TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP IN DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS PORT HARCOURT, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between technological capacity and employee relationship in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study employed cross sectional survey design. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study was made up of two hundred and forty five (245) employees of five (5) deposit money banks, while the sample size of one hundred and fifty three (153) was determined by the use of the Taro Yamane formula. To determine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables we employed the inferential statistical analysis using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.0. The study finding revealed that there is a significant relationship between technological Capacity and employee relationship in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. From the foregoing, it was concluded that technological capacity predicts employee relationship in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study therefore, recommended that, the management of the Deposit Money Banks should ensure that technological Capacity is complemented with good employment relation practices to enable employers and employees to benefit from technological advancements and to protect the interest of all the stakeholders.

Keywords: *Technological Capacity, Employee Voice, Employee Communication, Team-Building*

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INTRODUCTION

Organizational survival is very crucial and important to all the stakeholders in this current era of heightened competitiveness within and across major business environments. To become very effective and accomplish desired organizational objectives, organization's and its management especially the human resources department should develop the aptitude to effectively train its diverse human assets to be capable of becoming inventive, ingenious and imaginative; that will consistently promote commitment and boost effectiveness, while revolutionizing competitive advantage (Edralin, 2004;Vemic, 2007). Employee relationship is acknowledged as one of the essential and proactive techniques for boosting the performance of employee's thereby promoting organizational effectiveness in the workplace (Gupta, Bostrom & Huber, 2010).

Workers have been recognized to be the most unique and requisite resources as well as a major factor that is needed by organizations in their bid to gain competitive advantage and good relationships are important tools that helps to realize this (Houger, 2006). Thus, the role played by effective employee relationships to the success of organizations in this modern time cannot in any way be underestimated. This is because; it has been acknowledged that at each specific stage of organizational existence, employee relationship is very vital in preparing members of an organization on how to effectively accomplish the goals of the organization. Obviously, when employees work cohesively to establish good relationship they can accomplish set targets easily and convincingly. Therefore, developing and sustaining employee relationship has become very essential and priceless to attain success by organizations, which in the end boost competitive gains (Rahman & Tamya, 2017).

According to Wargborn (2008), employee relationship is a strategic procedure used in developing and sustaining steady motivation of employees in the work environment by critically focusing on the excellence of personal relationship between management and the rest of the workforce. In most organizations, the management work very hard to establish enduring relationship among workers and sustain a greater confidence by creating good and highly spirited work environment within such organization. This goes a long way to act as a change agent while managing numerous actions within the organization (Bajag, Sinha & Tiwari, 2013). The effective application of employee relationship within an organization has become a well-known success indicator for development of strategic human resource (HR) policy (Rachman & Tamiyan, 2017). Just as any other known new managerial technique, employee relationship is a valid and important procedure that offers mutual values to both employers and its workforce. Strohmeier (2013) stated that the major values promised to individual employees are the best known employee satisfaction mechanism as part of the psychological contract that appeals to individual needs as well, promotes increased attraction, commitment and motivation. Thus, the lack of good employee relationship within an organization promotes low commitment, dissatisfaction, poor moral and absenteeism (Strohmeir, 2013). Employee relationship is very essential in creating communication mechanism between employees and management. Employee relationship is known to address bureaucratic and relational equity which makes it possible for employees to participate in all aspects of decision making process (Singh & Kumar, 2011).

Most recently, workers in the banking sector have always focused on their job and do not put up their best due to incidence of unhealthy relationship existing in the workplace. This situation makes workers to be unhappy and could likely result in their inability to make their clients happy, this indicates that management of deposit money banks could be throwing its profits and business away. Therefore, managers of these organizations should as a matter of urgency create strong and effective employee relationship that is observed to be

beneficial for the good and growth of their organization's stakeholders (Bratton & Gold, 2003). There is however a major problem with regards to employee relationship, just like every other relationship it is only the tip of an iceberg which is only visible above water level, while most elements that predicts quality relationship is beneath water.

