International Journal of Academic Management Science Research (IJAMSR)
ISSN: 2643-900X
Vol. 9 Issue 10 October - 2025, Pages: 55-64

Leadership Trust And Employee Engagement Of Banking Firms In Rivers State

Efelo, Nwianee1, Prof. Edwinah Amah2

1Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Port Harcourt
09157604989
2Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Port Harcourt
Edwinah.amah@uniport.edu.ng

Abstract: *This research looks at the link between leadership trust and employee engagement in selected banking businesses in Rivers State, Nigeria. It focuses on how two characteristics of leadership trust, consistency, and transparency, promote employee behavioral engagement. The study used a quasi-experimental survey research approach using a structured questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 165 workers selected from a population of 285 across seven banks. The sample size was calculated using Taro Yamane's method. The data were analyzed using Spearman Rank-Order Correlation in SPSS version 25.0. The results demonstrated a substantial positive and statistically significant link between both independent factors and employee behavioral engagement. Leadership consistency had a substantial correlation with employee engagement ($r = 0.796$, $p < 0.01$), whereas transparency had an even greater link ($r = 0.820$, $p < 0.01$). These findings indicate that when workers see their leaders as consistent and honest, they are more likely to be proactive, dedicated, and engaged at work. The research shows that leadership trust is an important driver of employee engagement in Nigeria's banking industry. It suggests that bank executives establish trust by consistent behaviors, open communication, and inclusive decision-making to boost staff morale and organizational commitment.*

Keywords: Leadership trust, Consistency, Employees engagement, Behavioral Engagement.

Introduction

Companies in today's fast-paced, highly competitive market are making employee engagement a top priority if they want to boost output, creativity, and happiness among their clientele. The importance of employee engagement the mental and emotional investment that workers have in their jobs and the company they work for in determining the success of businesses is becoming more and more acknowledged (Sharma & Dhar, 2021). The bottom line benefits from engaged workers because they are more inclined to go above and above, show devotion to the company, and perform better overall (Saks, 2022). When workers are emotionally, intellectually, and behaviorally invested in what they do for their company, we say that they are engaged. As a result, workers are more invested in the success of the company and are more likely to go above and beyond in their work (Saks, 2022). The success of a company may be enhanced when its personnel are highly engaged because they show enthusiasm, commitment, and total immersion in their job (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018).

The importance of trust in leadership in shaping employee attitudes and organizational success is becoming more acknowledged, particularly in fast-paced and competitive fields like banking (Wang, Liu, & Wang, 2023). When workers have faith in their leadership, they are more likely to feel safe, appreciated, and driven, which in turn increases commitment and decreases intents to leave (Yadav & Tripathi, 2020). When it comes to industries like banking, where customer happiness and operational correctness are paramount, confidence in leadership has a major bearing on staff engagement and performance results (Okoye & Igwe, 2022). Nevertheless, difficulties including inconsistent leadership actions, a lack of openness, and inadequate communication often erode trust, which in turn causes employees to become disengaged and less committed to the firm (Eze, Obi, & Akpan, 2023). In emerging nations like Nigeria, where institutional instability and economic constraints are on the rise, occupational stress is already a major problem (Sharma & Dhar, 2021). Trust in leadership is crucial for banking organizations in Rivers State to maintain employee engagement and organizational resilience in the face of economic volatility and increased competition (Wang et al., 2023).

