

MEDIATING EFFECT OF JOB SATISFACTION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

F C Ebuzoeme

Lecturer II
Department of Business Administration
Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

Abstract: High-level performance keeps an organisation in business while low-level performance does the contrary. Organisational performance has a small chance of being maximized where employees experience low job satisfaction due to poor work environment, poor advancement opportunities, among other factors. These factors constitute a hindrance to the efforts of organisations such as food and beverage manufacturing companies that conduct businesses in competitive environments to maximize performance. This study was conducted to determine the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and the performance of employees of a food and beverage manufacturing company in Oyo State, Nigeria.

The study was conducted based on a survey research design. Data were collected on a scale ranging from Strongly Agree, 4, to Strongly Disagree, 1. Hypotheses were stated and tested in order to attain the objectives of the study. Data analyses were carried out based on inferential statistics involving simple and multiple regression analyses.

The findings of the study revealed that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The effect of transformational leadership on employee performance was positive and statistically significant; so also was the effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction.

The implication of the findings was stated. It indicates that in order to boost performance in the studied company, it was necessary for the management of the company to place huge emphasis on factors that promote job satisfaction such as conducive work environment, training, and advancement opportunities.

IndexTerms - Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, employee performance.

INTRODUCTION

Transformational leadership style has a main objective of pursuing and attaining long-term goals of an organisation. These goals include market leadership, expanding market share, and initiating change that is capable of giving the organisation an edge over competitors. Attaining these goals requires effective coordination of activities and resources emanating from the transformational leader's behaviour. However the level of job satisfaction of employees seems to affect attainable level of performance in organisations. Mowday et al. (2013) gave indication that many employees in work organisations have high-level job dissatisfaction that causes unpleasant attitudes to work and thereby affects their level of performance. The transformational leader's behaviour, characterised by the four I's (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration), is known to have produced positive impact on performance as indicated by a number of empirical studies (Al Khajeh, 2018; Chege & Gakobu, 2017; Dele et al., 2015; Abasilim, 2014; Shafie et al., 2013; Ben & Agu, 2012; Ojokuku et al., 2012; Koech & Namusonge, 2012; Paracha et al., 2012). However, a review of extant literature suggested the need to further investigate the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership style and company performance because low-level employee job satisfaction seems to be among the challenges of companies in the Nigerian manufacturing sector. Making such investigation in a food and beverage manufacturing company would give indication relating to whether the impact of transformational leadership style on performance would be significantly reduced or not as a result of the effect of job satisfaction on employee performance. Factors that yield employee job satisfaction include commitment, communication, and training while factors such as opportunities, rewards, and leadership need further investigation (Kumani, 2011).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study had a broad objective of establishing the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership style and employee performance. The specific objectives were to: examine the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance; determine the effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

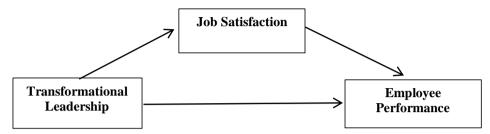
The hypotheses of this study are:

H₀₁: Transformational leadership has no significant effect on employee performance

H₀₂: Transformational leadership has no significant effect on job satisfaction

H₀₃: Job satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of transformational leadership style and employee performance mediated by job satisfaction



Source: Researcher, 2023

MODEL OF THE STUDY

$$\begin{split} EP &= \alpha + \beta_1 TF + \xi \\ JS &= \alpha + \beta_2 TF + \xi \\ EP &= \alpha + \beta_3 TF + \beta_4 JS + \xi \end{split} \tag{1}$$

Where EP = Employee performance

 α = Dependent variable-intercept

 $TF = Transformational \ leadership$

JS = Job satisfaction

 β_1 - β_4 = Coefficients

 $\mathcal{E} =$ Standard error of the estimate

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Performance

Performance refers to work behaviour that accomplishes results (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). Al Khajeh (2018) defined performance as the results an organization achieves or the actual output of the organization which can be measured against intended output or goals. Gavrea et al. (2011) stated that organisational performance is one of the most important variables in management research and that continuous performance is the objective of any organisation since it is only through performance that organisations are able to grow and progress. However, organisational performance has a small chance of being maximized where employees experience low job satisfaction occasioned by such factors as pay inadequacy, poor work environment, and poor advancement opportunities. Low job satisfaction in organisations such as the food and beverage companies carrying out business in competitive environments does not augur well for optimal performance.

