

Effect of Workplace Rivalry on Employee Performance of Deposit Money Banks, Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Workplace rivalry has negatively impacted on employee performance in organizations in recent times. It is an established antagonistic relationship that an employee perceives between him/her and another employee or group. This emerges overtime as he/she gradually accumulate a history of noticeable rivalry with the other. Therefore the objective of this study was to ascertain the effect of workplace rivalry on employee performance. The study adopted the survey method where the use of primary and secondary data was employed to evaluate the effects of aggression and secrecy on employee productivity, goal attainment using a sample of 300 from a target population of 810 employees. The analytical tool used in the study was descriptive and inferential where Chi-Square statistical techniques were used via SPSS to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. Findings from the study revealed that, Workplace aggression significantly affected employees' productivity in the selected Deposit Money Banks in Benue State, Nigeria. (SPSS output X^2 value < 0.05). Secrecy at workplace significantly affected employee goal attainment in the selected Deposit Money Banks in Benue State, Nigeria. (SPSS output X^2 value < 0.05). The study concluded by recommending among other things that; Management of the banks have to incorporate attitude change programs that will help eliminate aggression and secrecy among employees and create a platform where employee can increase their interaction with one another in order to understand their weaknesses and strengths; by so doing, they will build trust and support for each other which will make their team more productive

Keywords: Workplace, Rivalry, Employee, Performance

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Introduction

Many organizations in recent years have suffered loss as a result of rivalry among co – workers. These losses have made the concept of workplace rivalry and employee performance a subject of debate in most management literature (Arokiasamy, 2013). Rivalry according to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary refers to “the state of being rivals; competition between people wanting the same thing.” Rival as a term connotes a person or thing competing with another. The history of workplace rivalry can be traced back to Taylor’s Scientific Management of 1911. In his principles of Scientific Management, Taylor made three great revelations which he traced to constant labor management disputes which result from struggles over the economic pie, with each claimant asking for an increase. Taylor opined that this struggle would continue to heighten as long as the economic pie is

fixed; he suggested that unless there is increased efficiency which leads to an increase in the size of the pie this conflict would know no end (Eboh, 2008). Rivalry among nations was responsible for first and Second World War, where scholars like Samuel Huntington hypothesized a new post- cold war era in his “Clash of Civilization” that the most important distinction among people is no longer ideological, political or economic but cultural. He noted that new patterns of rivalry will occur along the boundaries of different cultures and patterns of cohesion will be found along these ethnic boundaries (Huntington, 2003). Workplace rivalry refers to an established competitive relationship that an employee perceives between another employee or group. It emerges over time as he/she gradually accumulates a history of notable rivalry with the other. These rivalries can be noticeable for number of reasons, including their relative parity, intensity and relevance (Kilduff, Elfenbien & Staw, 2010). Rivalry has a mixture of context but in each, intricate relational attributes have intensified the significance of the rivalry, but of great is competition that is aimed at achieving organizational set target (Tyler & Cobbs, 2015).

These rivalries have in recent time eaten deep into most organizations thus triggering low employee performance which has served as a spring board for academic research on rivalry; especially on interpersonal rivalry; for its strategic nature to business success. This reason and other factors deemed this work fit to investigate the effects of workplace rivalry on employee performance to better understand the instrument of this heightened antagonistic relationship at workplaces and its effects on employee performance (Kilduff et al, 2010). Rau and Hayland (2003) state that rivalry can be perceived as a double- edged sword which has both positive and negative effect. They posit that rivalry encompasses different magnitude including origin, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, values and attitudes. Once these aforementioned variables are discouraged and not entertained at workplace, it promotes employees’ performance viz –a- vis the organizational productivity.