Having a highly motivated staff is very essential in the banking business, as ensuring client pleasure, compliance, and service quality takes precedence. Poor leadership and a lack of trust are frequently blamed for the high personnel turnover, job discontent, and deteriorating morale that emerging economy banks like Nigeria's still face (Okoye & Igwe, 2022). Eze, Obi, and Akpan (2023) found that many Nigerian banks' leadership approaches lacked the emotional intelligence necessary to establish meaningful connections with staff, and were instead focused on transactional tasks. Banking companies in Rivers State face high levels of competition, volatile economies, and safety issues. The need for trustworthy and engaging leadership is further highlighted by the fact that these external circumstances increase the workload of bank personnel. There is a dearth of empirical study on the topic of leadership trust and its impact on employee engagement in Nigerian banking, especially in the state of Rivers, despite the critical relevance of such research. The need to learn more about how confidence in leadership relates to employee engagement in a few Rivers State banking organizations prompted us to conduct this research. This research seeks to improve leadership practices and organizational results in the banking business by analyzing the effects of leader integrity, communication, and perceived fairness on staff commitment and excitement. The findings will be supported by data. This research aims to investigate the connection between confidence in leadership and employee engagement in a sample of Rivers State banking organizations, taking these factors into account. The study's overarching goal is to help leaders and HR professionals in the Nigerian banking industry improve employee engagement by shedding light on the relationship between confidence in leadership and workers' actions and attitudes on the job.

Statement of the problem

Employee engagement is becoming a key indicator of organizational success in today's fast-paced and competitive corporate world, particularly in the banking industry. Despite the increasing awareness of its importance, many Rivers State banking organizations still deal with low employee engagement. This leads to decreased productivity, high staff turnover, a lack of innovation, and poor service delivery. Literature has recognized leadership trust—the degree to which followers have faith in their leaders' honesty, skill, and dependability—as a significant component of employee engagement. Poor communication, favoritism, opaque decision-making, and inconsistent leadership conduct are some of the identified problems plaguing most Nigerian banks, making leadership trust a recurrent theme. Despite the abundance of prior research on the subject, this study aims to fill that knowledge gap by investigating the connection between confidence in leadership and employee engagement in the banking sector in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to understand the relationship between leadership trust and employee engagement of selected banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically the objectives are:

i. To examine the correlation between Leadership Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.
ii. To ascertain the correlation between Leadership Transparency and Behavior Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question

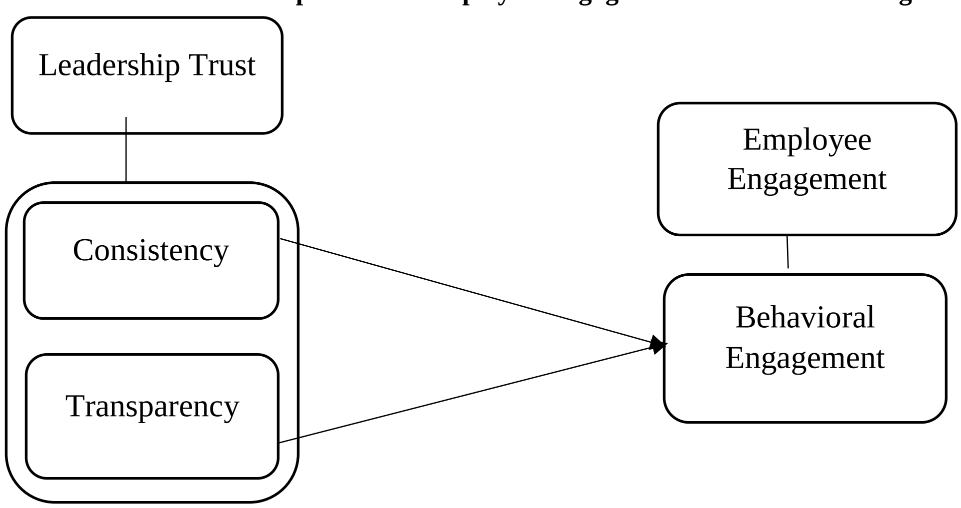
i. What is the correlation between Leadership Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria?
ii. To understand the relationship between Leadership Transparency and Behavioral engagement of selected banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research hypotheses

H_{O1} There is no relationship between Leadership Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of selected banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

H_{O2} There is no relationship between Leadership Transparency and Behavioral Engagement of selected banking firms in Rives State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework leadership trust and employees engagement of selected banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria



Sources

Dimension of independent variable is adapted from Covey, S. R.& Norman, S. M., Avolio, B. J., & Luthans, F. (2010). Measure of dependent variable adopted from Saks, A. M. (2006).

