



Helping Behaviour and Task Performance of Employees in Commercial Banks: Moderating Effect of Task Interdependence

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ABSTRACT

Some bankers encounter unanticipated events such as shortage or overage of transactions which often lead to stress, query and even dismissal. The objective of this study is to examine the moderating effects of Task Interdependence on the relationship between helping behaviour (HB) and employee task performances. The study employed Survey research design which is cross sectional in nature; questionnaire was administered on 176 employees of commercial banks. Hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis formulated for the study. The finding of the study revealed that task interdependence moderated the relationship between HB and employee task performance in Commercial banks. In the light of this, it was concluded that task interdependence can enhance the relationship between HB and performance of employees of commercial banks.

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INTRODUCTION

Employee job performance is an important outcome measure of researches in a working setting. Previous studies have established that what comprises employees' work performance varies from work to work. Consequently, a number of measures of work performance have been utilized. Thus far, the measurement of employee performance has mainly centered on either objective measurement of work production (like the number of days not present, reckoning of particular acts, or productivity sustained in organizational report) or on subjective rulings of quantity and quality of work from the worker him or herself, peers, or supervisors, (Linda Claire, Vincent, Wilmar, Henrica & Allard, 2011). This study examined employee work specific behaviour that encompasses an employee's task performance at the place of work.

Employee task performance can be seen as the frequent activities employees carry out to accomplish organizational goals, sustain improvement towards the goals and make

adjustments to achieve those goals effectively and efficiently (Richard, 2019). One of the variables that can serve as an indicator of enhanced employee task performance is helping behaviour. It can be seen as an assistance one employee offer to another in order to effectively accomplish his task performance without any or much problem. In support, Jahangir (2014) noted that organizations and its employees could not continue to exist or perform well without their employees engaging in helping behaviour. In addition, Rachael (2013) posited that when performing a task or seeking to achieve a performance goal, group members cannot control the functions, information, or resources needed independently. Hence, they must rely on others to fulfill their performance goals and work tasks.

Furthermore, understanding of employee helping behaviour and their task performance can be greatly enhanced by better understanding of the level or the extent to which employees depend on one another in carrying out their task (Kiggundu, 1983). Task interdependence refers to the degree to which



group members depend on other members of their group to carry out their task effectively and efficiently in the organization. Bachrach, Powell, Bendoly and Richey (2006) posited that group members may be more likely to work collectively on the task and exchange information and resources in a high task interdependence situation. He concluded that, a low task interdependence state may be characterized as an entity working alone but still making effort to contribute to collective group task. For instance, the members within a team have independent tasks which ultimately contribute to the overall task. Hypothetically, all teams, in spite of their intensity of task interdependence, should benefit from helping behaviour and the extent to which helping behaviour positively affect performance may depend greatly on the intensity of task interdependence (Kiggundu, 1983).

More also, it has been a standard practice in the Nigerian commercial banks for the individual worker to take the initiative in helping their co-workers each time they face challenges of work stress, work overload and some problems such as shortage or overage of transactions, (Muhammad, 2014). However, employees of Commercial banks always work with high level of performance target of account opening, deposit mobilization and investment that is often difficult to achieve. While very few Nigerian bankers always meet up with their performance target, 65% do not always achieve their performance target. In addition, about 34% of employees of Nigerian commercial banks do encounter unanticipated events such as shortage or overage of transactions; call over of transaction, and improper documentation of control copy of transaction among others (Abdulmalik & Kabiru, 2015). Thus, studying employee performance in Nigerian commercial banks is greatly important as little attention have been given to such specific situations problems happening among employees of the banks.

