



THE IMPACT OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM (PAS) ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN BANKS OPERATING IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA POST-COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the impact of the performance appraisal system (PAS) on employee performance in banks operating in South East Nigeria post the Covid-19 pandemic. The study's broad objective was to examine the impact of performance appraisal on employees' work performance in South East Nigeria. This research also looked into the important components of performance appraisal, such as setting performance criteria, communicating those goals, measuring actual performance against those standards, discussing the appraisal with employees, and providing feedback. The required data for this investigation was acquired using a closed-ended structured questionnaire. Many related studies were used to create the questionnaire, which was then modified. The following approaches were used to select the comprehensive sample from a total population of 1745 employees: The target demographic was first determined, and then the sample size was calculated using a formula. Basically, 325 questionnaires were distributed to the employees that were sampled, and 260 of them were returned, representing 80% response rate. The 260 completed surveys were then analysed with smart PLS, a programme designed specifically for Structural Equation Modeling, path analysis, and confirmatory component analysis. It is also known as causal modelling software or analysis of covariance software. Correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were used. The study's findings revealed that performance appraisal had a primarily favourable impact on employee performance in Nigeria's banking sector. There was some positive and a negative (very significant) relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance, according to the correlation study.*

KEYWORDS: Work performance, employee performance, Nigeria Banking Sector, Performance appraisal.



INTRODUCTION

Supervisors consider performance evaluation to be the most important human resource activity for assessing and developing the current performance of their staff (Gardas & Navimipour, 2021). During the Covid-19 pandemic that ravaged different parts of the world, including Nigeria, most bank employees were forced to work from home, which had an impact on their performance and appraisal. Tenbrink and Speer (2022) discussed the role of performance evaluation in the organisation by ensuring that employees perform their assigned work to the required standards. Employee pay and incentives are also linked to performance evaluation. One of the most common practices in most organisations is evaluating and assessing their staff performance (Bayo-Moriones, Galdon-Sanchez & Martinez-de-Morentin, 2020). This study was divided into five major sections: the first section was background research on the variables; the second section was the conceptual framework; the third section was the theoretical framework; the fourth section was the research methodology and data analysis; and the last section was the conclusion and recommendations.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The problem statement, the research contribution, the research objectives, the research question, the research hypotheses, and the conceptual model are the six sections of the conceptual framework.

Statement of the Problem

Because of the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, it tends to affect how people perform their jobs. Performance evaluation is critical in all organisations, but notably in the banking industry. Performance appraisal is critical in any business that evaluates employees based on the tasks they do in order to ensure that employees do their jobs correctly. The researcher looked into the relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance in this work. The goal of the study was to see if a well-conducted performance appraisal has a favourable impact on employee performance.

Objectives of Research

The major objective of the study is to see how performance appraisals affected employee work performance during the Covid-19 pandemic in the banking sector in Nigeria. The study's specific objective was the link between employee performance and performance appraisal. It also looked into several sub-objectives, such as:

1. To investigate the relationship and impact of performance appraisal on employee work performance.
2. To investigate the relationship and impact of performance standards on employee job performance.
3. To examine the relationship and impact of established communication standards on employee work performance.



4. To investigate the relationship and impact of comparing actual employee performance to standards.
5. To look into the relationship between corrective action on employee work performance.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions in light of the aforementioned objectives:

1. What effect does employees' work performance have on performance appraisal?
2. What effect does establishing performance standards have on employee work performance?
3. What effect do established communication standards have on employee job performance?
4. What is the impact of measuring actual employee performance and comparing it with standards?
5. What effect does corrective action have on employee work performance?

Hypotheses for Research

H01: Performance appraisal has a significant impact on employees' work performance.

