

Transformational Leadership Style and Organisational Performance: An Empirical Study of Oil Companies in Rivers State Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study examined the relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance of oil companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This study used the cross sectional survey which is a type of quasi experimental design. In the context of this research, the target population is the one hundred and eighty eight (188) oil companies in Port Harcourt according to Port Harcourt business directory. The accessible population was 159 employees drawn from 15 selected oil companies in Port Harcourt. The accessible population was made up of managers, supervisor and head of departments. These oil companies were selected for the study as a result of easy accessibility to information. A simple random sampling technique was used in this study. The Yamene (1968) formula for sample size determination was used with a 95% confidence interval. In determining the distribution of questionnaires to each oil company, the Bowleys (1964) formula was used. The study being predominantly quantitative, generated data using the structured questionnaire. A total of 114 (100%) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to target oil companies within a specified time frame. Copies of the questionnaire were manually distributed through established contacts in the selected oil companies, thereafter retrieval was also accomplished through same contacts in the oil companies. Retrieval of distributed copies recorded a success of 102 (89%) copies. The retrieved data was analysed using the Pearson product moment correlation statistical analysis in order to establish the relationship between the predictor variable and the criterion variable. One hypothesis was tested using the Pearson product moment correlation statistical technique at a 95% confidence interval. The decision rule is set at a critical region of $p > 0.05$ for acceptance of the null hypothesis and $p < 0.05$ for rejection of the null hypothesis. The result of the analysis reveals a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance (where $\rho = .400$ and $p = 0.000$). Hence, it was concluded that transformational leadership style has positive effect on organisational performance. Thus, the study recommended that managers of oil companies in Port Harcourt that is on performance improvement should adopt transformational leadership style because it acts as a bridge between leaders and followers as well as improve organisational performance.*

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership Style, Organisational Performance, Oil Companies.*

Introduction

Leadership is a process which allows management to be proactive rather than reactive in shaping its own future. A focused organisational leader provides and establishes visionary leadership to his organisation. He understands and appreciates the dynamic nature of business environment. He formulates responsive options to the changes in the business environment through viable strategies based upon sustainable competitive advantages manages rather than just identifying

and responding to change, anticipates or even create the change. Unfortunately lack of these qualities is the problem of indigenous business organisations in developing countries (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000). The concept of leadership has become a fundamental issue in today's environment. Leading is the process of influencing others to accomplish specified objectives. Taffinder (as cited in Bass & Bass, 2008) defines leadership as getting people to do things they have never thought of doing, do not believe are possible or that they do not want to do, the action of committing employees to contribute their best to the purpose of the organisation. Good leadership is developed through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and the accumulation of relevant experience (Bass & Bass, 2008).

It is increasingly accepted, however, that in order to be a good leader, one must have the experience, knowledge, commitment, patience, and most importantly the skill to negotiate and work with others to achieve goals. Trustworthiness is often key to positions of leadership as trust is fundamental to all manner of organised human groups, whether in education, business, the military, religion, government, or international organisations (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2007). From the perspective of employees, leadership comprises everything a leader does that affects the achievement of objectives and the well-being of employees and the organisation (Abbasialiya, 2010). A good or effective leader inspires, motivates, and directs activities to help achieve group or organisational goals. According to Naylor (1999), effective leadership is a product of the heart; an effective leader must be visionary, passionate, creative, flexible, inspiring, innovative, courageous, imaginative, experimental, and initiates change. Conversely, an ineffective leader does not contribute to organisational progress and can, in fact, detract from organisational goal accomplishment.

Several theories exist to explain leadership effectiveness. Two of the most important leadership theories are Transformational and Transactional leadership theories. Since the late 1980s, theories of transformational and charismatic leadership have been ascendant. Versions of transformational leadership have been proposed by several theorists, including Bass (1999). Transformational leadership can be defined as the process of affecting significant changes in people's attitudes, beliefs and values to the point where an organisation's priorities and the leader's vision are internalised and followers produce results which surpass expectations (Yukl, 1999). The word transformational leadership was coined by Bass in 1985, who described leaders as agents of transformation, creating and transforming followers' values, attitudes and motivations.

