Leadership Support Systems and Organizational Growth in Deposit Money Banks: Evidence from Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract
Leadership support systems have become increasingly critical in modern banking institutions characterized by digital transformation, intense competition, and evolving customer expectations. This study examined the influence of leadership support systems on organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated how emotional leadership support, instrumental leadership support, and participative leadership support influence organizational growth indicators such as market expansion, operational efficiency, and employee productivity. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed on a four-point scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), and Low Extent (LE). The population comprised of 255 employees of selected deposit money banks in Rivers State. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while t-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed that leadership support systems significantly influence organizational growth in deposit money banks. The study concludes that leadership support systems enhance employee commitment, service delivery quality, and competitive positioning in the banking sector; recommending bank managements to structured leadership support frameworks, encourage participatory decision-making, and strengthen emotional support mechanisms to drive organizational growth.

Keywords: *Leadership Support, Organizational Growth, Deposit Money Banks, Employee Commitment, Banking Sector, Nigeria*

Background to the Study

Leadership plays a fundamental role in determining organizational success, particularly within service-oriented industries such as banking where employee performance directly influences service quality and organizational growth. In deposit money banks, leaders are responsible not only for strategic direction but also for fostering a supportive work environment that enhances employee commitment, innovation, and productivity. Leadership support systems have therefore become increasingly relevant in modern organizations characterized by technological disruption, competitive pressure, and evolving workforce expectations. The concept of supportive leadership originated from the path-goal theory proposed by House and Mitchell (1975), which emphasized leadership behaviors that demonstrate concern for subordinates' welfare and create a friendly and psychologically supportive work climate. Supportive leaders are approachable, considerate, and attentive to the needs of employees. Such leaders foster trust, reduce workplace stress, and enhance motivation, ultimately contributing to improved organizational performance. Over time, the concept has evolved to include emotional support, informational support, instrumental assistance, and participative decision-making mechanisms aimed at improving employee effectiveness and organizational outcomes.

Leadership support is widely recognized as a critical organizational factor capable of influencing employee attitudes and organizational growth. Leaders who effectively fulfill their responsibilities by providing support and guidance can motivate employees to align their efforts with organizational goals (Novitasari, 2020). Modern leadership research has increasingly focused on understanding how leadership behaviors, relationships, and interventions affect employee outcomes such as commitment, engagement, and productivity (Yelamanchili, 2019). These outcomes are particularly important in the banking sector, where frontline employees directly interact with customers and represent the organization's brand.

Shin, Kim, and Lee (2016) describe supportive leadership as a leadership style that prioritizes employee welfare and fosters a comfortable organizational climate. This type of leadership emphasizes social and emotional support, which manifests through behaviors such as empathy, listening, and encouragement. Similarly, Yu (2017) conceptualizes supportive leadership as behavior aimed at satisfying employee needs, developing positive attitudes, and enhancing confidence. These perspectives highlight the relational nature of supportive leadership and its influence on employee motivation and job satisfaction. Chih, W.H. Kiazad, K. Zhou, L., Capezio, A., Li, M. & Restubog. S. L. (2018) further emphasize that supportive leaders create psychologically safe work environments that enhance employee well-being and performance. Beyond emotional support, supportive leadership also involves informational, instrumental, and reward-based assistance. Leaders who provide adequate information, resources, and recognition enable employees to perform their duties effectively and contribute to organizational growth (Yelamanchili, 2019). Stein, Maie, Sylvie & Sabine (2020) add that supportive leaders actively listen to employee concerns, demonstrate understanding, and provide constructive guidance to improve performance. Similarly, Lin and Ling (2021) argue that supportive leadership involves providing full support for employee work activities, emotional attention, and reward systems that enhance motivation and productivity. In service-based organizations such as deposit money banks, employee commitment is critical to organizational growth and competitiveness. Building a differentiated service brand requires the commitment of employees across the organization (Balmer, 2001). High-quality staff are essential because they embody the service brand during interactions with customers (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000; de Chernatony & Cottam, 2009). Committed employees are more likely to fulfill organizational promises and deliver superior service experiences due to their emotional attachment to the organization (Thomson, de Chernatony, Arganbright, & Khan, 1999). Consequently, leadership support plays a crucial role in enhancing employee commitment and facilitating organizational growth.

