

**MENTORSHIP AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN PORT
HARCOURT**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between mentorship and employee performance of commercial banks in Port Harcourt. The study reviewed mentorship and employee performance and anchored the work on Herzberg two factor theory of motivation and the Goal-Setting theory. From reviewed literature, it was observed that mentorship serves as a strength and reliable internal conduit for the acquisition and development of skill both for the immediate and future placement of experienced, skillful, and organizational oriented work force. Hence, performance is spurred as they perceived a strong feeling of having a stake and citizenship in the organization. Were opportunity for growth and exhibition of creative might are made ready and planned for in the organization. The study concludes that the use of mentorship program is characterized by the presence of and use of understudy, coaching and roleplay in order for the employees to work effectively around commercial banks are viable ways to achieve work accuracy, quality service delivery and work quality. Trending mentorship program in commercial banks is characterized by the adoption of understudy, coaching and roleplay to promote the performance of employees. It becomes necessary on commercial banks to make adequate provisions of leadership style such as transformational leadership style and visionary leadership style etc. to create an enabling environment for mentorship to be effective, thereby enhancing the performance of their employees.

Keywords: Mentorship, Coaching, Employee Performance, Leadership Style

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian banking sector is marked by intense competition, ever-evolving customer demands, and the imperative of operational efficiency. To authenticate this claim, Banjoko (2018) asserted that one of the most fearsome challenges faced by workers in commercial banks in Rivers State, Nigeria currently appears to be job security. Ineffective mentorship programs and inadequate support systems hinder employee growth, leading to suboptimal performance, low job satisfaction, and high turnover rates within the organization. The researcher has observed that across some commercial banks in Rivers State, there appears to be dearth of understudy, coaching and role play, among others, which all point to the absence of employee performance. The organization requires a reinforced workforce that would be able to actualize their goals and objectives effectively and efficiently, and to also ensure that the vision of the organization is sustained. However, there is a drift in employee commitment towards actualization of these goals and objectives. This is due to the apparent problems militating smooth performance of task, such as: Inability of superior staff to allow subordinate to understudy him, Inability of management to inculcate coaching practice, and the absence of role-playing in the studied organization.

Another issue that necessitated this study is the dearth of research work on the relationship between mentorship and employee performance. Evidently, Paul (2014) assessed the impact of working environment on employees' performance at Institute of Finance Management in Dar es Salaam Region; Joseph *et al.* (2019) assessed the effect of employees' remunerations on productivity in the Nigerian Breweries Plc.; Tafamel and Akrawah (2019) examined the role of organizational justice on employee commitment in Nigerian Universities; and Seniwoliba (2015) investigated equitable pay as an antecedent of work performance and job satisfaction (experience from university for

development studies). However, none of these studies provided empirical evidence on how mentorship such as understudy, coaching and role play correlate with employee performance of Commercial Banks in Rivers State.

However, this research on mentorship and employee performance of commercial Banks in Rivers State is seriously begging for research effort. These are the identified contributory problems that require solutions for efficient operation and productive performance in the organization. Despite the above listed studies, it is clear that none studied mentorship and employee performance specifically in Commercial Banks in Rivers State. None of the studies adopted the same dimension, measures and indicators as presented in the conceptual framework overleaf

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework showing the measures as well as their dimensions. The independent variable is Mentorship, while the dependent variable is Employee Performance.

