

Job Rotation and Employee Skills in Deposit Money Banks in Yenagoa Bayelsa State

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ABSTRACT

Job rotation is a critical component of human resource management and human capacity building as it enable and sharpen the not only employee skill, but enhances their skill varieties. A lot of organizations including deposit banks are under performing because they have neglected and refused to diversify their workers skill through job rotation strategy. This paper seeks to examine the influence of job rotation on employee's skill varieties in selected deposit banks in yengoa. The study was anchored by organizational learning theory by Argyris and Schon (1978). The research design was mixed method approach. About 240 respondents (banking employees) were selected through simple random sampling techniques across five different deposit banks in yenagoa from a total population of about 546. Also 10 top management staff was purposively selected for the qualitatively study and triangulation validation. Both questionnaire and in depth instruments were utilized for the study. The findings of the study revealed that job rotation strategy positively impact the skill diversity and verities of the banking workers. Besides, the opportunity for job rotation greatly improved the productivity and efficiency of the employees. Notable skills acquired by employees as a result of job rotation included technical skills. Soft skills and problem solving skills. It was recommended that to further promote job rotation as skill varieties strategy management should encourage superior/ subordinate teem pairing and mentorship. Also, a mixed method training that encourages a blend of on the job training and job rotation should be adopted to stimulate employees skill diversity and by extension optimal performance.

Keywords: Job Rotation, Skill Varieties, Up skilling, Deposit money Bank

INTRODUCTION

Many businesses, small and large, are attempting to improve work design systems by the development of job rotation strategy. Job rotation is a strategy conducted by organizations either private or public to improve employee performance and productivity (Schultz, 2020). Job rotation is a planned replacement of staff in jobs and in different time periods with the aim of gaining skill, job autonomy, motivation, and productivity (Saravani, 2021). Job rotation is an interesting mechanism for employees to work in different positions and jobs as possible. And as a result it leads to employees job learning and up skilling as working in various position provide the opportunity to learn one's appropriate job. Ortega (2021), defined job rotation as: it happens regularly, alternatively between different jobs in an organization based on a plan, or alternatively based on individual needs of workers . Job rotation is a horizontal displacement of workers in different stations so that each workstation requires different skills and responsibilities (Dari &Zandieh,2022; Coyne,2019).

The banking sector in Nigeria, particularly in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, faces significant challenges in terms of employee skills variety and organizational performance. Deposit money banks in this region struggle to attract, retain, and develop employees with the necessary skills and competencies to drive business growth and success. This is partly due to the lack of effective human resource management practices and strategies; including job rotation, which can enhance employee skills variety and organizational performance. Despite the importance of employee skills variety and organizational performance, there is a dearth of research and data on the impact of job rotation on these outcomes in deposit money banks in Nigeria, particularly in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Existing studies have focused on the impact of job rotation on employee motivation, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions, but there is a need to investigate its impact on employee skills variety and organizational

performance in the context of deposit money banks in Nigeria. While previous studies have examined the impact of job rotation on employee performance and productivity (Esezobor, 2017; Oluwafunmilayo, 2018), there is a paucity of research on how job rotation influences employee skills development in the banking sector. Specifically, there is a lack of empirical study on the impact of job rotation on the assessment, improvement, and utilization of employee skills in deposit money banks in Nigeria.

Moreover, existing studies have not adequately addressed the contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of job rotation in enhancing employee skills variety and organizational performance (Johns, 2006; Rousseau & Fried, 2001). For example, the impact of job rotation on employee skills variety and organizational performance may vary depending on the size, structure, and culture of the organization, as well as the individual characteristics and needs of employees (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Luthans & Sommer, 2018).

Additionally, there is a lack of research on the specific job rotation practices and strategies that are most effective in enhancing employee skills variety and organizational performance in the banking sector (Campion et al., 2011; Iles et al., 2010). By addressing these gaps, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature on job rotation, employee skills variety, providing valuable insights for human resource management practices and policies in the banking sector in Nigeria.

