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EFFECT OF VISIONARY LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN DANGOTE CEMENT COMPANY PLC, GBOKO, BENUE STATE.

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of visionary leadership on employee performance at Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State. The study focused on three key dimensions of visionary leadership: inspiration, innovation, and foresight. Utilizing a survey research design, data were collected from 225 employees through a structured questionnaire. The study used the multiple regression techniques to test the formulated hypotheses. The results indicate that all three dimensions of visionary leadership significantly positively influence employee performance. Specifically, inspiration, with a coefficient of 0.513 and a p-value of 0.001, enhances employee performance by fostering motivation and commitment. Innovation, with a coefficient of 0.809 and a p-value of 0.006, contributes to improved performance through increased creativity and problem-solving capabilities. Foresight, with a coefficient of 0.569 and a p-value of 0.000, positively impacts performance by providing strategic direction and planning. These findings concluded that visionary leadership enhances employee performance. Leaders who inspire, foster innovation, and demonstrate foresight can significantly improve their employees' effectiveness and contribute to organizational success. The study recommends among others that Invest in training programs that develop leaders' ability to inspire and motivate their teams, as this has been shown to significantly improve employee performance. Encouraging leaders to adopt motivational practices can help cultivate a more engaged and committed workforce.

Keywords: Visionary Leadership, Employee Performance, Inspiration, Innovation, Foresight, Employee performance

Introduction

The visionary leadership is a type of leadership that is concerned with the capacity to generate and communicate a vision that will help the employees to realize the organizational objectives. Strategic managers are those who are able to plan for the long-term, to create new ideas and to motivate the employees for the accomplishment of a strategic vision. In the global perspective, transformational leadership has been embraced as an effective form of leadership that may help organizations in the process of their transformation, development, and enhancing the performance (Caldwell, 2020). These leaders establish rate and they use visions, encouragement and creativity to compel the followers to envision a better tomorrow.

Therefore, the visionary leadership in the case of Nigeria can help to improve the employees' performance and the organization's outcomes. This leadership style is appropriate in the current business environment of the Nigerian manufacturing sector where it is important to look ahead and to adapt.

The study adopts three key dimensions of visionary leadership: of innovation, inspiration and foresight that are very important in any organization. Innovation is the promotion of imagination and the development of solutions for enhancing work and goods (Smith & Tushman, 2021). Inspiration is about encouraging the employees to adopt change by relaying a message that will make the employees change willingly and with passion (Kouzes & Posner, 2018). The last competence is foresight, which means that the leader is able to predict possible trends and issues in the organization's development and lead the organization through these changes. These dimensions were selected because they may improve the organizational performance, commitment and satisfaction of employees in their organizations. To most organizations these leadership attributes are crucial in creating a motivated and high performing human capital hence enhancing productivity and organizational performance.

Employee performance is a critical determinant of organizational performance and is defined as the capability of the employee to perform his or her tasks. It is affected by things such as leadership, organizational culture, and ways of encouraging employees (Armstrong, 2020). HI increases the level of productivity, organizational commitment and engagement thus the organizational performance and competitiveness among the employees (Guest, 2017). The leadership function in improving the performance of the employees is vital in the creation of leadership practices that are in harmony with the strategic plan of the firm.

Leadership particularly visionary leadership is important in organizations because it determines the performance of the employees which is one of the key determinants of success of organizations and innovation. When a leader adopts visionary leadership, the other top managers can be able to come up with new ideas as well as inspire others to do the same. The focus on the visionary leadership also addresses the general organizational objective of improving the high performance and change culture which is crucial for the growth of the enterprise in the future (Caldwell, 2020).

Thus, the aim of this research is to make up for the research gap of assessing the influence of visionary leadership on employee performance in the Nigerian manufacturing industry. Although there has been a considerable amount of research conducted on transformational and transactional leadership, little is known on the impact of visionary leadership on employee outcomes in the local context. Therefore, the study seeks to add to the existing body of knowledge in the field of leadership and performance with the view of providing useful information on how leadership can be developed in similar organizational contexts. This research is relevant to leadership strategies for the Nigerian cultural and business environment to foster economic growth and firm evolution for the Nigerian firms.

Although leadership has been defined as a factor that can improve organisational performance, there is a little knowledge of the role played by visionary leadership in improving employee performance in the Nigerian manufacturing organisations. Several firms including the Dangote Cement Company Plc have been struggling to manage problems that stem from low employee performance, productivity, engagement and overall organizational performance (Adeniyi, 2022). What is important to understand is that the traditional leadership frameworks do not capture the strategic and innovative leadership needs of an organization and thus lead to organizational stagnation and no change (Caldwell, 2020). It is now required to look for the leadership behaviours that can help in enhancing the performance of the employees and develop the progressive organisational culture.