Furthermore, a number of studies such as David, James, and Michael (2014), Daniel, Benjamin, Elliot, and Glenn (2014) and Racheal (2013) among others have documented a strong relationship between helping behaviour and performance. However, only few studies such as Richey (2006) have considered the inclusion of a

moderator variable as recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986). Thus, helping behaviour and task interdependence can play a significant role in enhancing the performance of employees especially the newcomers, those with work-related problems and those who cannot meet up with their performance expectation. Additionally, Studies on the relationship between helping behaviour and performance have been inconsistent with some studies like Rachael (2013) and Coole (2003) among others documenting significant positive relationship and others (e.g. Podsakoff & Mackenzi, 1994; Dorothea, 2012; Abubakar & Hanan, 2010) had insignificant relationship between helping behaviour and performance. It is on the basis of these differences in results and the recommendation of Baron & Kenny (1986) that the current study resolved to integrate a third variable that can explain these inconsistencies. In line with this, Robbins, and Judge (2013) noted that employees with high task interdependence are more likely to experience enhanced performance and meet up with their individual and organizational performance expectation than employees with low task interdependence. Thus, the current study focuses on determining the moderating effect of task interdependence on the relationship between helping behaviour and performance of employees of Commercial banks in Zaria Metropolis.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Performance is a multi-component concept and on the fundamental level one can distinguish the process aspect of performance, that is, behavioral engagements from an expected outcome (Borman, & Motowidlo, 1993; Campbell et al., 1993; Roe, 1999). The behavior over here denotes the action people exhibit to accomplish a work, whereas the outcome aspect states about the consequence of individual's job behavior (Campbell, 1990). Apparently, in a workplace, the behavioral engagement and expected outcome are related to each other (Borman, & Motowidlo, 1993), but the comprehensive overlap between both the constructs are not evident yet, as the expected outcome is influenced by factors such as motivation and cognitive abilities than the behavioral aspect. Performance in the form of task



performance comprises of job explicit behaviors which includes fundamental job responsibilities assigned as a part of job description. Task performance requires more cognitive ability and is primarily facilitated through task knowledge (requisite technical knowledge or principles to ensure job performance and having an ability to handle multiple assignments), task skill (application of technical knowledge to accomplish task successfully without much supervision), and task habits (an innate ability to respond to assigned jobs that either facilitate or impede the performance) (Conway, 1999). Therefore, the primary antecedents of task performance are the ability to do the job and prior experience. Helping behaviour involves helping others with or preventing the occurrence of work-related problems, (Organ, 2016). According to George and Bettenhausen, (2013), when experienced employees help less experienced ones solve work related problems, find more efficient way of performing their task, it is likely to enhance both the quantity and quality of performance of the less experienced employee. In addition to this, the more employees help each other with work related problems, the less time a manager need to devote to these activities; thus, freeing up the manager for more productive activities. It will also increase group cohesiveness, make the organization a more attractive place to work, reduce voluntary turnover and thereby enhance organizational productivity (Podsakoff & Mishra, 2010). When performing a task or seeking to achieve a performance goal, group members cannot control the functions, information, or resources needed independently. Hence, they must rely on others to fulfill their performance goals and work tasks. Task interdependence refers to the degree to which team members identify with, and intend to help, one another both through their actions, and through providing resources (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Bachrach, (2016), defined task interdependence as the degree to which group members depend on other members of their group to execute organizational task effectively and efficiently. McCann and Ferry, (2019) added that group members may be more likely to work collectively on the task and exchange information and resources in a high task interdependence situation while Mitchell & Silver, (1990) concluded

that, a low task interdependence state may be characterized as an entity working alone but still making effort to contribute to collective group task. For instance, the members within a team have independent tasks which ultimately contribute to the overall task. Thus, teams' members perform interdependent tasks to achieve their overall goal. Hypothetically, all teams, in spite of their intensity of task interdependence, should benefit from helping behaviour and the extent to which helping behaviour positively affect performance may depend greatly on the intensity of task interdependence (Podsakoff et al., 2020).