The research was guided by the following research questions

1. What impact does job rotation have on the improvement and development of skills in the banking sector
2. What set of skills do employees in money deposit banks acquire as a result of job rotation

ABRIDGED LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Job Rotations

Edward (2019) describes job rotation as “the process of switching a person from job to job” which increases an employee’s capability and value to an organization. Job rotation can be defined as the performance by an employee of a new assignment on a temporary basis for an agreed period of time. Job rotation is position-oriented, with management determining the need for a specific job to be done. Job Rotation is where an individual is moved through a schedule of assignments designed to give that individual a breadth of exposure to the entire operation. The term job rotation can also mean the scheduled exchange of persons in offices, especially in public offices (Stein, 2020). Job Rotation can be used in a variety of ways to meet the development and training needs of companies and employees, without a break in production.

It is a way to reduce employee boredom and it also facilitates more of an understanding about the organization. Job rotation is moving from one job to another. Job can be rotated that are very similar or drastically different for example, a person in charge of accounts receivable could change with a person who is in charge of accounts payable. An employee could work as a marketer for a year and then work as a selling agent for a year (John Pappa John Entrepreneurial Centre). Job rotation comes in many forms and is useful in many situations. Job rotation is the systematic movement of employee from one job to another. How this movement is accomplished depends on the purpose that you wish to achieve and how dramatic a move you are willing to take (Malinski, 2022).

Skills Varieties

Skills variety refers to the range and diversity of skills required to perform a particular job or task effectively. It is a concept often discussed in the context of job design and organizational behavior. Jobs that involve high skills variety require employees to possess a wide array of different skills and abilities to successfully complete their tasks (Uzochuwu, 2018). On the other hand, jobs with low skills variety may only require a limited set of skills or repetitive tasks. Skills variety can encompass both technical skills (such as computer programming, data analysis, or mechanical expertise) and soft skills (such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership). The level of skills variety in a job can impact employee engagement, job satisfaction, performance, and overall organizational effectiveness.

Alawiye (2004) posit that jobs with high skills variety are often seen as more challenging and engaging because they provide opportunities for employees to continuously learn and develop new competencies. On the other hand, jobs with low skills variety may lead to boredom, disengagement, and decreased motivation among employees. Organizations that recognize the importance of skills variety in job design can tailor their recruitment, training, and development programs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to excel in their roles. By promoting skills variety, organizations can create a more dynamic and stimulating work environment that fosters employee growth and innovation.

Skill is acquired when it is considered to be formed, if a person does not think, how to act, does not share the action on the parts, but simply makes it. A number of small movements merge into one. Redundant, unnecessary movements are eliminated; the pace of implementation of the action speeds up. A man has no control over the transition from one motion to another. It happens by itself, without any special planning. Lilian and Chidiebere (2015) as well as Tijani (2019), observed that entrepreneurs successfully run innovative enterprises, nurture them to grow and sustain them, with a view to achieving broad socio-economic development goals. In essence entrepreneurs through entrepreneurial development such as in skill acquisition create job opportunities or become self-employed. Entrepreneurial skill acquisition is the ability to learn or acquire entrepreneurial skills.

Job Rotation and Employee Skills Varieties

Eriksson and Ortega (2002) in their paper, the adoption of job rotation: testing the theories, argued that job rotation practices in organizations increases with firm size, stronger presence of unions, the gender proportion in the organization's workforce and the homogeneity with respect to the workforce. They further acknowledged that the job rotation program is an effective training tool for short-tenured employees. They were however silent on its influence on overall employee job satisfaction. Patrick, Christine and Dirk (2016), in their study, job rotation and employee performance in the financial services industry investigated the determinants and performance effects of job rotation. Findings revealed that rotation was frequent among low performers as compared to their counterparts. Findings also revealed that there were no significant relationship between the rotation program and future performance on low performers. They concluded that the job rotation program be focused on high performers. Van Wyk, Swarts and Mukonza (2018), in their study on job rotation and employees' perceived job satisfaction found that there was a general feeling that the implementation of the job rotation strategy would positively impact job satisfaction. They further acknowledged that the job rotation strategy should be well communicated to all employees and the involvement of all the stakeholders, including employees, be sought when such a strategy is being developed.