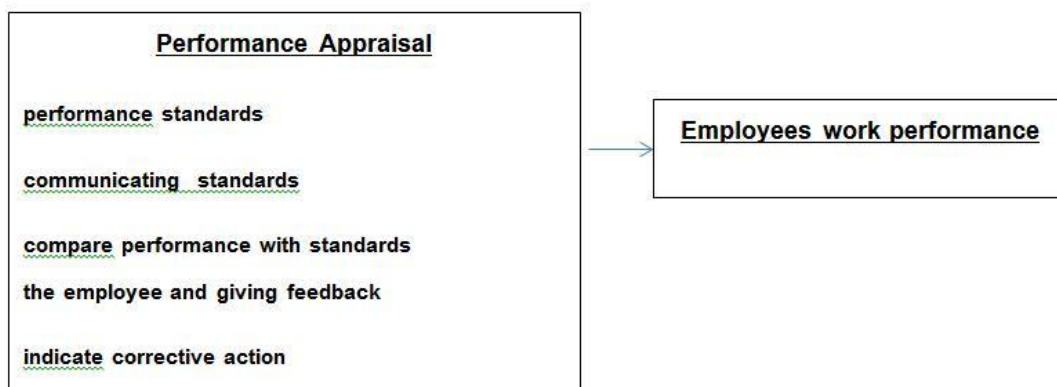
H02: Establishing performance standards has a significant impact on employee work performance.

H03: Established communication standards have a significant impact on employee work performance.

H04: Measuring actual employee performance and comparing it to standards has a significant impact.

H05: Corrective action has a significant impact on employee work performance.

The Conceptual Model





The Study's Scope

This study focuses on the effect of performance appraisal on employee performance in the banking sector in the Southeastern region of Nigeria, which includes Enugu, Umuahia, Owerri, Awka, and Abakaliki. The study population consists of 1745 employees working in the banking sector in the Southeastern region of Nigeria.

Study Limitation

The lack of literature on the subject in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as limited access to various databases, is a major limitation of this study.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This section is divided into three parts: performance appraisal, performance appraisal procedure, and importance of performance appraisal.

Appraisal of Performance

Although there are numerous definitions of performance appraisal, Armstrong (2006) describes it as the official rating and classification of employees by their supervisors, which is normally done once a year. In addition, performance evaluation is the activity of management in discovering and measuring employee performance in businesses (Setiawati & Ariani, 2020). Employees can also use performance appraisal to determine their goals, future orientation, and passion for completing their assigned responsibilities (Elangovan & Rajendran, 2021). Performance refers to what management expects employees to deliver in terms of outcomes, efforts, tasks, and quality within a given time frame and under specific conditions (Kumari & Malhotra, 2012). The process of evaluating employee performance is based on specific goals and expectations, according to the study (Mondy & Noe, 2005). According to Dangol (2021), performance appraisal is a process in which an organisation categorises and evaluates the behaviour or qualities of its personnel.

Elangovan and Rajendran (2021) define performance as a method of evaluating an employee's current or previous performance in respect to their performance criteria. Evaluations include assessing the employee's real performance in relation to the standards in question, creating work standards, and delivering feedback to the employee in order to motivate them to improve their performance. Performance evaluation is a method of assessing employee behaviour in an organisation that includes an organization's assessment of an individual's level of performance as well as a review of the employee's quality of performance in relation to organisational objectives.

Process of Performance Appraisal

To best achieve organisational goals, managers use performance appraisal systems to give employees an opportunity to reach their potential while also facilitating their efficiency and effectiveness. Staff performance can be effectively monitored by using performance assessment as the main tool. According to Gingrico et al. (2012), this study finds a correlation between employee wages and compensation, performance appraisal, and employee commitment. The foot and hook theory (Foot & Hook, 2011) holds that employees must be



engaged in assessments, agree with the organization's goals, be clear on the goals of the organisation and the personal goals of the individual. As the researcher sees it, performance management processes are a long-term project and negotiation that depends on a successful dialogue or communication between management and employees (Prah, 2019).

The Importance of Performance Evaluation

Evaluating employee performance is essential, as it aids management in understanding employees within the highly complex business structure. When a non-practical assessment framework is in place, individuals can become frustrated, uncomfortable, and less likely to use the tools that are being tested. Also, resources and time have been wasted because non-employee-specific systems are in place. It is worth noting that while most effective evaluation mechanisms are designed to identify and examine only the behaviours that are important in order to have a successful job, this does not apply to all positions (Houldsworth et al., 2021). It is imperative to conduct performance evaluations because they empower the company to set strategic employee performance objectives that motivate employees to strive to reach their full potential in accordance with those objectives (Swanepoel, Erasmus & Schenk, 1998).