Leadership Trust: Building productive connections inside businesses requires trust from leadership. It is a measure of how much faith workers have in the judgment, behavior, and goals of their superiors (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995). Workers are more inclined to be honest, helpful, and dedicated to the company's mission when they trust one another (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). According to McAllister (1995), leaders may earn their subordinates' confidence by consistently demonstrating honesty, fairness, and integrity. A good work environment, one in which workers feel respected and protected, is fostered by trust in leadership. According to Norman, Avolio, and Luthans (2010), it promotes an environment where workers feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and concerns. A trustworthy leader is one who is dependable, competent, and cares about the welfare of their employees (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Employees are more invested, motivated, and satisfied with their work when they trust their coworkers (Saks, 2006). Workers feel more secure and able to adjust to new circumstances as a result (Wang, Liu, & Wang, 2023). Workers are more likely to go the extra mile when they have faith in their supervisors. According to Breevaart and Bakker (2018), when leaders trust their employees, it leads to better cross-departmental cooperation. It increases loyalty and decreases opposition to organizational policies. Workers are more likely to remain with a company for the long haul if they have faith in its leadership (Searle, 2013). It lays the groundwork for employees to feel empowered and to innovate. Organizational culture is strengthened when leaders and workers develop trust and mutual respect. Leadership trust is critical for keeping morale and productivity high during crisis situations (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Consistency: A leader's credibility, trust, and the organization's success are all boosted by their consistency. A stable work environment is created when leaders regularly behave, which increases the likelihood that workers will see them as trustworthy and dependable (Zenger & Folkman, 2024). When leaders are consistent, they reassure their staff in times of uncertainty by predictable conduct, unified decision-making, and solid communication techniques (Deloitte, 2024). When leaders consistently implement rules and follow through on their promises, their employees respect them. Employees are more invested and satisfied in their work as a result of less ambiguity and more equity (Gleeson, 2025). When leaders are reliable, it makes workers feel secure knowing that their expectations will not change (Toastmasters International, 2024). Furthermore, leaders build corporate culture and foster a sense of shared purpose when they constantly demonstrate the organization's values and mission (Gallup, 2024). Conversely, disengagement, distrust, and high turnover may result from inconsistent leadership. Leaders that "say one thing and do another" damage morale and productivity. According to Zenger and Folkman (2024), consistency is key in multicultural and complicated environments, such as Nigerian financial businesses, in order to maintain justice and equality across varied employee groups. Leaders are better able to control team dynamics and unite workers around shared objectives when they model consistent conduct. It is simpler to execute change and inspire innovation when leaders are consistent, which increases their reputation and influence (Gleeson, 2025). Consistent leadership, in the end, creates a strong workforce that can confidently adjust to changes while still performing well.

Transparency: When executives and workers in a company are open and honest with one another, it's called transparency. According to Gallup (2024), it is an important factor in creating trust in today's workplaces and is associated with ethical leadership and employee engagement. According to Deloitte (2024), leaders who are open and honest with their followers encourage a culture of responsibility and belonging, which in turn helps workers to coordinate their efforts with the company's objectives. Leadership that is open and honest helps everyone make better decisions by improving communication and lowering levels of uncertainty. Involving workers in topics that impact their responsibilities and the organization's future enhances morale and sends a message of respect (PwC, 2023). Transparency helps workers cope with uncertainty and fast change by lowering their anxiety levels and increasing their resilience. When employees are well-informed and feel appreciated, they are more likely to be committed, trusting, and satisfied with their employment. Employees are more inclined to accept change and provide creative solutions if they think leadership is transparent about problems and solutions (Gleeson, 2024). Conversely, rumors, distrust, disengagement, and increased turnover may result from a lack of openness. When it comes to ethical behavior, minimizing risk, and complying with regulations, businesses like banking place a premium on transparency. Because workers feel safe enough to raise concerns and ask questions in open and honest companies, ethical lapses are less likely to occur (EY, 2024). Leaders who are open with their followers also foster an atmosphere of trust where criticism and suggestions may be freely exchanged.