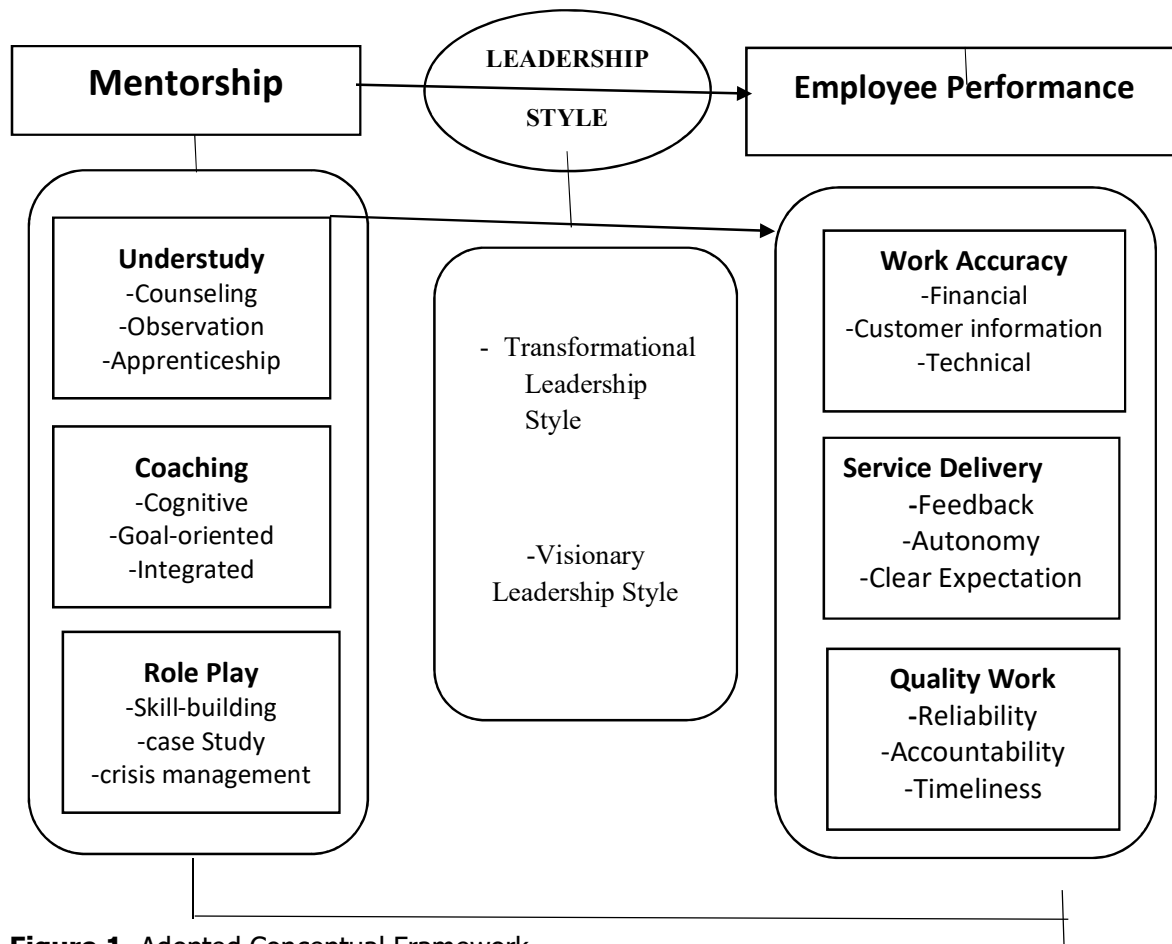


Figure 1. Adopted Conceptual Framework

Source: (Singer, et al, 2020), and Researcher’s conceptualization in liaison with Supervisor (2024)

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between mentorship and employee performance of commercial banks in Port Harcourt. Specifically, the objectives to achieve were:

1. To determine the relationship between understudy and work accuracy of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.

2. To determine the relationship between understudy and service delivery of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
3. To determine the relationship between understudy and work quality of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
4. To determine the relationship between coaching and work accuracy of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
5. To determine the relationship between coaching and service delivery of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
6. To determine the relationship between coaching and work quality of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
7. To determine the relationship between role-playing and work accuracy of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
8. To determine the relationship between role-playing and service delivery of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
9. To determine the relationship between role-playing and work quality of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.
10. To determine how organizational culture influences the relationship between Mentorship and Employee Performance of Commercial Banks in Port Harcourt.

Concept of Mentorship

Mentorship was defined as an exchange of knowledge and experience between mentor and mentee (cf. Ahlström, Citation2007; Olsson, Citation2008). Further, mentorship is described as a democratic process where thoughts, reflections and knowledge are made deeper (Hultman & Sobel, Citation2013; Lauvås & Handal, Citation2015; Lindgren & Morberg, Citation2012).The concept of mentorship dates back to Greek mythology, emphasizing the importance of guiding individuals without imposing one's own image on them. Mentorship is a structured process where an experienced individual guides another to foster personal and professional growth. Mentorship is the patronage, influence, guidance, or direction given by a mentor. A mentor is someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person Mentorship is used in organization to help employee acquire and develop their skill for effective and efficient performance of their job. It involves sharing knowledge, skills, and experiences to empower the mentee in achieving organizational goals and personal development. Often times, training and education are used interchangeably, but there exists a distinct difference. Training teaches the trainee on the specific rules, methods, techniques and means for performing a specialized task; while, education instructs on a more general knowledge of human and socio-environmental system. Ekamper (2013) defined training as methods used to give new or present employee the skill, they need to perform their job. For example, training might mean showing a new web designer the intricacies of your site, a new sales man how to sell your firm's product, or a new supervisor how to fill out the firm's weekly payroll timesheets. It is important to note that, having high-potential employees does not guarantee that they will be successful on their job. Thus, they must be taught and know what you want them to achieve and how to do what you want them to do; if not, they will do the job their own way.