This five-prong approach (aimed at key organisational outcomes such as financial performance, productivity, product and service quality, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction) has an effect on organisational outcomes such as financial performance, productivity, product and service quality, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. More so, effective performance management is defined as the growth of employee capabilities, excellent customer service, and improved overall quality (Selvarajan, Singh & Solansky, 2018). Sutcliffe (2006) posits that performance appraisals, bonuses, motivators, and training may work against staff if they are not administered fairly.

Empirical Studies

According to Sajuyigbe and Ademola (2017)'s research, many organisations have low productivity because PAS (performance appraisal system) is not well managed. Only the results of performance evaluations can be used to determine training needs. PAS is a high-productivity and high-performance model. As a result, the study looked into the impact of PAS on employee performance in the telecommunications industry. In MTN, Nigeria, a simple random sampling method was used to select 65 people from a total population of 1,300. The survey results served as the foundation for personal interviews. The mean, standard deviation, and linear regression were used to analyse the data. According to the study's findings, employees are well aware of the importance of performance evaluation. The findings also demonstrated that PAS has a significant impact on staff performance. Furthermore, the findings revealed that a lack of timely feedback hampered MTN's performance appraisal system in Nigeria. The author advocated for objective and transparent employee evaluations by management in the workplace. Feedback and career development should also be provided in order for the organisation to gain a competitive advantage in this area.

According to Khan, Saha, and Pal (2018), the purpose of the study was to identify the relationship between performance evaluation and employee performance in higher education institutions in Pakistan and to obtain empirical results on this type of relationship. A survey-based questionnaire was used by the researcher. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 150 respondents at public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Three



hundred (300) questionnaires were distributed to faculty members at public universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, with 150 returned, a response rate of 50%. According to the findings of this study, there is a positive relationship between performance evaluation and employee performance in public sector universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The universities' performance was fairly evaluated, which will encourage employees to improve their skills and improve their individual and organisational performance in general. The significance of this study is that researchers can learn from higher education policymakers.

The goal of the study by Gebre, Girma, and Solomon (2016) was to investigate the impact of the performance evaluation process on the performance of Hawass University faculty members. Structured questionnaires were distributed to 320 tenured administrative staff to collect data. According to the findings of this study, there is a positive relationship between the independent and consequential variables. As a result, performance standards were established, and employees were made aware of them. These performance standards were then developed, and employees' actual performance was measured against these new standards. Employee performance met these standards, and management then discussed employee evaluations in relation to these standards. Employees were free to express their views on these standards, and corrective action was taken in response. As a result of the evaluation system, the university's administration should make some changes.

Sarkar (2016) in the study on performance evaluation is a critical component in motivating employees to achieve organisational goals. The study was carried out by the researcher to demonstrate the effects of performance evaluation on job satisfaction and employee commitment. The study employed descriptive research, with 200 samples drawn at random from a microfinance institution in Ghana. As a data collection tool, a questionnaire was used. According to the findings of the study, fair employee evaluations by management have a positive effect on employee satisfaction. The researcher associates positive ratings with promotions and clarifies the role of the staff as well as the comments made about their performance. The study also found that linking salary and compensation assessments, identifying training needs, increasing employee knowledge of evaluation skills, and involving employees in the development of assessment tools all have a positive impact on job commitment. The researcher recommended that organisations increase staff salaries in accordance with their levels of performance, as well as conduct training programmes for employees who require it in order to understand the importance of performance evaluation and motivate employees to achieve organisational goals, as well as increase communication between management and employees so that employees are aware of their performance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a quantitative approach to investigate the impact of performance appraisal on employee performance in the banking sector in South East Nigeria. This research paper describes the methods used to determine the effectiveness of Performance Appraisal on employee performance. The research design and approach, which was a descriptive research design, was among these methods. The goal of the researchers was to identify the aspects of the problem that are critical for analysis. The effect of performance appraisal on employee performance in the banking sector in South Eastern Nigeria was investigated using a quantitative research approach.