Employee Engagement: The term "employee engagement" describes the level of mental and emotional investment that workers have in the success of their company. Employees that are engaged in what they do go above and above what is required of them in the workplace (Shuck & Reio, 2023). Increased output, less employee turnover, and a more pleasant work environment are all results of such active participation. Several aspects impact engagement, such as management style, communication, work atmosphere, and acknowledgment. Employees are more likely to put forth their best effort when they believe their bosses have their backs (Saks, 2024). On the other side, disengagement may cause poor morale, decreased performance, and absenteeism. Because engagement has such a direct bearing on both organizational success and consumer happiness, it has become a strategic focus for modern firms. Innovations in technology and shifts toward remote work have altered the traditional methods of engagement cultivation, necessitating new ways of keeping people connected and inspired (Bakker & Albrecht, 2023).

Behavioral Engagement: Employees' visible efforts and behaviors while on the job are known as behavioral engagement. According to Rich, LePine, and Crawford (2024), it includes how engaged, hardworking, and persistent workers are while doing their jobs. Behavioural engagement focuses on the actions that workers do while on the job, as opposed to emotional or cognitive engagement that is concerned with ideas and emotions. Behaviourally engaged workers go above and above what is required of them in the workplace, demonstrate initiative, and assist coworkers (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2023). The efficiency and output of an organization are often enhanced by these actions. Several elements in the workplace, including as the support of leadership, the design of jobs, and organizational culture, impact behavioral engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2023). When workers feel appreciated for what they do, they are more likely to go above and beyond in their job. Because it shows how motivation looks in action at work, this kind of involvement is crucial. According to Bakker and Albrecht (2023), it may also assist decrease unproductive habits like as tardiness and absenteeism. Objective performance metrics, self-reports, and evaluations from supervisors are common ways to measure behavioral engagement (Saks, 2024). Overall performance, customer happiness, and creativity all take a nosedive when companies actively encourage employee behavior change. To promote behavioral engagement, it is necessary to have leaders who are supportive, to communicate expectations clearly, and to provide a work atmosphere that promotes both independence and teamwork (Schaufeli et al., 2023). Organizations may achieve long-term success and employee engagement by concentrating on this aspect of engagement.

Theoretical Review

Luhmann's Theory of Trust

In 1979, Luhmann put out his Theory of Trust, which provides a sociological view of trust as a tool for dealing with social complexity and reducing uncertainty. Luhmann argues that trust is fundamental because it lessens the need for continual monitoring and control, which is necessary for navigating an unpredictable environment. Within the context of leadership, this signifies that workers have faith in their leaders to provide a steady and predictable work environment free from arbitrary choices and unjust treatment. This perspective holds that trust is more about its practical purpose in promoting organizational collaboration and coordination than about any particular sentiments or emotions that may be involved. It takes time for leaders to establish credibility by being reliable, fair, and consistent in their actions. Employees are more likely to take chances, contribute ideas, and give their all to their job when they have faith in their leaders and the reliability of the organizational social structure. According to Luhmann, a more engaged workforce is the result of leaders who are consistent and predictable, which in turn builds trust. We used this idea as our foundational or baseline hypothesis to support our study because of how applicable it is.

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007)

Bakker and Demerouti's 2007 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model offers a thorough framework for comprehending employee engagement via the analysis of the equilibrium between job demands and job resources. Workload, emotional pressures, and time limits are some of the unique demands of each profession that the model identifies as requiring constant attention and, at extreme levels, the potential to cause burnout or stress. On the other side, workers are better able to handle these pressures and remain engaged and motivated when they have access to employment resources including social support, autonomy, feedback, and advancement chances. Employees' fundamental psychological requirements, such competence, relatedness, and autonomy, are met when work resources are plentiful, according to the concept. This, in turn, promotes engagement and helps to mitigate the negative consequences of job demands. When workers believe they have access to all they need at work, they are more likely to be enthusiastic about what they do and dedicated to their jobs. According to the JD-R model, engagement is all about giving workers the tools they need to succeed no matter what obstacles they face, not just less expectations. What makes this model so useful is how easily it can be adjusted to fit various work settings; this allows it to be used in a broad variety of industries and occupations. When it comes to increasing engagement, the JD-R model provides useful information for executives who want to invest in their employees' well-being and performance while also effectively managing their needs.

