and influence released from the leader.

## 2.3 The Task-Oriented Leadership Dimension

This leadership dimension is focused on initiating structure and has its major focus on the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of work. According to the Ohio research study (1945), “It is the extent to which a leader defines leader and group member roles, initiates actions, organizes group activities, and defines how tasks are to be accomplished by the group”(p.5).

Here, the leader is most interested in clarifying work expectations, defining task schedules, establishing concrete performance measurement standards and ensuring strict adherence to set

standards. This dimension of leadership is needed to compel a positive can-do approach among staff towards task accomplishment. Task-oriented leaders are also referred to as being assertive and usually possess great skills. They get the support of their followers using their prevailing personality. This however has some back falls as they might tend towards neglecting employees interests and needs which will result in workers feeling detached, helpless and ultimately losing morale in his work. As aptly sated by Neil (1994), “Some task-oriented leaders rely on fear or title power to get employees to work in the short term, but long-term burn out and loss of motivation may result without any display of empathy” (p.21).

The authoritarian and transactional leadership styles fall under this dimension of leadership.

#### **2.4 The People-Oriented Leadership Dimension**

This leadership dimension which is basically people-centred is hinged on ‘consideration’ and relational ability and measured by the leader’s ability to be friendly, approachable, concerned with group members’ welfare as well as treating everyone equally.

Based on the view point of the Ohio research study (1954), consideration refers to the level of concern showed by a leader towards the wellbeing of his followers or group members. This includes behaviours directed towards fostering better work relations, job involvement as well as shared confidence among group members. Here, employees follow a leader not just because they have to, but because they want to; they are able to view the leader as one who is concerned about their welfare and are therefore also willing to work hard to support the leadership vision. People-orientated dimension of leadership helps leaders build binding and closely united work force or team.

An extreme case of the people-oriented dimension however is not good for the organization as it can give room for worker’s excesses which will negatively affect productivity. It could also lead to a frustration of top-performing employees who feel low performers are not appropriately dealt with.

The democratic, laissez-faire and transformational leadership style all fall under this dimension of leadership.

#### **2.5 The Concept of Organisational Performance**

This concept, though significant in management literature, has been unable to secure a universally acceptable definition based on the varied perspectives of scholars in this regard.

Lebans & Euske (2006) define the concept of organizational performance as “a set of financial and non-financial indicators which offer information on the degree of achievement of objectives and results”. According to Richard et al. (2009), “Organizational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives)”. Putting together these ideas on the concept can lead to a general conclusion that organisational performance is basically how well a clearly defined task or objective is accomplished by a group of people who come together with a unified goal.

In their work on the indices for financial performance, Van de Ven & Ferry (1980) postulated that “the traditional financial performance was the most common indices used to measure organizational performance by researchers”(P.4). Wikipedia defines Profitability as “a firm’s ability to earn income and sustain growth in both the short and long-term”. This basically concerns the financial health of the firm and can be described as a subjective measure of how

well a firm can generate revenues for its business, using its own assets. This is critical for the survival of the business in the long run.

Measuring customer satisfaction is also essential for improved business performance and can be achieved by answering the following questions:

1. Do the customers give an overall general impression of their needs being well met?
2. How likely will your customers recommend your organisation to their friends and colleagues?
3. How much effort do customers have to put in when solving their problems with the organisation?

An appreciation of customers' reactions towards the products and services offered by the organisation goes a long way to help the organisation make more profitable business decisions; producing and offering better products and services to meet clients' needs more strategically and also boosts positive energy in employee interactions with customers.

The importance of employee satisfaction in measuring organisational performance is reflected in the words of Hosmer (2001), thus: "because human resources are characterized by the highest degree of restraint, attracting and retaining employees quality is a critical issue for competitive advantage and organizational performance". Also Surujlal & Singh(2003); Yee et al. (2008), gave credence to this in a research which showed that in addition to its positive influence on workplace efficiency and productivity, employee satisfaction also acts as a stimulant for employee confidence and commitment. Goslin (2005), also agrees that "satisfied employees have higher retention rates and are more productive" (p.4). As aptly stated by Reichheld (1993), "A few percent reduction in employee turnover rate may have as a result, an increase in profitability by 50%" (p.3).

## **2.6 Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance**

Leadership styles employed within organizations have very clear implications which cannot be ignored. Van Wart, 2003 carefully outlined this truism by stating thus:

*Effective leadership provides higher quality and more efficient goods and services; it provides a sense of cohesiveness, personal development, and higher levels of satisfaction among those conducting the work; and it provides an overarching sense of direction and vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a resource for invigorating the organizational culture.*

As aptly put by Venkataraman (1997), "Today's intensive, dynamic markets feature innovation-based competition, price/performance rivalry, decreasing returns, and the creative destruction of existing competencies..." It has however been suggested by intellectuals and researchers alike that when such challenges as mentioned above arise, organisations can still boost and enhance performance by focusing on adopting effective leadership behaviours. Findings of previous research also lead to the anticipation that leadership styles employed in organisations will have a significant influence on levels of satisfaction derivable by the customers, employees, and also on profitability.

According to Zhu et al. (2005), leadership remains a major driving force which can give organisational performance a positive turn. Research findings of McGrath and MacMillan

(2000) also report that “there is significant relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance”. Effective leadership can be regarded to be potent bedrock for organizational growth as well as a continued competitive edge necessary in the attainment of improved organizational performance.