Nigerian Banking Sector

The Nigerian banking and finance sector is primarily regulated by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), which is in charge of licensing and regulating banks and other financial institutions pursuant to the CBN Act 2007, and the Securities and Exchange Commission, which is responsible for regulating investments in the capital markets, including the conduct of participants therein, pursuant to the Investment and Securities Act 2007 and its subsidiary legislation. The Nigerian banking sector is a crucial component of the country's economy, playing a significant role in financial intermediation, economic growth, and development. It consists of various types of financial institutions, including commercial banks, microfinance banks, development finance institutions, and non-bank financial institutions. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) serves as the primary regulatory and supervisory authority for banks in Nigeria. It formulates and implements policies to ensure the stability, soundness, and integrity of the banking system. The CBN issues licenses to banks, sets prudential regulations, conducts regular inspections, and intervenes when necessary to maintain financial stability.

The Nigerian banking sector is characterized by a mix of domestic and foreign-owned banks. Some of the prominent Nigerian banks include Access Bank, Zenith Bank, Guaranty Trust Bank (GTBank), First Bank of Nigeria, and United Bank for Africa (UBA). These banks offer a wide range of financial services such as deposit-taking, lending, trade finance, treasury operations, and electronic banking. Technological Advancements In recent years, Nigerian banks have embraced technological advancements to enhance service delivery and customer experience. The adoption of digital banking solutions, mobile banking apps, internet banking platforms, and ATMs has transformed the way customers interact with banks.

Organizational Learning Theory (OLT)

This study is anchored on the Organizational Learning Theory (OLT), which was propounded by Chris Argyris and Donald Schön in 1978. The OLT posits that organizations can learn and adapt through the sharing of knowledge and experiences among employees. According to Argyris and Schön, organizational learning occurs when individuals within the organization share their knowledge and experiences, leading to a collective understanding and improvement in organizational performance.

The OLT is based on the idea that organizations have a collective memory that stores knowledge and experiences. This collective memory is built through the sharing of information, ideas, and experiences among employees. The theory also emphasizes the importance of experiential learning, where individuals learn from direct experience and experimentation. The OLT also emphasizes the importance of learning mechanisms, such as training, mentoring, and feedback, in facilitating the sharing and application of knowledge.

The applicability of OLT to this research lies in its focus on how job rotation can facilitate organizational learning and improve employee skills development. By rotating employees through different roles, organizations can facilitate knowledge sharing, experiential learning, and the development of collective memory. This, in turn, can lead to improved organizational performance and employee skills development. The OLT provides a framework for understanding how job rotation can be used as a tool for organizational learning and improvement. By applying the principles of OLT, this study aims to explore the impact of job rotation on employee skills development and organizational performance in the Nigerian banking sector.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the conceptual structure within which a research is conducted. It is the logical sequence in which the study is to be carried out, and it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measuring and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). This research deploys the Mixed Method Design (MRD), which according to Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2008) involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study. The study population was drawn from all employees in the five branches of Deposit Money Banks, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State which has a total population of 546 employees in their five branches. The collected data was thoroughly examined, and checked for completeness. Survey statistics tool such as simple percentage table, was used to analyze the questionnaire. A sample size of about 240 respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique and through the objective lens of taro Yamane formula. In addition about 10 top management banking staff was purposively selected across the five deposit banks for qualitative study as well as for triangulation reason

Job rotation and the improvement and development of skills in the banking sector?

Has job rotation helped you develop new skills and knowledge relevant to your current?

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	180	82
2	No	40	18
	Total	220	100

Have you gained practical experience in applying theoretical concepts to real-world banking scenarios through job rotation?

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	200	91

2	No	20	9
	Total	220	100

How has job rotation impacted your technical skills?

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes, improved significantly	120	54
2	Yes, improved slightly	60	27
3	No, remained the same	30	14
4	No, decline	10	5
	Total	220	100

What type of skills has job rotation helped you develop?

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Technical skills	70	32
2	Soft skills	80	37
3	Problem-solving skills	36	16
4	Innovation skills	34	15
5	Others		9
	Total	220	100

The results of this study reveal that job rotation has a significant impact on employee skill development in the banking sector. Notably, soft skills emerged as the most commonly reported skill developed through job rotation, with 80 respondents (36.4%) citing its importance. This suggests that job rotation programs prioritize interpersonal skills, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and time management, which are essential for effective customer relationships, collaborative teamwork, adapting to changing environments, and leadership development.

Technical skills ranked second, with 70 respondents (31.8%) reporting improvements in specific banking functions, such as financial analysis, risk management, and accounting. This is crucial in the banking sector, where technical proficiency directly impacts performance and decision-making. However, the relatively lower percentage compared to soft skills may indicate that job rotation programs prioritize interpersonal skills over technical expertise.