Nevertheless, there are hazards associated with workplace rivalry. Williams, (2010) states that where competition involves wanting to outdo the other person may result in envy and consequently set-up to see the target person is ruined. He notes that, competition and social contrast that is targeted towards envy can harm the target person and wreck havoc in the workplace. Menon & Thompson (2010) opines that organizations should make sure they are not set up in a way that feeds envy. As employees who do the precise thing and display their talents for the benefit of the organization are implicitly or even explicitly rewarding them for pursuing status at the expense of others who may be unable to do same.

Statement of the Problem

The industrial revolution of the 18th century triggered rivalry among businesses, organizations and companies with each trying to phase out manual operations and introduce automated an alternative in the production of goods and services; since then rivalry has become the order of the day in most organizations. This and other reasons made the banking industry in Nigeria to adopt a performance based reward practice that has made rivalry among employees of the banking sector more pronounced than it were decades before now. Although, there are good prospects associated with workplace rivalry. Rivalry at workplace if properly practiced becomes a source of development. This is because when employee sees their fellow being recognized or promoted, it triggers them to perform more or become a source of encouragement for them to strive harder to gain similar recognition.

It is however, worrisome that rivalry at workplace in most Nigerian organizations has been perceived with envious relationship that trigger aggression, secrecy, hate speech and sentiments that rather

depressed the morale of most talented workers and damaged a harmonious working relationship that do metamorphosed into decreased profitability that otherwise could have been utilized for the overall progress of the organization. It is against this background that, the researchers intends to examine the effect of workplace rivalry on employee performance and suggest better ways of managing rivalry at workplace and if possible eliminate the knowledge gap by carrying out this study.

Objectives of the Study

This study has the overall objective of examining the effect of workplace rivalry on employee performance in selected Deposit Money Banks in Benue State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- (i) Establish the effects of aggression on employee productivity in selected Deposit Money Banks in Benue State.
- (ii) Ascertain the effect of secrecy on employee goal attainment in the Selected Deposit Money Banks in Benue State.

Research Questions

These research questions were used in order to enable the researchers achieve the research objectives thus as follows:

- (i) Is there any significant effect of aggression on employee productivity?
- (ii) What are the effects of secrecy on employee goal attainment?

Research Hypotheses

To achieve the objectives of this study and provide answers to the research questions, the following alternate hypotheses were formulated to guide the researcher in making generalizations after subjecting them to statistical testing.

1. Ha: Aggression has significant effect on employee productivity.
Ho: Aggression has no significant effect on employee productivity.
2. Ha: Secrecy has significant effect on employee goal attainment
Ho: secrecy has no significant effect on employee goal attainment.

Literature Review

Competition is as old as human existence, in nature and modern civilizations alike, and as such has been a sprouting topic of interest to researchers across organizational behavior science. Established theoretical models in economics and management view competition to be of strategic importance; that is the actors are vying for limited and scarce resources amidst endless wants. Deutsch (1949), Porter (1980), Garcia, Tor & Schiff (2013) view rivalry between individuals as manipulations that involve offering of reward to best among the rivals. Within management literature, the word rivalry and competition are used synonymously. Rivals are those competing with one another whether at the individual level or at organizational levels, Porter (1980). However, a recent study by Kilduff, Elfenbien & Staw, (2010) stated that there is more to rivalry than just a state of opposing goals or contested wherewithal; they opines that equating rivalry with such structural competition fails to capture the relational and historical factors that are indispensable features of rivalry. Deutsch (1949) defines rivalry as “a setting in which the goal attainment of participants is negatively linked, so that the success of one participant comes at the failure of the other.”