Most organisation theorist agree that leadership and organisational performance determines the quality of the organisation itself. The natural qualities of an individual in the environment in which he operates on daily basis, as they unfold, coupled with other factors do influence his leadership pattern. Leadership will enhance organisational performance by adopting team work approach. The extent to which all members of the organisation use their abilities and influences in the effective utilisation of resources depends upon how well the manager of the organisation understands and perform his work through his subordinates. Maddock and Fulton (1998) explain that leadership style and organisation performance must be such that can ensure maximum probability within all interactions and relationships. Within the organisation, each member will

in the light of his background, values and expectations, view the process as supportive and one which can build and maintain a sense of personal worth and importance.

Organisational performance is not only the performance of the single parts or units of the organisation but the product of all interactions taking place in the organisation. Organisational performance is an index to show whether the organisation is growing or not coupled with the leadership style adopted which may be influenced or affected by employee commitment, employee empowerment, employee job satisfaction and the type of organisations culture in the organisation. Organisations believe that leadership capacity brings their establishments valuable assets, which enhances growth and income. Organisations worldwide are therefore spending billions of dollars in training and development on leadership. The main objective of transformational leaders is to change the current structure of the organisation and encourage employees to consider a new vision with new opportunities for the individual, and the organisation as a whole (Tucker & Russell, 2004). The work of Bass (1985) showed that in times of development, change and crisis, transformational leaders can emerge. In organisations, which face dynamic markets and rapidly changing technology such as the oil companies, transformational leaders can be accepted more readily, says Avolio and Bass (2004).

Investigations have shown that transformational leadership involves both satisfaction and commitment to the organisation (Hatter & Bass, 1995). The commitment to organisational change has also been affected by transformational leadership (Yu, Leithwood & Jantzi, 2002), but also by organisational conditions (Lam, Peggy-Wei, Pan & Chan, 2002). The transformational leader increases individual needs and desires to do more, to work more continuously and to increase subordinates' work and performance (Howell and Avolio, 1993). Several studies have shown the positive links between transformational leadership and personal results (Dumdum, Lowe & Avolio, 2013). Bass and Avolio's (1990) research shows the connection between transformational leadership and personal results, such as satisfaction and commitment at work. Other research has shown that this leadership style directly affects corporate behavior and performance (MacKenzie, Podsakoff & Rich, 2001). The results of the empirical study carried out on leadership style by researchers such as Ejere and Abasilim (2013); Longe (2014); Sofi and Devanadhen (2015); Rodrigues and Ferreira (2015); Cavazotte, Moreno and Bernardo (2013) revealed a significant relationship between transformational leadership and organisational performance. In the light of the above, this paper seeks to examine the relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance in oil companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Operational Conceptual Framework

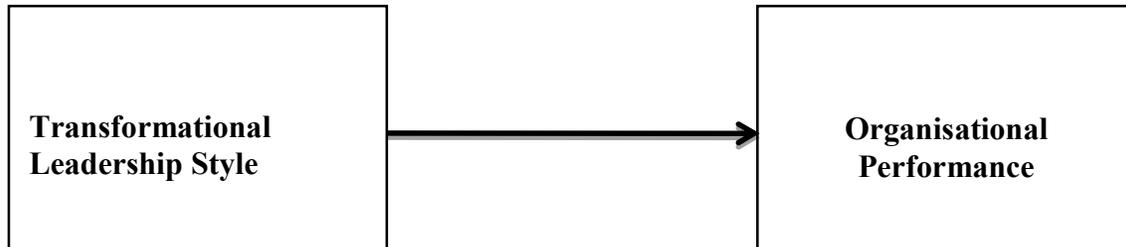


Fig. 1: Operational conceptual framework showing the relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance.

Source: *Researcher's Conceptualisation (2016).*

Research Question

1. What is the relationship between relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance in oil companies in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance in oil companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

This study is anchored on Transformational Theory.

