

## ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIAN BANKING SECTOR

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### ABSTRACT

**T**his paper examined the relationship between organizational culture and employee performance in the Nigerian banking sector. The research made use of leadership styles, employee training, work process, and employee commitment as the dimensions of organizational culture. The study analysed primary data from field survey using the questionnaire instrument. The sample size for the study consisted of 392 employees drawn through convenience and systematic sampling techniques among employees of First Bank, Access Bank, Zenith Bank, Fidelity Bank, First City Monument Bank, United Bank for Africa, Diamond Bank and Guaranty Trust Bank, Nigeria. The model parameters used in the framework were estimated using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). Collected data were analysed using SPSS 22.0 by running both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings from the study revealed that there is a high level of organizational culture practices in the Nigerian banking sector. Organizational culture dimensions all had positive effects on employee's performance. Thus, the study recommended that firms should adopt organizational culture that best enhances employee performance.

**Key Words:** Employee Commitment, Employee Performance, Employee Training, Leadership Styles, Organizational Culture, and Work Process

## Introduction

Organizations are a constituent of people with different ideological orientations, values, opinions, and attitudes coming together cooperatively to achieve a goal. It therefore implies that the belief system, goals, objectives, philosophies are all part of the corporate culture of any organization, which are learned by every member of the organization. Organizational culture is one of the essential tools in understanding the behaviour of people in organizations. It is a persuasive force that controls an employee's work life; the thread that binds the entire organization together.

Organizational performance involves engaging in recurring activities aimed at establishing organizational goals, monitoring progress toward the goals, and making adjustments to achieve those goals more effectively and efficiently (Păunescu, 2014). It also means having the different parts of an organization work together to achieve great results which are measured in terms of the value being delivered (Hopkins, 2004). The goal of organizational performance is getting all of these parts work in harmony.

There is a very high positive connection between organizational culture and performance in the Nigerian banking sphere. The stronger the strength of corporate culture, the greater the bank's performance is expected to be (Umobuarie, 2013). Banks are veritable institutions to demonstrate what organizational culture is. An important drift in managerial thinking in recent years has been one of encouraging managers to build strong organizational cultures (Devis, 2007). Employees do not function in a value-free milieu. They are governed, directed and tempered by the organization's culture. Therefore, organizations can only attain their goals by ensuring that their culture aligns with their performance management system (Agboola, 2013). In other words, employees' performance, which is key to the survival and continuity of any organizations exists at is at the heart of organizations' culture.

Agwu (2014) avers that organizational culture is an important concept that affects employee performance, profitability, attraction and retention of good and high performing employees. According to Alharbi and Alyahya (2013), proper understanding and deep knowledge of organizational culture will improve employees' performance. Omoniyi, Salau and Fadugba (2014) corroborate this view by affirming that organizational culture is fundamental to achieving results particularly employees' performance. In essence, organizational culture is significant as an approach for understanding organizational life of the employees in all its richness and variations.

The goals of the organization can be achieved through collaborative culture in the execution of organizational activities. Agwu (2014) admonishes that organizations focus on some key practices of organizational culture. This will enable employees to wield greater control and autonomy over their work, thereby increasing their performance, self-assurance and self-worth. It is against this backdrop, that this paper aims at examining some practices of organizational culture so as to ascertain their influence on the performance of the employees in the organization.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

It is widely acknowledged in current discussion of organizational performance that managers have to widen an understanding of their cultural settings if their organizations are to perform effectively (Hodgetts & Luthans, 2013; Agwu, 2014). Increased competition, globalization, and alliances have led to a greater need for a performance-based organizational culture. This has become necessary because organizations are saddled with a lot of management crises that stem from their organizational culture (Agwu, 2014). These problems tend to impede progress toward achieving high employees' performance.

A lot of attention has been given to organizational culture and related studies (Ojo, 2010; Omoniyi, Salau, & Fadugba, 2014). The extent of the relationship between organizational culture and employees' performance has been the subject of several researches in many fields, including management, organizational behaviour and industrial organizations (Ojo, 2010, Agboola, 2013, Alharbi & Alyahya, 2013; Omoniyi *et al*, 2014). Theoretical arguments as well as empirical evidence lend credence to the view that organizational culture is related to employees' performance (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Zheng, Yang & McLean, 2010; Ogbonna & Haris, 2000; Agwu, 2014; Omoniyi *et al*, 2014). However, Ojo (2010) argues that there is no clear conclusion on the exact relationship between organizational culture and employees' performance. Similarly, Ogbonna and Harris (2000) aver that despite many research works done in this area and contributions from various fields, there is no generally acceptable causal relationship between organizational culture and employees' performance. Therefore, more research is needed in understanding and establishing relationship between organizational culture and employees' performance.