The socio-cultural context of Nigeria has certain requirements that have to be fulfilled by the leadership styles that are to be used. One can discuss the idea of visionary leadership, which implies such aspects as vision, novelty, and enthusiasm, as rather perspective in regard to these problems (Smith & Tushman, 2021). Nevertheless, little empirical evidence has been given on the applicability of this leadership style in the Nigerian manufacturing industry. This research

therefore seeks to fill this gap by determining the relationship between visionary leadership and employee performance in Dangote Cement. Knowledge of this relationship is important in the formulation of leadership approaches that improve employee and organizational performance in a vended context (Armstrong, 2020; Guest, 2017).

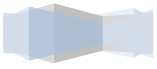
The broad objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between visionary leadership and employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State. Specifically, the study seeks to: i. Evaluate the effect of foresight on employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc. ii. Examine the effect of innovation on employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc. iii. Analyze the effect of inspiration on employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc.

Review of Related Literature

Visionary Leadership Role

Visionary leadership is a type of leadership that entails the development of a clear and desirable picture of the future of the organisation and how the picture can be achieved. This approach has been receiving a lot of attention especially in the management of change, innovation and performance (Caldwell, 2020). Strategic leaders are defined by the ability to see what is going to happen in the future, make sure that the employees and other stakeholders are on the same page with the vision, and encourage innovation and solutions to challenges (Smith & Tushman, 2021).

Visionary leadership can be described in terms of elements of vision, creativity and motivation. Wise perception entails the capacity of the leader to predict the future and how he or she would handle the challenges that are likely to occur in the future, which is very crucial when formulating the strategic plan (Kouzes & Posner, 2018). Innovation involves the encouragement and fostering of new ideas and finding new approaches and methods of working by the employees (Smith & Tushman, 2021). Motivation on the other hand is about the encouragement of the employees through provision of a vision and direction which plays a central role in increasing the level of motivation and productivity of the employees (Northouse, 2022).



The current research studies show how and in what way visionary leadership impacts on the performance of organisations. For example, Caldwell (2020) notes that visionary leadership

improves the degree of staff participation and productivity since it plays a role in creating vision. Similarly, Smith and Tushman (2021) found out that visionary leadership improves the culture of innovation that improves the performance and competitiveness of organizations. These revelations therefore justify the call for leadership that aims at enhancing performance and productivity of employees and as a result the organization.

Relationship Between Foresight and Employee Performance

Foresight as one of the components of the visionary leadership has a great influence on the performance of employees. Good managers are able to look into the future and anticipate any challenges and opportunities that may be likely to occur in the future and ensure that they are in a position to influence their subordinates to embrace change and ensure that they are at par with the organisational goals and objectives (Kouzes & Posner, 2018). It helps to foster stability and coherence of the organization in the eyes of the employees, which in return enhances their performance and commitment to the organizational objectives (Armstrong, 2020).

According to mega literature, forecasting in leadership improves the performance of the workers because they know what to do and there is little room for confusion (Caldwell, 2020). This means that when the employees are informed of the vision of the organization and how they can contribute to the achievement of the vision, they are likely to perform a better job (Smith & Tushman, 2021). Moreover, when the leaders have good foresight, they can be able to communicate their vision to the employees making them feel more motivated to do their best in performing their duties (Northouse, 2022).

Relationship Between Innovation and Employee Performance

Another aspect of visionary leadership that has a significant effect on the performance of the employees is innovation. Leaders who promote innovation encourage experimentation and new ways of doing things within an organisation, which could improve the organisation's performance (Smith & Tushman, 2021). The leaders can foster and introduce new ideas at the workplace and this can enhance the satisfaction and motivation of the employees (Armstrong, 2020).

Kim & Beehr (2018) have found out that innovative work environment improves the performance of the employees since the leaders support change and innovation. Employees are likely to work hard if they are involved in the organizations innovation process since they will be motivated to come up with new ideas (Alonso, Moscoso, & León, 2018). Also, the culture of innovation will enhance the level of motivation and satisfaction of the employees that will enhance the performance of the organization and its growth (Lee & Raschke, 2020).

Relationship Between Inspiration and Employee Performance

Inspiration as one of the facets of visionary leadership is beneficial in increasing the performance of the employees. The passion and the ideas that leaders have can go a long way in boosting the morale and productivity of the employees (Northouse, 2022). The inspirational communication therefore helps the leaders to ensure that the employees get to appreciate and be committed to the goals of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2018). In this regard, it has been found that inspirational leadership enhances the performance of the employees by enhancing the organisational climate and the level of meaning (Zhou et al. , 2018). According to Li, Sanders and Frenkel (2018), the employees who are motivated by the leaders are likely to have higher job satisfaction, engagement and performance. Furthermore, the use of inspiration from leaders results in positive affective experiences among the employees such as joy and pride that boosts their motivation and performance (Bakker et al. , 2014).