Sample Size

The research population consisted of all staff (1745) working in 20 banks in the capitals of Nigeria's five Southeastern states. The Taro Yamane formula was used to calculate the sample size, which resulted in a total of 325 employees working in banks in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. To achieve the study's objectives, both primary and secondary data sources were used. The primary source of data was an online questionnaire distributed to bank employees in Nigeria's South East via the Google Survey method and 260 targeted participants responded. Due to the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, this method of questionnaire distribution was used, and it is also a cheaper and faster way to collect data from a large number of respondents. The link to the questionnaire was sent to the operation manager of each of the bank branches and was subsequently forwarded to their various bank group chats. The primary data was gathered using a questionnaire comprising closed-ended questions based on the problem statement. This section contains information on data collection procedures, ethical considerations, and data analysis.

Results of Demographic Data

The study population was 61.5 percent males and 38.5 percent females. 49.2 percent had less than five years of work experience while 3.1 percent had more than fifteen years. 52.3 percent of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25. Over 36-year-olds made up the smallest group at 4.6 percent. Additionally, 90.8 percent of the samples possessed a bachelor's degree, while 1.5 percent possessed only a secondary school education. The largest group of employees (47.7 percent) worked in customer service while the smallest group (6.2 percent) worked as branch managers. The employees' social status was as follows: 64.6 percent were unmarried while 35.4 percent were married. Table 1 provides an overview of the study sample's characteristics:

Table 4.2: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

S/N	Description	Items	Frequency	Percentages	Cumulative
1	Gender	Male	160	61.5	61.5
		Female	100	38.5	100
		Total	260	100	
2	Age	18-25	136	52	52
		26-30	84	32	84
		31-35	28	11	95
		35 and Above	12	5	100
		Total	260	100	
3	Marital Status	Single	168	65	65
		Married	92	35	100
		Total	260	100	
4	Education Qualification	SSCE/GCE	4	2	2
		OND/ND	8	3	4
		B.SC	236	91	96
		M.SC/MB	12	5	100
		A	260	100	



		Total			
5	Work Experience	Less than 5			
		years	128	49	49
		5-10 years	112	43	92
		11-15 years	12	5	97
		16 and above	8	3	100
	Total	260	100		
6	Title in Organization	Credit officer	72	28	28
		Customer Service	124	48	76
		Supervisor	24	9	85
		Branch Managers	16	6	91
		Others	24	9	100
		Total	260	100	