Empirical Review

Helping behaviour and performance relationship has been widely studied, and there appear to have inconclusive results. Organ et al., (2006) studied paper mill employees and instituted that helping behaviour was significantly related to manufacture goods quality. Walz and Niehoff (2015) conducted a study which investigated 30 different restaurants in Indonesia and establish that helping behaviour was significantly related to working effectiveness, buyer happiness, and quality of performance. Studies have also established that helping behaviour was also negatively related with wasted food. For example, Koys (2014) utilized a mixture of helping behaviour dimensions to structure a composite measure of HB. Findings from the study showed that the composite measure of helping behaviour was negatively related with restaurant returns. Furthermore, Podsakoff and Mackenzi (2009) examined the relationship between helping behaviour and organizational performance in a major insurance company. Their findings revealed that helping behaviour accounted for about 17% of the discrepancy in agency-level performance. They use objective measures to assess insurance agency performance, their findings showed negative relationship between helping behaviour and performance. Also, Podsakoff (2000) discovered in his empirical evidence that helping behaviour exceptionally accounted for 42.9% of the inconsistency in managerial performance evaluations. Findings from the research also showed that altruism or helping behaviour was significantly correlated to performance evaluations in six out of the ten studies it was



incorporated in while the remaining four were insignificantly correlated to performance. Pearce and Gregersen, (1991) have acknowledged the possibility for task interdependence to affect worker helping behaviour (HB) and performance relationship. However, studies such as Richey (2006) among others have shown that few researches have really explored the influence of task interdependence on the HB-performance relationship. Richey (2006) explored the impact of task interdependence on the correlation between HB and performance evaluation in three distinct studies and established that task interdependence may affect the significance attributed to HB. Bommer et al. (2007) conducted a research which investigated HB across diverse levels of interdependence and established that the level of interdependence necessary for the performance of a group task may impact on the suitability and regularity of HBs.

Daniel, Benjamin, Elliot, and Glenn (2014) studied the influence of task interdependence on the significance attributed to Helping Behavior (HB) in evaluations of member of staff performance. The study adopted a survey research design and simple random probability sampling was employed. The regression result put forward that task interdependence may influence HB in overall evaluations of employee performance. Also, Rachael (2013) examined the relationship between OCB and sports team performance and whether this OCB-performance relationship was moderated by task interdependence. Two types of collegiate teams—softball and tennis—were utilized to represent two different levels of task interdependence with softball being considered more interdependent than tennis. Results indicated that TCBS sometimes significantly predicted performance with helping behaviour being the strongest predictor. However, the effect of TCBS on performance differed between tennis and softball teams. Furthermore, Caroline and Vincent (2005) tested the interaction involving group goal commitment and three criteria of group effectiveness among which are: team performance, quality of group experience and team viability together with the moderating effect of task interdependence and the mediating role of helpful behavior. Information was obtained

through questionnaire from a sample of 74 teams functioning in 13 Canadian organizations. The result shows that team goal commitment is absolutely correlated to the three dimensions of team effectiveness. The result also revealed that, task interdependence moderates the relationship between team goal commitment and team performance and that supportive behaviour actually mediates the relationships that team goal commitment has with team performance as well as the quality of group experience. David, James, and Michael (2014) investigated coworkers' support and task interdependence: a mediated representation of police officers' performance. The research was carried out in a number of police departments in the Southern United States. Descriptive statistics was adopted but path analysis was utilized in lieu of structural equation modeling. The findings revealed that, perceived co-worker support initiate the moderation of the relationship between task interdependence and felt responsibility.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Social Exchange Theory, which was propounded by George Humans, (1958) in the publication of his work 'Social Behaviour as Exchange'. He defined social exchange as the exchange of activity, tangible, or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly between at least two persons. The theory emphasized the individual behaviour of actors in interaction with one another. Social exchange theory provides a hypothetical lens to comprehend the relationships between each of the factors such as procedural justice, transformational leadership, complexity of organizational structure, helping behaviour and job satisfaction. It takes place when two or more people exchange something based on trust (Blau, 1964). Though, it involves imperfectly precise terms and a custom of reciprocity, in such a way that discretionary and beneficial behaviour provided to a partner are also returned in a discretionary way in the long run, (Eisenberger et al., 1986). From the foregoing explanations, we therefore adopt this theory to underpin this study. It has also been widely cited as an explanation for why employees might render helping, proposing that individuals perform helping behaviour as part of a desire to maintain equitable

and favourable workplace relationship. Figure 1.0 is the research framework showing the helping behaviour-Performance relationship with Task Interdependence as the moderator.