Transformational Theory

Transformational leadership distinguishes itself from the rest of the previous and contemporary theories, on the basis of its alignment to a greater good as it entails involvement of the followers in processes or activities related to personal factor towards the organisation and a course that will yield certain superior social dividend. The transformational leaders raise the motivation and morality of both the follower and the leader (House & Shamir, 1993). It is considered that the transformational leaders “engage in interactions with followers based on common values, beliefs and goals”. This impacts the performance leading to the attainment of goal. As per Bass, transformational leader, “attempts to induce followers to reorder their needs by transcending self-interests and strive for higher order needs”. This theory conform the Maslow (1954) higher order needs theory.

Transformational leadership is a course that changes and approach targets on beliefs, values and attitudes that enlighten leaders“ practices and the capacity to lead change. Followers and leaders set aside personal interests for the benefit of the group. The leader is then asked to focus on followers’ needs and input in order to transform everyone into a leader by empowering and motivating them (House & Aditya, 1997). The transformational leaders are considered by their

capability to identify the need for change, gain the agreement and commitment of others, create a vision that guides change and embed the change (MacGregor Burns, 2003). These types of leaders treat subordinates individually and pursue to develop their consciousness, morals and skills by providing significance to their work and challenge. These leaders produce an appearance of convincing and encouraged vision of the future. They are “visionary leaders who seek to appeal to their followers” better nature and move them toward higher and more universal needs and purposes” (MacGregor Burns, 2003).

Concept of Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership can be defined as the process of affecting significant changes in people’s attitudes, beliefs and values to the point where an organisation’s priorities and the leader’s vision are internalised and followers produce results which surpass expectations (Yukl, 1999). The word transformational leadership was coined by Bass in 1985, who described leaders as agents of transformation, creating and transforming followers’ values, attitudes and motivations. Those leaders build an intimate bond and vision with their followers, raising awareness of them and their confidence in higher goals over their own interests. In doing so, leaders and followers lift one another’s spiritual standard and motivation (Carlson & Perrewé 1995).

Transformational leadership is a style of leadership whereby a leader works with subordinates to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in partnership with committed members of a group (Wikipedia, 2015). Transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and job-performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms; these include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to a project and to the collective identity of the organisation; being a role model for followers in order to inspire them and to raise their interest in the project; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, allowing the leader to align followers with tasks that enhance their performance (Riggio, 2008).

Transformational leaders are described to hold positive expectations for followers, believing that they can do their best. As a result, they inspire, empower, and stimulate followers to exceed normal levels of performance. Transformational leaders also focus on and care about followers and their personal needs and development (Riggio, 2008). Transformational leaders fit well in leading and working with complex work groups and organisations, where beyond seeking an inspirational leader to help guide them through an uncertain environment, followers are also challenged and feel empowered; this nurtures them into becoming loyal, high performers.

There are 4 components to transformational leadership as identified by Riggio (2008), sometimes referred to as the 4 I's; Idealised Influence (II) - the leader serves as an ideal role model for followers; the leader "walks the talk," and is admired for this. Inspirational Motivation (IM) - Transformational leaders have the ability to inspire and motivate followers. Combined these first two I's are what constitute the transformational leader's charisma. Individualised Consideration (IC) - Transformational leaders demonstrate genuine concern for the needs and feelings of

followers. This personal attention to each follower is a key element in bringing out their very best efforts. Intellectual Stimulation (IS) - the leader challenges followers to be innovative and creative. A common misunderstanding is that transformational leaders are "soft," but the truth is that they constantly challenge followers to higher levels of performance.

Transformational leadership is said to have occurred when engagement in a group results in leaders and followers raising one another to increased levels of motivation and morality. Effective leaders succeed most by encouraging followers to associate with a vision that goes beyond their own direct self-interests. The transformational leader wants to lift the higher order of the followers so as to increase each other's motives and objectives. This means that both sides have one goal and aspiration to create shared goals for themselves (Bryman, 1992). In motivating followers, the underlying mechanism of influence is identified and it raises awareness of the value of mission results and inducing them to surpass their personal interest in the interest of the organisation.

