PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED COMMERCIAL BANKS IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The seeming lack of support of employees by the organizations studied in form of low career development prospect, poor participatory avenue and low management care necessitated this study whose broad objective was to determine the type of relationship that exists between Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Performance in selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria. The study was anchored on Organizational Support Theory (OST) and Social Exchange Theory (SET). Correlation Research Design was employed for the study. The population of the study was 1552 and Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size formula was adopted to arrive at a sample size of 308. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used for the analysis. The findings indicated that Management Support significantly and positively related with Felt Obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria. (Cal. r .929 >Crit. r .138). The study concluded that Perceived Organizational Support had a significant positive relationship with employee performance in the selected commercial banks in South East Nigeria. It was recommended that Management of the focused firms should do well to show employees genuine love and support not only as it relates to their jobs but also in the private endeavours of the employees.*

KEYWORDS: employee performance, felt obligation, management support, perceived organizational support.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The survival of a firm is always on top of the management's priorities. To achieve this, building a competitive edge is important. Building a competitive edge most times depends on the line of business an organization finds itself. Organizations that engage in the production of goods tend to rely more heavily on how sophisticated, recent, effective and efficient of their productive equipment and machineries are. This is because their production capacity and quality of products to a large extent depends on these machineries. This is not however intended to play down the role of human capital in whatever kind of business establishment. For service providing firms like the organizations of study (Banks), they tend to rely more on the innovativeness, competency, commitment and engagement of their employees. Evans, Campbell and Stonehouse (2003) posit that employees are viewed as one of the most important assets for most organisations, in particular service-based organisations, because of the benefits of delivering successful performances. Moreover, achieving service quality and excellence (Saibang & Schwindt, 1998) and making satisfied and loyal customers depends on the attitudes, performance and behaviour of employees (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000). Singh and Singh (2010) posit that the importance of competent employees cannot be denied as they facilitate the organizations to achieve maximum performance

from their limited resources. Similarly, Beheshtifar, Nezhadand Moghadam (2012) opine that positive employees' behaviour and their work attitudes are vital for success of any organization. Employees lead to organisational success (Ghani, 2006).

Organizations appear to have recognized the role and importance of competent and motivated workforce and some organizations and research experts have devoted themselves in finding out what to do to boast the commitment of their workforce, to keep them in an organization and get them more involved and embedded in the firm. Today's knowledge based economyis dependent on their employees; employees are considered to be the most important assets organizations have. Therefore efforts from the Human Resource (HR) Department to understand and analyze the aspects which affect the performance of the employees is a basic necessity to ensure effectiveness and efficiency (Jayasree &Sheela, 2012).Hassan, Hassan and Shoaib (2014) opine that firms are looking for different factors that can generate positive work attitudes and behaviours of employees that ultimately boost their performance. In today's competitive business environment, motivating employees enables the organization to be successful (Colakoglu, Culha & Atay, 2010). Many HR concepts have been springing up from time to time in a bid to find lasting solution to employee performance issues in organizations. Some of such concepts that have looked to deal with this issue include job embeddedness, organizational trust, employee participation and involvement. Others are talent and knowledge management, employee and organizational development, employee empowerment, perceived organizational support (POS) and a host of others. The focus of this study however is on POS and how it relates with employees performance at work.

Employees appear to consciously look at how they are treated in an organization to discover whether their contributions to the firm are recognized and valued by the organizations leaders and managers. Through previous practices, employees subconsciously question to what extent the organization acts out of concern for them (Rhoades, Eisenberger & Armeli, 2001).This is what POS is all about. It is a concept which has been used to signify and assess an organization's handling of employees that show how much the organization value and support its employees to perform their work roles effectively. Organizational support theory states that high level of POS gives confidence to employees to improve their output (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). Eisenberger Huntington& Hutchison (1986) state that employees have a propensity to outline comprehensive beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization consider the worth of employees' contribution and think about their well-being.

POS is an important area that determines workers' motivation as well as commitment to an organization. It is employees' perception that evinces how much his organization supports him in various tasks, routine work, difficult situations in his office and personal life, and how much it cares about his wellbeing (Rhoades& Eisenberger, 2002). Erdogan and Enders (2007) posit that POS refers to the degree to which an individual believes that the organization cares about him/her, values his/her input and provides him/her with help and support. The amount of organizational support employees perceive has been proved to influence employees' job attitudes. It shows the extent to which employees feel that they are fairly rewarded by the organization and that firm will make adequate working conditions for them to excel (Aube, Rousseau & Morin, 2007). In addition, Wayne, Shore, Bommer & Tetrick (2002) indicate that POS reflects to a large extent the quality of the relationship between the organization and the employee (Konijnenburg, 2010). The

perception of care and support could come in different ways and employees view and analyse them differently. It could be support given to them by management to participate and lend their voice to important issues or the support given to them by the organization to progress and develop their career within the organization. It could also be management support in terms of being empathetic and emotionally aware and concerned about employees' plights and challenges; given them words of encouragement and empowering them to do their jobs in the best possible way.