Organizations have adopted the use of internet and intranet access aptitude which influence the management personal value of its workforce and on the other hand impact on competitive advantage (Allyne & Kakabadse, 2007). On the other hand, Bell, Lee and Yeung (2006) has argued that the decline of human contact in the use of technological application icons in answering questions, the removal of human interaction with personal activities such as online banking reflects the effective advancement of personal technology in most work organizations. While Allyne and Kakabadse (2007), views organizational internet and intranet access aptitude as an influencing tool to personal values of the workforce, it seen to have the capacity to predict competitive edge to organizations.

Given that today's business environment has been facing sublime to complex challenges resulting from globalization and sporadic increase and changes in technology. The competitive nature of the deposit money banks business environment have made it imperative for them to invest hugely in acquisition of novel technology to boost their aptitude to attend to customers' expectations and as such accomplish organizational goals. Technology has been transmitted into a configuration containing huge volumes of information. In the recent past, technological advances have increased astronomically with the incredible speed equity, compared to the previous time. Technology entails the employment of science most importantly for industrial and business purposes, it comprises the application of scientific procedures and materialism in a bid to accomplish innovative needs such as production of equipment's, machines, hi-tech products, production/service materials with the aim to attain efficiency and competitive advantage. In view of the foregoing, this study examined the relationship between technological capacity and employee relationship of Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Based on the foregoing, the following research questions were put forward:

- What is the relationship between technological capacity and employee voice in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
- What is the relationship between technological capacity and employee communication in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?
- What is the relationship between technological capacity and team building in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria?

Figure 1: *Conceptual framework of the relationship between technological capacity and employee relationship*

Source: Researchers Desk, 2019

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Technological Capacity

Technology is clearly a critical factor in the lives of organizations. We can elucidate from available literature that most companies have altered their work organization due to different technologies, thus resulting to flat hierarchies, platform-based services, peer production (Dunleavy, Margetts, Bastow &Tinkler, 2006; Leonardi & Barley, 2010). There is increasing pressure for the organizations to embrace more dynamic innovative and technologically advanced systems of productions and service delivery in a bid to match competitive rivalry in their industry (Osborne &Brown, 2013; Janssen & Estevez, 2013; Townsend, 2013).

Nevertheless, it appears that little substantiation exists within developing nations as they are lacking in innovating novel technologies (Pollitt, 2012). However, the majority of the obtainable studies on technological capacity have concentrated mostly around diverse enablers and barriers without a well-defined hypothetical frame, only precisely limited studies have tried to unearth the deeper contrivance that outlines the long-term alteration of the organizations (Dunleavy *et al* 2006, Janssen & Estevez, 2013). To this extent, existing studies have mostly concentrated on various parts of what it is in evolutionary terms, that is to say how organizations develops, acquire and adopt new technologies without thoroughly taking into interpretation the multifaceted feedback and diverse forces that impact on the advancement of technological capacity.

Technological capacity can be defined as an ability to explore, develop and/or adapt new technological solutions in operation and service design, delivery and evaluation. In this vein, it reinforces the earlier works on administrative capacity which is seen as; the delivery of tasks within a given framework of resources such as, human, financial and relational; as well as reputation coordination practices and organizational politics (Painter & Pierre, 2005; Karo & Kattel, 2016). In a bid to take into consideration the technological Capacity of organizations, and their impact and advancement, we need to appreciate what systems impel the swiftness, complexity and course of technological developments and how this materializes through alterations in work organization.

Employee Relationship

The most essential factor of production as known in the management literature is human resources; as such they need to be handled with greater care to enable the organizations to accomplish desired goals (Dessler, 2008). Employee relationship refers to the assessment of the numerous aspects of how human beings interact at work-place, and therefore is the relationships that manifest between workers on one side and employers on the other hand. Most often, this interaction could be formal or in-formal and entails aspects of managing labour relations, workers involvement and participation, Communication and workplace harmony (Armstrong, 2008).

