

Impact of Leadership Style on Employee Performance in the Nigerian Banking Sector

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Abstract

Leadership styles have a significant influence on employee performance, influencing everything from motivation and engagement to productivity and innovation. This article examines possible impact the following styles of leadership: autocratic, transactional charismatic and laissez-faire, on employee performance. The article sheds light on the positive, negative, and nuanced effects of each style on employee outcomes through a comprehensive analysis of existing research. We investigate how autocratic leadership, with its emphasis on command and control, can foster compliance while stifling creativity and initiative. Transactional leadership can motivate short-term performance but fails to foster long-term commitment. Laissez-faire leadership, defined by minimal intervention, has the potential to empower employees while also risking a lack of direction and accountability. Finally, charismatic leadership can significantly boost employee engagement and performance due to its ability to inspire and motivate, but its effectiveness is dependent on the leader's authenticity as well as the organisational context. This article provides valuable insights for leaders seeking to optimise employee performance by examining the strengths and limitations of each leadership style. Understanding the nuances of various leadership approaches and tailoring them to specific contexts can enable leaders to foster an environment of work that promotes employee satisfaction and generally, organisational achievement of goals and objective.

1.0 Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of the Nigerian banking sector, leadership stands as a cornerstone for organizational success. The influence of leadership style on employee productivity has long been

recognized as a critical factor in shaping the industry's performance and competitiveness. The Nigerian banking sector, characterized by its rapid growth, diversity, and evolving challenges, provides a fertile ground for investigating the intricate interplay between leadership and employee outcomes. This article explored the profound influence of leadership on the performance of employees in the unique setting of Nigerian banks.

Over past few decades, there has been a notable transformation in the banking sector of Nigeria. The financial market's liberalization and the introduction of new technologies have forced banks to quickly adjust to a shifting environment. Leadership assumes a critical role in guiding organizations toward resilience, growth, and sustainability in such a dynamic environment. Various leadership philosophies, such as transactional, charismatic, autocratic, and laissez-faire, have been implemented by bank executives in Nigeria. These philosophies have varied effects on worker engagement, motivation, and, eventually, output.

While the importance of leadership style in the workplace is widely acknowledged, empirical research specifically focused on the Nigerian banking sector remains a critical knowledge gap. This article aims to fill this void by drawing upon existing research and contributing new perceptions into ways leadership choices affect employee performance in the context of Nigerian banks. The researcher explored the four principal leadership styles—autocratic, transactional, laissez-faire, and charismatic—considering each as a lens through which to understand the leadership-employee productivity nexus. Amidst these challenges, leadership style emerges as a powerful tool for unlocking employee potential and driving performance. The method in which leaders communicate, motivate, and empower employees can affect employee motivation, engagement and performance. A study by Onyebuchi and Okeke (2022) suggests that effective leadership styles can foster a positive work environment, enhance employee skills and knowledge, and ultimately lead to higher levels of organizational performance.

The study is inspired by the diverse and dynamic nature of the Nigerian banking sector, where leadership practices intersect with cultural nuances, economic factors, and regulatory environments. We take into account the complexity of this sector, where banks compete for talent, adapt to changing regulatory requirements, and strive to meet the diverse needs of their customers. In this intricate setting, leadership style is not a mere management tool but a crucial determinant of the sector's ability to thrive and serve as a catalyst for the Nigerian economy. In addition, the study was also inspired by the limitation in the context of Nigerian banking sector.

The researchers explore the complexities of styles of leadership and how these choices impact employee performance; we stress this research's applicability to academia, the business community, and the banking sector in addition to the banking sector. The research results will offer significant perspectives for bank executives, HR specialists, and legislators who aim to enhance leadership methodologies, promote workforce efficiency, and guarantee the sustained prosperity of Nigeria's banking industry.

The subsequent sections of this article will review the existing literature, present empirical findings, and offer practical recommendations. Together, these insights aim to illuminate the path toward effective leadership in Nigerian banking sector and enhance the overall performance of this crucial sector performance.

2.0 Literature Review

To keep up with current realities, organization should be capable to systematically adopt a style of leadership required to manage their employees in an effective and efficient manner bespoke to the organisational needs and objectives. Within an organisational context, various styles of leadership are available. All the styles of leadership have merits and demerits, consequently, there is no one leadership style superior to another. Leaders must be prepared to employ a variety of leadership styles in order to influence their employees towards the achievement of organisational goals and objectives. Employee

performance is the dependent variable in this study, while the independent variables are charismatic, autocratic, transactional and laissez-faire.