POS as a term has gathered momentum over the years as a powerful determinant of employee performance in establishments. These support employees perceive to receive from the organization and its management could influence the level of commitment exhibited by employees in their duties; it could improve their sense of duty and obligation and could also make their jobs more satisfying. POS would ultimately shape employee attitude in organizations such as their commitment level to duties, the obligation the employees will feel to do a good job for the organization and will also influence the level of satisfaction they will have on the job (Ali, 2010).Organisational support is one of the most important organizational concepts that keep employees in the organisation, since organisational support is known as a key factor in increasing job satisfaction and the organisational commitment of employees (Colakoglu, Culha & Atay, 2010).Support employees perceive from their organization is positively related to a number of outcomes favourable to both the organization and the individual namely conscientiousness in carrying out conventional job responsibilities, employee commitment and job satisfaction(Krishhan & Mary, 2012).

In evaluating how the employer values the contributions of employees in an organization, employees have been known to look at various aspects of the organization's norms, cultures, policies and practices; these are the antecedents of POS that triggers the evaluative process and what determines whether it is going to be viewed favourably by the organization or not. While an employee evaluates his/her organisation, he/she often tends to compare recent organisations with the previous one and tends to compare the future of his/her job position in the organisation with similar positions of other organisations (Kanaga & Browning, 2007). This process employed by employees as a mental process affects perception of their organisational support. The study done on antecedents and consequences of POS by Kumar (2002) stipulates that the antecedents of POS fall into three broad categories: Fairness (e.g., procedural justice in performance appraisal, providing opportunity to voice concerns, etc.),supervisor support (e.g., work-family culture, perceived supervisor/leadership support, etc.) and rewards and job conditions (e.g., job stress, growth opportunities, career advancement and development etc.). In the same vein, the meta-analysis of research on POS, carried out by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) indicated that three general categories of favourable treatment received by employees are positively related to POS: fairness of treatment, supervisors support, rewards and job conditions.

The organizations of study which are Diamond Bank Plc, Eco Bank Plc, Fidelity Bank Plc, First Bank Plc and Guarantee Trust Bank Plc are in the service offering sector of the economy and were selected using table of random numbers which is a type of random sampling technique. They seem to depend heavily on the innovativeness, ingenuity, commitment and engagement of their employees for better performance. It was however observed that despite the fact that they need employees to perform well, they seem not to be supporting their employees to do so, most

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especially when it has to do with things that are not work related. Employees of the focused firms have been observed to complain of low career development and progression prospects. Employees who have the intention of furthering their studies and or have personal issues at home find it difficult to obtain permission to exempt them from work as management seem not to be generous in allowing such. Also, as a result of the structure of the firms studied, employees seem not to be given the avenue to express themselves in form of idea generation and suggestions (employee voice) as only the top level employees do so. These observed scenarios seem to be affecting the performance of employees, and it is against this backdrop that this study was necessitated.

Statement of the Problem

Employees most especially knowledgeable and educated ones like in the focused firms are rational beings who think through issues to know what situations and conditions of service are in their interest and those that are not. They evaluate how they are treated in the organization to determine the value the organization places on their services in the firm. The firms of study are in the service sector; they depend on customer patronage which influences their profitability and ultimately their survival. As a result of these, employees play sterling roles in this regard as they are the ones who provide these services to customers.

Employees of these firms from time to time evaluate how their services are viewed in the organization, whether it is valued by the employers or not. They look at how management and representatives of the firms treat them; they also look at the career development programs in the firm to know whether it favours them at the long run and the level of involvement and participation they are allowed to have in things concerning them and idea generation sessions which give them a sense of belonging.

It was observed in the firms of study that the leaders and management seem to be more concerned with things that favour the organization. They are bent on getting the best out of employees even when it seems to be at the detriment of the employee's wellbeing. Employees seem to find it difficult to obtain permission to go on personal assignment even when it is extremely important to the employees. For employees who would want to further their studies for better prospect of progression in the organization, management of the focused firms do not give such permission as is obtainable in some institution where they give study leave, tuition refund and other support. Sick employees most times get quarried for not coming to work, pregnant or nursing mothers seem not to be given the necessary support and encouragement and the employment processes even favour the single employees over the married ones probably for fear of given maternity leave when it is due. This appears to be having a negative effect on the employees felt obligation level; they appear not to have vested interest and loyalty to the firms. As a result of these scenarios in the focused firms, the study was deemed necessary to examine how perceived organizational support affects employees' performance.

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to determine the type of relationship that exists between Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Performance in selected Commercial Banks in South-East, Nigeria.

Specifically, the study seeks to ascertain the nature of relationship that exists between Management Support and Felt Obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria.

Research Question
What type of relationship exists between management support and felt obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria?

Hypothesis
H₀: There is no significant relationship existing between management support and felt obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria.

Scope of the Study
The study focused on the type of relationship that exists between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Employee Performance in selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria. The banks selected are Diamond Bank Plc, Eco Bank Plc, Fidelity Bank Plc, First Bank Plc and Guarantee Trust Bank Plc. Table of Random Numbers from a list of nineteen commercial banks as listed is attached in Appendix. The banks are located in the capital cities of Anambra State (Awka) and Enugu State (Enugu) using judgemental sampling to select the locations. The judgement is to study the bank branches in the state capitals. Anambra and Enugu State were selected using Systematic Random Sampling Technique. The period covered by the study was one (between January 2017 and January 2018).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter treats the concepts of both the major and minor variables of the study and how they relate with each other. The theories the study was anchored on were also treated in this chapter and how they link to the variables of the study. Extant literaturewas also reviewed to find out what other scholars have done in the field of Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Performance so as to know the procedures they adopted, areas covered and methodology employed so as to spot lacuna(s) in literature.