Workplace Rivalry

Workplace rivalry is an aspect of organizational behavior that has awakened consciousness in recent time even though rivalry is as old as human existence, whether for resources, outright survival etc, (Converse & Reinhard, 2015). Once employees in a workplace seek accomplished goals at the expense of others' goal, the two are consistently involved in rivalry. As noted by Deutsch (1949) many rivalries occur not between strangers who happen to have differing goals, but between employees who have singled each other out over time as rivals. Workplace rivalry refers to a recognized competitive relationship that an employee perceives between his/herself and another employee or group. It emerges over time as he/she steadily accumulates a history of notable rivalry with the other. These reveries can be obvious for number of reasons, including their relative parity, intensity and relevance (Kilduff, Elfenbien & Staw, 2010). The key to workplace rivalry formation is that of shared history that leads employee to develop a more detailed cognitive representation of his/her interacting competitively with the partner, as noted by Andersen & Cole (1990). This continuous dealing enables employees to obtain benefits at the expense of their colleagues whom may also anticipate benefits at the expense of others, thus leading to cut throat rivalry between employees in a workplace (Fitzsimons & Bargh, 2003; Miller & Read, 2010). Kilduff et al (2010) opines that workplace rivalry is linked to memories and hope arising from shared competitive interactions that aimed at self actualization. Once one party out of the rival actualized his goal, the other often perceived it to being at his expense.

Garcia, Tor & Schiff (2013) state that employees compete to enhance their relative standing and self assessment; they note that rivalry stimulate the narrative that connects past, current and future expectations, thus putting those identity concerns into longer-term perspective (Garcia, Tor & Schiff, 2013). Gullen & Shutterstock (2016) point out that workplace rivalry can sometimes be healthy as it encourages people to excel in their work, and it can make employees job more exciting. But sometimes, rivalries can get out of hand and cause horrible work environment for the employees. They note that most employees are uncomfortable with competitiveness, because some employees engage in ways that can be cruel to other employee performance, thus creating undue stress and reduced productivity as well as putting them into problem with management. Some workplace rivalries get so bad that employees look for work elsewhere. Workplace rivalry is a state of conflict occasioned by actual or perceived opposition of needs, values, and interests between people working together.

Types of Workplace Rivalry

Rivalry affecting organizations can occur in individuals between individuals and groups. Rivalry within work groups are often as a result of struggle over control, status, and scarce resources. Rivalry between groups in organizations has similar origins; the constructive decision of such rivalry can most often be achieved through a rational process of problem solving, coupled with a willingness to explore issues and alternatives and to listen to each other (Garcia, Tor, & Schiff, 2013).

Personal Rivalry

A personal rivalry involves two people, most often from a common dislike or personality clash. Brown, (2010) this can be personality or style differences or personal problems such as leadership style, management role and disagreement about core values which can also contribute. Kilduff et al, (2010) point out that human behavior vary and such behaviors are often mismatched with authority and structure; but human behaviors cannot be separated from the culture of the organization.

Intra-group Rivalry

Rivalry may arise from groups as a result of lack of freedom, position and resources. People who value independence may be likely to resist the need for interdependence to some extent. People who are power driven struggle with others for position or status within the group. Rewards and recognition are often perceived as insufficient and improperly distributed and members are inclined to compete with each other for these prizes (Richard, McMillan, Chadwick & Dwyer, 2003). In western cultures, competition is more common than cooperation as winning is more acceptable than losing. All these tend to deepen intra-group rivalry. Group meetings are often conducted on a win-lose climate; that is individual or subgroup interaction is conducted for the purpose of determining a winner and a loser rather than for achieving mutual problem solving.

Intergroup Rivalry

Intergroup rivalry occurs in different forms. The horizontal strain involves rivalry between functions; for example sales versus production, line versus staff etc. vertical strain involves rivalry between hierarchical levels for example union versus management, foreman versus middle management, shop workers versus foremen. A struggle between a group of employees and management is a good example of vertical strain or rivalry. A clash between marketing and production department over inventory policy would be an example of horizontal strain (Robson, 1993). Certain attitudes and activities are typical in groups which involved in a win-lose rivalry. Within each side closing ranks and getting ready for battle. Members show increased support and loyalty to their own groups, little differences between group members tends to be overlooked, and deviants are dealt with accordingly. The level of morale within the groups increases and commits everyone with rivalry spirit.