Concept of Organisational Performance

Organisational performance deals with organisation's outcomes, it is the extent to which an organisation are able to meetup with their target, objectives and goals. The organisational performance comprises of three components – financial performance (return on investment, benefit etc.), shareholder return (economic added value, total shareholder etc.) and performance of the product/service market (market share, revenue etc.) (Gavrea et al., 2011). Organisational performance is regarded as the ultimate dependent variable of interest for researchers concerned with any area of management. The measurement techniques introduced over the past two decades have been one of the most widespread international trends in public (Pollitt, 2006). Furthermore, performance is considered as a description of an organisations' success or failure during the conduction of major duties and functions, in order to realise the stipulated goals, objectives, vision and mission. This is also attributed as achievements within a certain period.

Cropanzano et al. (2002) defined organisational performance as the transformation of inputs into outputs, aimed at attaining certain results. Based on content, this provides information about the relationship between minimal and effective (economic) costs, effective costs and realised outputs (efficiency), as well as between outputs and results achieved (effectiveness). The performance of a company is possibly used as a benchmark while evaluating the collective ability to achieve goals. Furthermore, the measurement used is one of the most important factors, because the process adopted evaluates the extent of goals achievement. This determines the possible existence of a deviation from the predetermined plan, or specified time schedule during the implementation.

Organisational performance can be used to look at how companies do in relation to other companies in the same industry in terms of profit level, market share and product quality. This reflects the productivity of a company's members, measured in terms of the organisation's revenue, profit, growth, development and growth (Kehinde, Jegede & Akinlabi, 2012). Organisational performance can also be used to view how an enterprise is doing in terms of level of profit, market share and product quality in relation to other enterprises in the same firms.

Consequently, it is a reflection of productivity of members of an enterprise measured in terms of revenue, profit, growth, development and expansion of the organisation. Organisational performance may be defined as the transformation of inputs into outputs for achieving certain outcomes. With regard to its content, performance informs about the relation between minimal and effective cost (economy), between effective cost and realised output (efficiency) and between output and achieved outcome (effectiveness) (Chen and Barnes, 2006).

Methodology

Research Design

This study used the cross sectional survey which is a type of quasi experimental design. The quasi experimental design was used because the variables under study are not under the control of the researchers and the research intends to produce new fact short of intentional manipulation of the variables.

Population

In the context of this research, the target population is the one hundred and eighty eight (188) oil companies in Port Harcourt according to the Port Harcourt business directory. The accessible population was 159 employees of 15 selected oil companies in Port Harcourt. The accessible population is made up of managers, supervisor and head of departments. These oil companies were selected for the study as a result of easy accessibility to information.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size Determination

A simple random sampling technique was used in this study. This technique was employed because it gives a sample that is a true representative of the entire population and reduces the tendency of researcher bias in selecting the sample cases. The Yamene (1967) formula for sample size determination was used with a 95% confidence interval. The Yamene (1967) formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population size

e = The error of sample

Applying this formula in determining the sample size of this study, we have:

$$n = \frac{159}{1 + 159(0.05)^2}$$
$$n = \frac{159}{1 + 159(0.0025)} \quad n = \frac{159}{1.3975}$$
$$n = 114$$

Hence, the sample size for this study is 114 employees.

In determining the distribution of questionnaires to each oil company, the Bowleys (1964) formula was used, given as:

$$nh = nNh/N$$

Where:

nh = The number of questionnaire for each firm

Nh = The number of employees in each firm

n = The total sample size

N = The population.

