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PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AS A PANACEA FOR GOOD EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A BANKING CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Perceived Organization Prestige (POS) defines how employees feel that the organization(s) they work in appreciate and value their effort, and hence determines their performance and that of the organization at large. Therefore, this study examined POS as measured by employee recognition and how it impacts employees' task performance in selected deposit money banks in Southeast Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted by the study. A total of 10 banks were selected for this study with a population of 789 and it had a sample size of 257. A structured questionnaire was used in data collection and analyzed using correlation analysis, while the hypothesis was tested at a 5% level of significance. Findings showed that employee recognition has a statistically significant positive nexus with task performance in the selected

deposit money banks in South East Nigeria ($r = .974$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). It is, therefore, concluded that POS is positively and significantly related to employee task performance. The study recommended that the management of the studied banks need to be recognizing exceptional performance in the presence of others as it will motivate them to continue while encouraging others to put in more effort so as to also get recognized.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Employee Task Performance, Employee Recognition, Banks and Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Banks are important for the functioning of many economies of the world, the same thing goes for the economy of states in the Southeast region of Nigeria. However, for these banks to function optimally, the services of employees are required to come and fill numerous positions, both strategic and operational positions, hence, the banks most times jostle for the best brains in the labour market. However, attracting employees is just a part of the whole gamut of human resource management in organizations, keeping the employees in the organization for a long time, especially the exceptional employees is another very important part altogether. But, making the employees function at an optimum level is perhaps the most important and sometimes herculean task of organizations and their management.

Many organizations have come to the realization that spurring employees to perform well holds the key to creating a competitive edge. This is even more so in the very competitive banking sector, where banks try to outmuscle and outcompete others. To achieve this, some banks design unique strategies to motivate and keep their employees on their toes. This was the position of Salau (2022) who opines that organizations have come to realise that developing a distinctive dynamic characteristic to have a competitive advantage in order to survive the complex, dynamic and turbulent business environment is salient to their survival. The strategy that has proven to work most times to make the employees perform well and keep them within the organization without seeking employment elsewhere is perceived organizational support (POS). Colakoglu, Culha and Atay (2010) capture it thus: POS is one of the most significant organizational constructs that embeds employees in the firm since it has come to be known for increasing job satisfaction and the organisational commitment and task performance of workers. Perceived organizational support (POS) explains how the employees of an organization feel that the firm cares and values them; the extent to which employees evaluate the kind of support they get from the firm where they work. It points to organizational value for employees, their contributions, and concern for their well-being (Loi, Ao, Olivia & Xu, 2014). Jayasree and Sheela (2012) opine that it is an employee's belief that the organization cares for and values his or her contribution to the success of the organization. It is the extent to which employees perceive that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Guan, Sun, Hou, Zhao, & Luan, 2014). Kim et al. (2020) state that it is the level at which organisation values and cares for its employees, actively help them when problems arise and are proud of their achievements.

How employees feel concerning the support they receive from their organization is tied to how they will perform their tasks. This was corroborated by Krishhan and Mary (2012), who explicate that the support employees perceive has a positive nexus to several outcomes such as

conscientiousness in carrying out conventional job responsibilities, employee commitment and job satisfaction. Similarly, Furianiskurlina, Muhamamad, Erina, Alfina, Ratih and Angelita (2022) aver that the support provided by the organization is a source of enthusiasm in carrying out their tasks. It has a direct and indirect impact on employee attitude towards their task engagement in the organization (Hakkak, Gashti, & Nawaser, 2014).

Task performance is crucial for organizations such as banks, to meet up with their targets, and employees play a great role in this regard. Seeing that POS have in the past been fingered as having a great influence on how workers perform, this work, therefore, becomes necessary to empirically examine POS as measured by employee recognition and how it impacts employees' task performance in selected deposit money banks in southeast Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Perceived Organizational Support

The concept of perceived organisational support (POS) was formally recognised as a salient construct in the organisational context in the US by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson and Sowa in 1986 (Wójcik-Karpacz, Karpacz & Ingram, 2020). Since then, it has occupied an important place in organizational and management studies. It is seen as the belief of employees about how the organization and its representative care about them and look after their wellbeing. According to Erdogan and Enders (2007), it refers to the degree to which employees believe that the organization and its management care about them, value their input and provide them with help and support. Similarly, Islam, Ahmed and Ahmad (2015) opine that POS is the level of employee trust, that the organization cares about them, respects their input, and provides support and assistance with regard to evaluating their contributions and caring about their welfare.