For mentorship program to be effective, a care analysis of training needs had to be identified as to determine the type of training to be administered. It might depend on whether to train new or current employees. The reason for analyzing new employees training need is to determine what the job requires and to break it down into subtasks for effective teaching and learning. Analyzing current employee training needs can be cumbersome, since you have the added task of deciding whether training is the solution. For example, employee's performance may be poor, reason been that the standards are not clear enough for them to understand, or for the simple reason, that the employee is not motivated, thereby affecting his performance and commitment. However, task analysis is used to determine new employees training needs. Task analysis is a detailed study of the job to determine

what specific skills the job requires. The easiest means available to effectively analyze a task is the use of job description and job specification methods. They list out or outline the job, specify duties and skills, and further provide the basic reference point in determining the training required. Also, training need can be discovered through performance appraisal, review of performance standards, and questioning current job holders and their supervisors (Musa & Semasinghe, 2014).

Mentorship and Training are meaningless if the trainee (employee) lack commitment, lack the ability, or there is no motivation to benefit from it. In terms of commitment, the trainee should be able to determine why he should be trained and his relevance to the organization, either for the immediate or future purposes. The trainee needs ability, the readiness, willingness, the required educational level, intelligence, and knowledge base. Effective employee selection is crucial here, but it can be overcome by using simple task from the training program to help decide or eliminate who will and will not proceed on to training. Employers should adopt positive strategies to increase employees' motivation to learn. By providing opportunities for active practice, accommodating errors and exploring alternative solutions improves motivation and learning.

Employee Performance

Employee Performance is traced to the attitude of the employee, to the job he is hired for and the organization (Johnson, 2016). Individual comes to organization with certain needs, skills, expectations and he hope to find a work environment where he can use his ability to satisfy or in exchange for his needs. The commitment they exhibit is generally compatible with the dominant orientation of organizational behavior that views commitment as reflecting an employee's psychological attachment to an organization. Kuratko, (2015) opined that attachment may be to like other individuals in the organization (affiliation), to the organization as an entity (identification) or to its mission and values (internalization). The connection may be emotional (affective), or it may be derived from the individual's deeply-held beliefs (normative). Whatever the source, this type of commitment reflects a desire to be involved in the organization.

The focus on commitment to work includes the exploration of factors thought to serve as determinants such as: punctuality and regularity, timely completion of task, and goal attainment, social affiliation, performance. Leggett, (2017) codified that these variables tend to build workers (employees) perceptions or attitudes towards various aspects of their work experience. Employee commitment is relatively expressed with the term affective commitment (Masterson, 2011). Affective commitment is a process through which people (employee) express their emotional attachment to the job they are involved in to the extent that they can stretch beyond limits in order to give only that which is best. Affective commitment is fundamental for the effectiveness of any organization. Affective commitment as referred to by Onuoha, (2013), is an employee's emotional attachment to, and identification with the organization. He sees affective commitment as referring to an actor's attachment to, identification with, and involvement within the respective entity based on positive feelings of emotions toward the organization. It is a feeling of belonging and sense of psychological attachment to the target of commitment; they believed that it is a behavior that is primarily self-regulated rather than controlled by sanctions and pressures external to the individual.

Rollinson, (2017) posited that affective commitment is negatively related to absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover, and reduced output level and social-loafing. Kartz, (2016) in her study demonstrated that affective commitment is positively related to employee outcomes such as punctuality, regularity, self-regulated behavior, increased performance, minimal supervision, timely completion of task, goal attainment, high level of effort and an intention to stay with the company (retention). Affective commitment of an employee exhibit a sense of belonging and identification with the organization which increases his involvement with the organization's activities as a result, he finds it difficult to walk out on his employer in search of "better alternatives" because he is devoted to the organization and it appeals to him. In addition, Dauda, (2013) contributed that affectively committed employees care about the future and are willing to invest discretionary efforts. They feel a strong emotional bond to the organization that employs them, this is associated with

people demonstrating willingness to recommend the organization to others and commit time and effort to help the organization succeed. Also, they serve as brand ambassador of the organization. He further expressed that people perform better and are motivated by intrinsic factors (e.g personal growth, working to a common purpose, being a part of a larger process) rather than simply focusing on extrinsic factors (e.g pay/reward) which results in higher retention levels and productivity levels, and these could be stimulated in the worker through a carefully executed and regular training programs or activities in an organization.