Researchers define performance in objective or subjective terms to fulfill the purpose of each researcher's work. What this means is that there are various definitions of performance in the literature. Darwish et al. (2016) indicated that company performance is a multidimensional construct that can be measured in different ways - financial and non-financial. Mishra and Mohanty (2014) stated that financial measures of performance include return on equity (ROE), return on assets (ROA), and return on sales. Financial performance represents the fulfillment of a company's economic goals in financial terms (Richter et al., 2017). Food and beverage manufacturing companies adopt various metrics to measure performance. Irrespective of the metrics they adopt, the ability to attain defined performance goals is what enhances their effectiveness.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership places emphasis on motivating followers by providing them support to perform beyond expectation (Burns, 1978). It is a leadership style that inspires and motivates employees to innovate and create change that will enhance the performance of a company (White, 2018). A transformational leader creates a vision for followers and guides the change by inspiring and motivating the followers and also by activating their self-efficacy (Barth-Farkas & Vera, 2014). Transformational leadership provides motivation to followers and shows concern for their personal needs. It symbolizes leadership that creates an environment that energizes employees in companies. De Poel (2011) stated that transformational leadership style is one of the leadership styles that is particularly well-suited for creating cohesion and locomotion in organizations i.e. making the workforce strong and adaptive because transformational leadership is an inspiring and motivating leadership style that is primarily concerned with imparting a vision for the future relating to where the organization is heading and what it wants. Motivated employees working in a supportive climate provide more effective customer service that reinforces company performance and leads to financial gains for shareholders (Lai et al., 2020).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a measure of the extent of contentment a worker feels concerning the features of a job such as work environment, working hours, interaction with co-workers, opportunities for advancement, remuneration and other factors. Job satisfaction refers to people's attitudes and feelings concerning their work whereby positive attitudes toward the job indicate job satisfaction while negative attitudes indicate job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2006). It is the joyful and emotional state of a worker that results from an evaluation of job attributes (Danish & Usman, 2010). Sarwar and Khalid (2011) referred to job satisfaction as an emotional reaction to a person's job due to mutual and physical environments of an organisation.

Many factors affect employee job satisfaction in work organisations. Gupta et al. (2012) indicated four factors that affect job satisfaction: personal factors, social factors, cultural factors, and environmental factors. Personal factors include: education, experience, achievements, recognition, growth, responsibility and personality while social factors consists of relationships with coworkers, supervision, group work, prompt feedback from management, opportunity to participate in decision making, autonomy, empowerment, and praise for efforts (Alromaihi et al., 2017). Cultural factors include: human resource management policies, leadership styles, exposure to training, technology and work organisation while environmental factors refer to such factors as economic influences, governmental influences, technical influences, outer social influences, promotion, stress, salary and fringe benefits (Alromaihi et al., 2017). Chen (2015) indicated that flexible work arrangements (the extent of flexibility about working time, work location, and how much work one does) affect employee job satisfaction while Al-Hosam et al. (2016) stated that psychological empowerment (incentive to carry out responsibilities without referring to management and to participate in decision making) has impact on job satisfaction. When a worker is high performer in a company, it results in feelings that indicate job satisfaction. For this reason, it is important to ensure that workers are well motivated in work organisations in order to strengthen their loyalty.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the expectancy theory. The expectancy theory was proposed by Victor H. Vroom in 1964. The theory is based on the equation: Motivation = Expectancy x Instrumentality x Valence (Goyal, 2015). Motivation describes the extent an individual is energized or encouraged. Expectancy is a person's perception that effort would lead to performance. Instrumentality is a person's perception of the probability of receiving reward for expending effort. Valence refers to the perception of the magnitude and value of reward that would be associated with performance.

Since a transformational leader behaves in ways that inspires and motivates followers by providing meaning and challenge to the work they do (Bass & Avolio, 1994), there is need to ensure equitable and meaningful rewards for followers that adequately compensate for job hazards, job stress, excess hours, education and training and so on; so as to reflect a balance in the motivation-expectancy-instrumentality-valence equation.