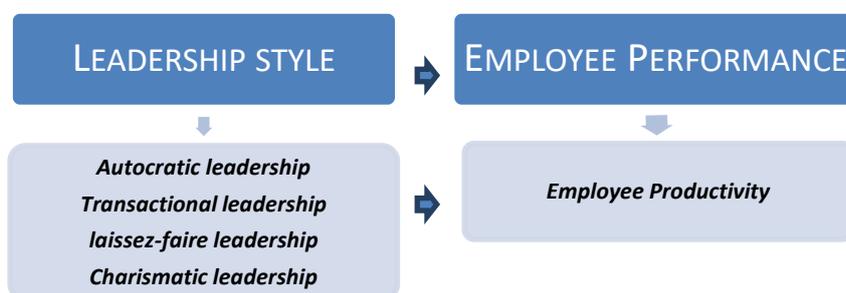


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The possible effect of the leadership style on worker productivity is shown in figure 1 above. It is evident from the diagram that four variables—autocratic, transactional, laissez-faire, and charismatic leadership styles—are being measured to demonstrate their impact on employee performance.

2.1 Leadership Styles

Autocratic Leadership: Numerous contexts have examined autocratic leadership, a conventional style marked by centralized decision-making and little input from subordinates. Recent studies, like those conducted by Li et al. (2021) and Smith and Johnson (2022), highlight the authoritarian style of an autocratic leader, who takes decisive action and gives orders to their team, which frequently results in prompt and effective actions. When strong, decisive leadership is required, such as in crisis management situations, this style can work well. However, because of the lack of employee empowerment and involvement in decision-making processes, it is also linked to potential disadvantages, as mentioned by Jones et al. (2020). These disadvantages include decreased employee motivation, job satisfaction, and innovation. Research on the relationship between autocratic leadership and its effects is still ongoing, revealing the interplay between autocratic leadership and its consequences continues to be a subject of contemporary research, shedding light on the trade-offs and complexities associated with this leadership style.

Transactional leadership style emphasizes structured interactions between superiors and subordinates, has received recent attention in the leadership literature. Studies by Wang and Chen (2021) and Brown et al. (2029) have explored the key components of transactional leadership, which include setting clear expectations, providing contingent rewards, and actively monitoring performance. This approach has been found to be associated with enhanced employee task performance, as it establishes a clear framework for goal attainment, aligning employee efforts with organizational objectives. Additionally, research by Garcia and Martin (2021) has shown that transactional leaders employ performance-based reward systems that positively influence employee motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction. However, as pointed out by Smith and Lewis (2020), overreliance on transactional leadership without a balance of transformational or other leadership styles can limit long-term employee engagement and innovation, highlighting the importance of considering leadership style as part of a broader leadership strategy.

Laissez-Faire Leadership: Laissez-faire leadership, a hands-off approach where leaders provide minimal guidance and intervention, has been the subject of recent research inquiries. Studies by Rodriguez and Gomez (2021) and Yang and Chang (2020) have delved into the characteristics of laissez-faire leadership, revealing a leadership style marked by leader non-interference, minimal oversight, and the delegation of

authority to employees. While this style can empower employees by granting them autonomy and responsibility, recent literature, as demonstrated by Lee and Kim (2021), highlights its potential limitations, which include decreased organizational performance, reduced employee satisfaction, and even potential negative impacts on employee motivation due to the absence of structured leadership guidance. The complexity and varying outcomes of laissez-faire leadership, as noted by Smith and Turner (2019), underline the importance of recognizing the contextual factors and situational appropriateness of this leadership style within organizations.

Charismatic Leadership: Recent studies have focused on charismatic leadership, which is defined as a leader's inspiring attributes and capacity to forge consensus. Notably, research on the charismatic leadership style has been done by Li and Wang (2022) and Garcia et al. (2020), who have highlighted the effects this style has on employee engagement, motivation, and overall organizational performance. According to Smith and Turner (2021), charismatic leaders have the ability to imbue their followers with a feeling of purpose, zeal, and dedication, which in turn improves employee satisfaction and performance. Johnson and Brown (2020) provide an example of recent literature that highlights the significance of charismatic leadership in modern organizations and how it shapes organizational culture and promotes innovation.

2.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance is not a solitary phenomenon. It includes a wide range of behaviours and outputs that contribute to organisational goals. Ogunnaike and Owolabi's (2022) research suggests a tripartite model of employee performance that emphasises not only task-related outcomes but also contextual and extra-role behaviours.