POS is employee-centric, that is, it deals with employees and how they interpret how the organization they work for value and appreciate their effort and offer them support when they need it. It is the level of employee trust in organizations that they care about their problems, are willing to help them and support their endeavours both within and outside the organization (Islam et al. 2015). It is how much the employees perceive that the organisation values their contributions and cares about them (Allen, Armstrong, Reid & Riemenschneider, 2008). It is the extent to which an employer respects employee contributions and cares for their welfare (Miao, Sun & Liu, 2012; Ahmed and Nawaz, 2015).

The way and manner the employees will interpret these caring attitudes of their employers will depend on how the organization and management do certain things, including how they reward the employees and recognize their effort, how seriously the management of the organization takes their training and development among others. Beheshtifar, Ali-Nezhad and Nekoie-Moghadam (2012) capture it thus, employees' perception of organizational attitude regarding their support is based on organizational employee caring activities such as rewarding employees' contribution, employee well-being programs and opportunities for employees to have participation in key organizational decisions and recognizing good performance or attitude of workers. This support could also take the form of a fair attitude, adequate income, favourable work arrangements and opportunities to engage in decision-making. Others are opportunities for a career, recognition of performance and achievement, support of colleagues, and sound managerial relationships (leadership support) (Ahmed & Nawaz, 2015; Sarfraz, Qun, Sarwar,

Abdullah, Imran & Shafique, 2019). Such perceived support could spur the employees to greater performance at the workplace (Ali, 2009).

Employee Recognition

Employees work in organizations most times based on what they are told to do and they expect a reward in return for doing that which they are expected to do in terms of salaries and or wages. But beyond salaries and wages, they also expect the organization to do other things that can motivate them to do more, and one of such thing is recognition. Recognition gives employees some sort of intrinsic satisfaction and motivation to soldier on and put in their best. It makes employees feel appreciated and wanted and hence, forms part of the ways organizations can show support to their employees.

Citing the importance of recognition in the dynamics of POS were Gede and Desak (2019), who opine that when employees feel that they get support from organizations such as respect, caring, and recognition, they get inspiration and encouragement to commit to working wholeheartedly. Similarly, Colakoglu et al., (2010) while defining POS state that it reflects how much the organization shows their concern for employees' need and their recognition of employees' achievements. So, employees want to get paid for their job, but also want some form of recognition which could come in different ways such as an award, praise in front of colleagues, cash price for best performance and others.

Task Performance

Before exploring the concept of task performance, it is pertinent to look at the concept of performance in an organizational context first. Performance according to Mangkuprawira and Hubeis (2007), is the result of a certain work process in a planned manner at the time and place of the employee and the organization concerned. It is the acquisition of results that the company can achieve in a certain period, both for profit-oriented and non-profit firms (Ozbilgin, 2020). It is the result of work achieved by someone in carrying out a task given based on their ability and experience in working (Salau, 2022).

Connecting employees to the performance concept, it can be said to be how employees execute their duties in an organization. Mangkunegara (2006) expresses employee performance in terms of output, efficiency and effectiveness in the productivity of employees. It is the quality and quantity of work which is achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties according to responsibilities (Moeheriono 2012). According to Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2012), it is a behaviour that is consistent with role expectations which contributes to organisational performance.

The evaluation of employee performance concerns the individual's behaviour in the workplace (Beltrán-Martín & Bou-Llugar 2018). It concerns the tasks, jobs and responsibilities which the organisation needs someone to do well (Groen, Wilderom & Wouters 2017). The way employees perform the tasks they are given, therefore, defines their task performance. Every employee is given a particular task or group of tasks to execute, how effectively and efficiently they execute such tasks determines their task performance. It also goes beyond determining the task performance of employees but also the success or otherwise of the organizations. This was corroborated by Salau (2022) who aver that employee task performance is a determining tool in achieving organizational goals since good performance is a step towards achieving organisational goals. Similarly, Moeheriono (2010) opines that the success of an organization can be said to depend on the task performance of the employees.