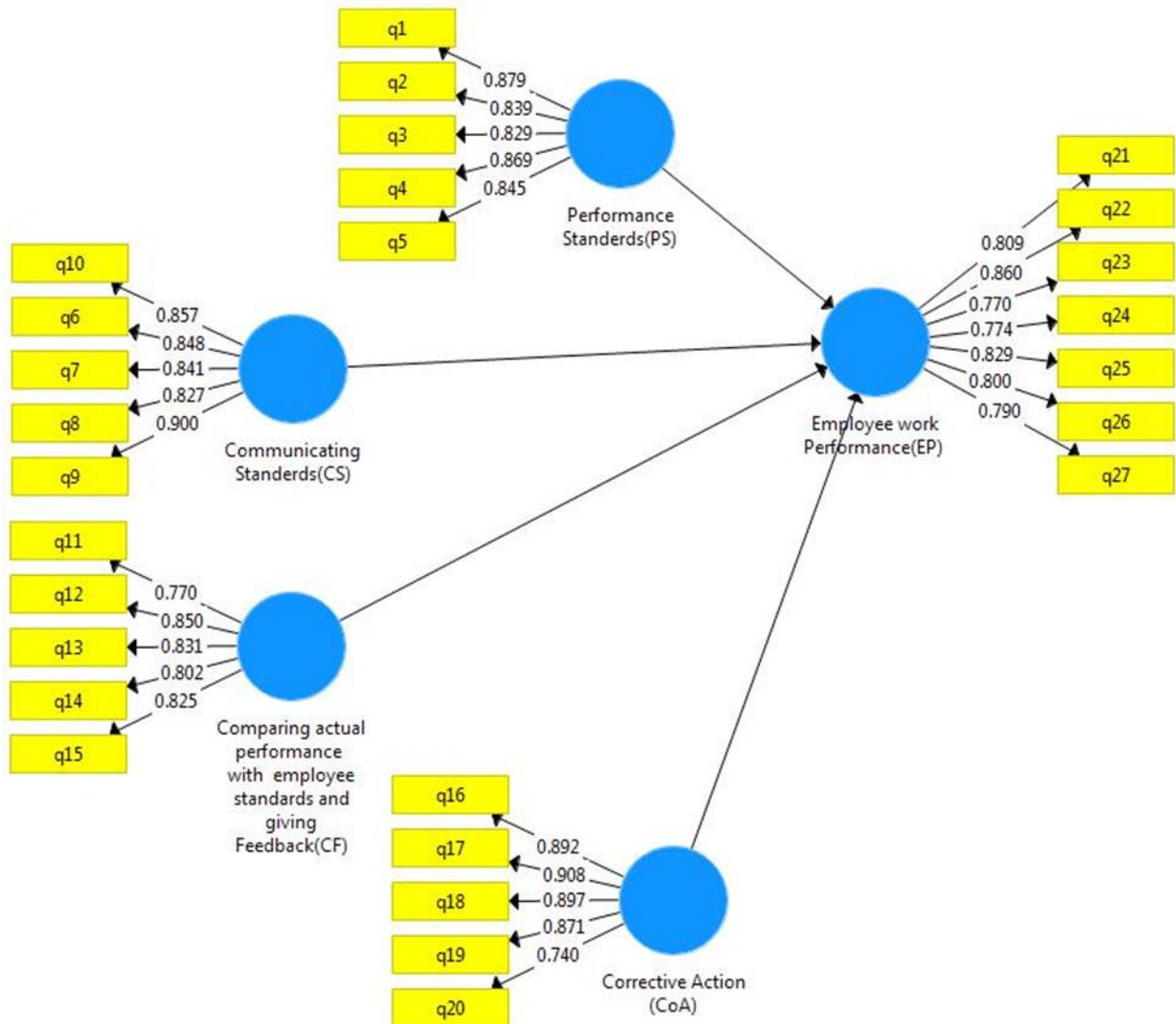
Source: *Field Survey, 2023*

Constructs Measurements Analysis

In order to inspect and analyse the data linked with the hypotheses, the Smart Partial Least Square-Structure Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) tool was chosen and used in this research. Shmueli and Koppius (2010) completed two phases that investigated the content, convergent, and discriminant validity of dimensions. In accordance with the study model, extra data testing was conducted in regard to hypotheses.

Path Loadings for the Proposed Model

All factors were approved for analysis since the path loading for all factors exceeded the value of (0.55) (Falk & Miller, 1992). Performance standards (PS), communication standards (CS), comparing actual performance to employee standards and providing feedback (CF), corrective action (CoA), and employee performance (EP) are all detailed in Figure 1. (EP). The researcher also gives a summary of the path loading results for all of the items in this study that are linked to the recommended model.





Reliability and Validity Test

The degree to which the data collection process will produce consistent results is referred to as reliability. Validity, on the other hand, ensures that the findings measure what they are supposed to measure while examining the link between two variables (Roberts & Priest, 2006).

Table 2 provides an explanation for Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted results for the complete model variables in order to guarantee that the questions in the questionnaire are both valid and reliable.

Table of Contents (2): Validity and Dependability Findings

Constructs	Cronbach Alpha (CA)	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability
Performance standards (PS)	0.847	0.753	0.942
Communication standards (CS)	0.958	0.726	0.918
Comparing actual performance with employee standards and feedback (CF)	0.784	0.684	0.930
Corrective action (CoA)	0.846	0.785	0.915
Employee Performance (EP).	0.923	0.724	0.986

Discriminant Validity Test

The results of Latent Variable Correlation are used to establish discriminant validity, which means that a construct must share a higher fraction of variance with its measures than any other construct included in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The findings of the Latent Variable Correlations (Discriminant Validity) are shown in Table 3, which lists all variables and demonstrates that they have a substantial degree of variation when compared to other variables. Discriminant validity was statistically satisfactory, with no correlation coefficient over 1.0, indicating that multicollinearity between variables was not present. In other words, if a correlation coefficient is greater than 1.00, it indicates a problem with multicollinearity (Hair et al., 2006).