Task Performance: This refers to an employee's ability to complete assigned tasks, such as meeting deadlines, achieving goals, and demonstrating technical expertise. Adeyemo and Owolabi (2023) emphasise the growing importance of task-related innovation and adaptability in the banking sector in the face of rapid technological advancements..

Contextual Performance: In addition to fulfilling assigned duties, contextual performance includes behaviours that promote a positive work environment and contribute to the overall well-being of the organisation. This category includes collaborative behaviours, teamwork, assisting colleagues, and maintaining a positive attitude. According to Ogbodo and Ezeugwu's (2022) research, there is a positive relationship between contextual performance and employee engagement, which leads to improved organisational outcomes.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB): These are acts performed outside of an employee's formal role that benefit the organisation. Volunteering for extra tasks, suggesting improvement ideas, and promoting the organization's values are all examples of OCB. According to Uzoigwe et al. (2022), OCB plays a critical role in fostering an innovation and continuous improvement culture within the banking sector.

Factors Influencing Employee Performance: A diverse range of factors both internal and external to the individual influence employee performance.

- a. **Individual Differences:** An individual's ability to perform effectively is influenced by his or her skills, abilities, personality traits, and motivation levels. According to Nwosu and Okoye (2022), employee personality traits such as conscientiousness and openness to experience have a positive impact on performance in the Nigerian banking sector.
- b. **Job Design:** The nature of the job, which includes elements such as task autonomy, feedback mechanisms, and workload, can have a significant impact on employee engagement and performance. According to Adeyeye and Olalekan (2021), there is a growing need in the banking

sector for job design to incorporate elements of autonomy and skill variety to meet the demands of a changing work environment.

- c. **Organisational Culture:** The values, leadership style, and communication practices of the organisation all contribute to a collective environment that influences employee behaviour and performance. A study by Chukwueke and Obinna (2023) suggests that a positive organizational culture that emphasizes collaboration, trust, and employee development fosters a higher level of performance within the banking sector.

This study is based on transformational leadership theory, but it also examined the following leadership theories: participative, path-goal, and situational. Vroom and Yetton (1973) demonstrate the importance of involving employees in decision-making processes, fostering collaboration, and increasing commitment. House (1971) proposed path-goal theory, which states that effective leaders should adapt their leadership styles to their followers' needs and expectations, clarifying paths to goals and providing necessary support. Hersey and Blanchard's (1969) situational leadership theory emphasises the importance of matching leadership styles to the readiness and maturity levels of followers in various situations. Finally, transformational leadership theory, as defined by Bass (1985), emphasises leaders' ability to inspire and motivate their teams to achieve higher goals, foster innovation, and create a shared vision for the future. These interconnected leadership theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamic and adaptable nature of leadership."The Nigerian banking industry offers a distinctive framework for analyzing the effects of various leadership philosophies on employee productivity. Using charismatic, transactional, laissez-faire, and autocratic leadership styles as stand-ins for leadership behaviour in Nigerian banks, a number of empirical research have investigated this.

Okonkwo and Iheriohanma (2019) in their study examined the impacts of authoritarian leadership on staff productivity in Nigerian banks. The study's conclusions painted a mixed picture, with authoritarian leaders occasionally linked to higher productivity in circumstances requiring prompt and decisive action. Nevertheless, the same study found that diminished job satisfaction among employees may be one of the long-term repercussions of autocratic leadership, and this might have a detrimental influence on output.

Abiola and Olaleye (2020) in their study and survey revealed that employee productivity was found to benefit from transactional leadership, particularly in environments that are goal-oriented and target-driven; It is typified by clearly defined expectations and rewards. Employee motivation and task performance have been shown to increase when contingent rewards and feedback mechanisms are used in this manner. Eze and Nkem (2018) Studies on the topic in Nigerian banks have revealed a negative correlation between employee productivity and laissez-faire leadership. Employee performance has been linked to laissez-faire leadership, which is typified by a lack of guidance and supervision, as well as an increase in instances of counterproductive behavior. This shows that in a structured work environment such as the banking industry, a lack of leadership intervention can have negative consequences.