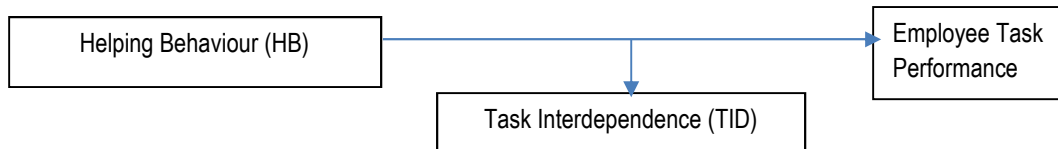


Figure 1.0 Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross sectional survey research design. The reason was that the information about the variables (helping behaviour, task performance and task interdependence) represents what was going on at one point in time. The population of this study comprises of 295 employees working in 13 branches of Commercial banks operating in Zaria, Kaduna State. Krejcie and Morgan (1977) sample size table at 5% confident interval was used to arrive at 88 bankers as sample size. However, 100% as recommended by Israel (2013) was added bringing the total to 176. This takes care of unavoidable errors such as incorrect filling and failure of some respondents to return questionnaire. Furthermore, simple random probability sampling technique was used for selection of the respondent. In addition, proportionate simple random sampling was employed to arrive at the sample size for each bank. This study used the primary source and data was collected through self-administered questionnaire. The dependent variable, task performance was measured using Motowidlo and Van Scotter's (1994) 12-item scale of task performance adapted from David, (2003). Among the specific items are; I perform at a level much higher than coworkers; I produce a large amount of work. The independent variables; helping behaviour was measured using Organ, (1988) 14 item scale adapted from Rachael, (2013). Specifically, the items include; I help out other teammates if someone falls behind in her work. I willingly share my expertise with other players on the tea. Lastly, task interdependence was measured using Kiggundu, (1983) 12-item scale

of initiated task interdependence (ITID) and received task interdependence (RTID) adapted from Daniel et'al (2014). Specific items include; other peoples' work depends directly on my job; I provide other people with information they need to do their work. All responses were measured using five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The use of 5-point likert scale is necessary because Krosnic and Fabrigar (1997) posited that a scale of 5 to 7 points is more reliable and valid than shorter or longer scale. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used for statistical analysis. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis technique was employed to test the hypotheses formulated.

Moderation of Regression

The hypothesis of this study suggest that task interdependence (T.I) moderate the relationship between helping behaviour (HB) and employee task Performance. To test this hypothesis a three-step hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. Hierarchical regression or moderator regression has been suggested by many authors as statistical technique for analyzing the moderating effect (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Sharma et al., 1981; Frazier et al., 2004). In this study, three levels of significance (1%, 5% and 10%) were used to detect the moderating effect of T.I on the relationship between HB and Performance. Arnold & Evans (1979) suggested that the hierarchical regression analysis provides an unambiguous conclusion with regard to the existence of moderator effects. To test the moderator effect a three (3) step hierarchical regression was conducted to determine what



proportion to the variance in a particular variable is explained by other variables when these variables are entered into the regression analysis

in a certain order. The result is presented in the table below.