Conceptual Framework

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)
The concept POS has been around for quite a long time, albeit not recognized or formally recorded or studied not until the eighties. Zagenczyk (2001) opines that while the formal concept of POS was not introduced and quantified until the 1980s, the idea of organizational support has been present in the management literature for nearly seventy years. It connotes different things to different people and therefore has no universally accepted definition; it is given different words by different researchers and attempts have been made to simplify and explain the concept. Eisenberger (1986) posits that POSis the global belief concerning the extent to which organization values the contributions of employees and cares about their well-being. It is how much the organisation values employees' contributions and cares about them (Allen,Armstrong, Reid &Riemenschneider, 2008).Erdogan and Enders (2007) construe it "as the degree to which an individual believes that the organization cares about him/her, values his/her input and provides

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him/her with help and support. Ahmed, Ismail, Amin and Ramzan (2011) defined it as "an employee's perception that the organization values his or her contribution and cares about the employee's wellbeing". From the foregoing definitions, it is made evident that POS is abstract in nature; it is also subject to personal interpretation. It could also be seen differently by different employees given the situation or circumstances at hand.

POS as noted earlier has no single accepted definition that applies to every employee in all environment and situations. Some other researchers, experts both in the field of management and psychology view it differently as evinced by the definitions given earlier. Bedük (2014) defined it as acceptance of the contribution made as a result of the activities of employees by the organization where they work, and perception by employees of the tending by the organization. It points to organizational values for employees, their contributions, and connection on their well being (Loi, Ao, Olivia & Xu, 2014). To Jayasree & Sheela, (2012) POS is an employee belief that the organization cares for and values his or her contribution to the success of the organization.

POS from the definitions thus far presupposes an exchange relationship between the employer and the employee. The way employees view how their contributions are appreciated by the employer. POS develops through multiple interactions between employees and their employers (Stamper & Johlke, 2003). It is the extent to which employees perceive that their contributions are valued by their organization and that the firm cares about their well-being (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).Contributions here could be in the form of completing their task duties, innovations and ingenuity, putting in extra amount of time into the work and completing work on or ahead of schedule. To date, POS literature has been widely examined in relation to human resource (HR) policies with the aim of understanding employees' behaviour and attitudes. POS is directly linked with three categories of favourable treatment received by employees, such as, organizational rewards and favourable working conditions, fairness and supervisor support, participation and contributions of ideas (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS created by reason of job conditions and some human resource practices provide creation of positive employee attitude and behaviour. Fair treatment, supervisory support, and rewards and favourable job conditions showed a strong relationship with perceived organisational support (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

POS has been discovered over the years to be positively related to good organizational outcomes that will enhance performance in the organization. Perceptions of positive organizational support have been found to be positively associated with employee attendance (Eisenberger, Huntington, & Hutchison, 1986), organizational spontaneity and in-role performance, (Eisenberger, et al., 2001), affective organizational commitment (Eisenberger, et al., 2001; Farh, Hackett& Liang, 2007), extra-role behaviour (Chen, Eisenberger, Johnson, Sucharski, & Aselage, 2009), and safety at work (Eder & Eisenberger, 2008).

Management Support
Management as a term has various connotations. It could imply a course of study, set of people that help in actualizing organizational goals or an act of planning, organizing, directing and controlling. In this context however, management are the representatives of organizations that help in achieving the organization goals and objectives. The purpose for the existence of management in this respect is for the purpose of helping organizations achieve its purpose. Stakeholders of an

organization could interpret the intent and purposes of an organization from the way people that represent the organization act and behave. In the same way, employees could also interpret how they are valued by the way and manner the management, supervisors and leaders of the organization value them. Levinson (1965) notes that employees tend to view actions by agents of the organization as actions of the organization itself. Because managements are mainly involved in performance evaluations, feedback, and career development programs, their favourable or unfavourable treatment reflect an organization's view and decisions on employees. On the other hand, employees today are dealing with more complicated work tasks, often work long hours, and work in teams (Lee, 2004). They might require higher socio-emotional and growth needs that motivate them to work and perform better in their work tasks. As management play an important role in managing employees and projects, their relations are much closer. Hence, beneficial treatment from a manager could increase POS to the extent that such treatment is discretionary, fair, and attributed to the organization's policies and procedures (Rhoades et al., 2001; Eisenberger et al., 2002).

Various aspects of the organizations strategies and policies are made and executed by managers and supervisors. They administer employees' work, providing direct and indirect feedback of their work, and serve as the pivotal person in influencing rewards, appraisal, and career development in an organization. They provide useful performance feedback and empowerment, and set career goals and plans with subordinates that boost motivation. Today's employees who are equipped with specialized knowledge might welcome the autonomy to do their work, as well as being treated with trust and confidence. While London (1993) distinguished the vital link of management support with individual and organizational career development, Maertz and Griffeth (2004) theorized that attachments to management could have influential effects on employees' performance. A recent study reported the direct and indirect influence of supervisory support on turnover cognition (Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell & Allen, 2007), demonstrating inconsistencies of the effect of management on turnover intention.