Empirical Review

Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance

The literature provides substantial evidence on the positive relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance. Al Khajeh (2018) studied "impact of leadership style on organisational performance" and found that transformational had positive relationship with organisational performance (r = .265). Another study by Chege and Gakobu (2017), based on a sample size of 98 telecommunication employees and descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, found that transformational leadership style had positive relationship with organisational performance (r = .265; p < .05). Dele et al. (2015) studied 450 randomly selected bank employees in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria and indicated positive effects of transformational leadership style on company performance. Abasilim (2014) reported a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational performance in Nigerian work context. The study by Shafie et al. (2013) found that transformational leadership had positive impact on staff performance.

The study by Ojokuku et al. (2012) investigated the impact of leadership styles on organisational performance. The sample size of the study was 60 employees of twenty randomly selected banks in Ibadan and the findings show positive relationship between transformational leadership styles and employee performance (r = .215). Koech and Namusonge (2012) studied 72 middle and senior managers of 30 state-owned corporations with the objective of ascertaining the main effects of leadership styles on organisational performance. The findings of the study revealed high correlations between transformational-leadership factors (.518 to .696; p < .05) and performance. Ben and Agu (2012) studied the impact of transformational and transactional leadership on the performance of manufacturing companies and found significant positive relationship between transformational leadership style and company performance. The conclusion of the study was that transformational leadership enabled the companies to achieve results beyond what was normal by setting higher corporate goals, by inspiring a sense of importance about the team's mission, by stimulating employees to innovative thinking about a problem or task and by placing group goals over personal interest; transactional leadership enabled followers to achieve goals by providing clarifications on how to achieve the goals and by enabling them to receive intrinsic and extrinsic rewards upon goal attainment.

Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Javed et al. (2014) studied how transformational leadership styles related to employees' job satisfaction and reported that it had positive relationship with job satisfaction (r = .182). One of the objectives of the study by Riaz and Haida (2010) was to determined the impact of transformational leadership style on job success and career satisfaction. The findings of the study indicated that transformational leadership and job success were highly correlated with job satisfaction. Sarwar et al. (2015) also reported positive effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction. Abodunde et al. (2017) studied the impact of leadership styles on employee job satisfaction in a Nigerian insurance company and reported that transformational leadership had significant impact on employee job satisfaction. This finding prompted the recommendation that Managers in Nigeria's insurance firms should adopt transformational leadership style so as to increase employees' job satisfaction significantly due to strong positive correlation between both variables.

Mediation Effect of Job Satisfaction

It is expected that a leadership style that yields employee job satisfaction would produce positive impact on performance. Shahab and Nisa (2014) indicated that leadership plays a role in enhancing employee performance by impacting on employee job satisfaction. Mangkunegara (2016) conducted a study on the effect of transformational leadership and job satisfaction on employee performance and reported that job satisfaction and transformational leadership had positive effect on employee performance. It was also reported that it was necessary to give job satisfaction top priority in a company and company management should show concern for achieving equity in promotion exercise by taking the skills and contributions of employees into consideration. Roz (2019) studied the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance in Melang City and reported that transformational leadership and job satisfaction had significant positive influence on employee performance and that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. It was also indicated that higher levels of job satisfaction increased employee performance. Iman and Lestari (2019) also reported the mediation effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. Rawadesh et al. (2020) studied how transformational leadership affected employee performance with job satisfaction mediating. The findings of the study indicated that job satisfaction had significant relationship with employee performance; it also had significant mediation effect on employee performance. Paracha et al., (2012), investigated the impact of leadership styles on employee performance and found that transformational leadership style had positive impact on employee performance. It was also reported that job satisfaction played a mediating role between transformational style and job performance. The mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership style and performance reported by these studies indicate the importance of ensuring employee job satisfaction in organisations as a means of achieving higher levels of performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A survey research design was the basis for conducting this study. Data were collected from a population of 460 employees of a food and beverage manufacturing company in Oyo State, Nigeria. The employees were randomly selected middle level and junior members of staff. The sample size was calculated from Taro Yamani formula, $n = N/(1+Ne^2)$, where n represents the sample size, N represents the population of study, and e is the error margin. With 5 percent error margin, the sample size, $n = 460/[1+460(0.05)^2] = 214$. However, data analysis was based on 77 percent response rate. Regression analysis determined the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance while controlling for the mediator, job satisfaction. The conditions for mediation were verified based on Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step approach. Baron and Kenny (1986) posited that a variable can function as a mediator in causal relationships if regression analyses reveal statistically significant relationships in the first three of the following steps:

- 1. The independent variable is a statistically significant predictor of the dependent variable.
- 2. The independent variable is a statistically significant predictor of the mediator where the mediator serves as a dependent variable.
- 3. The mediator is a statistically significant predictor of the dependent variable while controlling for the effect of the independent variable.
- 4. Full mediation occurs if the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is no longer statistically significant after controlling for the effect of the mediator. If, on the other hand, the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is statistically significant, it is partial mediation.

However, the effect size of a variable on another was obtained. The following effect sizes were obtained:

- 1. β_1 = Total effect of transformational leadership on employee performance.
- 2. β_2 = Direct effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction.
- 3. β_3 = Direct effect of transformational leadership on employee performance.
- 4. β_4 = Direct effect of job satisfaction on employee performance while controlling for the effect of transformational leadership. The indirect effect of transformational leadership on employee performance was obtained from the product of the direct effect of

The indirect effect of transformational leadership on employee performance was obtained from the product of the direct effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and the direct effect of job satisfaction on employee performance while controlling for the effect of transformational leadership. That is to say:

Indirect effect of transformational leadership on employee performance = $\beta_2 * \beta_4$ (4)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Regression Analysis of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance

Coefficients ^a						
				Standardized		
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Coefficients			
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.588	.225		11.491	.000
	Transformational Leadership	.925	.016	.968	56.078	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 1 indicates that transformational leadership is a statistically significant predictor of employee performance ($\beta_1 = .925$, t = 56.078, p < .05). Therefore, null hypothesis 1 is rejected at .05 significance level.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of Transformational Leadership on Job Satisfaction

Coefficients^a

				Standardized		
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Coefficients		
	Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.613	.187		8.622	.000
	Transformational Leadership	.931	.014	.978	67.965	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source: Researcher, 2023

It is indicated in table 2 that transformational leadership is a statistically significant predictor of job satisfaction ($\beta_2 = .931$, t = 67.965, p < .05). Therefore, null hypothesis 2 is rejected at .05 significance level.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance

Coefficients^a

				Standardized		
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Coefficients		
	Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.042	.159		6.564	.000
	Transformational Leadership	.032	.048	.034	.676	.500
	Job Satisfaction	.959	.050	.955	19.123	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 3 gives indication of a substantially reduced and insignificant effect of transformational leadership on employee performance while controlling for job satisfaction ($\beta_3 = .032$, t = .676, p > .05). Null hypothesis 3, is therefore, rejected at .05 significance level. This implies full mediation of job satisfaction on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. It is shown it table 3 that job satisfaction plays a significant role in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance since it reduced the effect of transformational leadership from 92.5 percent indicated in table 1 to 3.2 percent contribution to performance for a unit increase in transformational leadership. Based on tables 1 to 3, the following effect sizes are obtained:

Table 4: Effect Size

Effect	Direct	Indirect	Total		
Transformation leadership on Job Satisfaction	.931	=	.931		
Job Satisfaction on Performance	.959	-	.959		
Transformation leadership on Performance	.032	.893	.925		
Statistically significant effect (p < 0.05)					

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 4 gives indication that job satisfaction exhibits the largest direct effect on employee performance followed by the direct effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction. Total effect is the summation of direct effect and indirect effect.

CONCLUSION

The results of data analyses revealed the following: statistically significant impact of transformational leadership on employee performance; statistically significant impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction; and statistically insignificant mediation effect of transformational leadership on employee performance. Since the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance was substantially reduced while controlling for job satisfaction, job satisfaction mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The results revealed full mediation since the inclusion of job satisfaction as a mediating variable produced statistically insignificant effect of transformational leadership on employee performance. This further indicates that in order to boost performance in the studied company, the management of the company should place huge emphasis on providing factors that promote job satisfaction such as conducive work environment, training, and advancement opportunities. Company transformational leadership has a greater chance of achieving significant increases in

performance by ensuring that employees experience high levels of job satisfaction and that the rewards they receive for performing their jobs well are valued and equitable.

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