Furthermore, there is indeed a expanding body of literature about questions of cultural influences on organizational behaviour (Bradley & Parker, 2001; Abu-Jarad, Yusof & Nikbin, 2010; Eccles, Ioannou & Serafeim, 2012). However, some of these papers consist of accounts and recommendations based on Western practice. Consequently, not much of extant literature on the impact of culture on employees' performance dwells on developing countries. This study was intended to tackle this paucity by empirically examining the impact of organizational culture on employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of this study was to determine the impact of organizational culture on employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector. The specific objectives were to ascertain if there was a significant relationship between:

1. leadership styles and employees' performance;
2. employee training and employees' performance;
3. work process and employees' performance; and
4. employee commitment and employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector.

#### **4. Hypotheses of the Study**

The study was guided by the following research hypotheses stated in the null form:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between leadership style and employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector;
- Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between work process and employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector;
- Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between work process and employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector; and
- Ho<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between employee commitment and employees' performance in the Nigerian banking sector.

#### **Research Framework**

Organizational culture practice is conceptualized as a four-dimensional construct. The four dimensions are leadership styles, training, work process and employees' commitment. Using literature support, the expected relationships among organizational culture practices and employees' performance were discussed.

#### **Organizational Culture**

The concept of culture is originally obtained from an image of the organization as 'something cultivated'. This suggests that the notion of culture is the environment and practices that organizations build around the management of people. In the views of Schein (2011), culture promotes values and statement of beliefs of an organization. Culture therefore, bestows on organizations a sense of identity and establishes, through the organization's rituals, legends, values, norms, meanings, beliefs, and languages, the manner in which functions are carried out.

Organizational culture is a system of shared meaning that members hold and distinguishes one organization from other organizations (Collins & Porras, 2000). Corroborating this view, Arnold (2005) avers that organizational culture is the unique beliefs, principles, ways of behaviour, and norms that coalesce to give each organization its distinctive character. The above definitions imply that organizational culture is to an organization what personality is to an individual.

Organizational culture offers a potent means for directing behaviour (Agwu, 2014). In essence, it influences how we view the world around us. Academic arguments hold up the notion that organizational culture is linked to organizational performance and long term effectiveness (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Zheng, Yang, & McLean, 2010). Zheng *et al*, (2010) claim that organizational culture is among key organizational assets that have been studied comprehensively in relation to organizational effectiveness. They opine that organizational culture fuel many activities that engender corporate success. Consequently, Hambrick, (2007) asserts that high performance organizations could be differentiated from low performance firms as they are characterised by certain cultural traits. Similarly, Omoniyet *al* (2014) allege that organizational culture possesses the potential to boost employee performance, workers' job satisfaction as well as engender a sense of certainty about problem solving at any time.

### **Leadership Style**

Mario (2012) examined the relationship between organizational culture and leadership styles in large firms in Croatia. A significant positive correlation was found between leadership styles and organizational culture. The study revealed that transformational leadership style was most productive than transactional leadership style.

### **Employee Training**

Kitson (2003) defines training as a learning activity that is designed for immediate impact, for the job that one does at present. The goal of training is to instil in the employee, the motivation and skills for which the organization can repose total confidence on the employee resulting from the latter's ability to respond and act in precisely the manner required (Hall, 1990). The knowledge and skills of workers acquired through training is vital in the face of the progressively more express changes in technology, products, competition, and systems of the business world.

In the view of Asamu (2013), organizations can develop to the point that employee who work in such organizations are supported to develop. According to the empirical study done by Ji, Huang, Liu, Zhu and Cai (2012), there is evident supporting the positive impact of employee developmental opportunities on organizational performance and other work outcomes. Similarly, Eldridge and Nisar (2006) emphasized that for employees to perform their jobs efficiently and effectively, they should acquire technical skills and solid knowledge through training. They affirmed that lack of on-going training would lead to their performing below expectation.

### **Work Process**

According to Jeffrey (2011), specific work process has insignificant impact except they are coherent element of a work system. In essence, workers involvement in problem solving committees may escalate performance if workers play active roles. Assurances of job security may be necessary to motivate workers to share the ideas that may increase productivity. Systems where employees' job assignment is flexible and workers participate in decision making are more effective and tend to function better in terms of performance.