**Table 3: Discriminant Validity**

Constructs	Communicatin g standards	Comparing actual performanc e with employee standards and feedback (CF)	Correctiv e action (CoA)	Employee Performanc e (EP).	Performanc e standards (PS)
Performance standards (PS)	0.855				
Communicatio n standards (CS)	0.860	0.758			
Comparing actual performance with employee standards and feedback (CF)	0.887	0.884	0.835		
Corrective action (CoA)	0.876	0.788	0.814	0.888	
Employee Performance (EP).	0.823	0.764	0.886	0.867	0.854

R (Square) Test

The R (Square) test is widely accepted as a reasonable method for describing measurements and their interpretation. The R (Square) value is summarised in Table 4. As mentioned in the study of Gaur and Gaur (2006), the R (Square) value in current research reveals the extent of interpretation from performance appraisal aspects to employee work performance. The score is shown within an acceptable prediction level and equivalent to 0.796 when it exceeds 25%.

Table 4: Value of R (Square)

Employee work Performance(EP)	<i>R Square</i> 0.846
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With the use of bootstrapping analysis within smart PLS software, the researchers were able to complete a reasonable analysis in order to present a sound conclusion pertaining to the findings and relating to the hypotheses. Following the completion of the test, as can be seen in Figure 1, the p-value rate for all performance appraisal factors on employee work performance has been determined (2).

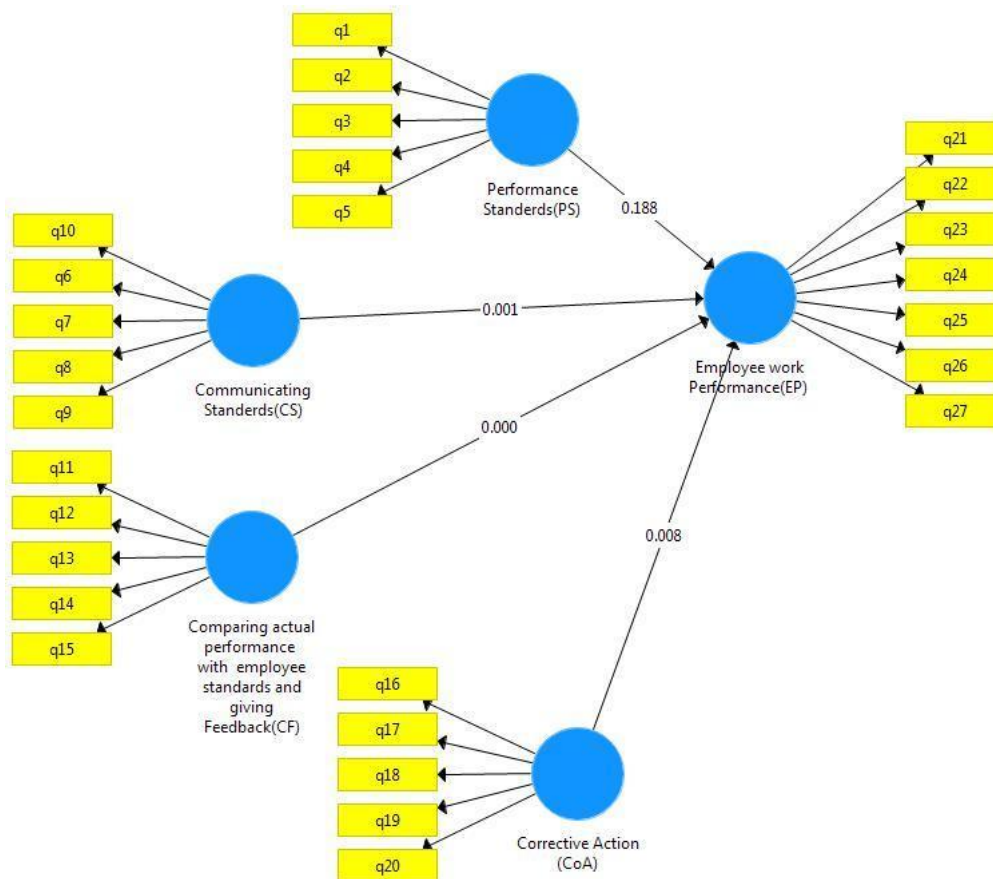


Figure 2: Bootstrapping (p-value) for all performance appraisal factors on employee work performance in the Nigerian banking sector

The p-value rate is depicted in Figure 2, with the figure emphasising the hypotheses testing in relation to the four performance appraisal variables: performance standards (PS), communication standards, and organisational standards (CS). Actual performance is compared to employee standards and feedback (CF), corrective action (CoA), and employee performance (EP). The results are summarised in Table 5.