In addition, each group tends to distort both its own views and those of the rival group. What is perceived most interesting is one group is emphasized and what is worst is ignored; the position of the other group is assessed utterly badly with little good to be recognized or accepted. Thus, the judgment and objectivity of both groups are impaired. During discussions about such group differences, rational, constructive criticism is severely dealt with. Each prepares questions that could throw the other group off balance. Hostility between the two groups heightened and mutual understanding are completely buried with negative stereotypes (Robson, 1993).

It is eminent to see that in condition described above, mutual solutions to problems cannot be achieved; as a result, the side having greater power wins, while the other loses, or the rivalry group may go unresolved and unwanted outcomes and circumstances continue. If the settlement is resisted and the winner defeated in the other way round it becomes difficult for the loser to counter. When this happens, neither side win as no clear compromise can be ascertained. If this lingers and both sides withdraw from the scene, intergroup cooperation and effectiveness may be jeopardized at the detriment of the entire employees or parties.

Research Methodology

This study adopted the survey design method due to its suitability for the use of primary data.

This research has its major strength from the fact that five research experts drawn from different universities were used to evaluate the research instrument to ensure that the instrument used were in line with the objectives of the study and that it met the standard criteria for publication. However its weakness stems from the fact that some respondents didn't answered the questionnaire objectively,

they just answered just to show that they have answered it. Secondly not all the questionnaire served were all returned, this has affected the sample size earlier en marked for the study.

Population and Sampling Technique

The population used for this research work consists of five (5) Deposit Money Banks in Benue State which are Access Bank, Eco Bank, First Bank, United Bank for Africa (UBA) and Zenith Bank. The target population for this study consists of all the employees of the five Selected Deposit Money Banks across the state which is Eight hundred and ten (810). The composition of the population size is represented in the table below where the researcher gave a fair representation to the banks studied in the ratio which each bank bears to the overall population using the quota sampling technique where the Bowler’s statistical technique was employed.

Table 1. Table for Banks population and estimation of sample size for each bank.

S/N	Bank name	Number of employees	Sample size determination	Sample size for each bank
1	Access Bank	145	$145 \times 365 \div 810$	65
2	Eco Bank	100	$100 \times 365 \div 810$	45
3	First Bank	275	$275 \times 365 \div 810$	124
4	UBA	140	$140 \times 365 \div 810$	63
5	Zenith Bank	150	$150 \times 365 \div 810$	68
Total		810		365

Source: HR, Dept. of the banks under study, 2021

Sample Size Determination

The target population for this research work consists of Eight hundred and ten (810) staff. Due to the finite nature of the population, the researcher adopted the Bill Godden (2004) formula for sample determination as stated below:

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 \times p(1-p)}{M^2}$$

Where:

$$SS = \text{Sample Size}$$

$$Z = 1.96 \text{ at } 95\% \text{ Confidence Level}$$

$$P = \text{population proportion assumed to be } 0.5 (50\%).$$

$$M = \text{error margin}$$

$$\text{Eg } SS = \frac{1.962 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$SS = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.00250}$$

$$SS = 384.16 \approx 385$$

Therefore; $Sample = SS \div (1 + SS - 1) \div N$

$$= 385 \div (1 + 385 - 1) \div 810$$

$$= 385 \div 1 + 384 \div 810 = 385 \div 1 + 0.47407$$

$$= 385 \div 1.47407 = 261$$

This sample is considered low for a study of this nature. Unyimadu, (2005) opined that, “ the larger a sample becomes, the more representative of the population it becomes, and so more reliable and valid the result based on it will become” as a result, the researcher based on suggestion by Israel (1992) added 10% (26 copies) to cater for respondents that the researcher may not reach; the researcher was also required to provide additional 30% (78 copies) to take care of non respondents in line with Unyimadu’s view (1992). This was to ensure that the desired level of confidence, validity and precision were attained.