According to Terry (1960), Success in business management is usually ascribed to the degree of efficiency in leadership; that is, the leadership style employed by supervisors and administrative managers. Research results showed that the leadership style used by supervisors and managers influence organizational performance significantly. In the light of this, leadership styles ought to be appropriately and flexibly applied with the aim of guiding and motivating subordinates towards goal accomplishment (Elenkov, 2002).

### 3.0 Research Methodology

In this study, the cross-sectional survey approach, which is an arm of the quasi-experimental design was employed. Out of the 24 registered deposit money banks operational in Port Harcourt city, five banks were selected as our target population for study. The research instrument which is the structured questionnaire was distributed to the total target population in the selected banks, which comprised 72 middle level management employees. However, on retrieval, 56 copies of questionnaire which amounted to 82% of initial amount distributed were error-free and useable for analysis.

In this study, the dependent variable (organizational performance) and independent variables (leadership styles) were operationally measured using the ordinal scale. The Likert Scale was used to rank responses gotten; weight values were assigned on the modified 5-point scale thus: Strongly Agree =5, Agree =4, Undecided =3, Disagree =2, Strongly Disagree =1. This prompted the use of the Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient statistical tool for analysis of data.

### 4.0 Results and Discussions

Here, the previously stated hypothesis is tested. In this work, we adopt a 0.05 level of significance which will serve as a basis to either accept or reject the null hypothesis.

**Table 4.1 Hypotheses Testing**

			Task	Profit	Customer	Employee
Spearman's rho	Task	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.732	.502	.620
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	56	56	56	56
	Profit	Correlation Coefficient	.732	1.000	.660	.525
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.	.000
		N	56	56	56	56
	Customer	Correlation Coefficient	.502	.660	1.000	.619
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.
		N	56	56	56	56
	Employee	Correlation Coefficient	.620	.525	.619	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	56	56	56	56

Source: Research survey, 2017

Table 4.1 above illustrates the output tests for hypotheses Ho<sub>1</sub>, Ho<sub>2</sub> and Ho<sub>3</sub>. The result of the analysis shows that there is a significant relationship as Rho = 0.732, 0.505 and 0.620 for Ho<sub>1</sub>, Ho<sub>2</sub> and Ho<sub>3</sub> respectively with P value=0.000. Based on the decision rule using the 0.05 level of significance, we reject the null hypotheses which states that the Task-oriented Leadership do not have a significant relationship with the measures of organizational performance (profitability, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction) and accept the alternatives.

**Table 4.2 Hypotheses Testing**

			People	Profit	Customer	Employee
Spearman's rho	People	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.442	.873	.774
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	56	56	56	56
	Profit	Correlation Coefficient	.442	1.000	.660	.525
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.	.000
		N	56	56	56	56
	Customer	Correlation Coefficient	.873	.660	1.000	.619
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.
		N	56	56	56	56
	Employee	Correlation Coefficient	.774	.525	.619	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	56	56	56	56

Source: Research survey, 2017

Table 4.2 above illustrates the output tests for hypotheses Ho<sub>1</sub>, Ho<sub>2</sub> and Ho<sub>3</sub>. The result of the analysis shows that there is a significant relationship as Rho = 0.442, 0.873 and 0.774 for Ho<sub>4</sub>, Ho<sub>5</sub> and Ho<sub>6</sub> respectively with P value=0.000. Based on the decision rule using the 0.05 level of significance, we reject the null hypotheses which states that the People-Oriented Leadership do not have a significant relationship with the measures of organizational performance (profitability, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction) and accept the alternatives.

#### 4.1 Discussion of Findings

Our findings show a significant and strong relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance. This agrees with the argument of Barling et al., (1996); Berson et al., (2001); Zacharatos et al., (2000) that the style of leadership adopted influences the achievement of organizational goals as well as performance among subordinates. The findings also show that all two measures of leadership styles, namely – task-oriented leadership and people-oriented leadership significantly correlate with organizational performance, thereby influencing outcomes such as profitability, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.

## **5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, we put forward the following conclusion:

Task-oriented leadership, which highlights majorly the power and authority of the leader, is an antecedent to levels of organizational performance and has been revealed to substantially influence measures of performance such as profitability, customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.

People-oriented leadership, given its tendency for charisma and likeability as a result of its level of commune and relations with subordinates, is significantly associated with organizational performance and enhances performance measures such as profitability, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction.

### **5.1 Recommendations**

In view of the research analysis and conclusions above, the following recommendations are put forward:

- Leadership styles should be employed flexibly and skilfully based on the forces in the leader, the forces in the subordinate and the forces in the situation for optimal results.
- Leadership should allow for participation and create room for workers innovativeness and contributions towards the pursuit of the organizations goals and objectives. Not only would this offer a varied array of alternatives for the achievement of organizational goals, it would also enable a more cooperative workplace and enhanced working relations.
- The organizational atmosphere should be structured by management in such a way that supports, appreciates and recognizes workers contributions and roles towards the realization of organisational goals and objectives.

### **5.2 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Similar studies should be conducted within other socio-contextual environments, industries and geographical settings. This would allow for more insight as regards the interplay of the variables within these differing environments and contexts and further generalize findings.

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