Table 5: The effect of performance appraisal factors on employee work performance in the Nigerian banking sector was determined through a study.

Relation (Direct effects)	T Value	Beta Value	P Value
Performance standards (PS)	-1.345	0.082	0.176
Communication standards (CS)	3.427	0.382	0.001
Comparing actual performance with employee standards and feedback (CF)	3.784	0.385	0.000
Corrective action (CoA)	3.846	0.245	0.001

The **H₁** data, as shown in Table 5, shows that performance standards (PS) had a negative effect on employee performance (EP) in the Nigerian banking sector at (0.05). The statistics T value was found to be (-1.345) while the (Beta) Value ratio was found to be (0.082).

Furthermore, **H₂** findings suggest that communication standards (CS) influence employee performance (EP) in the Nigerian banking sector at (0.05), with a statistical T value of (3.427) and a (Beta) Value ratio of (0.382). This provides a clear picture of how a change in communication standards (CS) might result in a change in employee performance of 38.2 percent (EP). As a result, communication standards (CS), which might be communication through Skype, Zoom and other multi-communication apps, have been found to have a significant impact on Employee Performance (EP) in the Nigerian banking sector over the Covid-19 era.

Furthermore, **H₃** results show that comparing actual performance to employee standards and providing feedback (CF) influences Employee Performance (EP) in the Nigerian banking sector at (0.05), where the statistics T value was determined to be (3.784), whereas the (Beta) Value ratio was seen to be (0.385). This provides a clear outline as to the change of one amount of Comparing actual performance to employee standards, and giving feedback (CF) influences Employee Performance (EP) in the Nigerian banking sector at (0.05).

As a result, in the Nigerian banking sector, comparing actual performance to employee standards and providing feedback (CF), has a beneficial impact on Employee Performance (EP).

Finally, **H₄** results show that Corrective action (CoA) influences Employee Performance (EP) in the Nigerian banking sector at (0.05), where the statistics T value was determined to be (3.846) and the (Beta) Value ratio was determined to be (0.245). This provides a clear outline as to the change of one amount of Corrective action (CoA) as inducing a change equal to (24.5 percent) in Employee Performance (EP). As a result, in the Nigerian banking sector, Corrective Action (CoA) has a favourable impact on Employee Performance (EP).



CONCLUSION

The study concludes that employee work performance has a significant impact on performance appraisal. Also, from the study finding, the research shows that establishing performance criteria has a negative significant impact on employee work performance in the banking sector in Nigeria as most of them might just be willing to achieve the stated appraisal point and not motivated to do more. The study also showed that established communication norms have a significant impact on employee work performance and that monitoring actual performance and comparing it to standards has a significant impact on employee work performance. Finally, this research will make a significant contribution to existing knowledge in the field of performance appraisals during the Covid-19 pandemic. The study investigated the impact of Performance Appraisals on employee performance, with a focus on the finance industry (deposit money banks) in the Southeastern part of Nigeria. The study should help to enhance the banking and financial sectors, which are vital to the economy of the Southeastern part of Nigeria in particular and Nigeria in general. Despite the numerous obstacles the banking business encountered during the Covid-19 outbreak, the banking industry has emerged as a leader in employee performance evaluation strategies, both domestically and internationally. The banking industry is also one of the most important sectors since it strives to deliver high-quality service even when employees telecommute. In the future, this study will be used as a reference for other related research projects. The research-identified factors will be quite beneficial.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the foregoing findings, we suggest:

1. It is necessary to keep up with performance appraisal systems, such as cards, in order to assess the performance of staff in banks in Nigeria's Southeastern region.
2. In order to measure performance, other more sensitive variables, such as training and development, should be prioritised.
3. According to the findings, performance standards have a negative impact on employee work performance in the banking sector in Nigeria's Southeastern region; employees in this sector prefer to have more freedom in their work while adhering to specific standards that may increase their productivity.



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