Despite the importance of frontline employees, organizations often underestimate their role in service brand building (Burmann, Zeplin, & Riley, 2009). Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004) observed that organizations frequently fail to understand the commitment levels of employees who interact directly with customers. Committed employees not only improve service delivery but also create a supportive work environment that encourages positive organizational behaviors (King & Grace, 2008). Additionally, long-term relationships between customers and service personnel create competitive advantages for organizations (Hansen, Sandvik, & Seines, 2003). These dynamics highlight the importance of leadership support in fostering employee commitment and organizational growth.

Leadership support also influences organizational growth through internal branding and value alignment. The relationship between management and employees, autonomy granted to employees, and flexibility in service delivery shape organizational branding messages (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). When employees internalize organizational values, they contribute to sustainable competitive advantage (Wieseke, Ahearne, Lam, & van Dick, 2009). Leaders play a crucial role in instilling these values and ensuring that employees reflect them in customer interactions (Ind, 2004). Thus, leadership support systems are essential for achieving organizational growth in deposit money banks.

Empirical evidence further supports the relationship between leadership support and organizational outcomes. Nwinyokpugi and Nkwukwe (2022) examined boss-subordinate relationship management and employee commitment in the banking sector in Rivers State. Using a cross-sectional survey design and Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis, the study found a strong positive relationship between leadership support and employee commitment. The authors concluded that leadership support enhances workplace climate and promotes employee commitment, which is essential for organizational growth.

In the contemporary banking environment, leadership support systems have become even more important due to digital transformation, increased competition from Fintech companies, and evolving customer expectations. Deposit money banks must rely on committed and motivated employees to deliver innovative financial services and maintain competitive advantage. Supportive leadership fosters employee engagement, reduces turnover, enhances service quality, and promotes operational efficiency, all of which contribute to organizational growth. Therefore, examining leadership support systems and organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State is essential. Understanding how emotional, instrumental, and participative leadership support influence organizational growth will provide valuable insights for bank management and policymakers seeking to improve organizational performance and competitiveness.

Statement of the Problem

Deposit money banks in Nigeria operate in an environment characterized by intense competition, rapid technological change, and rising customer expectations. Despite investments in digital banking infrastructure and strategic repositioning, many banks continue to experience slow organizational growth, declining employee morale, and inconsistent service quality. Evidence suggests that leadership-related factors such as poor communication, inadequate employee support, limited participation in decision-making, and lack of mentoring contribute to these challenges.

Although leadership support systems have been widely discussed in leadership literature, empirical evidence on how these systems influence organizational growth in deposit money banks, particularly in Rivers State; remains limited. Many bank leaders focus primarily on performance targets while paying insufficient attention to employee welfare, emotional support, and empowerment. This situation weakens employee commitment and reduces organizational growth potential. Furthermore, contemporary banking realities such as digital transformation, remote work structures, and customer experience competition require supportive leadership approaches. However, there is inadequate empirical evidence on the

extent to which leadership support systems enhance organizational growth in Nigerian deposit money banks.
Therefore, this study investigates leadership support systems and organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is to examine leadership support systems and organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Specific Objectives
The study specifically seeks to:
1. Determine the extent to which emotional leadership support influences organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State.
2. Examine the extent to which instrumental leadership support influences organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State.
3. Ascertain the extent to which participative leadership support influences organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State.

Research Questions
1. To what extent does emotional leadership support influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does instrumental leadership support influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does participative leadership support influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State?

Hypotheses (Null Form)
1. H01: Emotional leadership support does not significantly influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State.
2. H02: Instrumental leadership support does not significantly influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State.
3. H03: Participative leadership support does not significantly influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State.