Therefore, the number of questionnaire distributed to each oil company is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Name of Oil Companies, Population, Sample Size and Questionnaire Distribution.

| S/N | Oil Companies | Population | Sample Size and Copies of Questionnaire Distributed | Copies of Questionnaire Retrieved and Used |
|--------------|---------------------------|------------|--|---|
| 1 | Agip Oil | 16 | 12 | 11 |
| 2 | Brimeimpex Oil | 18 | 13 | 11 |
| 3 | Century Energy | 6 | 4 | 2 |
| 4 | Chevron | 11 | 8 | 8 |
| 5 | Exxon Mobil | 10 | 7 | 4 |
| 6 | Halliburton | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| 7 | Oando | 12 | 9 | 9 |
| 8 | Saipem | 11 | 8 | 8 |
| 9 | Statoil | 11 | 8 | 8 |
| 10 | Total E&P Nigeria Limited | 10 | 7 | 6 |
| 11 | Tropical Petroleum Plc. | 12 | 9 | 6 |
| 12 | Universal Gases Limited | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| 13 | Vego Oil & Gas | 10 | 7 | 7 |
| 14 | Wabeco Petroleum Limited | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| 15 | West Mall Oil & Gas | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| Total | | 159 | 114 | 102 |

Source: Research Data, 2016

Methods of Data Analysis

The study being predominantly quantitative, generated data using the structured questionnaire. A total of 114 (100%) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to target oil companies within a specified time frame. Copies of the questionnaire were manually distributed through established contacts in the selected oil companies, thereafter retrieval was also accomplished through same contacts in the oil companies. Retrieval of distributed copies recorded a success of 102 (89%) copies. The retrieved data was analysed using the Pearson product moment correlation statistical analysis in order to establish the relationship between the predictor variable and the criterion variable. One hypothesis was tested using the Pearson product moment correlation statistical technique at a 95% confidence interval. The decision rule is set at a critical region of $p > 0.05$ for acceptance of the null hypothesis and $p < 0.05$ for rejection of the null hypothesis.

Table 2: Relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance.

| | | Correlations | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | Transformational Leadership Style | Organisational Performance |
| Transformational Leadership Style | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .400 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 102 | 102 |
| Organisational Performance | Pearson Correlation | .400 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 102 | 102 |

Source: SPSS Output, 2016

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance: The data as shown in table 2 reveals that there is a significant relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Organisational Performance (where $\rho = .400$ and $p = 0.000$) hence we find that Transformational Leadership Style is associated with Organisational Performance and based on the decision rule of $p < 0.05$ for null rejection; we therefore reject the null hypothesis and restate that there is a significant relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Organisational Performance.

Table 3: Summary of the Result and Decision Making

| S/N | Hypotheses | Outcome | Extent of Relationship | Decision |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| H ₀₁ | There is no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance of oil companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. | $\rho = .400$ $\text{sig} = .000$ | Moderate Positive Relationship | Reject Null Hypothesis |

Source: SPSS Data Output, 2016

Discussion of Findings

Transformational Leadership Style and Organisational Performance

The result of the analysis reveals that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance (where $\rho = .400$ and $p = 0.000$). This finding is in consonant with the work of Howell and Frost (1989), Fu-Jin et al. (2010), Obiwuru et al (2011), and Jeremy et al. (2012) that transformational leadership style has significant effect on organisational performance. Transformational leaders emboldens followers to attain higher-order needs like self-actualisation, self-esteem (Bass, 1985), and are influential in surging followers' motivation in the direction of “self-sacrifice and achievement of organisational goals over personal interests (Bass, 1995).

Conclusion

This study has examined the relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance in oil companies in Rivers State. The results of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance. On the basis of the findings of this study, it can be concluded that transformational leadership style has positive effect on organisational performance. Transformational leadership acts as a bridge between leaders and followers to develop clear understanding of follower's interests, values and motivational level. It basically helps follower's achieve their goals working in the organisational setting to improve organisational performance; it encourages followers to be expressive and adaptive to new and improved practices and changes in the environment (Ismail et al., 2009; Bass, 1990). The study therefore concludes that transformational leadership style is a strong predictor of organisational performance.

Recommendation

The researchers made the following recommendation on the basis of the finding of the study:

- i. Managers of oil companies in Port Harcourt that are focused on performance improvement should adopt transformational leadership style because it acts as a bridge between leaders and followers to develop clear understanding of follower's interests, values and motivational level in order to achieve their goals working in the organisational setting to improve organisational performance.

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