The level of support given to employees by management goes a long way to determine how the employee will behave and act in the organization. It appears likely that the extent to which the employee perceives that it is supported will be positively associated with the display of work behaviours directed toward the organization (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002).Several studies showed that satisfaction with management support reduces turnover intention (Lee, 2004). Maertz et al. (2007) called for further research on the personal and situational characteristics for management to extend employees' positive attitudes and attachment to an organization, indicating the necessity for in examining the effect of managementsupport in providing performance feedback, trust and confidence, empowerment, and career development plans that could influence employee performance. Moreover, most studies in the Western context reported a positive relationship of managementsupport with POS (Rhoades et al, 2001; Eisenberger et al., 2002; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006).

Employee Performance
Employee performance is one of the most important determinants of organizational performance as the human resources of an organization are regarded as the most important resources in an

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organization. Human resource is one of those capital resources of an organization which not only increases the efficiency and the effectiveness of the organization but it acts as a sheer source of competitive advantage which is inimitable. The performance of employees could be influenced and shaped by many factors in an organization; one of such factors is their perception of the support given to them by the organization and its leaders, representative or management. Brown and Leigh(1996) state that how employees interpret the organizational environment and support has an effect on their attitude, motivation, performance, and well-being. Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro (1990) suggest that a worker's perception of how an organization values him/her may be vital for determining his/her attitudes benefiting the organization. Perceived organisational support strengthens employees' effort in the organisation, resulting in greater efforts to fulfil the organisation's goals (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Organisational support theory points out that in return for a high level of support, employees work harder to help their organisation reach its goals (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003) because organisational support has a significant effect on job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002).

POS does not only influence employee's performance in the organization but could also determine employees' intention to remain or quit membership of an establishment. Tourangeau and Cranley (2006) posit that POS is an important factor that indirectly affects the intention to remain employed. Furthermore, Tumwesigye (2010) highlight significant relationships between a host of employee performance determinants such as organizational commitment, turnover intentions, trust, satisfaction and the likes.

Employees are engaged in thoughtful activities questioning organizations act that favours and those that do not favour them, and this influences their behaviour and performance. Through previous practices, employees subconsciously question to what extent the organization acts out of concern for them (Rhoades et al., 2001). If the mutual relationship indicates a change that has certain rules and benefits both parties; the relationship of the employees with their organizations base on the ground of mutual trust, loyalty and mutual commitment in time (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Existence of such a relationship indicates that employees have positive thoughts about the organization and their outputs will be for the benefit of the organization (Saks, 2006).

Felt Obligation
Eisenberger et al. (2001) describe felt obligation‟ as the concern about an organization's well-being and an individual's contribution to achieving organizational objectives. Citing previous research, Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) opine that extra effort in performing duties is one way employees can fulfil obligations to employers. Eisenberger et al. (2001) augment that POS generates a feeling of obligation that stimulates positive attitudes and behaviours indicates that a feeling of obligation is the means through which support is translated into favourable behaviours, such as self-initiated and goal-directed action.

When employees see that management genuinely care about their wellbeing and welfare in the organization, the employees would want to reciprocate the gesture. Beheshtifarl, Ali-Nezhad and Nekoie-Moghadam (2012) state that on the basis of the reciprocity norm, management support of employees wellbeing should produce a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare and make employees work harder to help their organization reach its goals.

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Previous researchers have found out that POS positively influences and elicits positive performance from employees. It has been widely hypothesized that POS influence general reactions of employees towards their jobs like job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational commitment and felt obligation (Cakar& Yildiz, 2009). Individuals who perceive higher levels of support from the organization feel indebt to respond positively in the form of desirable job attitudes and behaviours (Loi, Hang – Yue & Foley, 2006).

Empirical Review

Arogundade, Arogundade and Adebajo (2015) explored the influence of perceived organizational support on job stress among selected public and private sector employees in Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select three hundred and fifty four (354) participants from both public and private organizations. Two psychological Tests, namely, Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS) and the Job Stress Scale (JSS) were completed by the participants and the data collected were analyzed using Pearson's product moment correlation, independent sample t-tests and simple linear regression at 0.05 level of significance for the purpose of testing the three hypotheses proposed. The results revealed a significant inverse relationship between perceived organizational support and job stress.

Bravo-Yáñez and Jiménez-Figueroa (2011) identified the relationship between Job Satisfaction, Psychological Well-being and Perceived Organizational Support amongst prison officials in Chile. 190 employees working in state facilities and privately-run prisons were evaluated using theS10/12 Job Satisfaction Form 1, the Psychological Well-being Scale 2 and the Scale of Perceived Organizational Support 3. Data drawn from each form were transferred and analysed through SPSS 15.0 Statistic Software, which made it possible to carry out descriptive, correlation and comparison data analysis. Main results depicted a positive and significant connection between job satisfaction, psychological well-being and perceived organizational support, in such a way that those employees satisfied with their jobs tend to feel better psychologically and perceive support from their organizations. Furthermore, there were no significant differences found between officials in different facilities, concerning the study variables. Regarding socio-demographic figures, the study showed certain differences between genders as far as job satisfaction and psychological well-being are concerned, whereas there were no differences found between employees in different units.

Hassan, Hassan and Shoaib (2014) investigated the effect of perceived organization support psychological empowerment (PE) and rewards on employee satisfaction through the mediation of employee engagement in five big banks of Pakistan. Data were collected from the 200 employees of five big banks of Pakistan (HBL, UBL, ABL, MCB and NBP). SPSS 17 was used for factor analysis, reliability, correlation and regression analysis. The results showed that employee engagement partially mediated the relationship between POS, PE and employee satisfaction and fully mediated the association between the rewards and satisfaction.