Employee Performance

Performance is one of the most crucial organizational variables since it defines productivity, efficiency, and organizational results because it is a product of employees' performance (Aguinis, 2019). Enhanced performance of the employees may be attributed to high organizational commitment, achievement of task objectives, and efficiency. The following are some of the factors that have been found to cause high performance; These include; Goal clarity, feedback, skill development, and organizational support (Kahn, 1990). For instance, those who provide many comments and acknowledge the efforts of the employees will enhance the morale of the employees and they will continue to work harder (Judge & Bono, 2001). Besides, training and development improve on the skills of the employees and prepare them for the tasks ahead and the challenges that are likely to prevail in the market (Becker & Huselid, 1998).

Besides, the visionary leadership is the crucial factor in the process of the mobilization of the performance of the employees through the promotion of proper motivation at the workplace

(Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the authors' view, when the leaders articulate clear visions and set realistic but challenging goals, the workers comprehend how their work relates to organisational goals (Northouse, 2022). When the employees have a sense of direction that is supported by positive and interest encouraging behaviors from the leaders, the level of motivation and commitment from the employees increases as supported by Bono and Judge (2003). When leaders are visionary, employees, enthusiastic and when they involve the employees in decision making processes, the potential of the employees is likely to be unlocked hence improving the performance of the employees (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). Thus, it is possible to assert that the relationship between the visionary leadership and the performance of the employees support the positive leadership style in the attainment of the organizational goals and the realization of the strategic goals and the plans (Yukl, 2013).

Theoretical Framework: Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) that was developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan in 1985, people have inalienable psychological needs to be motivated and to grow, namely the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the course of this study, the SDT framework will be useful in establishing the correlation between leadership behaviours and motivation of employees at Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State while assessing the effects of visionary leadership on the performance of the employees.

This study can extend to explain how visionary leadership fosters proactivity and self-direction, how it promotes competence by training and developing the skills of the employees, and how it fosters relatedness by promoting positive working relationships in the organization. Through these aspects, the study will determine the relationship between visionary leadership and the psychological needs of SDT as well as its effect on motivation, engagement and performance of employees. From this theoretical perspective, there will be a clear understanding of how visionary leadership impacts on employee performance.

Empirical Review

Kim and Beehr (2018) aimed at investigating the moderating role of empowering leadership on affective organizational commitment. They did their research on empowering leadership and

affective organizational commitment with 300 employees from various sectors and they used self-report questionnaires. From the regression analysis, it was found that empowering leadership has a positive and significant relationship with affective organizational commitment which indicates that employees who receive empowering leadership from their leaders are emotionally committed to the organization. These results suggest that empowering leadership enhances the level of organizational commitment, which can help to understand how the visionary leadership impacts the performance of the employees.

The study titled Inclusive leadership and innovative work behavior; psychological safety as a mediator was done by Javed et al. (2019). Using self-completed questionnaires, 250 employees from various sectors demonstrated that inclusive leadership positively influenced psychological safety and innovative work behaviour. The results of SEM analysis showed that psychological safety partially mediated this relationship, this means that inclusive leadership establishes the climate of safety in which employees are willing to engage in innovative behavior. This work therefore supports the above assertion that leadership has a pivotal role in the creation of organizational culture and the promotion of innovation which is useful in explaining how visionary leadership affects the productivity of the workers in Dangote Cement.

Li et al. (2018) examined the effect of transformational and transactional leadership on employee innovation behaviour with a focus on knowledge sharing and perceived organisational support as the moderators. Their survey involved 350 participants from different organizations and they used structured questionnaires and SEM analysis. The results of the study indicated that both the leadership styles positively influenced the knowledge sharing and perceived organizational support that partially mediated the relationship between leadership styles and innovative behaviour. These findings underscore the leadership in the development of the organizational climate that would foster innovations, which is useful when analyzing the impact of visionary leadership on the performance of employees.

Alonso et al. (2018) focused on the leadership styles and organizational commitment in the public organizations. Self-administered questionnaires were used and the responses were received from 400 employees. The research found out that there was a significant relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment while there was no

significant relationship between transactional leadership and organizational commitment. In addition, practising participative leadership was positively correlated with organizational commitment. Such studies stress the importance of transformational and participative leadership to commitment and loyalty, which may contain the key to how visionary leadership can improve employees' performance in a corporate setting.

Methodology

The research work used survey research method in order to determine the effect of visionary leadership on employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State. The survey design is suitable for collecting data from a large number of people without putting limitations on the respondents.

This research work is focused on Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko. as one of the leading firms that are involved in cement production in Nigeria. The target population for the study is 225 employees, which include all the employees of the company at all levels that are impacted by the visionary leadership practices of the organization.