### **Employee Commitment**

Employee commitment has always been an essential attitudinal predictor of firm performance (Ji Ji, Huang, Liu, Zhu, & Cai, (2012). From their research, it was stated that employees who demonstrate organizational commitment tend to be happier with their work, are less likely to leave the organization and spend less time away from their jobs. This connotes that when an employee exhibits moral commitment to an organization, there is the greater chance of retention, regular attendance, and enhanced productivity. Therefore, committed employees will perform better than the uncommitted employees. Similarly, Bulach, Lunenburg and Porter (2012) are of the view that organizational culture can promote commitment to the organization's values and philosophy.

## Employee Performance

Employee performance is a central variable in employment relation. Employee performance mirrors the extent of goal achievement among employees of the organization. The attainment of these goals and objectives depends on the organization's capacity to develop strategies aimed at fostering organizational performance (Ricardo and Wade, 2001). Cascio (2006), on the other hand, defined performance as the extent of achievement of the mission of the organization that develops an employee job. To this degree, individual performance is a core concept within work and organizational psychology. Reviewing the relationship between organizational culture and employee performance, Sorensen (2002), John and Saks (2005), and Dasanayake and Mahakalanda (2008) note that the relationship between cultural elements and employee performance have been inconsistent over time.

## Methodology

The study used the survey research design. It made use of primary data that were gathered through field survey using self-administered questionnaire. The data were sourced between April and May, 2017. The population of the study consists of employees of the Nigerian banking sector. A valid sampling size of three hundred and ninety-two (392) out of the four hundred (400) copies of questionnaires that were distributed. This gave a response rate of 98%. The convenience and systematic sampling techniques were used to select these banks: First Bank, Access Bank, Zenith Bank, Fidelity Bank, First City Monument Bank, United Bank for Africa, Diamond Bank, and Guaranty Trust Bank, The respondents were chosen based on accessibility and the level of knowledge of organizational culture practices in the Nigerian banking sector.

The instrument used for the data collection was a closed ended questionnaire designed for the subjects. It employed a five points modified form of Likert type scales with 1 = strongly disagree (SD), 2 = disagree (D), 3 = Undecided (U), 4 = agree(A), 5 = strongly agree (SA) to measure all the items.

Appendix A presents the multiple items representing each of the constructs. Collected data were analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics. All data were coded and the test analyses were done at 5% level of significance using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0.

## Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

The items on the questionnaire were face validated by senior colleagues in research area. Pilot study was conducted by testing and pre-testing the questionnaire with 20 randomly selected employees of the selected banks. Feedbacks were incorporated and questions were then revised. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of 36 closed-ended questions. To test reliability of the research instrument, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha as a diagnostic measure. It assesses the consistency of the entire scale. The results of the reliability analysis are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha

Construct	Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Organizational Culture Practices	Leadership Styles	5	0.724
	Training	12	0.801
	Work Process	7	0.785
	Commitment	6	0.779
	Employee Performance	6	0.842

**Source:** Researchers' computation based on the field survey 2017 using SPSS22.0

**Model Specification**

The model for the study was formulated as employee performance, a function of leadership style, training, work process, commitment. It was therefore stated functionally as:

$$EMP = f (LS, TR, WP, CO) \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Therefore, the model for the study is stated in econometrics term as:

$$EMP = \beta_0 + \beta_1LS + \beta_2TR + \beta_3WP + \beta_4CO + \varepsilon_t \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Where: EMP = Employee Performance; LS = Leadership Style; TR = Training; WP = Work Process; CO = Commitment;  $E_t$  = error term;  $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$  = coefficients of elasticity displaying degrees of explanation power about employee performance; and  $\beta_0$  = constant term.

And apriori expectations:  $\beta_1 > 0, \beta_2 > 0, \beta_3 > 0, \beta_4 > 0$ .

**Discussion of Findings**

Table2:Pearson’s CorrelationCoefficient for All Variables, 2017

	Mean	Std deviation	EMP	LS	TR	WP	CO
EMP	3.521	1.115	1.000				
LS	3.623	1.017	0.305	1.000			
TR	3.368	1.030	0.429	0.646	1.000		
WP	3.210	1.094	0.240	0.390	0.405	1.000	
CO	3.455	1.219	0.522	0.675	0.743	0.296	1.000

Table 2 presents the results of the inter-correlation among the variables. In Table 2, all the correlation statistics values are positive, indicating that these variables move in the same direction as employee performance. In essence, it shows that employee performance is significantly positively correlated with the independent variables on a 5% level of significance. It was also observed that LS, TR, WP, and CO variables in relation to employee performance did not exhibit multicollinearity since none of the variables has correlations in excess of 0.90 as suggested by Dwivedi (2008).