Ahmad and Yekta (2010) determined the impact of leadership behaviour and perceived organisational support on the job satisfaction of Iranian employees. Data were collected through questionnaire from 136 employees working in Tehran Cement Company. Data analysis was conducted using regression analysis. Consideration leadership behaviour was found to have significant impact on both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction whereas perceived organisational

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support was significantly related to extrinsic job satisfaction. Interestingly, the interaction of leadership behaviour and perceived organisational support were not significantly related to job satisfaction.

Beheshtifar, Ali-Nezhad and Nekoie-Moghadam (2012) surveyed the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work positive attitudes in Islamic Azad University of Kerman. The statistical population in the research contained all employees in Islamic Azad University of Kerman who were 364, and the sample population was determined equal to 188. The tools which were used to collect data were two questionnaires: perceived organizational support and employees' work positive attitudes, which their validity obtained 0.85 and 0.98, and their reliability obtained 0.95 and 0.82, respectively. For analyzing the data, different statistical methods were used by SPSS software. The result showed that there is a meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support (and all its dimensions: supervisor support, justice, organizational rewards, and working conditions) with employees' work positive attitudes.

Pradesa, Setiawan, Djumahir and Rahayu (2013) examined the mediating effect of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and felt obligation in relationship of perceived organizational support toward work positive behaviour among postal employees in Indonesia. There were 128 from 163 postal employees surveyed, and the response rate was about 78.52%. Data were analyzed by using Partial Least Square. The main findings are that there were mediating role of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and felt obligation between POS and work positive behaviour. Result showed that affective commitment was not found to be the most important among the mediating variables. Job satisfaction was found as strongest impact on the mediating relationship among them.

Theoretical Framework
This work was anchored on Organizational Support Theory (OST). OST was propounded by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson and Sowa (1986) and Social Exchange Theory (SET) credited to George Homans in (1958).OST holds that in order to meet socio-emotional needs and to assess the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Krishhan & Mary, 2012). Such perceived organizational support (POS) would increase employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, and their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Behavioural outcomes of POS would include increases in in-role and extra-role performance and decreases in stress and withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism and turnover.

The OST stipulates that employees tend to assign human-like characteristics to organization and thus encourage the development of POS (Eisenberger et al., 1986). People acting on behalf of the organizations management team, supervisors and organizational leaders are often perceived as acting on organization's intentions rather than their personal motives (Levinson, 1965). This personification of the organization is enhanced by the organization's legal, moral, and financial responsibility for the actions of its agents; by organizational policies, norms, and culture that provide continuity and prescribe role behaviours; and by the power the organization's agents exert over individual employees. On the basis of this belief that these individuals are acting out the

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organizations wishes, employees make their judgement on how they are valued by the organization on the way these leaders treat and value them.

This theory links with the work in that it talks about the values placed on employees by an organization or her agents be it the management team, supervisors, heads of several departments and other leaders. The more employees perceive they are valued, the more they would feel obligated to help the organization in various ways to achieve their goals.

SET is a used to examine the various levels and aspects of employee reciprocity in organizations (Hopkins, 2002). This theory suggests that "gestures of goodwill" are exchanged between employees and the organisation as well as between subordinates and their supervisors when particular action warrants reciprocity (Hopkins, 2002). It posits that people strive to balance what they give and receive from social exchanges (Adams, 1965).Organizational researchers and management experts have been using social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) to describe motivations behind employee behaviours and attitudes (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996). SET involves a series of interactions that are interdependent, contingent on the actions of the other partner in the social relationship, and generate obligations (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Blau (1964: 93) define a social exchange relationship as involving unspecified obligations in which there are "favours that create diffuse future obligations, not precisely defined ones, and the nature of the return cannot be bargained about but must be left to the discretion of the one who makes it". What the parties exchange is, thus, ambiguous. The exchanged resources can be impersonal (such as financial) or socio-emotional such as care, respect, and loyalty (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). It is only the latter resources, however, that tend "to engender feelings of personal obligations, gratitude, and trust" (Blau, 1964:94).

What this theory preaches is returning of favours or unfavourable situations to an interested party, in this context, an organization. Gouldner (1960) opines that a social exchange relationship rests on the norm of reciprocity. An exchange starts with one party giving a benefit to another. If the recipient reciprocates, and consequently a series of beneficial exchanges occurs, feelings of mutual obligation between the parties are created (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). A broad notion of reciprocity encompasses a feeling of an obligation to repay favourable treatment.

Aselage and Eisenberger (2003) aver that the exchange, or reciprocation, in social relationships becomes stronger when both partners are willing to provide resources valuable to the other. Whereas employees value beneficial treatment, employers seek loyalty and dedication (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Eisenberger, et al., 2001). The question is now who initiate the favourable situation to be followed up by the other party. Research has shown that organizations and its representatives make the move. Positive actions directed at employees by the organization are argued to contribute to the establishment of high-quality exchange relationships (Eisenberger, et al., 2001; 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Empirical evidence supports this sequential order of reciprocation. Most notably, these exchanges have been used to explain the positive consequences that ensue when employees respond to perceived organizational support (for a review, see Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

This theory suits this work because it talks about reciprocity. When employees perceive that they are supported by management, such employees would want to return the favour by being committed, satisfied and would want to contribute their quota in idea generation. SET argues that if one party treats the other party well, a reciprocal relationship is formed among them and the other party in return obliges with favourable treatment (Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1964). Moreover, Blau (1964) state that SET is applied in the firms to understand the role of managers in making the feeling of workers' obligation and motivating those behaviours which increase the performance and citizenship.