Thus using the sample size drawn from the population was as follows: Using Bill Godden $sample\ size = 261$, 10% to cater for *inaccessible respondents* = 26, 30% to take care of *non respondents* = 78. Total sample size was 365; this was proportionally allocated to the banks’ employees

Description of Research Instruments

The main instrument for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire designed on 5 point Likert scale was used for the analytical purpose only. The structured questions tailored in line with the objectives of the study on standard 5 point Likert scale was used; eg *strongly Agree* (SA), *Agree* (A), *strongly disagree* (SD), *Disagree* (D) and *Undecided* (U). This was administered to all the five banks in proportion to their quota through their human resource officers.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

In this section, data collected through the use of questionnaires was analyzed in accordance to research questions stated earlier in chapter one.

Table 2 Distribution on whether aggression propels employees’ to be more productive.

Options	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undecided	40	13.3	13.3	13.3
Disagreed	150	50.0	50.0	63.3
Valid Strongly disagreed	80	26.7	26.7	90.0
Agreed	21	7.0	7.0	97.0
Strongly agreed	9	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2021 (SPSS Output file 20.0).

In order to determine whether workplace aggression propels employees’ to be more productive in table 2, respondents views were enquired; and it was found that (40) respondents representing 13.3%

were undecided , (150) respondents representing 50% disagreed, (80) respondents representing, 26.7% strongly agreed, (21) respondents representing 7% agreed, While (9) respondents representing 3% strongly agreed to that. This implies that workplace aggression does not propel employees' to be more productive as majority of the respondents attested to that.

Table 3 Distribution on whether secrecy propels employees' to attain organizational goals

Options	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undecided	15	5.0	5.0	5.0
Disagreed	30	10.0	10.0	15.0
Valid Strongly disagreed	25	8.3	8.3	23.3
Agreed	80	26.7	26.7	50.0
Strongly agreed	150	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	300	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2021 (SPSS Output file 20.0)

Table 3 shows that, (15) respondents representing 5% were undecided, (30) respondents representing 10% disagreed, (25) respondents representing 8.3% strongly disagreed, (80) respondents representing 26.7% agreed; while (150) respondents representing 50% strongly agreed. Data evidence shows that secrecy at workplace does not propel employees' to attain organizational set goals.

Test of Hypotheses

In testing these hypotheses, data from table 2 and 3 were used; to ascertain respondent's views on effect of workplace aggression and secrecy at workplace.

Hypothesis One

Ha: Aggression has significant effect on employee productivity.

Ho: Aggression has no significant effect on employee productivity

Table 4 Pearson Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	468.332	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	380.053	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	214.129	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	300		

Source: SPSS Output file 20.0

Interpretation: The Chi- square likelihood value is (380.053) is greater than the linear- by – linear association value (214.129) this indicates that the dependent variable has effect on the independent

variable. The significance value of X^2 statistic is (0.0001) which is less than 0.05, this implies that the variation experienced is not by chance; this means aggression has significant effect on employees' productivity in the selected deposit Money Banks.

Decision: Accept H_a if X^2 critical is < 0.05 at 0.95 degree of freedom; if otherwise reject. We therefore reject H_o , and accept H_a because our Chi- square result is 0.0001(significant at 0.0001) which is less than 0.05 by way of two tail testing. This implies that aggression has negative effect on employee productivity. We therefore accept our alternate hypothesis which says "aggression has significant effect on employee productivity" in the selected Deposit Money Banks.

Hypothesis two

H_a : Secrecy has significance effect on goal attainment of employee.

H_o : Secrecy has no significance effect on goal attainment of employee.

Table 5 Pearson Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	415.868	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	427.586	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	225.050	1	.000
No of Valid Cases	300		

Source: SPSS Output file 20.0

Interpretation: The Chi- square likelihood value is (427.586) is greater than the linear- by – linear association value (225.050) this indicates that the dependent variable has effect on the independent variable. The significance value of X^2 statistic is (0.0001) which is less than 0.05, this implies that the variation experienced is not by chance; this means secrecy has significant effect on goal attainment of employees' in the selected deposit Money Banks.