Table 1: Hierarchical Regression Results

Moderating effect of T.I on the Relationship between HB and Task Performance			
Variables	Step1 Std β	Step2 Std β	Step3 Std β
NIHB	.141**	.141**	.126**
Moderator Variable NTI		.131*	.142*
Interaction terms:			
NIHBTI			
F value	29.065	22.834	.136*
R2	0.347	0.359	14.842
Adjusted R2	0.335	0.343	0.394
R2 Change	0.347	0.012	0.367
F Change	29.065	3.051	0.035
Significance F Change	.000***	.083*	3.042
Note: Level of significant: *p<0.10**p<0.05, ***p<0.01			.031**

Hypothesis Testing

To test the extent to which T.I moderates the relationship between HB and employee task performance, a hierarchical multiple regression was performed. The HB was first entered into the step 1, followed by the moderator (TI) into the step 2 and the interaction terms in step 3 of the regression model. Table 1 showed the result of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis of the moderating effect of TI on the relationship between HB and employee task performance. At first, HB variable was entered in step 1 and the variance explained about 33.5%. Secondly, TI was entered at step 2 and the total variance explained by the model was 34.3%.

Finally, the interaction terms were entered at step 3 and additional variance explained by the model resulted to about 36.7%. The F change from step 1 to 2 was significant at 1% level and from step 2 to 3 was significant at 5% level. Furthermore, inspection of the interaction terms between T.I and H.B ($\beta = 0.136$, $t = 1.853$, $p = 0.036$) showed that helping behaviour was significant at 5% level. Thus, T.I moderates the relationship between H.B and task performance of employees in Commercial banks. The summary of the moderating effect of T.I on the relationship between H.B and employee task performance is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Moderating effect of TI on the relationship between H.B and Performance		
Hypothesis	Statement of Hypothesis	Remarks
H ₂ : A-1	T. I Moderate the relationship between H. B. and Task Performance	Supported

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The objective of the research is to examine the moderating effect of task interdependence (T.I) on the relationship between helping behaviour and employee task performance. This study found that T.I moderates the relationship between helping behaviour and

performance. This finding supports the study of Daniel, Benjamin, and Elliot (2014) which suggested that T.I moderates the relationship between helping behaviour and performance. This study also established that there is direct relationship between helping behaviour and performance. This finding entails that banks that



have excellent management competence would have a strong TI that would lead to a higher level of performance. This finding is consistent with previous studies that established a significant and positive relationship between helping behaviour and organizational performance among which includes: Obamiro, Ogunnaiké and Osibanjo (2014), Gholamreza, Masoumeh and Muhammad (2013), Nathan, Steven, and Philip (2009). Furthermore, the moderating effect of T.I on the relationship between helping behaviour and employee task performance supports the literature, which suggested that implementation of T.I with helping behaviour strategy enhance organization's ability to focus on activities that are positive to the organization, avoid complain about trivial issues and thereby allowing managers to devote their time and energy on more productive aspect of the organization, (Daniel, Benjamin & Elliot, 2014). An empirical study by Bachrach, Powell, Collins, & Richey, (2006), also reported that a high level of TI enables organizations to perform activities with greater speed and more accuracy. This finding is consistent with the argument put forward by Barney, Wright and Ketchen (2001) who suggested that the synergy between two or more resources will create a sustainable and competitive work advantage. The overall findings from the study provide evidence of linkage between T.I on the relationship between H.B and employee task performance. The finding provides empirical supports and contributions to the existing literature as well as organizational practitioners. For the benefit of industries, the academia is therefore challenged to carry out additional research on multi-discipline to support the established linkage. Organizational practitioners should employ multi management techniques in achieving excellence in order to ensure continual survival and success.

CONCLUSION

This study investigates the effects of helping behaviour on employee task performance in Commercial banks with task interdependence as the moderator. Based on the research hypotheses and the research objectives the conclusion was drawn. The findings revealed that helping behaviour which involves helping co-workers with work related problem, sharing

expertise with other co-workers, taking step to try to prevent problem with each other are motivators in improving the performance of employees in Commercial banks. The overall findings revealed that task interdependence moderates the relationship between helping behaviour and employee task performance.

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