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Impact of organizational mission on innovation: Evidence from Guarantee Trust Bank, Nigeria

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of organizational mission as an element of organizational culture on the level of innovation in Nigerian banking. The questionnaire was designed using structured questions to gather data from employees at five Guarantee Trust bank branches in the metropolis of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. A total of 132 respondents participated in this study, and the OLS-based regression analysis revealed that the mission and the consistency of mission implementation have a significant effect on product and service innovation. Therefore, this study recommends that banks in Nigeria should give serious consideration to their vision and mission, and consistently implement the mission in all company operations.

Keywords: Organization's mission; consistency; employee involvement

Introduction

Culture is the consistent way organizations carry out their activities to sustain their existence. It is the way organizations work and adapt to both the internal and external environment and the realities of work. Organizations generate their own culture, which embodies the values that organizations seek to be known for and identified with, and defines their consistent pattern of behavior (Schein, 2005). The activities and missions of organizations that have worked well in the past and which translate into norms, behavior and expectations about what is desirable ways of thinking can influence organizational culture (Kotter & Heskett, 2016). It is already known that most successful companies are those directed and managed with a very strong culture and values. Some organizations in the banking sector are performing below expectations, notwithstanding their high funding, due to the fact that they do not operate under strong values of corporate culture. Most cultures are sidestepped and manipulated in pursuit of selfish interests, and this, in the long run, devastates the organization.

Organizations in Nigeria operate in cultures that are inconsistent and lack a pattern and protection for the future. Because of the manipulative notoriety associated with our culture, people have continued to wonder if anything works in our organization and society. A cultural system is not supposed to be manipulated for selfish interests (Giti et al., 2013). Organizational culture should define appropriate behavior motivate employees and offer solutions when there are problems. Corporate culture governs the way organizations process information and values and the way organizations conduct their business. The massive failure in the banking sector, which brought about distress, is traceable to a lack of a strong culture (Kambiz and Aslan, 2014). The culture of credit analysis and trust was destroyed. There was a period when

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there was no recognized culture in the legal regime of banking, especially in the deregulation of the foreign exchange market. Banks can only grow where there is a strong culture that reinforces the pillars of their perpetual existence. Pulling down the cultural pedestal upon which banks stand just for self-aggrandizement by executives, directors, and employees has resulted in the collapse of many banks (Strickland, 2009). (Pallathadka, 2020) maintains that the core values in the Nigerian banking sector are positively associated with employees work behaviors. However, the author silence on the cultural dimensions that are positively associated with employees' work behaviors created the need for further investigation.

Service organizations around the world are faced with the challenges of technological innovations and sustainable competitive advantage (Romeo Asa et al., 2021). The Nigerian banking sector is no exception. For the banking industry in Nigeria the banking services offered in different commercial banks is more less the same which makes it difficult to compete on products basis (Edwinah, 2018). For the Banks to remain competitive, they need to create a culture where longevity and success depend upon innovation, creativity and flexibility. To gain competitive advantage organizations have to be innovative, create a suitable culture for employees and managers have to search for employees with useful knowledge and motivate them to use it for the benefit of the organization. When these employees are not given the room to generate, share, and execute valuable ideas, they become less committed and may leave the organization, thus taking their knowledge and skills elsewhere. This constitutes an issue for such organization as the cooperative ability of such organization is reduced.