Concept of Leadership Style

Leadership and leadership style are pivotal in shaping the culture, performance, and success of commercial banks in Port Harcourt. These concepts are multifaceted and can be defined and understood from various perspectives. Leadership is the capacity of an organization's management to set and achieve challenging goals, take fast and decisive action when needed, outperform the competition, and inspire others to perform at the highest level they can. In commercial banks, effective leadership involves steering employees towards excellence in service delivery and operational efficiency (Adamu, 2020). Leaders use their influence to inspire trust and commitment, fostering a productive work environment. Leadership provides direction for an organization and its workers. Leadership involves showing employees how to effectively perform their responsibilities and regularly supervising the completion of their tasks. Visionary leaders in banks articulate clear, strategic goals that align with the institution's mission, encouraging employees to contribute meaningfully to these long-term objectives (Nwachukwu, 2019). Leadership involves making critical decisions that affect the direction and functioning of the organization. In the banking sector, leaders must make informed choices about financial strategies, risk management, and customer relations, balancing short-term needs with long-term growth (Eze, 2021). Leadership style refers to the specific behaviors and methods leaders use to manage and interact with their teams. This includes how they communicate, motivate, and handle conflicts. For instance, a laissez-faire leadership style in banks allows employees autonomy, fostering innovation but requiring self-motivation and discipline (Okafor, 2020). Leadership styles refer to the behavioral approach employed by leaders to influence, motivate, and direct their followers. A leadership style determines how leaders implement plans and strategies to accomplish given objectives while accounting for stakeholder expectations and the wellbeing and soundness of their team.

In the changing environment of commercial banks in Port Harcourt, these varied definitions of leadership and leadership styles underscore the importance of adaptability and contextual awareness. Effective leaders must be able to switch between styles as needed, ensuring that they meet both the immediate operational needs and the long-term strategic goals of the bank. For instance, during periods of stability, a democratic or laissez-faire style may be beneficial for fostering innovation and employee satisfaction. Conversely, in times of crisis or significant change, transformational or autocratic leadership might be necessary to provide clear direction and maintain stability. In essence, leadership and leadership style are complex, multifaceted concepts that play a crucial role in the success of deposit money banks in Rivers State. By understanding and effectively applying different leadership styles, bank leaders can enhance organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and overall success.

Leadership style in commercial banks in Port Harcourt is a pivotal element that shapes organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and overall success. Leadership style refers to the manner in which leaders guide, motivate, and manage their teams. Various leadership styles impact the operational efficiency, morale, and productivity of bank employees differently. Understanding and applying the appropriate leadership style is essential for achieving organizational goals and maintaining a positive work environment. In the banking sector, leadership styles are crucial in navigating the complexities of financial services, regulatory compliance, and customer relations. Leaders in deposit money banks must possess the ability to adapt their style to suit the dynamic banking environment and the diverse needs of their employees. Among the numerous leadership

styles, some commonly recognized ones include transformational leadership, transactional leadership, autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and visionary leadership. In deposit money banks in Rivers State, the effectiveness of leadership styles can vary depending on the organizational context and specific challenges faced by the bank. Effective leadership often involves blending different styles to suit the needs of the organization and its employees. For instance, democratic leadership, which allows a leader to make decisions based on the input received from team members. It is a collaborative and consultative leadership style where each team member has an opportunity to contribute to the direction of ongoing projects. Autocratic leadership, which involves making decisions unilaterally, and democratic leadership, which encourages employee participation in decision-making, can also be employed selectively to address particular situations. In essence, leadership style is a vital component of organizational success in commercial banks in Port Harcourt. transformational and visionary leadership styles each offer unique benefits and challenges. The most effective leaders are those who can adapt their approach to the evolving needs of their organization, blending different styles to create a supportive, innovative, and high-performing work environment. Understanding and implementing the right leadership style can lead to improved employee satisfaction, enhanced productivity, and overall organizational success.

Theoretical Review

The study will anchor on Herzberg two factor theory of motivation and the Goal-Setting theory. The Herzberg two factor theory was propounded by Fredrick Herzberg in 1959, while the Goal-setting theory was propounded by Edwin A. Locke in 1968.