Empirical Review

A research was carried out in the banking business of Bangladesh by Mozammel and Haan (2016). With this quantitative research, we hoped to draw some conclusions on the relationship between transformative leadership and employee engagement in Bangladesh's banking industry. There was no significant relationship between transformative leadership and employee engagement, according to Mozammel and Haan and Singh (2015). The impact of transformative leaders on employee engagement may depend on factors such as industry, location, and culture, according to Mozammel and Hann. According to the results, implementing a transformational leadership style in the workplace does not ensure that people would give their all. Nevertheless, mozammel and haan (2016) point out that the present study's findings contradict the literature on transformative leadership and employee engagement.

Employee engagement was proposed as a possible essential mechanism to explain the interaction between workers and their organizations in the current organizational environment by Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot (2016), who performed a cross-sectional research in Israel. Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot (2016) found that employee engagement promotes a variety of ideas about the meaning of the employee-organization relationship in the organizational setting, and that this makes it a significant concept for researchers and practitioners. The study used an interactive sample of 573 public and private sector employees. These results are in line with what Kahn (1990) has said about engagement: it's a win-win situation for both the company and its workers.

Agarwal (2014) surveyed 323 managers from western Indian pharmaceutical and industrial companies. Based on social exchange theory, Agarwal investigated how trust mediated the justice-engagement link and how worker engagement affected their propensity to be creative on the job. 54 Justice had a favorable relationship with job engagement, with trust moderating the relationship, according to the Agarwal (2014) research. The level of engagement among workers has a substantial impact on their level of innovation at work (Agarwal, 2014).

From a multicultural perspective, Adnan, Bhatti, and Baykal (2022) investigated the relationship between moral leadership and workplace engagement. Executives in the service sector in Malaysia, Pakistan, and Turkey were surveyed to get their thoughts on how moral leadership affects employee happiness on the workplace. The research used a purposive sample technique to choose 28 executives from the industry and interviewed them using a semi-structured interview approach to collect data on ethical leadership, employee engagement, and meetings with leaders in the service sector. According to the study's findings, eight main themes emerged from the respondents' descriptions of ethical leadership: trust, honesty, integrity, religion, and role modeling. Furthermore, they demonstrated that various ethical leadership methods impact the level of employee engagement in the service organizations that were part of the research.