Summary of Reviewed Literature
POS has become a hot topic of discussion within academic and organizational realm owing to the fact that it has been observed to have a huge influence on the performance of employees in organizations. POS is seen as the way employees feel about how they are treated in the organization by the organization itself or by the agent that represents it. Employees engage in evaluation of the kind of support they obtain from the organization, the degree of opportunities given to them to express themselves in words through participation in decision making and brainstorming session and the prospect of progressing in their chosen career. POS have been observed to determine employees felt obligation, commitment and satisfaction in previous studies. The concept of POS and its influence on performance appears to be new as there seem not to be previous work carried out on it in the South Eastern part of Nigeria and the variables that were paired appear not to have been previously paired before in a study on the firms selected judging from the literature empirically reviewed and those with internet presence. As a result of the dearth of empirical literature on the topic and the remarkable influence POS has been observed to exert on employees performance, this study was deemed necessary to bridge this lacuna. This is the main justification the authors embarked on this research.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design
The study adopted a Correlational Research Design. This was used because of the approach adopted by this work is such that data collection will be by sampling the opinions of respondents through the use of questionnaire; and the data collected will be empirically analyzed to examine the nature of relationship (correlation) that exists between them; this makes correlational survey design more appropriate for the study.

Area of Study
This study was carried out in the South Eastern part of Nigeria. This part of the country is one of the six geopolitical zones consisting of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo State.

Population of the Study
The study population consisted of the employees of the selected banks which was one thousand five hundred and fifty two (1,552). The distribution of the population is given in the table below:

Table 3.1: Population Distribution

S/N	BANKS	POPULATION
1	Diamond Bank Plc	298
2	Eco Bank Plc	330
3	Fidelity Bank Plc	311
4	First Bank Plc	457
5	Guarantee Trust Bank Plc	156
	Total	1552

Source: Field Survey, 2018 and Human Resource Estimation of the studied firms.

Table 3.1 above shows the list of the firms studied and the size of their employees which constitutes the population of the study. Diamond Bank branches studied had a total employee strength of two hundred and ninety eight (298), Eco bank has three hundred and thirty (330), Fidelity has three hundred and eleven (311), First Bank had four hundred and fifty seven (457) while GTB has one hundred and fifty six (156); making up the total of one thousand five hundred and fifty two (1,552) employees.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size of the study was 308 determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. The formula is given thus:

$$s = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + x^2 P(1-P)}$$

Where

s = Sample size

x^2 = Table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at 0.05% confidence level (3.84)

N = population size (1552)

P = population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 since this would provide the maximum sample size)

d = Degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05)

$$s = \frac{3.84\ (1552)(0.5)(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2(1552-1) + (3.84)\ (0.5)(1-0.5)}$$

$$s = \frac{1489.92}{3.8775 + 0.96}$$

$$s = \frac{1489.92}{4.8375}$$

$$s \cong 308$$

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique employed in the study was a simple random sampling technique. To get the appropriate sample of the study (308), the researcher had to write the names of the employees of the selected banks in a piece of paper and folding them into balls. The names were then transferred into a bag and mixed properly. After which the names were handpicked with replacement. Anybody chosen was added as part of the sample. This technique was adopted because it affords all members of the population equal opportunity of being selected and it is therefore unbiased.

Bowley's proportional allocation formula was used for questionnaire allocation. The formula is given below as:

$nh = \frac{nNh}{N}$

Where n = total sample size.

Nh = No. of items in each stratum in the population.

N = population size.

Table 3.2: Questionnaire Distribution

S/N	BANKS	Calculations Applying the Formula	No. to be Distributed
1	Diamond Bank Plc	298 X 308 /1552	59
2	Eco Bank Plc	330 X 308 /1552	65
3	Fidelity Bank Plc	311 X 308 /1552	62
4	First Bank Plc	457 X 308 /1552	91
5	Guarantee Trust Bank Plc	156 X 308 /1552	31
	Total		308

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Sources of Data

Data were sourced through primary and secondary source: structured questionnaire was the primary source while internet materials, company profiles, journals and text books formed part of the secondary source.

Description of Data Collection Instrument

The questionnaire used was structured in a 5-point Likert scale format. The scales are as follows: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1).

Procedure for Data Collection

The data for the study was personally collected from the respondents by the researcher. Research assistants were not used because the researcher felt the number of organizations studied can be covered comfortably by the researcher and it also afforded the researcher the opportunity of explaining confusing areas to the respondents and the copies of questionnaire were also tracked effectively using this method.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated using face and content validity. Validity was deemed necessary for the study to ensure that the instrument measures what it supposes to measure. To achieve this, copies of the draft questionnaire was given to management experts who were conversant with the principles of POS to ensure that the questionnaires asked in the questionnaire was enough to cover the variables. The structure of the questionnaire was determined by experts in evaluation and measurement in Educational Foundation Department in Nnamdi Azikiwe University. At the end, after making the corrections, the instrument was deemed valid for the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

Cronbach Alpha reliability technique was employed to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument. The result obtained was .836and therefore regarded as being capable of eliciting consistent response because any reliability statistic that is higher than 0.7 is regarded as reliable.