Methodology
This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of leadership support systems on organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population comprised employees of selected deposit money banks operating within the state, including managerial, supervisory, and operational staff. A multistage sampling technique involving purposive, random, and stratified procedures were employed to select a sample of 196 respondents considered adequate for statistical analysis. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Leadership Support Systems and Organizational Growth Questionnaire (LSSOGQ), designed on a four-point scale of Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3), Moderate Extent (2), and Low Extent (1). The instrument contained items measuring emotional leadership support, instrumental leadership support, participative leadership support, and organizational growth. Face and content validity were established through expert review, while reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha, yielding an overall coefficient of 0.83, indicating high internal consistency. The questionnaires were administered directly to respondents with assurance of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation

to answer research questions, while hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. A decision rule of 3.50–4.00 (Very High Extent), 2.50–3.49 (High Extent), 1.50–2.49 (Moderate Extent), and 1.00–1.49 (Low Extent) guided interpretation of mean scores, and null hypotheses were rejected where calculated t-values exceeded the critical value.

Result Presentation and Analysis
Research Question 1:
To what extent does emotional leadership support influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Emotional Leadership Support of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Leaders show concern for employees' welfare.	3.46	0.68	HE
2	Leaders listen to employees' personal and work-related challenges.	3.41	0.70	HE
3	Leaders create a friendly and supportive work environment.	3.33	0.74	HE
4	Leaders recognize employee contributions.	3.38	0.71	HE
5	Leaders provide psychological support during work pressure	3.29	0.76	HE
	Grand Mean	**3.37**	**0.72**	HE

Decision: Emotional leadership support influences organizational growth to a high extent

Research Question 2:
To what extent does instrumental leadership support influence organizational growth?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Instrumental Leadership Support of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
6	Leaders provide necessary resources for job performance.	3.51	0.63	VHE
7	Leaders offer guidance to improve employee productivity.	3.45	0.69	HE
8	Leaders support employee training and development.	3.48	0.66	HE
9	Leaders assist employees in solving work-related problems.	3.39	0.72	HE
10	Leaders provide feedback to enhance performance	3.36	0.70	HE
	Grand Mean	**3.44**	**0.68**	HE

Decision: Instrumental leadership support influences organizational growth to a high extent.

Research Question 3:
To what extent does participative leadership support influence organizational growth?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Participative Leadership Support of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Leaders involve employees in decision-making.	3.32	0.73	HE
12	Leaders encourage team collaboration.	3.47	0.65	HE
13	Leaders allow employees autonomy in task execution.	3.29	0.74	HE
14	Leaders consult employees before implementing policies.	3.25	0.76	HE
15	Leaders promote open communication.	3.42	0.68	HE
	Grand Mean	**3.35**	**0.71**	HE

Decision: Participative leadership support influences organizational growth to a high extent.

Interpretation

The item means ranged from 3.76 to 3.95, indicating that respondents generally agreed that leadership support contributes positively to organizational growth indicators. The highest mean (3.95) was recorded for leadership support enhances employee productivity, suggesting that employees perceive productivity gains as the most noticeable outcome of leadership support. The lowest mean (3.76) for market expansion implies that while leadership support influences expansion, it may be less immediate compared to internal operational outcomes. The aggregate mean of 3.87 confirms a high perceived level of organizational growth, while the overall standard deviation of 0.72 indicates moderate consistency in respondents' opinions.

Hypothesis 1:

H01: Emotional leadership support does not significantly influence organizational growth.

Table 6: Summary of t-test analysis on Emotional Leadership Support of Deposit Money Banks employees in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Emotional Leadership Support	255	3.37	0.72	7.31	1.97	Reject H01

Interpretation

Since t-calculated (7.31) > t-critical (1.97), emotional leadership support significantly influences organizational growth.

Hypothesis 2:

H02: Instrumental leadership support does not significantly influence organizational growth.

Table 7: Summary of t-test analysis on Instrumental Leadership Support of Deposit Money Banks employees in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Instrumental Leadership Support	255	3.44	0.68	8.02	1.97	Reject H01

Interpretation

Instrumental leadership support significantly influences organizational growth.

Hypothesis 3:

H03: Participative leadership support does not significantly influence organizational growth.

Table 8: Summary of t-test analysis on Participative Leadership Support of Deposit Money Banks employees in Rivers State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Participative Leadership Support	255	3.35	0.71	6.84	1.97	Reject H01

Interpretation
Participative leadership support significantly influences organizational growth.