Table 2 also shows the means of the four dimensions of organizational culture practices: leadership style, training, work process, and commitment. The table reveals that firms emphasized more on leadership styles of the firms (mean=3.623) followed by staff commitment (mean=3.455), and the lowest components of organizational culture is work process (mean = 3.210). The average score for the four dimensions was 3.210. It can be seen that organizational culture with leadership styles helps to handle external adaptation and internal integration. The leadership styles as exemplified in a firm's culture could be critical to its performance. Given that the scale used a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree), it can be concluded that the firms in the Nigerian banking sector are highly committed to organizational culture practices above the average mean. Table 2 also shows the mean of the employee performance of the firms in the Nigerian banking sector. The table reveals that the firms have high employee performance with a mean of=3.521. Given that the scale used a 5-point scale it can be concluded that the firms have high employee performance above the average mean of 3.

The results of the estimated multiple regression model using OLS are presented in Table 3 below. The coefficient of determination (R-square) of 0.93 indicates that for the period under study, based on the

available data, leadership styles, employee training, work process, and employee commitment are able to account for 93% of the changes in employee performance of firms in the Nigerian banking sector with only 7% being explained by other variables which were not included in the study. The R squared value for the employee performance equation is very high at 0.93 which indicates highly impressive goodness of fit for the model. Apparently, the model is a good method for the estimates.

The F- Statistics of 10.045 with probability value of 0.000 signify that there was a simultaneous linear relationship between the dependent variable and all the explanatory variables combined. Thus, we reject the hypothesis of a non-linear simultaneous relationship between employee performance and all the explanatory variables combined. This implies that the joint effects of all the incorporated variables in the model are significant in explaining employee performance of firms in the Nigerian banking sector.

The results of the OLS analysis show support for all the alternate hypotheses. In essence, the regression results indicate that leadership style, employee training, work process, and employee commitment significantly affect employee performance in the Nigerian banking sector. Therefore, these results provide support for the assertion that organizational culture practices leads to improved employee performance.

Considering the degree to which the independent variables affect the dependent variable, the coefficient results showed that leadership styles has the most significant effect on employee performance ( $\beta_1=0.411$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), followed by employee commitment ( $\beta_4=0.393$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and the lowest significant effect on employee performance is work process ( $\beta_3=0.238$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This indicates that work process may not be a strong indicator of organizational culture practice compared to the other three dimensions. According to Jeffrey (2011), specific work process has limited or negligible impact unless they are coherent element of a work system.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Using Ordinary Least Square

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t- Statistics	P-value	Hypotheses
C	9.846	1.253	7.858	0.000	Significant
LS	0.411	0.087	4.699	0.000	Significant
TR	0.291	0.092	3.169	0.000	Significant
WP	0.238	0.098	2.443	0.000	Significant
CO	0.393	0.065	6.051	0.000	Significant
$R^2 = 0.93$ $Adjusted R^2 = 0.84$ $F- Stat (Prob.) = 10.045[0.000]$ $Durbin-Watson Statistic = 1.872$					

**Source:** Researchers' computation based on the field survey 2017 using SPSS22.0

The findings in this study find support in the research of prior studies (Zangaro, 2001; Combs, Liu, Hall & Ketchen, 2006). According to Combs *et al* (2006), training enhances workers' abilities, skills and knowledge that results in their being creative and innovative. Similarly, Zangaro(2001)posits from the outcome of his research that organizational commitment can lead to retention, attendance, and job productivity. He saw commitment as an essential outcome, that is concerned with the goals relating employees with firm performance.

## **Conclusion**

This paper empirically examined the influence of four key dimensions of organizational culture practices on employee performance within the context of firms in the Nigerian banking sector. Empirical results indicated that an organizational culture that supports leadership style, training, work process and commitment significantly and positively impacts employee performance. Generally, there is a strong view in the literature that organizational culture fosters increased employee performance. Against this backdrop, there is no doubt that the type of culture existing in an organization has a great impact on its performance. Therefore, it behoves organizations to create and perpetuate a strong culture in an organization that supports high performance. Leadership style and other organizational cultural practices discussed in this paper are aimed at increasing employee performance and ultimately lead to higher firm performance.