Webometrics analyses of Empirical Review

Author(s) & Date	Location	Focus	Methodology	Findings
Chen et al. (2023)	China	Leadership trust and employee innovation	Quantitative survey of 450 employees in tech firms, using structural equation modeling (SEM)	Found that leadership trust significantly boosts employee innovation by enhancing psychological safety and motivation.
Patel & Singh (2022)	India	Impact of leadership trust on engagement	Cross-sectional survey of 300 bank employees, analyzed via regression analysis	Leadership trust was positively correlated with higher employee engagement and job satisfaction.
Johnson & Lee (2021)	USA	Trust, leadership style, and team performance	Mixed-method approach: surveys (N=350) and interviews (N=30) analyzed through thematic and statistical methods	Trust mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and improved team performance.
Müller et al. (2020)	Germany	Leadership trust in crisis management	Longitudinal study tracking 200 employees during organizational change, analyzed using SEM	Leadership trust reduced employee anxiety and increased commitment during organizational crises.
Alharbi (2021)	Saudi Arabia	Leadership trust and employee turnover	Survey of 250 employees in public sector, analyzed using hierarchical regression	Higher leadership trust was linked to lower turnover intentions and higher retention rates.
Kim & Park (2019)	South Korea	Trust and organizational citizenship behavior	Quantitative survey of 400 employees, analyzed with structural equation modeling	Leadership trust positively influenced employees' discretionary behaviors beyond formal roles.
Mbogo & Nyangau (2023)	Kenya	Leadership trust and employee motivation	Survey of 320 bank employees, analyzed with correlation and regression	Leadership trust enhanced intrinsic motivation, leading to better job performance.
Rodríguez et al. (2022)	Spain	Ethical leadership, trust, and engagement	Cross-sectional study with 380 employees, structural equation modeling	Ethical leadership increased leadership trust, which in turn elevated employee engagement levels.
Nguyen & Tran (2020)	Vietnam	Leadership trust and employee creativity	Survey data from 290 employees, analyzed using multiple regression	Trust in leadership was a key predictor of employee creativity through increased psychological empowerment.
Silva & Santos (2021)	Brazil	Trust and knowledge sharing in organizations	Mixed methods: survey of 310 employees and 15 interviews, analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively	Leadership trust promoted knowledge sharing and collaboration among teams.
Ahmed & Hussain (2022)	Pakistan	Leadership trust and workplace stress	Survey of 400 employees, hierarchical regression analysis	Leadership trust moderated the relationship between workplace stress and employee well-being.
Brown & Green (2019)	UK	Leadership trust and remote work engagement	Survey of 350 remote employees, analyzed via SEM	Trust in leadership was critical in maintaining engagement and productivity during remote work settings.
Okafor & Nwosu (2024)	Nigeria	Leadership trust and employee commitment in banks	Survey of 400 banking employees, analyzed with correlation and regression	Leadership trust significantly predicted employee commitment and reduced absenteeism.

López & Garcia (2023)	Mexico	Leadership trust and job satisfaction	Survey of 360 employees in manufacturing, analyzed via regression and mediation analysis	Leadership trust was a significant mediator between job autonomy and job satisfaction.
Zhang & Wang (2018)	China	Transformational leadership, trust, and innovation	Survey of 300 employees, path analysis	Trust fully mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee innovation.

Methodology

For this investigation, the quasi-experimental approach was thought to be the most suitable. Data was gathered in this manner using a questionnaire. The key data used in this research is the kind and sources of data. According to Trochim (2006), survey research enables researchers to utilize questionnaires and interviews to measure people's knowledge, preferences, and opinions. The interview format (focus group) was used as the research tool for this study. The Taro Yamane method was used to get the sample size of 165, given the study's population of 285. This approach was used to guarantee that the study's findings were as trustworthy as possible while also reducing the issues related to data collecting. All statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. This revised version has the ability to convert scaled data as well as discrete and continuous data.

Table.1: List of Selected Banks Firms in Rivers State.

S/N	NAME	Number of Employees
1.	Zenith Bank	49
2.	First Bank	40
3.	Union Bank	36
4.	Eco Bank	36
5.	Fidelity Bank	46
6.	Access Bank	34
7.	Sterling banks	44
	Total	285

A sample size of 194 was gotten using the Taro Yamene formula. The computation are as follows:
Where
n = sample size
N= Population
e =level of precision (marginal of error) commonly 0.05 for 95 confident level

$$n = \frac{285}{1+285(0.05)2}$$

$$\frac{285}{1+285(0.05)}$$

$$\frac{285}{1+0.7125}$$

$$\frac{285}{1.7125}$$

166.4
Sample size is = 165

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.2.1: Impact of Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My work performance remains stable regardless of external challenges.	165	1	6	5.11	.705
I complete my duties with the same level of accuracy every time..	165	1	6	5.06	.812
I strive to uphold consistent professional behavior even under stress.	165	1	6	5.29	.713
Valid N (listwise)	165				

SPSS 25 Output (2025)