Herzberg two factor theory of motivation is an important theory in the human and behavior school of thought that stimulates workers commitment in the work place or the environment. This theory was propounded by Frederick Herzberg in 1959, which was developed out of research with the sole purposes of ascertaining the factors that influences workers commitment (satisfaction) on the job. He conducted that in reality to two distinct categories of motivational factors exist:

- i. Hygiene factors which consist of dissatisfaction to no dissatisfaction. The variables in the factor includes: pay, job security, company policies, working conditions, fringe benefits, and interpersonal relations which are all external to the job.
- ii. This category is what he called motivators. The variables for ranges from no satisfaction to job satisfaction also known as content factors. The variables consist of: challenging job, recognition for accomplishment, opportunities for growth and advancement, feelings of achievement, increase responsibility, and the job itself. Sheppard, (2014) in his opinion, he asserted that both categories serve to motivate workers to greater higher and increase (commitment) performance on the job. However, he alluded to the fact that, in both hygiene and motivator, manager actions should be focused on job content for effective motivation of employees.

In relation to this study, Herzberg two factor theory was chosen with particular or special interest on his assumptions for motivators or content factors, because it gives a clear understanding and insight to managerial responsibilities for increased and improved workers commitment in the organization. Hence, training is a managerial responsibility aimed at stimulating the internal variables of the content factors of the Herzberg theory which tend to motivate and influences employee commitment on the job (Zepeda, et al 2012). The practicality in applying the theory on problems observed in the study organization are suggestive of the objectives stated for in the study.

Also, Skinner's Reinforcement theory of motivation is one of the theories that focus on human motivation. Reinforcement theory was theorized by American social philosopher, psychologist and a behaviorist called Burohus Frederic Shinner in 1957.

Korn (2017) the theory was based on the principles of causality and knowledge that a worker's behavior is regulated by the type of reward (intrinsic and extrinsic) that he receives.

The theory does not place much emphasis on personality traits, but focuses on behavior under three basic assumptions:

- i. Reward for positive behavior reinforces positive behavior.
- ii. Punishment for negative behavior weakens negative behavior.
- iii. If there is no reward or punishment, behavior is fading.

The result of this theory revealed that incentives, both intrinsic and extrinsic are major factors for worker's reinforcement or commitment to organizations' goal and vision. In accordance to Khumalo, and Harris, (2014) in his view, the result revealed that, if an organization wants to weaken any behavior, punishment will serve as an effective tool to apply. The theory also posits that, time interval for gathering rewards should be meaningful as possible.

In relation to this study, the theory brought to bear both positive and negative dimension for motivating employee. Mentorship is an intrinsic form of reinforcing employee commitment to the job he is hired to perform in the organization; hence, the theory satisfied the objectives for which the study achieved.

CONCLUSION

From reviewed literature, it was observed that mentorship serves as a strength and reliable internal conduit for the acquisition and development of skill both for the immediate and future placement of experienced, skillful, and organizational oriented work force. Hence, performance is spurred as they perceived a strong feeling of having a stake and citizenship in the organization. Were opportunity for growth and exhibition of creative might are made ready and planned for in the organization. The significant relationship of the studied variables would be better correlated by conducting an empirical study that would satisfy the objectives for extensive generalization. or

Based on the results of the analyses and discussion of findings, the study concludes that the use of mentorship program is characterized by the presence of and use of understudy, coaching and roleplay in order for the employees to work effectively around commercial banks are viable ways to achieve work accuracy, quality service delivery and work quality. Trending mentorship program in commercial banks is characterized by the adoption of understudy, coaching and roleplay to promote the performance of employees. It becomes necessary on commercial banks to make adequate provisions of leadership style such as transformational leadership style and visionary leadership style etc. to create an enabling environment for mentorship to be effective, thereby enhancing the performance of their employees.

RECOMMENDATION

Organizations have choices regarding how to recruit, identify, and develop their workers for increase commitment to work. Hence, based on the reviewed literature and findings of the study, the paper further recommended the following:

1. Organizations should be specific and adhere to the right skills they want to attract during recruitment.
2. Management should always make provisions for junior staff to understudy the senior staff in commercial banks.
3. Observation should be used by employees of commercial banks to enhance their creativity and innovativeness, hence promoting their performance, among other things.
4. Management of commercial banks should ensure employees undergo adequate training from time to time in order to enable them adapt and be profitable in utilizing mentorship, thereby promoting their job performance.
5. Organizations should be specific and adhere to the right skills they want to attract during recruitment.
6. A detailed and well-planned mentorship program should be emphasized in organizations that hope to care for the future their organization.

7. Equity and fairness should be the index for enlisting workers for training, and rewarding outstanding performance
8. Employees of commercial banks should rigorously adopt the culture of using crises management among themselves, so as to ensure that this translates into work quality, work accuracy and service delivery.
9. Management of commercial banks and other organization should adopt goal-oriented coaching in mentoring employees, so as to ensure that everybody work towards the actualization of the organizational goals and objectives.

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