Relationships usually manifest in numerous diverse contexts and is variously constrained and impacted upon them. Our focus in this study is on the organizational context of relationship involving employers and employees (Nikoioski, Dimitrova, Koleva & Kacarskil, 2014). At the organizational level, the interactions amongst employee usually create a lot of outcomes that is very vital and beneficial to all the members of the organization. Relationships at the organizational levels are influenced by the values and beliefs of all the parties involved, and may lead to the alterations in their expectations and perceptions of their interests and the nature of interactions. Bearing in mind the influence of relationships in the work place, it is pertinent to underscore the fact that it has the capacity of affecting the management styles and approach to leadership in line with unionism, power sharing and control, decision making process, whether management are ready and willing to enter into the mechanism of collaboration, determination of issues, conflicts resolution and preferences for human resource management (Lewis &Thornhill, 2003).

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Employee relations refers to those relationship that exist between individuals that work in both unionized and non-unionized work places, this relationship are usually managed by employers to ensure that there are visible respect of individuals as a means of increasing employee morale, commitment and involvement at work (Mike, 2011).This relationship which is critical in the workplace is being currently preferred than industrial relations due to the realization that there is much more at the work environment than industrial relation could embrace. In the broader perceptive employees relationship is seen as the interactions that exist among employees as well as between workers and their employers, which enables both parties to seek better ways of handling conflicts and boosting organizational performance by amplifying the enthusiasm and morale of the workforce (Sisson, 2003).

Measures of Employee Relationship

Employee Voice

Scholars and professionals have over the past decades paid considerable interest to the concept of employee voice fundamentally in the fields of Human Resources Management (HRM) and organizational behaviour (OB). However, each of field of endeavour usually focuses on diverse aspect of employee voice, organizational behaviour examines the mechanisms for employees to have a say in the organizational decision making process, while human resources management views employee voice as the additional function of upward communication behavior, with the intention to promote good organizational life (Gollan, Kaufman, Taras & Wilkinson 2015).

The aim of voice is viewed by each of these disciplines in a most diverse dimension, in line with the perception of the human resources, voice is undermined by the assumption that it primarily provides the democratic right for employees to extend the extent of control over managerial decision making within an organization (Wilkinson, Golcan, Lwein & Marchington 2010, Kaufman 2015). This means that every employee should have a

voice and the eventual lack of the opportunities to exercise voice may adversely affect employee's dignity. Conversely, the perception of organizational behaviours focuses on the ability of voice to help in improving the organization, thereby allowing it to rest in the hands of managers to decline or altar existing voice arrangements due to an economic downturn (Barry &Wilkinson, 2016).

Employee voice transcends all kinds of opportunities where workers are expected to have their say and affirm some influence over decision making process and any decision that affect them at the organization (Boxall & Purcell, 2011). However, Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003), described voice as the freedom to speak up on essential issues and challenges in any organization by workers. Dundon, Wilkinson, Marchintona and Ackers (2004), viewed voice as the ability of dissatisfied employees to express themselves with their immediate supervisors or managers grievance procedure, and expression of collective issues presented by the union members through the process of collective bargaining, ability and the freedom to participate in the management decision making process through effective upward communication, problem solving and through mutual partnership agreements, and joint consultative forum.

Employee Communication

Employee communication is critical in institutions (Welch & Jackson 2007). Staff in organizations spend big portion of their time interacting with each other through different channels. Effective communication implies people involved in the communication are in a position to send message in all levels of the organization. When information flows seamlessly in an organization, the institution is in a position to execute its functions smoothly. However, where communication discord is encountered, the institution has to run into problems. According to Tench and Yeomans (2009), internal or employee communication is the term used to describe an organization's managed communication system where employees are regarded as a public or stakeholder group.

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Employees are communicated with through a variety of methods, including newsletters, intranet, memos, notice boards, staff briefings and letters, which are intended to enlighten employees about the business.

Stauss and Hoffman (2000), define employee communication as the planned use of communication actions to systematically influence the attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors of employees. Welch and Jackson (2007), are of the opinion that effective employee communication is crucial for successful organizations as it affects the ability of strategic managers to engage employees and achieve objectives. Tench and Yeomans (2009) believed that employee communication is concerned with building two way relationships with internal publics, with the goal of improving organizational effectiveness. Kolla (2005), lists some of the key roles of effective employee communication within an organization as supporting major change programmes, raising awareness of the organization's priorities, communicating messages from top management, raising/maintaining the credibility of the top team, enhancing efficiency and productivity, increasing employee motivation, facilitating feedback and enhancing managers communication skills. Efficient employee communication within an organization, (businesstraining.com) is key to success of an organization's adaptability to external changes.