Table 4.2.2: Relationship between Transparency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organization clearly communicates its goals and expectations to employees.	165	1	6	5.11	.760
Leaders in this organization are open to feedback and suggestions.	165	1	6	5.06	.811
I trust the information provided by management is accurate and complete.	165	1	6	5.29	.717
Valid N (listwise)	165				

SPSS 25 Output (2025)

Statistical test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses stated in chapter one of this study was tested statistically in this section using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient analytical technique. The result of the statistical testing was used to either accept or reject the null hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Decision rule:

P-value approach: reject $H0_1$ if p-value$\leq \alpha$

Accept if p-value$\geq \alpha$

Rule of correlation coefficient:

i. Values between 0 and 0.3 (0 and -0.3) indicate a weak positive (negative) linear relationship.
ii. Values between 0.3 and 0.7 (-0.3 and -0.7) indicates a moderate positive (negative) linear relationship.
iii. Values between 0.7 and 1.0 (-0.7 and -1.0) indicate as strong positive (negative) linear relationship.

Test of Hypothesis 1

Ho1: There is no relationship between Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

.

Correlations

			Consistency	Behavioral Engagement
Spearman's rho	Consistency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.796**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	165	165
	Behavioral Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.796**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	165	165

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The hypothesis was as follows: "There is no relationship between Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria." Since there is no statistically significant correlation between the two variables, this hypothesis is null. The Spearman's rank-order correlation, which gauges the direction and strength of a link between two ranked variables, is shown in the correlation table. According to the table, there is a 0.796 association between behavioral engagement and consistency. This number shows a significant positive correlation, indicating that employees' behavioral involvement rises in tandem with their consistency. For this association, the significance value (p-value) is 0.000, which is below the standard cutoff of 0.01. This indicates that there is very little possibility that this outcome happened by accident and that the observed association is statistically significant at the 1% level.

Ho2: There is no relationship between Transparency and Behavioral Engagement of selected banking firms in Rives State, Nigeria.

Correlations

			Consistency	Behavioral Engagement
Spearman's rho	Transparency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.820**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	165	165
	Behavioral Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.820**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	165	165

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings of a Spearman's rank-order correlation study are shown in the correlation table. In this instance, there is a 0.820 link between behavioral engagement and transparency. This suggests that the two variables have a very strong positive association. In practice, this means that employees are more likely to exhibit higher levels of behavioral engagement, such as active participation, extra effort, and dedication to their work, when leadership transparency in the organization increases, such as openness in communication, sharing of information, and honesty from management. This correlation has a significance value (p-value) of 0.000. The link is confirmed to be statistically significant at the 1% level since this value is below the 0.01 criterion. This indicates that there is extremely little likelihood that this outcome would have happened by accident, confirming the validity of the conclusion.

Discussion of Findings

(Ho1) The hypothesis tested was: "There is no relationship between Consistency and Behavioral Engagement of banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria." This hypothesis was tested using Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis on data collected from 165 respondents at various financial institutions. The data show a 0.796 correlation between behavioral involvement and consistency. This value has a substantial positive association, demonstrating that workers' behavioral participation increases in parallel with their consistency. To put it another way, employees that exhibit regular, dependable, and steady work habits are more likely to be interested in their jobs, go above and beyond the call of duty, and display a deeper dedication to the company's goals. The result is statistically significant, as shown by the p-value of 0.000, which is less than the threshold of 0.01. This suggests that the observed correlation did not occur by mistake. Hence, the null. These findings are consistent with earlier research, which has shown that consistent employee behavior promotes stable work environments with increased employee engagement, as well as improving collaboration and building trust. Employee engagement and involvement in organizational activities are positively benefited when they display dependability and maintain performance standards over time.