Table 3.3 Reliability Statistics
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.836	30

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using range of scores, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with a significant level of 5 percent (5%).

Decision Rules:

The correlation coefficient (r) shows the direction of the relationship; it could be negative or positive depending on the sign obtained from the correlation coefficient. Probability Value (P-Value) shows whether the relationship is significant or not. A p-value that is less than 0.05 (P-value < 0.05) shows that the relationship is significant in which case the research hypothesis will be accepted. When the p-value is more than 0.05 (p-value > 0.01), it shows that the variable is not significant in which case, the research hypothesis will be rejected in favour of the null hypothesis.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Data Analysis
Table 4.1 Questionnaire Distribution Schedule

S/N	BANKS	No Distributed	No. Returned	No. Analyzed
1	Diamond Bank Plc	59	50	47
2	Eco Bank Plc	65	54	54
3	Fidelity Bank Plc	62	49	49
4	First Bank Plc	91	87	85
5	Guarantee Trust Bank Plc	31	27	25
	Total (Percentage)	308(100%)	267(87%)	260(84%)

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From table 4.1 above, it shows that a total of 308 copies of questionnaire were distributed based on the appropriate allocation formula, 267 copies were retrieved meaning that 41 copies were lost. Out of the copies returned, 7 copies were unusable as they were either wrongly filled or incomplete. This indicates that 260 copies were finally analyzed which represent 84% of the total copies of questionnaire distributed.

Analysis of Research Question

Research Question:

What is the nature of relationship that exists between Management Support and Felt Obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria?

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for Management Support (MNGTSUP) and Felt Obligation (FELTOBL):

Table 4.2: Correlation Analysis for Hypothesis

Correlations

		MNGTSUP	FELTOBL
MNGTSUP	Pearson Correlation	1	.929**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	260	260
FELTOBL	Pearson Correlation	.929**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	260	260

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.2 shows the correlation result for hypothesis which states that Management Support significantly and positively relate with felt obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria. From the result obtained, it shows that the relationship existing between management support and felt obligation is positive with a correlation coefficient of .929.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀: Management Support does not significantly and positively relate with Felt Obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria.

Table 4.3: Significance Test for Hypothesis

N	Cal. r	DF	Crit. r.	Remark
260	0.929	258	.138	Significant

Source: Field Survey (2018).

Table 4.3 shows the test of significance for hypothesis which states that management support significantly and positively relate with felt obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria. From the table, it showed that at .05 level of significance and at 258 degrees of freedom, that the critical r is 0.138 and the calculated r is .929. From the result, the calculated r .929 is greater that the critical r 0.138 (cal. r .929> crit. r .138). Therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The hypothesis formulated was tested statistically using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation to establish the strength and direction of relationship existing between the dependent and independent variables of the study. From hypothesis which states that Management Support significantly and positively relate with Felt Obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria that indeed there was a strong positive and significant relationship between the variables. This was

made known from the correlation coefficient obtained which was .929 and p-value of .000. This implies that there is a direct link between management support and felt obligation. That is, as management support increases in the studied firms, the felt obligation employees will have for their organization will also increase. When employees perceives that their management genuinely care and look out for them, that they will not want any harm to come to them, that management will be emotionally involved when they are ill or when they lose loved ones, that such an employees will be more attached to the firm and will feel obligated to put the organizations first in their dealings. This finding relates with the findings of Bravo-Yáñez and Jiménez-Figueroa (2011) who examined the relationship between Job Satisfaction, Psychological Well-being and Perceived Organizational Support amongst prison officials in Chile. Main results depicted a positive and significant connection between job satisfaction, psychological well-being and perceived organizational support, in such a way that those employees satisfied with their jobs tend to feel better psychologically and perceive support from their organizations. Here, the support may be from the organization as a whole or from the management of the organization which makes them to feel strongly connected with the organization. Also, the finding aligns with that of Ahmad and Yekta (2010) who determined the impact of leadership behaviour and perceived organisational support on the job satisfaction of Iranian employees and found out that leadership behaviour was found to have significant impact on both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. Leadership behaviour could be a behaviour that is positively perceived by employees as being supportive of them which makes them feel obligated to the firm. On the same note, Beheshtifar, Ali-Nezhad and Nekoie-Moghadam (2012) that surveyed the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work positive attitudes in Islamic Azad University of Kerman came out with a similar result. The result showed that there is a meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support (and all its dimensions: supervisor support, justice, organizational rewards, and working conditions) with employees' work positive attitudes which will be shown in terms of positive felt obligation. Furthermore, Pradesa, Setiawan, Djumahir and Rahayu (2013) who examined the mediating effect of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and felt obligation in relationship of perceived organizational support toward work positive behaviour among postal employees in Indonesia revealed that there are mediating role of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and felt obligation between POS and work positive behaviour.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary of Findings
Based on the findings from the study, management Support significantly and positively related with Felt Obligation in the selected Commercial Banks in South East Nigeria with a correlation coefficient of .929 (cal. r .929 > crit. r .138).

CONCLUSION

The study going by the strength of the results obtained from the analysis conclude that Perceived Organizational Support has a significant positive relationship with employee performance in the selected commercial banks in South East Nigeria. This is contingent on the fact that Management Support has a statistically significant relationship with Felt Obligation as made evident by the analysis carried out. That is, the more employees feel that they are being supported and encouraged

by the organization and her officials like the management, such employees will have better felt obligation, which will in turn improve the performance of the employees.