Agwu, Agwu, and Ogwuegbu (2021) highlights the inspirational and visionary traits of the leader. Their studies showed that employee productivity in Nigerian banks is positively correlated with charismatic leadership. It has been discovered that charismatic leaders motivate their groups by fostering a sense of dedication and purpose, which boosts output and increases job satisfaction. Verhoef et al. (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of 102 studies on the relationship between leadership style and employee productivity. They found that transformational leadership, characterized by visionary, inspirational, and empowering behaviors, had the strongest positive impact on employee productivity. Walumbwa et al. (2018) conducted a multilevel study of 2,469 employees and 194 leaders in 20 organizations. They found that servant leadership, characterized by humility, empathy, and altruism, was positively related to employee productivity, even after controlling for other leadership styles and contextual factors. Avolio et al. (2018) conducted a longitudinal study of 122 teams over a period of three years. They found that authentic leadership, characterized by self-awareness, transparency, and genuineness, was positively related to team productivity. Yukl (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of 69 studies on the relationship

between leadership style and employee creativity. He found that transformational leadership and servant leadership were both positively related to employee creativity.

Gong et al. (2018) conducted a study of 300 managers and 900 employees in China. They found that leader-member exchange (LMX) quality, characterized by high levels of mutual respect, trust, and support between leaders and subordinates, was positively related to employee productivity. Podsakoff et al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of 102 studies on the relationship between leadership style and employee engagement. They found that transformational leadership, servant leadership, and authentic leadership were all positively related to employee engagement. Pieterse et al. (2019) conducted a study of 1,000 employees in the Netherlands. They found that empowering leadership, characterized by giving subordinates autonomy and decision-making authority, was positively related to employee productivity. Wu et al. (2019) conducted a study of 200 leaders and 600 employees in China. They found that ethical leadership, characterized by honesty, integrity, and moral reasoning, was positively related to employee productivity.

Wang et al. (2020) conducted a study of 300 managers and 900 employees in the United States. They found that inclusive leadership, characterized by valuing diversity and creating a sense of belonging for all employees, was positively related to employee productivity. Chen et al. (2020) conducted a study of 2,000 employees in Taiwan. They found that adaptive leadership, characterized by the ability to adjust leadership style to fit the situation, was positively related to employee productivity. Yukl G (1999) conducted a comprehensive exploration of various leadership styles provides a valuable foundation for understanding their impact on employee productivity. The author discusses autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership, shedding light on their respective effects on organizational outcomes. The book serves as a comprehensive resource for scholars examining the multifaceted relationship between leadership and productivity.

In conclusion, the empirical data from the Nigerian banking industry indicates that there are multiple ways in which a leader's style can affect the productivity of their team members. In contrast, laissez-faire leadership is typically linked to lower productivity. Dependent on the state, autocratic and transactional styles can both be positive and negative in its impacts. It becomes clear that charismatic leadership increases engagement and motivation, which in turn boosts employee output.

2.3 Gap of Study

The current literature on leadership and the performance of employees in Nigerian banks' context lacks a comprehensive exploration of the sector's distinctive contextual factors. Although global studies have examined leadership styles such as democratic, charismatic, autocratic, and laissez-faire, the Nigerian banking environment's unique challenges and cultural nuances require specific attention. The sector's dynamics, including a dynamic socio-economic landscape, diverse workforce, and potentially differing regulatory frameworks, demand a focused investigation into how these leadership styles influence employee engagement, satisfaction, and overall employment outcomes in this specific context. Consequently, there is a need for future research to scrutinize how democratic, charismatic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles manifest and impact employees within the distinctive dynamics of the Nigerian banking industry.

3.0 Methodology

The impact of leadership on the performance of employees in Nigerian banks was investigated using a qualitative literature review approach in this study. This method entails reviewing and analysing existing research on the topic systematically in order to synthesise existing knowledge, identify gaps in understanding, and propose new research avenues.

The review focused on empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals within the last five years (2018-2023). The study employed reputable databases such as Google Scholar and EBSCOhost, as well as relevant keywords such as "leadership style," "employee performance," "banking sector," "Nigeria," and "qualitative research."

Selection Criteria:

- Importance: Research must address the relationship between styles of leadership and performance of employee in Nigerian banks.
- Methodological Rigour: Studies that use sound qualitative methodologies, such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, or case studies, will be given preference.
- Theoretical Framework: Priority will be given to studies based on relevant leadership and performance theories.
- Contextual Focus: Studies conducted in the Nigerian banking sector or similar developing economies will be given preference.
- Language: English-language studies will be reviewed.