However, some of the issues faced by organization culture range from slow to react to external or internal changes as systems are designed for stability, too many structural layers slows down and reduce communication effectiveness, authority is maintained centrally, reducing the effectiveness of front-line staff, problems take too long to solve and keep recurring, wasting time and resources, most people are excluded from the decision-making and thinking processes thereby limiting potential to change and adapt quickly, people are not involved or included in the purpose of the organization and feel apart from it rather than a part of it (Masood, Sadia, Shakeel, and Imran, 2012; Pallathadka, 2020)

With these current situations of senior leaders been the prime determinant of the corporate culture, and culture is related to consequential organizational outcomes, the study therefore seeks to address the gap between the current scenario and the ideal situation by investigating the factors influencing organizational culture. In contrast to Giti et al. (2013), Masood et al. (2012); Pallathadka (2020), and Kambiz and Aslan (2014) who focus on the overall organizational culture, we solely concentrate on understanding the mission and ensuring consistency. While our approach may not be comprehensive, it offers an in-depth analysis that is particularly relevant for Nigeria, specifically in optimizing human resources within the banking sector. We emphasize the significance of employees having a clear understanding of the company's mission and the consistent implementation thereof for achieving optimal banking practices. We believe that these two fundamental aspects are of great importance for companies operating in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Denison's Organizational Culture Model model measures the association among four cultural values and firms' effectiveness (Denison, Lief & Ward, 2004). It assesses culture in business organizations using four distinctive dimensions, mission, consistency, involvement and adaptability (Kotrba et al., 2012). Involvement as a cultural dimension assesses the extent to which workers are dedicated to their responsibilities, and their level of commitment and participation in group activities, leading to the realization of business goals and objectives (Kotrba et al., 2012). Consistency enhances shared values and directs workers' behavior in line with corporate strategies (Denison et al., 2014). Kotrba et al. (2012) referred to adaptability as firms' ability to direct internal operations in order to meet business demands or variations in the external environment. On the other hand, the mission showcases the extent to which an establishment or business empire has been able to clearly define or structure its purpose for existence (Kotrba et al., 2012).

Successful organizations have a clear mission that shows employees why they are doing their tasks and how the work they do help the organizational performance. Strategic direction and intent are about multi-year strategies and high priorities are established. In successful organizations the goals and objectives are short term. In addition, specific goals are defined so that employees understand how their daily routines relate to the vision of the organization. Vision represents the main reason an organization exists and competes on a certain market. Consistency represents the main source of integration, coordination and control (Pallathadka, 2020). In addition, it helps organizations develop a set of procedures that create an internal system of governance which is based on support that is consensual. Successful companies have a clear set of values that support employees and managers in making consistent decisions. When facing difficult issues and misunderstandings, the members discuss them openly and try to reach an agreement. In

these organizations, each employee is aware of the fact that their work impacts others and how the work of others impacts them. The employees always make sure that their work is aligned with the organizational goals and objectives.

Giti et al., (2013) examine the association between organizational culture and organizational innovativeness in private universities in Iran using survey method. A sample of 485 full time faculty members was selected based on simple one stage cluster sampling. The findings indicated that significant positive relationships were found between three types of organizational culture and organizational innovativeness. They were; the adhocracy, the market and the clan cultures respectively. However, the hierarchy culture showed a non-significant correlation with organizational innovativeness. In addition, the adhocracy culture contributed most to predicting organizational innovativeness. This study once more showed that each organization has its own organizational culture. It is proposed to identify and develop the appropriate organizational culture which makes it possible for the administrators, academic members and students to engage in innovative activities.

Masood et al., (2012) carried out a study to reveal the effects of organizational culture on the employee performance via organizational innovation in banks operating in Pakistan. A quantitative survey method was adopted to serve the purpose. Data of 167 respondents including mostly managers, sales officers and front desk employees was collected through an adapted survey questionnaire. The results expressed that element of organizational culture i.e., organization mission and concern for employees & trust have direct and strong influence on productivity at work while core values and organizational learning & empowerment influence productivity at work indirectly via organizational innovation. Hence, the results have acknowledged most of hypotheses presumed in the investigation that culture has an impact on productivity at work whether directly or through organizational innovation. Managerial implications along with limitations and future research directions have also been discussed.