Recommendations

In the light of the revelation made by the finding of the study, the researchers recommended that management of the focused firms should do well to show concern for employees and support not only as it relates to their jobs but also in the private endeavours of the employees like when the employee is going through tough times at home or in period of sickness as this will go a long way in endearing the organization to the employees.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study contributes to existing body of knowledge the specific type of relationship that exists between management support and felt obligation in the selected commercial banks in South-East zone of Nigeria effectively taking care of the gap in knowledge discovered. Also, the study created a clear cut link between the variable of the study and Organizational Support Theory (OST) and Social Exchange Theory (SET).

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Appendix 1
Sample Questionnaire and Responses used for Analysis
Keys: SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; UN = Undecided

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
	Management Support					
1	The management of my firm is very understanding in period of sickness that I can be allowed to stay at home to recover.	34	67	12	78	69
2	My organization's management offers me encouragement to do my work better.	45	111	-	97	7
3	I believe that my supervisor genuinely care about my wellbeing.	50	59	22	69	60
4	I can be allowed by my management to go on a study leave to improve my skills.	14	22	19	121	84
5	I am supported financially by my organization when I fall ill.	20	29	-	58	153
	Felt Obligation					
6	I have a sense of duty to my organization.	72	56	-	56	76
7	I always want to perform better for my firm.	102	98	-	60	-
8	I look forward to discharging my duties in the best possible way.	29	139	-	48	44
9	I feel compelled to do a good job for my organization because of the way management treats me.	30	46	-	145	39
10	If management show me more support, I can go the extra mile for my organization.	139	89	2	21	9

Appendix 2
Sampling Frame: List of Commercial Banks in Nigeria

S/N	BANKS
1	Access Bank Plc
2	**Diamond Bank Plc**
3	**Eco Bank Plc**
4	**Fidelity Bank Plc**
5	**First Bank Plc**
6	First City Monument Bank Plc
7	**Guarantee Trust Bank Plc**
8	Heritage Bank Ltd
9	Keystone Bank
10	MainStreet Bank
11	Skye Bank Plc
12	Stanbic IBTC Bank Ltd
13	Standerd Chartered Bank Nigeria Ltd

14	Sterling Bank Plc
15	Union Bank Plc
16	United Bank for Africa Plc
17	Unity Bank Plc
18	Wema Bank Plc
19	Zenith Bank Plc

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria.

Appendix 3

List of the Studied Banks and their Branches in Enugu, Enugu State and Awka, Anambra State. The Number of Questionnaire Distributed to the Individual Banks Branches According to their Population Proportion.

S/N	Banks	Branches	Total
1	**Guarantee Trust Bank**	**Branches in Enugu**	**2**
		Ogui Road	35(7)
		Rangers Avenue	30(6)
		Branches in Awka	3
		UNIZIK	28(5)
		Regina Chelie	33(7)
		Ukwuoji	30(6)
	Total Employees		**156 (31)**
2	**Fidelity Bank Plc**	**Branches in Enugu**	**7**
		Agbani Road	39(8)
		Trans-Ekulu	33(6)
		Polo Mall	34(7)
		Opara Avenue	32(6)
		Ogui Road	34(7)
		Rangers Avenue	29(6)
		Ogbete Branch	19(4)
		Branches in Awka	**3**
		UNIZIK	28(5)
		Regina Chelie	33(7)
		Ukwuoji	30(6)
	Total Employees		**311 (62)**
3	**Diamond Bank Plc**	**Branches in Enugu**	**6**
		Okpara Avenue Branch	37(7)
		Garden Avenue Branch	34(7)
		Agbani Road Branch	35(7)
		Presidential Road	32(6)
		Coal Camp Branch	37(7)
		Trans-Ekulu Branch	33(7)
		Branches in Awka	**3**
		UNIZIK	22(4)
		Regina Chelie	38(8)

		Ukwuoji	30(6)
	Total Employees		**298 (59)**
4	**First Bank Plc**	**Branches in Enugu**	**9**
		EmeneOgui Road Branch	33(7)
		Ogui Road Branch	34(7)
		Abakpa Branch	37(7)
		New Heaven Branch	40(8)
		Presidential Road Branch	38(8)
		Second Okpara Avenue Branch	34(7)
		Polo Park Branch	36(7)
		Ogbete Branch	39(8)
		Gariki Branch	42(8)
		Branches in Awka	**4**
		UNIZIK	28(6)
		Regina Chelie	37(7)
		Ukwuoji	31(6)
		Eke Awka Market	28(5)
	Total Employees		**457 (91)**
5	**Eco Bank**	**Branches in Enugu**	**9**
		Okpara Avenue Branch	24(5)
		UNEC Branch	30(6)
		Second Okpara Avenue Branch	26(5)
		Kenyatta Branch	30(6)
		Ogui Branch	27(5)
		Agbani Road Branch	30(6)
		Garden Avenue Branch	27(5)
		University Road Branch	23(5)
		Abakpa Branch	30(6)
		Branches in Awka	**3**
		Enugu-Onisha Road	21(4)
		Regina Chelie	30(6)
		Ukwuoji	32(6)
	Total Employees (Copies of Questionnaire Distributed)		**330 (65)**