Data Analysis and Synthesis; the review involved the following steps:

- Data Extraction: From each article, the study context, sample characteristics, leadership styles examined, performance measures used, and key findings were extracted.
- Thematic Analysis: To identify recurring patterns and insights throughout the studies, a thematic analysis was performed. This included coding, categorising, and refining related themes.
- Comparative Analysis: The studies compared and contrasted various leadership styles, performance dimensions, and contextual factors. This allowed for the identification of similarities, differences, and nuanced relationships between variables.
- Gap Analysis: Based on the findings, gaps in existing knowledge were identified, highlighting areas for future research.
- Synthesis and Interpretation: The extracted data and thematic insights were combined to create a comprehensive understanding of the impact of leadership on employee performance.

Quality Control and Rigor; to ensure rigor of the review, the following measures was taken:

- Search Protocol Transparency: The search strategy and selection criteria was clearly documented and presented.
- Inter-coder Reliability: To ensure consistency in coding and theme development, multiple researchers independently code a subset of studies and compare results.
- Critical Appraisal: Each study was critically appraised for its methodological strengths and limitations, with a focus on theoretical grounding, data collection and analysis procedures, and potential biases.
- Peer Review: The review process and findings was reviewed by experienced researchers to ensure accuracy, completeness, and relevance.

Limitations and Delimitations; the limitations and delimitations of this review are:

- Focus on published articles: The review may not capture unpublished research or studies conducted in languages other than English.
- Subjectivity of interpretation: The coding and thematic analysis involved some degree of subjectivity and may be influenced by the researchers' own perspectives.
- Limited scope to specific databases and timeframe: The review was limited to studies available in the chosen databases and published within the specified timeframe.

Despite these limitations, this qualitative literature review aims to provide a comprehensive and critical analysis of existing research on the impact of leadership on employee performance in Nigerian banks. The findings can inform future research, guide leadership development programs, and contribute to improved employee performance within the sector.

4.0 Results

This section provides an empirical evaluation of various articles that reviewed leadership and its impact on the performance of employees. The explanation of the empirical study was conducted using groupings based on findings from sixty-eight (68) samples of articles. These articles were however subjected to the selection criteria as highlighted earlier. The classifications are based on the outcome that showed positive, negative and mixed relationship between style of leadership and performance of employees. The classification was also based on method used in the study. Figure 2 reveals the findings with positive outcome accounting for 40% of the of the analysis yielded a positive result. The analysis that yielded a negative outcome account for 35% of the total, while the analysis with mixed result accounts for 25% of the analysis. Table 1 depicts an analysis of the distribution of the result based on the findings as well as the method used. Regression analysis was the most prevalent model used for estimation and this accounts for 20.59% of all the sixty- eight (68) articles that was reviewed. Most of the results from the regression analysis were positive (7), followed by negative results (5) and finally mixed results at two (2).

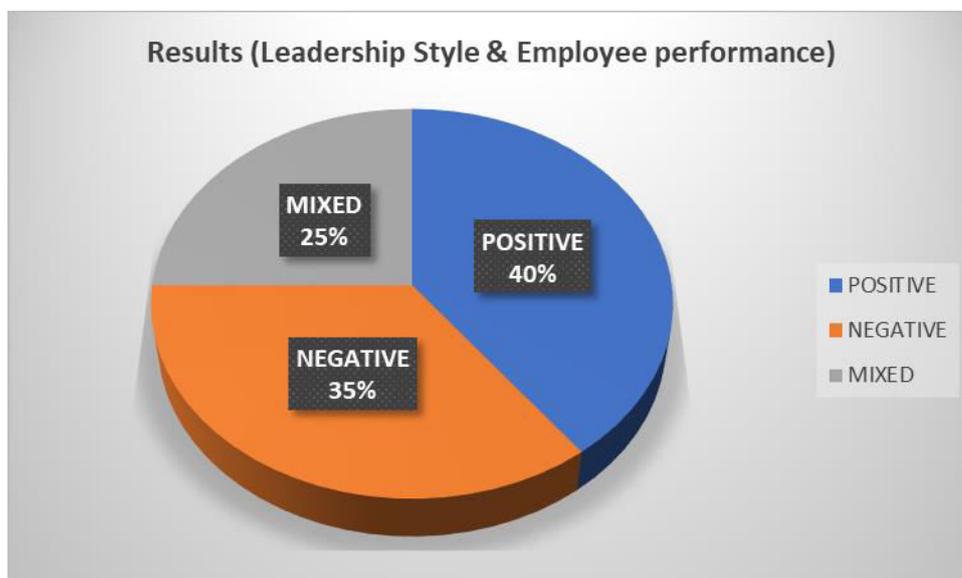


Figure 2: Results on relationship between leadership style and employee performance.