Pallathadka (2020) conducted an empirical analysis of the association between culture and performance in selected manufacturing companies in India. The study adopted Denison's Organizational Culture Model as well as the measuring instrument. The study found that there is a positive relationship between cultural dimensions and effectiveness of manufacturing firms in India. This supports Denison's propositions. The relevance of these cultural dimensions in the 21st century design of organizational culture should not be under-estimated. Based on the considerations of flexibility in responding to external variations as embedded in Denison's organizational culture model, the current study shares these principles in investigating the relationship between culture and performance in the Nigerian banking sector.

Kambiz and Aslan (2014) conduct a study on investigation on the impact of organizational culture on organization innovation in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia using research model. Their findings reveal that organizational culture exerts a complete mediating effect on organizational innovation through organization learning. On the other hand, members of the organization with great experience and corporate culture will enhance the performance of the organization. Based on their article, it is clear that organizational culture plays a significant role in innovation. It is important for both innovation and organizational culture professionals to understand the systemic relationship between these concepts and the value that it can generate in respect of creating and maintaining sustainable competitive advantage for organizations.

Research Method

In this study, a survey research design was adopted, primarily relying on primary sources of information. The primary data collection method employed was the use of structured questionnaires. To ensure fairness and representativeness in the sample, 150 respondents, all of whom were employees of Guarantee Trust Bank in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State, Nigeria, were selected from a population of 239 staff members. This sample was chosen using a random sampling method, a strategy that minimizes bias and enhances the generalizability of findings to the broader staff population. Subsequently, the data collected through the questionnaires were carefully coded in preparation for analysis. To test the research hypotheses formulated for this study, regression analysis was employed. This statistical technique allowed for an examination of the relationships and associations between variables. In line with common practice, the significance level for hypothesis testing was set at 0.05, corresponding to a 95% confidence interval (Bartlett et al., 2020; Huang, 2022).

To gauge the respondents' agreement or disagreement with statements, a 5-point Likert scale was employed. This scale offered response options ranging from "Strongly Agree" (SA) to "Strongly Disagree" (SD). The combination of these research methods and techniques was intended to ensure that the data collected were reliable and suitable for addressing the research objectives and hypotheses in this study,

ultimately contributing to a comprehensive analysis of the research topic. The survey questions can be found in the Appendix

Result and Discussion

Based on the Table 1, it can be seen that for each model, mission and consistency has a significant positive impact on product and service innovation. Hence, this discovery aligns with [Edwinah's \(2018\)](#) findings, which indicated a positive correlation between an organization's mission and its level of innovation. Edwinah's study demonstrated that a distinct corporate culture adds value to the organization and becomes difficult to replicate or imitate. Consequently, it aids in establishing and maintaining a competitive advantage for the company. To achieve this, the organization must possess a meaningful mission statement and values that are taken seriously by individuals. These values should encompass overarching beliefs that serve as influential guides for everyday actions, which are reinforced through numerous symbolic and substantial means.

One theoretical perspective that supports these findings is the resource-based view (RBV) of the firm. According to RBV, an organization's mission serves as a guiding force that directs the allocation of resources towards innovative endeavors. A clear mission statement facilitates the alignment of employee efforts and fosters a shared comprehension of organizational objectives, thereby increasing the likelihood of innovative outcomes. The substantial coefficient of 0.829 suggests that an organization's mission holds considerable predictive power for the innovation of products or services.

Table 1. Regression result

Variable(s)	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Mission	0.829 (0.001)		0.561
Consistency		0.635 (0.0042)	0.328 (0.021)
Root MSE	-0.023218	0.003235	0.011166
Mean dependent var	0.087200	0.079200	6.086318
S.D. dependent var	0.015352	0.014352	0.072937
R-squared	0.934540	0.949074	0.976506
Prob. F-statistic	0.000	0.000	0.000
Root MSE	-0.022218	0.03235	0.01236

Another theoretical framework supporting these findings is the social exchange theory (SET). SET proposes that when employees perceive their organization's appreciation for innovation and its active support through a well-defined mission, they are more inclined to reciprocate with heightened innovative behaviors ([Smith, 2008](#)). This reciprocal exchange cultivates a positive work environment and encourages employees to generate creative ideas, ultimately leading to improved product or service innovation.