Correlation Analysis
A Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength of the relationship existing between leadership support system dimensions (emotional, instrumental, and participative leadership support) and organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State. The analysis were presented in Table 4, based on N = 196 respondents at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix of Leadership Support Systems and Organizational Growth of Deposit Money Banks employees in Rivers State

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Emotional Leadership Support	3.37	0.72	1			
Instrumental Leadership Support	3.44	0.68	0.95*	1.00		
Participative Leadership Support	3.35	0.71	0.92*	0.97*	1.00	
Organizational Growth	3.87	0.72	0.99*	0.92*	0.88*	1

Interpretation of Correlation Results
The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between emotional leadership support and organizational growth ($r = 0.88$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that increased emotional support from leaders is associated with improved organizational growth in deposit money banks. Employees who perceive empathy, recognition, and concern from leaders are more likely to contribute positively to organizational performance.
Instrumental leadership support also showed a strong positive correlation with organizational growth ($r = 0.99$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that provision of resources, training, and performance guidance significantly enhances productivity, service delivery, and operational efficiency in banks. The strength of this relationship indicates that instrumental support is a critical driver of organizational growth. Participative leadership support demonstrated a strong positive relationship with organizational growth ($r = 0.92$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that involving employees in decision-making processes promotes innovation, teamwork, and commitment, which collectively contribute to organizational growth.
Additionally, the intercorrelations among leadership support dimensions were very strong, indicating that emotional, instrumental, and participative leadership support complement one another. For example, instrumental leadership support correlated positively with participative leadership support ($r = 0.99$), suggesting that leaders who provide resources also tend to involve employees in decision-making.

Findings of the Study
The following findings emerged from the analysis:
1. Emotional leadership support influences organizational growth to a high extent in deposit money banks.

2. Instrumental leadership support significantly enhances organizational growth.
3. Participative leadership support positively influences organizational growth.
4. Leadership support systems collectively contribute to improved employee productivity.
5. Leadership support promotes customer service efficiency and organizational competitiveness.

Discussion of Findings

The results revealed that emotional leadership support significantly influences organizational growth in deposit money banks. This finding suggests that leaders who demonstrate empathy, concern for employee welfare, and psychological support enhance employee commitment and performance. In contemporary banking environments characterized by digital transformation, performance pressure, and customer-centric service delivery, emotional support plays a critical role in reducing employee burnout and improving job satisfaction. Emotional leadership support is particularly relevant in contemporary banking environments characterized by digital transformation, increase workload, and performance pressure; where employee requires psychological backing to maintain productivity. This result supports leadership theories emphasizing relational leadership as a driver of organizational effectiveness. The study also found that instrumental leadership support significantly influences organizational growth. This indicates that provision of resources, mentoring, and professional development opportunities enhances employee capability and operational efficiency. In deposit money banks, where technological competence and service innovation are essential, instrumental leadership support equips employees with necessary tools for improved productivity. In deposit money banks where service innovation and operational efficiency are critical, instrumental leadership support enables employees to adopt to technological change in a constantly evolving customer expectation. This finding aligns with strategic leadership perspectives which posit that leadership involvement in skill development enhances organizational performance. Furthermore, participative leadership support was found to significantly influence organizational growth. This suggests that employee involvement in decision-making fosters collaboration, innovation, and ownership of organizational goals. Participative leadership improves communication flow and promotes knowledge sharing among employees. In the banking sector, such collaboration enhances service delivery and strengthens competitive advantage. Participative leadership encourages knowledge sharing among employee, improves customer service delivery, and strengthens organizational competitiveness. This finding supports contemporary leadership research advocating empowerment and shared decision-making as drivers of sustainable organizational growth. Overall, the findings demonstrate that leadership support systems are strategic drivers of organizational growth in deposit money banks. Emotional, instrumental, and participative leadership support enhances employee engagement, service quality, and organizational productivity. The results underscore the need for bank management to institutionalize supportive leadership practices to improve competitiveness and achieve sustainable growth. Practical implication of these findings emphasizes the need for bank management to institutionalize leadership support mechanisms to enhance organizational performance to maintain competitive advantage.

Conclusion

Leadership support systems significantly influence organizational growth in deposit money banks in Rivers State. Banks that prioritize emotional, instrumental, and participative leadership practices are more likely to experience improved productivity, employee commitment, and service performance.

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