Communicators in an organization ought to work above the barriers to ensure that communication flows effectively in the organization. These barriers may be inform of physical barriers, system design, attitudinal barriers, language barriers, physiological, presentation of information etc. According to Mehta & Xavier (2009), an organization needs to take into consideration organizational communication culture and understand employees' information needs as well as the communication channels. Organizational communication culture: There are two organizational communication cultures; authoritarian and participative. Grunig, Grunig & Dozier (2000) stated that in authoritarian cultures, decision making is centralized and communication is structured, formalized, and largely one way. In participative cultures however, employees are encouraged to be part of decision making and share in achievements with communication that emphasizes both dialogue and feedback.

Team Building

Teambuilding can be defined as "interventions designed to improve effectiveness in working together by confronting and resolving problems (Boss 1983). Hackman and Wageman (2005), refined this improvement of effectiveness to refer to "productive output, social processes and well-being of individual team members. These three outcomes of teambuilding are enlarged by a fourth dimension, organizational alignment as proposed by Thompson (2004). In the current study, the following definition of teambuilding was used: Teambuilding is a specific intervention to address issues relating to the development of the team. It consists of a one (or more) day programme focused on improvement of interpersonal relations, improved productivity or better alignment of team goals with organizational goals. These interventions may have emphasis on fun and enjoyment, simulation of workplace dynamics, or problem-solving activities, psychometric assessment to ascertain roles and personality, adventure-based interventions and, also psychodynamic interventions (Gmeiner & Van Wyk, 2001; Kriek, 2006). Organizations utilizes a variety of types of team-building to facilitate interventions for a variety of purposes, including improving interpersonal relationships, increasing motivation, aligning with change programmes, increasing productivity, finding direction and resolving conflict (Kriek 2007).

A team takes on a life of its own and has to be regularly nurtured and maintained like individual employees. In a team-oriented environment, individuals contribute to the overall success of the organization. They work with other members of the organization to produce these results. While they

have specific job functions and belong to specific departments, they are unified with other members to accomplish the overall objectives. The bigger picture drives their actions; and their functions exist to serve the bigger picture. Teamwork is fostered by respecting, encouraging, enthusing and caring for people, rather than exploiting or dictating to them. Heap (1996), affirms that the crux of the team building approach is love and spirituality which results in mutual respect, compassion, and humanity to work. People working for each other in teams are a more powerful force than skills, processes, and policies, annual appraisals, management-by-objectives etc.

Technological Capacity and Employee Relationship

Technologies have been seen to assist managers of organizations to pay close attention to their interactions with co-workers. However, Ndlovu (2009) stated that management of organizations should make concerted effort to effectively manage their highly productive workforce aptitude in executing goals that are related with the organization's core objectives and technological advancement offers a helping hand in meeting these objectives. Davenport (2013) viewed information and communication technology as veritable tools that; ensures the consistent and continuous relationship between management and the entire workforce in the organization. Scholars have acknowledged that technological capacity falls within the broad areas of organizational activities of managing assets, managing relationship and leveraging information in novel ways. The influence of technological capacity has introduced the use of modern technological equipment's such as computers, laptops, smart phones, fast windows operating systems, tablets, internet and intranet being used by employees in the work place and these gadgets are helpful with regards in the terms of making work very flexibly and easy for everyone.

Technologies boost the manager's aptitude to manage relationship in the workplace through an enhanced interaction between managers and employees. Employee relationship refers to the assessment of the numerous aspects of how human beings interact at work-place, and therefore is the relationship that manifests between workers on one side and employers on the other hand. Most often, this interaction could be formal or in-formal and entails aspects of managing labour relations, workers involvement and participation, communication and workplace harmony (Armstrong, 2008).Relationships usually manifests in numerous diverse contexts and is variously constrained and impacted upon them. Our focus in this study is on the organizational context of relationship involving employers and employees (Nikoioski, Dimitrova, Koleva &Kacarskil, 2014).