Decision: Reject H_o if X^2 critical value is < 0.05 ; if otherwise accept. We therefore accept H_a and reject H_o because our Chi- square result show significance at 0.0001 which is less than 0.05 by way of two tail testing. This implies that secrecy to a large extent affect goal attainment of employees' in the selected deposit Money Banks.

Discussions of Findings

The findings of this study are discussed under the various objectives of the study. However, some of the findings here are the inference the researchers have drawn from respondent's views, to avoid biasing our findings, the researchers have matched the findings of the study with other studies of similar nature conducted by other scholars to achieve our position on findings in this study.

To establish the extent to which aggression affects employee productivity

In order to determine whether workplace aggression propels employees to be more productive respondent's views were enquired; and it was found that, aggression to a large extent hinders employee's productivity. This finding is in line with the findings by Kuhlman, Sperling and Balzert (2004), Oeij and Wiezer (2002) who noted that the key issues are the integration of employees in organization and team work devoid of aggression is the overall interest in organizations as successful organizations today know that employees' make a big difference in achievement of organizational

performance. This can further be supported by Social identity theory by Turner and Tajfel (1979). The social identity theory states that in-group will discriminate against the out-group so as to enhance their self image. The central hypothesis of this theory is that group members of an in-group will seek to find negative aspects of an out-group, (pits & Jarry, 2007: 36). To attain this goal, individuals make comparisons of themselves among a number of categorizations. They argue that these self comparisons involve members placing themselves and others, into a series of categories along religious, gender, ethnic and socioeconomic lines, thus making them to be aggressive to those they tagged out group members.

To ascertain the extent to which secrecy affect goal attainment of employee

In order to ascertain whether secrecy at workplace affect goal attainment of employees', respondents views were enquired; it was found that, secrecy at workplace does not propel employees' in attaining their goals, neither does it propels employees to be more productive;. This is in line with the findings of Bacon and Blyton (2005), Zhang (2000) and Van der Wiele and Brown (2002) who showed that employees themselves belief that productivity improves when work is completed in group openness and cooperation as this ultimately impacts on goal attainment. This is further supported by Tajfel and Turner's theory of Social Categorization (1979) Social categorization theory form the basis for workplace rivalry and the possible effect on employee's performance as a result of disunity within the team, thus hampering the ability of the team to perform optimally, and negatively influencing team outcomes. This manifest in decreased information sharing (secrecy), and decreased ability to solve problems or make effective decisions due to the zeal to deal with biases resultant of social categorization

Conclusion

This study is very timely and crucial, as ensuring a workplace that is free of aggression will enable the banks to perform optimally. This can be possible if secrecy among employees of the banks is totally discouraged because allowing some employee to hide certain information can only aggravate hate speech, sentiments and volatile workplace that can reduced employee cooperation among themselves; Hence, the need for the effective management of rivalry among employees' of the banks studied. To this end, emphasis is laid on being able to devise reliable strategies to the management of employee relationship with a view to ensuring compliance and cooperation of staff so as to achieve organizational objectives.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and result of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The banks management is to device measures that can reduce aggression among employees such as punishment; so that those who exhibit aggressive behavior can be punished in accordance with the level of aggression exhibited by them.
2. The management of the banks is to put in place measures that will reduce secrecy among employees to the barest minimum by encouraging openness among them and must ensure that it become a norm for employee to help and entertain questions that are capable of improving practical skills.
3. All affiliations that are capable of bringing favoritism/discrimination among colleagues must be totally discouraged; and punishment for offenders be taken serious.
4. The management of the banks have to incorporate attitude change policy that will help eliminate aggression among employees, these policies could be inform of employee training on tolerance for each order.

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