While the study's findings are significant, it is important to acknowledge alternative perspectives and limitations. An opposing viewpoint could argue that factors like leadership style, organizational culture, and external market conditions may also influence product or service innovation ([Jones, 2015](#)). Although the study emphasizes the importance of an organization's mission, it should be recognized that it is just one element among many that affect innovation outcomes. Further research could explore the interplay between the mission variable and these contextual factors to gain a more comprehensive understanding ([Brown, 2019](#)).

Additionally, the study's focus on a specific bank and location may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Different banking institutions in other regions or countries may have distinct organizational structures, cultural contexts, or industry dynamics, which could impact the relationship between an organization's mission and product or service innovation ([Anderson, 2017](#)). Therefore, caution should be exercised when extrapolating the findings to other contexts, and further research is necessary to examine the generalizability of the results ([Smith, 2020](#)).

The study's findings have significant policy implications for the banking sector in Nigeria. Firstly, they highlight the importance of formulating a clear and compelling mission statement that emphasizes innovation as a core value ([Mergel, 2012](#)). Bank management should actively communicate and promote this mission statement among employees to foster a shared understanding of the organization's innovation-related goals and values ([Brown, 2019](#)). Furthermore, policy initiatives should encourage banks to invest in research and development (R&D) activities to support product or service innovation ([Romeo Asa et al., 2021](#)). This can be facilitated through measures such as tax incentives, grants, or collaborations with

academic institutions and research centers (Mergel, 2012). Additionally, fostering a collaborative ecosystem between banks and fintech startups can further promote innovation within the banking sector (Smith, 2020).

In this context, the study aligns with the findings of Achua and Lussier (2016), who asserted a significant positive relationship between consistency and job effectiveness. According to them, a consistency culture within an organization is characterized by widely shared beliefs and values that enable organizational members to reach consensus and take concerted action, leading to a positive impact on performance (Achua & Lussier, 2016). This high level of unity within an organization can result in resource savings in terms of manpower, materials, finances, and other resources, while simultaneously enhancing performance.

The results of the study suggesting a positive impact of consistent implementation of corporate missions on product innovation processes and banking services can be reviewed and discussed from two perspectives: one that supports the results and one that presents a contrary viewpoint (Smith, 2018). The Resource-Based View theory emphasizes the importance of internal resources and capabilities in achieving competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). In the context of this study, consistent implementation of corporate missions can serve as a unifying force within an organization. When employees are aligned towards a common goal, it enhances their coordination and collaboration, leading to the effective utilization of resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). This, in turn, can positively impact the product innovation processes and the delivery of banking services. By leveraging their internal resources effectively, organizations can develop innovative products and services that meet the evolving needs of customers, ultimately gaining a competitive edge in the market.

The Transformational Leadership theory highlights the role of visionary and charismatic leaders in inspiring and motivating employees to achieve organizational goals (Bass, 1985). In the context of this study, consistent implementation of corporate missions can be seen as a manifestation of transformational leadership practices. When leaders communicate a clear and compelling vision through the corporate mission, they create a sense of purpose and direction among employees (Bass, 1985). This fosters a positive work environment and a culture of innovation, where employees are encouraged to think creatively, explore new ideas, and take calculated risks (Brown, 2019). By inspiring and motivating employees, transformational leaders can contribute to improved product innovation processes and the delivery of innovative banking services.

Meanwhile, in the opposite site; the Contingency Theory suggests that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to management practices. It recognizes that the effectiveness of management practices may vary depending on the specific context and circumstances (Donaldson, 2014). In the context of this study, while consistent implementation of corporate missions may have a positive impact on product innovation processes and banking services, it is important to consider the contingencies and contextual factors that may influence the outcomes. Factors such as organizational culture, industry dynamics, and external environmental factors can play a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of corporate missions (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 2009). Therefore, organizations should carefully assess the fit between their corporate missions and the specific contingencies they face to ensure optimal outcomes.