From the foregoing discussion, the study thus hypothesized that:

Ho_1:   There is no significant relationship between technological capacities and employee communication in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Ho_2:   There is no significant relationship between technological capacities and team building in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Ho_3:   There is no significant relationship between absorptive capacities and employee voice in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed cross sectional survey design. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study was made up of two hundred and forty five (245) employees of five (5) deposit money banks, while the sample size of one hundred and fifty three (153) was determined by the use of the Taro Yamane formula. To determine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables the study employed the inferential statistical analysis using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 23.0. The tests of hypotheses were carried out at 95% confidence interval and at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics for the Instruments

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Technological Capacity	0.962	5
Employee voice	0.904	5
Employee communication	0.945	5
Team building	0.931	5

Source: Research Data, 2019

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Hypotheses Tests

Test of hypotheses were carried out using the Spearman's rank correlation at a 95% confidence interval. The level of significance 0.05 is adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in (p> 0.05) or rejecting the null hypothesis in (p <0.05).

Table 2: Correlation matrix for technological Capacity and measures of employee relationship

			Technological Capabilities	Employee Voice	Employee Communication	Team Building
Spearman's rho	Technological Capabilities	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.846**	.674**	.744**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	120	120	120	120
	Employee Voice	Correlation Coefficient	.846**	1.000	.871**	.896**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	120	120	120	120
	Employee Communication	Correlation Coefficient	.674**	.871**	1.000	.964**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	120	120	120	120
	Team Building	Correlation Coefficient	.744**	.896**	.964**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	120	120	120	120

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

Source: SPSS 23.0 data Output, 2019

Ho₁: ***There is no significant relationship between technological capacity and employee voice in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.***

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between technological capacity and employee voice. The *rho* value 0.846 indicated this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a very high correlation indicating also a very strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between technological capacity and employee voice in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Ho₂: ***There is no significant relationship between technological capacity and***

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employee communication in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between technological capacity and employee communication. The *rho* value 0.846 indicated this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a very high correlation indicating also a very strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between technological capacity and employee communication in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Ho3: *There is no significant relationship between technological capacity and team building in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.*

The correlation coefficient (r) showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between technological capacity and team building. The *rho* value 0.846 indicated this relationship and it was significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represented a very high correlation indicating also a very strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between technological capacity and team building in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined the relationship between technological capacity and employee relationship in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between technological capacity and employee relationship in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. This reinforced the previous studies by Koa *et al* (1996) who had stated that technology has become very beneficial when backed by good management systems, but it is not only technology that contributes to employee performance. Davenport (2013), viewed information and communication technology as veritable tools that; ensures the consistent and continuous relationship between management and the entire workforce in the organization. In the views of Hritzut and Jones (2014), we currently live in the era of tablets, computers, phones, and internets that, Information technology has become a known enabler of greater convenience for both managers and subordinates. However, with the modern technologies available today, managers can easily and effectively interact with all the stakeholders of the organization and conclude essential deals without being present in the different locations. To this effect Matt (2007), posits that today's global business environment calls for varied and widely distributed technologies to drive a highly mobile workforce. Christensen (2013), reveal that the current magnitude and speed at which technology have been evolving has significantly had a stunning alteration of managerial practices over the years. More specifically, the following findings from the study emerge:.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The idea which necessitated this study was to examine the relationship between technological capacity and employee relationship in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, Rivers State. From the data generated and analyzed, it was empirically discovered that there is a significant relationship between technological capacity and all the measures of employee relationship of deposit money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, Rivers State. Consequently, the study concluded that as technological capacity increases also does employee relationship increase in Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

Therefore, the study recommended that management of the Deposit Money Banks should give due attention to the impact of technological capability since it significantly affects employee relationship. This can be done by specific efforts and strategies regarding the choice establishment and improvement of technology.

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