Among the limitations of this study is the use of only six banks out of the twenty-five banks that were able to meet the recapitalization in Nigeria. Therefore, future research should be conducted that is inclusive of more banks so as to ascertain a more comprehensive and wider impact of organizational culture on employee performance. Also, future research should focus on measuring effects of new dimensions of organizational culture practices on employee performance.

This study offers a number of managerial implications. First, it provides managers with appropriate framework for evaluating the employee performance of their firms through organizational culture practices. Second, in the long term the success of firms in the Nigerian banking sector will heavily be dependent on its employee performance. Finally, the theoretical contributions of the study provides researchers new avenues for future research, as well as extracting new dimensions of organizational culture practices.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the study's data analysis and empirical findings, we recommend that:

- (i) firms adopt leadership styles that is favourable to workers so as to enhance employee performance;
- (ii) firms put into operation management practices that foster staff training and internal career development in order to keep turnover low, and maintain those organizational culture (values, beliefs, norms, assumptions) within the organization so as to ensure employees' performance;
- (iii) policies and strategies that tend to boost work process should be put in place as introduction of such policies will heighten employees' performance;
- (iv) excellent welfare packages should be introduced so as to raise workers commitment towards job execution and ultimately improve employees' performance;
- (v) managers should have the correct mix of organizational culture practices that would lead to improved employees' performance as the combined effect is greater than just one practice; and
- (vi) leaders should express their commitment to their vision and business model by actions and words. This will send a powerful signal to employees that leaders will do everything to improve their performance.

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**Appendix A**  
**Questionnaire for Organizational Culture Practice and Employee Performance**

No	Variables	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
	<b>Organizational Culture Practice</b>					
	<b>Leadership Style:</b> the pattern of behavior favoured by an organization during the process of directing and influencing employees.					
1.	The leadership style in the organization helps to handle external adaptation and internal integration of the firm.					
2.	The leadership style as exemplified in the organizational culture could be critical to its performance.					
3.	The organization promotes leadership styles where communication is top-bottom.					
4.	The organizational culture of the firm aligns its leadership styles with performance at all cost/time.					
5.	The organization promotes leadership styles where decisions are largely taken on the basis of influence of the employees rather than procedural grounds.					
	<b>Employee Training:</b> the ability of an organization to maintain and improve current job performance of employees					
6.	Firms who have overtime refused to embrace the culture of training have always been underperforming.					
7.	Sustainable competitive achievement is guaranteed for firms that adopt the culture of training.					
8.	Well-designed structures and systems make room for efficient operations and reduce the time for learning jobs.					
9.	The culture of training is a motivating tool at getting employees work towards achieving firm performance.					
10.	The organization provides employees access to training programmes.					
11.	Employees are equipped with technical skill needed to work effectively.					
12.	I have opportunity to learn new things while doing my job.					
13.	I am satisfied with the quality and orientation I received for my current position					
14.	Participating in training programmes in this company will help me perform my job better.					
15.	Participating in training programmes in this company will increase my chances of getting a promotion.					
16.	My manager makes sure I get the training I need to have if I am to remain effective in my job					
17.	I can count on my manager to help me with opportunities to develop the skills I learnt in training programmes I have attended					
	<b>Work Process:</b> the extent to which employees participate in problem solving in the organization.					
18.	Employees know what is expected of their functions					

19.	Employees work collaboratively than working alone					
20.	Work process is designed in a way that jobs are so tightly defined.					
21.	The organization does not give room for individual's contributions of talents in achieving organizational goal.					
22.	Work process is focused on relationships and less of the work routine in a bid to achieve firm performance.					
23.	Work process that engenders greater willingness to take risks is essential to firm performance.					
24.	Work process culture with structure, routine and predictability results in firm performance.					
	<i><b>Employee Commitment:</b> the ability of an employee to be committed to their work and the organization.</i>					
25.	Workers commitment reinforces organizational framework towards firm performance.					
26.	Commitment to excellence at any costs leads to waste and inefficiency.					
27.	Organizational culture that does not reward employees' commitment could frustrate employees' performance.					
28.	Employee is happy with his work.					
29.	Employee spends less time away from his job.					
30.	There is less likelihood of employee leaving the organization.					
	<b>Employee Work Performance</b>					
31.	The organization provides me work career opportunity.					
32.	Employees in the organization regularly share and exchange ideas.					
33.	My opinion counts in the organization.					
34.	My organization allows me to take initiative when doing my job.					
35.	I enjoy coming to work.					
36.	I am satisfied with the level of pay I receive.					