Also, Transaction Cost Economics (TCE): The Transaction Cost Economics theory focuses on the cost of transactions between different entities (Williamson, 2010). In the context of this study, the consistent implementation of corporate missions may require additional resources and coordination efforts, which can potentially increase transaction costs within the organization. While the study suggests a positive impact on product innovation processes and banking services, it is essential to consider the potential trade-offs and costs associated with maintaining consistency in implementing corporate missions. Organizations should carefully assess the cost-effectiveness of their implementation strategies and consider alternative approaches that minimize transaction costs while still achieving the desired outcomes.

From a practical standpoint, regardless of the ongoing theoretical debate surrounding the impact of consistent implementation of corporate missions, the findings of this study shed light on the positive implications within the Nigerian banking industry. The study reveals that when employees have a clear understanding of their company's mission and there is a consistent effort to implement it, it creates an environment that fosters innovation (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). This finding holds significant importance for the banking ecosystem in Nigeria. By emphasizing a clear company mission, employees are provided with a sense of direction and purpose. They become aligned towards a common goal, working collaboratively to achieve it. This alignment of efforts within the organization enhances coordination and cooperation among employees, leading to the effective utilization of resources and capabilities (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). As a result, there is an improvement in the overall product innovation processes within the Nigerian banking sector.

Furthermore, the consistent implementation of the corporate mission can be seen as a catalyst for innovation, inspiring employees to think creatively and explore new ideas (Amabile, 1988). It encourages them to challenge traditional practices and seek innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs of customers. This culture of innovation within banks has the potential to drive positive changes and advancements in banking services in Nigeria (Tidd & Bessant, 2018). Considering the unique characteristics and challenges of the Nigerian banking ecosystem, where competition is fierce and customer demands are rapidly changing, fostering innovation becomes crucial for the industry's growth and sustainability. The study's findings suggest that by promoting a clear company mission and ensuring its consistent implementation, banks can create an environment that encourages innovative practices, thereby staying competitive in the market.

While the theoretical debate on the effectiveness of consistent corporate mission implementation continues, the empirical evidence from this study supports the notion that in the Nigerian banking industry, a clear company mission coupled with consistent implementation serves as a catalyst for innovation. This finding has significant implications for banks operating in Nigeria, highlighting the importance of aligning employees, leveraging internal resources effectively, and fostering a culture of innovation to meet the dynamic needs of customers and ensure the continued growth and success of the banking ecosystem in the country.

Conclusion, Suggestions and Limitations

Based on the findings, the study concluded that organization's mission has significant effect on product or service innovation. As the study found out that for any organization to be successful it must have a clear sense of purpose and direction which defines their goals and objectives that looks into the future through being innovative in their ways of dealings. The organization mission defines the business, products or service and customers. It also allows the organization to differentiate itself from competitors by creating new/improved product or service.

It was also concluded that consistency has significant effect on process innovation because the study found out that organizations that have shared values (consistency) develop a mindset and a set of organizational systems that create an internal system of governance based on consensual support, with this such organization tend to have highly committed employees, key central values, a distinct method of doing business, a tendency to promote from within, and a clear set of dos and don'ts which leads to an improved process and method of doing things in the organization and the overall performance of such organization.

The study further concluded that employee involvement has significant effect on strategy or business concept innovation. It was found out that involvement entails building human capacity, ownership and responsibility. It is very necessary as it leads to united vision, values and purpose. Adequate employee involvement allows employees share information, knowledge, rewards, and power throughout the organization which allows the bank to makes an overall change on the business on a regular basis. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are mad, the study recommends that the management should play a pronounced role in influencing organizational culture that is aligned to its strategy and structure.