(H_{O2}) The hypothesis tested was: "There is no relationship between Transparency and Behavioral Engagement of selected banking firms in Rivers State, Nigeria." To test this hypothesis, Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis was used to data acquired from 165 workers at regional financial institutions. According to the correlation table data, the Spearman's rho connection value between transparency and behavioral engagement is 0.820. This statistic has a very strong positive association, demonstrating that employee behavioral engagement increases in parallel with corporate transparency. This means that workers are more likely to show high levels of involvement, effort, and initiative in their jobs when they perceive leadership is honest, transparent, and fair in decision-making. The correlation is statistically significant, as shown by the p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.01 level of significance. This implies that it is unlikely that the observed substantial correlation is the product of chance. As a consequence, the null hypothesis is falsified, and it is established that, in the selected financial organizations, transparency and behavioral involvement have a significant and beneficial relationship.

Conclusion

The goal of this study is to see how employee engagement with banking firms in Rivers State relates to leadership trust. After assessing all hypotheses, the researcher concludes that employee engagement with banking enterprises in Rivers State and leadership trust are substantially associated.

Recommendations

Based on the objectives earlier raised and the findings thereof, the following recommendations are hereby made:

i. Leaders and managers of banking firms should be consistenct in their policy and programs in other to enhance behavioral engagement of employees in the industry
ii. Managers and supervisors should be transparent to tntheir employee in other to enhance their involver and participation to task.
iii. Leaders should maintain regular, honest, and two-way communication with employees. This includes clearly explaining organizational goals, changes, and expectations. When employees are informed and feel their voices are heard, it builds trust and strengthens their emotional and behavioral commitment to the organization.
iv. Involving employees in decision-making processes and acknowledging their contributions increases their sense of value and belonging. Empowerment and recognition from trusted leaders lead to higher engagement, motivation, and performance among banking staff.

References

Alfes, K., Shantz, A., Truss, C., & Soane, E. C. (2013). The link between perceived human resource management practices, engagement and employee behaviour: A moderated mediation model. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*(2), 330–351.

Amah, E. (2023). Leadership trust and employee engagement: Building effective organizational relationships. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Behavior*, 18(3), 150–165.

Ariani, D. W. (2013). The relationship between employee engagement, organizational citizenship behavior, and counterproductive work behavior. *International Journal of Business Administration*, *4*(2), 46–56

Carmeli, A., Brueller, D., & Dutton, J. E. (2009). Learning behaviors in the workplace: The role of high-quality interpersonal relationships and psychological safety. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, *26*(1), 81–98.

Christian, M. S., Garza, A. S., & Slaughter, J. E. (2011). Work engagement: A quantitative review and test of its relations with task and contextual performance. *Personnel Psychology*, *64*(1), 89–136.

Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-determination theory in work organizations: The state of a science. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *4*, 19–43.

Dirks, K. T., & Ferrin, D. L. (2002). Trust in leadership: Meta-analytic findings and implications for research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*(4), 611–628.

Eze, J. I., Obi, S. I., & Akpan, E. (2023). Leadership styles and employee morale in Nigerian banking sector. *Journal of African Business Studies*, *19*(1), 85–101.

Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*(2), 268–279.

Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, *33*(4), 692–724.

Macey, W. H., & Schneider, B. (2008). The meaning of employee engagement. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *1*(1), 3–30.

Okoye, P. V., & Igwe, P. A. (2022). Employee turnover and job satisfaction in Nigerian banks. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *33*(4), 765–782.

Saks, A. M. (2022). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement revisited. *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *9*(1), 39–54.

Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources, and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *25*(3), 293–315.

Schaufeli, W. B., Salanova, M., González-Romá, V., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *3*(1), 71–92.

Sharma, J., & Dhar, R. L. (2021). Impact of employee engagement on performance: Mediating role of employee commitment. *Journal of Human Values*, *27*(2), 150–163.

Shuck, B., & Reio, T. G., Jr. (2014). Employee engagement and well-being: A moderation model and implications for practice. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *21*(1), 43–58.

Tremblay, M., Cloutier, J., Simard, G., Chênevert, D., & Vandenberghe, C. (2010). The role of supervisor motivational support on employee performance: The importance of intrinsic motivation and supervisor trust. *Group & Organization Management*, *35*(5), 691–715.