This was done to ensure that all the population was captured hence the use of census since the population was not very large. This method involved all the 225 employees and this eliminated sampling bias and gave a clear picture on how visionary leadership affected the employees.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into two sections: biographical data and, closed questions on a 5-point Likert scale. Face and content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed through the assessment of the experts and supervisors.
Content validity was quantitatively assessed using the Content Validity Index (CVI), resulting in a high validity score of 0.87. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with a pilot test carried out among 30 employees in a similar industry. The reliability coefficients, calculated using SPSS, ranged from 0.70 to 0.99, indicating the instrument's consistency and reliability.

Table 2: Reliability Results

S/N	Variable	Cronbach Alpha Value
1	Inspiration	0.88
2	Innovation	0.72
3	Foresight	0.78
4	Employee Performance	0.71

Source: SPSS Result, (2024)

The table above displays Cronbach alpha values ranging from 0.71 to 0.88, which are considered reliable.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were categorized based on the research questions and hypotheses developed for this study. To test the hypotheses, regression analysis was performed using SPSS Version 25. The significance level was set at 0.05 to determine the relationship between visionary leadership and employee performance, and to estimate the regression parameters.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The study administered 225 copies of questionnaire, apparently 117 were returned in and used for the analysis.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Summary of the regression model

Variables	Coefficient	T values	P values
Inspiration	.513	13.241	.001
Innovation	.809	12.029	.006
Foresight	.569	7.611	.000
R2	0.709		
F statistics	14.742		
P values	0.000		

Source: SPSS V25, 2024

Test of Hypotheses and Discussion of Findings

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: **There is no significant positive relationship between inspiration and employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State.**

The coefficient for inspiration is 0.513 with a t-value of 13.241 and a p-value of 0.001. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This suggests a significant positive relationship between inspiration and employee performance, indicating that inspirational leadership enhances employee performance by boosting motivation and commitment.

Hypothesis 2: **There is no significant positive relationship between innovation and employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State.**

The coefficient for innovation is 0.809 with a t-value of 12.029 and a p-value of 0.006. Given that the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding highlights a significant positive relationship between innovation and employee performance, demonstrating that promoting innovation within the workplace enhances employee performance through increased creativity and problem-solving.

Hypothesis 3: **There is a significant positive relationship between foresight and employee performance in Dangote Cement Company Plc, Gboko, Benue State.**

The coefficient for foresight is 0.569 with a t-value of 7.611 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a significant positive relationship between foresight and employee performance, suggesting that leaders with strong foresight positively influence employee performance by providing strategic direction and planning.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the regression analysis reveal that inspiration, innovation, and foresight, which are the visionary leadership variables are positively correlated with the performance of the employees at Dangote Cement Company Plc. All the coefficients for these variables are significant, meaning that they play a very big role in the improvement of the performance of the employees.

The variable of inspiration is significant, with a coefficient of 0. 513, it is shown that the leaders who motivate their subordinates enhance the performance of the organization. According to Bono and Judge (2003), inspirational leaders create environments that encourage the employees to work harder and be more productive.

The highest coefficient of 0 was attributed to innovation. 809, this show that the promotion of an innovation culture significantly enhances the performance of employees. This supports the argument that leaders who encourage the generation of new ideas improve problem-solving and flexibility within the organzation (Li et al. , 2018).

Foresight has the highest coefficient of 0. 569, suggests that leaders who show an ability to think ahead prepare well for the future events that may be beneficial or detrimental. This proactive approach also benefits the organization through enhancing the performance of the employees due to the offered strategic direction (Northouse, 2022).

These findings highlight the significance of leadership to the performance of the employees in an organization. Inspiring leaders, those who encourage innovation and have vision, play a major role in employees' productivity and organizational performance.

Conclusion

The study establishes that inspirational leadership, innovation and having vision improves employee performance at Dangote Cement Company Plc. The positive correlations that exist between these leadership traits and employee performance provide a strong nod towards visionary leadership as a critical factor to organizational success. Leadership that motivates, fosters innovation, and looks for the opportunities and threats in the future may help to increase employees' satisfaction and performance.

Recommendations

i. Implement leadership courses that will enhance the leader's capacity to motivate the employees since this has a positive impact on the performance of the employees. It is

recommended to motivate leaders to engage motivational practices that can foster commitment among employees.

ii. Encourage the culture of innovation in the organization and reward people for coming up with new ideas. Policies and procedures should be put in place to ensure that the employees come up with new ideas and solutions since innovation is known to lead to improved performance and solution finding.

iii. Teach leaders how to plan for the future and how to prepare for it. Offering tools to help leaders prepare for future issues can help improve the ways in which leaders are able to lead and manage their teams for the better.

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