The task performance of employees is also determined by a host of things, an important part of which is POS as recognized by extant literature. Ikon and Nwoye (2019) opine that the amount of support employees perceive has been proven to influence employees' job attitudes and performance. Also, Wayne, Shore, Bommer and Tetrick (2002) explicate that POS reflects to a large extent the quality of the relationship between the organization and the strength of task performance of employees (Konijnenburg, 2010). In addition, Karatepe (2012) suggests that POS influences employee task performance. POS is the best predictor of subordinates' performance and job satisfaction (Wen, Huang & Hou, 2019). It promotes favourable outcomes such as high job satisfaction, low turnover, positive emotions and better task performance (Yu & Frenkel 2013). Staff perception of support from the organization results in many positive results such as increased commitment, loyalty and better task performance (Imran, & Aldaas, 2020)

METHODS

The survey research design is the most suitable for this work because the data collection is from a sampled respondent using a questionnaire, hence, making the survey design perfect for this work. The area of the study is South East Nigeria, comprising five states (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo State). A total of 10 banks were selected for this study, two each from the five states and the population of the study is 789. The sample size of the study was arrived at using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination formula and the number arrived at 257. A structured questionnaire with 8 questionnaire items, 4 each for the dependent and independent variable was used to collect data from the respondents. A total of 245 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of the 257 copies distributed, and 240 copies were finally used for the data analysis which was done using correlation analysis as the study sort sought to examine the relationship existing between the variables of the study. The hypothesis was tested at a 5% level of significance, signifying a 95% confidence level.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1

Employee Recognition and Task Performance Distribution of Responses

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean
Employee Recognition							
1	I like being cheered by others in my organization.	120	78	3	38	-	4.16
2	Making me feel special is important to me in my job	90	75	-	65	10	3.71
3	When my performance is appreciated, it gives me confidence.	80	81	19	39	21	3.67
4	I prefer doing my things without being noticed.	19	100	-	78	43	2.89
Task Performance							
5	I work better when appreciated.	86	121	-	33	-	4.08
6	For me to put in my best, I love being recognized for my previous performance.	101	84	-	45	10	3.92
7	My performance is not tied to anything other than my salary.	19	89	05	70	57	2.76
8	I get motivated to go the extra mile when appreciated by the management of my firm.	77	102	03	34	24	3.73

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses for employee recognition as a measure of POS and task performance. The analysis here was done using mean, with a benchmark of acceptance of 3. Looking at the Table, it will be seen that all the questionnaire items are accepted as a result

of having an individual mean of 3 and above, except for questionnaire items 4 and 7 whose means are less than 3 and, therefore, rejected.

Test of Hypothesis

H_{a1}: Employee recognition has a significant nexus with task performance in selected deposit money banks in South East Nigeria.

Table 2
Correlation Analysis for Hypothesis One

		EMPREC	TASKPERF
EMPREC	Pearson Correlation	1	.974**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	240	240
TASKPERF	Pearson Correlation	.974**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	240	240

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Where:

EMPRECO = Employee Recognition

TASKPERF = Task Performance

Table 2 shows the correlation analysis carried out for the hypothesis which states that employee recognition has a significant nexus with task performance in selected deposit money banks in South East Nigeria. From the Table, the correlation coefficient is .974 and the P-value as represented by sig is .000 which is less than .05. Hence, the alternate hypothesis is accepted and it is stated that employee recognition has a statistically significant positive nexus with task performance in selected deposit money banks in South East Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

The perception of support received by employees in organizations is very crucial to the performance of not just the employees but also the organization in general. This is because it has been observed to trigger and spur the employees to perform better. The support perceived and received by employees can come in different ways, recognizing exceptional performers and appreciating them with gifts and awards is one of such way, and goes a long way in making the employees perform their tasks better. On the strength of the findings of this study, it is concluded that POS is positively and significantly related to employee task performance.

Recommendation

The study recommends that:

- a) The management of the studied banks needs to be recognizing exceptional employees in the presence of others as it will motivate the outstanding performers to continue while encouraging others to put in more effort so as to also get recognized.

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