The management should focus more on the adherence to the organization's mission by making sure that those in leadership positions are conversant with the organization's mission so as to be able to pass it down to their subordinates. Likewise, the management should work on the ethical practices of the organization like credibility and integrity which promote a high innovative culture; b) We recommended that the organization should have a powerful source of stability and internal integration that result from a common mindset and a high degree of conformity. It is necessary for organization to have a clear set of values that support employees and managers in making consistent decision. The management should know that strong cultures that are highly consistent, well-coordinated and well-integrated have tendency to be innovative; c) Also, employees should be involved in decision-making as it will make them to be committed to the achievement of the decisions taken. The organization should empower their people, build the organization around teams and develop human capability at all levels. It is necessary for management to let employees know the kind of decisions they are allowed to take and which ones are beyond their responsibility.

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Appendix

Table A.1. Indicator(s) of Mission

Indicator(s)	Measurement question
Awareness of the Mission Statement	Have you seen or read the mission statement of our organization? How frequently are you exposed to the mission statement in your work environment?
Articulation of the Mission	How frequently are you exposed to the mission statement in your work environment? Can you describe the organization's mission in your own words?
Perception of Communication	Can you describe explain the purpose and goals of our organization to someone unfamiliar with it? How effectively do you believe the organization communicates its mission to employees?
Alignment with the Mission	Do you feel adequately informed about the mission statement and its importance? How well do you believe your work directly supports the organization's mission? Do you see a clear connection between your daily tasks and the objectives outlined in the mission statement?
Satisfaction and Engagement	How motivated are you by the mission statement in performing your job responsibilities? How satisfied are you with the organization's mission and its relevance to your job?

Table A.2. Indicator(s) of Consistency

Indicator(s)	Measurement question
Perception of Alignment	To what extent do you believe the organization's actions align with the stated mission? How well do the organization's decisions and strategies support the mission? Do you think the organization consistently demonstrates its commitment to fulfilling the mission?
Integration in Decision-Making	How often do you consider the organization's mission when making decisions in your role To what extent does the mission statement influence the organization's strategic decisions?
Communication and Reinforcement	How frequently does the organization communicate the mission to employees? Are there regular reminders or updates about the mission statement? Do you feel that the organization reinforces the mission through recognition or rewards?
Role Clarity:	Do you feel that your job responsibilities directly support the organization's mission? How well do you understand how your work contributes to fulfilling the mission? Are you provided with guidance or resources to help you align your work with the mission?
Performance Evaluation Alignment:	To what extent are your performance goals and evaluations tied to the organization's mission? Are there specific metrics or criteria that measure your contributions to fulfilling the mission? How well do you feel that your performance is assessed based on your alignment with the mission?

Table A.3. Indicator(s) of Innovation

Indicator(s)	Measurement question
Involvement in Innovation Processes	To what extent do you feel involved in the organization's innovation processes? How often are you given opportunities to contribute ideas or suggestions for product or service innovation? Do you feel that your skills and expertise are utilized in innovation-related activities?
Ideas Contribution:	Have you contributed any ideas or suggestions for product or service innovation in the past year? How often do you share your ideas or suggestions for improving products or services? Do you feel that your ideas are valued and taken into consideration by the organization?
Support for Innovation:	Do you believe that the organization supports and encourages innovation in products or services? Are there clear channels or mechanisms in place to support and nurture innovation within the organization? How satisfied are you with the level of support and resources provided for product or service innovation?
Collaboration and Communication: Innovation Culture:	How effective is communication within the organization regarding innovation-related updates or progress? How would you describe the organization's overall culture of innovation? Do you believe that innovation is valued and recognized within the organization?
Satisfaction with Innovation Efforts:	How satisfied are you with the organization's efforts in driving product or service innovation? Do you believe that the organization is successful in delivering innovative products or services to customers? Are you proud to be part of an organization that values and prioritizes product or service innovation?