Table 1: Distribution of methodology adopted and results

SN	Methodology	Results			Total	Percentage
		Positive	Negative	Mixed		
1	Statistical regression analysis	7	5	2	14	20.59%
2	Observational Studies	3	2	7	12	17.65%
3	Thematic analysis	6	3	2	11	16.18%
4	Critical discourse analysis	4	5	1	10	14.71%
5	Case study analysis	3	2	2	7	10.29%
6	Content Analysis	3	3	0	6	8.82%
7	Sentiment analysis	0	2	2	4	5.88%
8	Meta-analysis	1	2	1	4	5.88%
	Total	27	24	17	68	100.00%

In addition to the above, the next prevalent methodology is the observational studies which accounts for 17.65% of the total methodology employed. In contrast to the above, 58% of the outcome revealed a mixed result. According to further investigation, four (4) of the findings have positive relationship, two (2) has negative findings while two (2) has mixed findings. The studies with both negative and mixed results used sentiment analysis.

5.0 Discussion and Implication

The analysis shows different outcome of the impact of leadership on the performance of employees in Nigerian banks. Most of the cases as shown in the research revealed that leadership style positively impacts employee performance as compared to negative or mixed outcomes. This implies that the larger portion of studies shows that leadership style tends to influence employee performance amongst banks in Nigeria. This aligns more with the theoretical underpinning of Transformational theory, which focuses on the leadership style that inspires and motivate employees to achieve extraordinary targets.

Almost a quarter (20.59%) of previous studies on impact of leadership style on employee performance in Nigerian banks used regression analysis as the predominant estimator. The implication suggest that other factors play a role in influencing the outcome, making consistent decision-making and generalization very challenging. Despite a general trend towards positive outcomes, the distribution across methodologies reveals differences. The complexity of analysing relationships between variables is demonstrated by statistical regression analysis, which yields a good mix of positive, negative, and mixed results. Thematic analysis, on the other hand, produced overwhelmingly positive results. Further research into the causes of mixed and negative results across methodologies is critical for improving research methods and expanding the evidence base.

In addition, mixed and negative results should not be overlooked; rather, they should be viewed as opportunities for further exploration and refinement of research approaches. Investigating the reasons for such discoveries can lead to advancements in methodology, data collection, and analysis, ultimately strengthening the field of study.

- Triangulation: Combining quantitative and qualitative methods can provide a more nuanced understanding and address the limitations of each approach (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).
- Methodological Awareness: Choosing the appropriate methodology based on the research question and context is crucial for reliable and interpretable results (Branney & Clark, 2020).

- Investigating Mixed/Negative Results: Exploring the reasons behind these outcomes can lead to methodological improvements, data collection refinement, and a stronger evidence base (Creswell & Miller, 2009).

The Findings of this study are as follows:

- A diverse range of methodologies is employed to investigate the research topic, indicating a multi-faceted approach to understanding the phenomenon.
- Quantitative methods dominate the research landscape, but qualitative approaches play a significant role in providing valuable insights and context.
- The distribution of results across methodologies reveals variations, highlighting the need for careful interpretation and consideration of methodological limitations.
- Mixed and negative results should not be overlooked, but rather investigated to refine research approaches and improve the overall quality of evidence.

6.0 Conclusion

This paper reviewed the impact of leadership on the performance of employees in Nigerian banks, out of the sixty-eight (68) articles that was reviewed, 40% showed that there is a positive relationship between style of leadership and the performance of employees Nigerian banks. This mean that choice of leadership is critical to the success and attainment of goal/ objectives of banks in Nigeria. It suggests that a wrong adoption of leadership style can threaten the success of these banks.

Furthermore, out of eight (8) methodologies adopted by researcher, based on the scope of this study, it is obvious that statistical regression analysis is the methodology of choice. This can be adduced to its simplicity and ease of interpretation. It is also more flexible and versatile than many other methodologies. This study is limited in terms of sample size and representativeness, as well as time constraint. Also, future studies could conduct similar qualitative research on unique categories of banks. Furthermore, investigating mixed and negative results can help to improve research practices, strengthen the evidence base, and ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Finally, the research landscape presented here is dynamic and ever-changing. Future research can continue to shed light on the complex and nuanced aspects of the chosen topic by acknowledging the strengths and limitations of different methodologies, embracing triangulation and methodological rigour, and actively investigating mixed and negative results.

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