Problem-solving skills and innovation skills tied for third, with 35 respondents (15.9% each) citing their development through job rotation. This indicates that job rotation encourages critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and creativity, essential for analyzing complex financial data, identifying risks and opportunities, and developing innovative solutions. However, the relatively lower percentage for problem-solving and innovation skills may suggest that job rotation programs could be improved by incorporating more challenging projects, case studies, or simulations to enhance critical thinking.

Overall, these findings highlight the value of job rotation in developing a range of skills essential for success in the banking sector. By refining job rotation programs to incorporate more challenging projects, simulations, and creative thinking exercises, organizations can enhance employees' overall skills and performance. This, in turn, can lead to improved customer satisfaction, increased innovation and competitiveness, and ultimately, drive business growth and success.

Theme: Qualitative excerpts regarding the impact of job rotation on the improvement of skills in the banking sector

"Job rotation has had a profound impact on my skill development in the banking sector. Through rotations, I've acquired a unique blend of technical, business, and soft skills that have elevated my performance. "Initially, rotating through the customer service department refined my communication and interpersonal skills, enabling me to effectively handle customer complaints and concerns. Subsequently, my stint in the treasury department honed my analytical and financial modeling skills, allowing me to make informed investment decisions. "Moreover, rotating through the risk management department equipped me with expertise in identifying and mitigating potential risks, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. This comprehensive understanding of risk management has been invaluable in my current role. "Job rotation has also fostered adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving skills. By navigating diverse departments and challenges, I've developed a flexible mindset, able to pivot when faced with unexpected obstacles. "Most notably, job rotation has bridged knowledge gaps between departments. I've gained insight into the interconnectedness of banking operations, recognizing how individual roles contribute to the organization's overall success." (Male, 35 years, Corporate Finance Unit, Eco Bank 2024)

Set of skills employees in money deposit banks acquire as a result of job rotation

Which of the following technical skills have you acquired/improved through job rotation in your current bank?

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Financial analysis	120	55
2	Risk management	90	41
3	Accounting	60	27
4	Compliance	40	18
5	Digital banking	30	14
	Total	220	100

How has job rotation impacted your understanding of banking operations and processes?

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Improved significantly	150	68
2	Improved somewhat	60	27
3	No impact	10	5
4	Decreased	0	-
	Total	220	100

Source: Field work 2024

The data reveals that financial analysis (54.5%) is the most prominent technical skill acquired through job rotation, indicating that employees in money deposit banks are developing strong analytical capabilities. This is crucial in banking, where financial analysis informs investment decisions, risk assessment, and portfolio management.

Risk management (40.9%) emerges as the second most acquired skill, highlighting the importance of mitigating potential risks in banking operations. This skill is essential in ensuring regulatory compliance, managing asset quality, and maintaining financial stability.

Accounting (27.3%) and compliance (18.2%) skills are also acquired through job rotation, albeit to a lesser extent. This suggests that employees are developing foundational knowledge in financial reporting, regulatory requirements, and industry standards.

Digital banking (13.6%) skills, while relatively less prevalent, indicate a growing recognition of the importance of technology in modern banking. As the banking sector continues to digitize, this skill will become increasingly vital.

The data reveals in the second statement that 68.2% of respondents reported that job rotation improved their understanding of banking operations significantly. This indicates that job rotation provides employees in money deposit banks with a comprehensive understanding of banking processes, systems, and regulations, enabling them to make informed decisions.

This significant improvement can be attributed to the acquisition of technical skills such as financial analysis (54.5%) and risk management (40.9%) through job rotation. By rotating through various roles, employees gain practical experience in applying these skills, deepening their understanding of banking operations.

The moderate improvement reported by 27.3% of respondents suggests that job rotation helps employees develop a broader understanding of banking operations, even if not all aspects are fully grasped. This may be due to the complexity of banking operations or individual learning styles.

The minimal percentage (4.5%) reporting no impact may indicate that job rotation is not effectively tailored to their needs or that individual learning styles require adjustment.

Theme two: Qualitative excerpts regarding situation where job rotation helped you develop or improve a particular technical, business, or soft skill?

"I've had the privilege of rotating through three departments in my current organization, and it's been a phenomenal experience. Initially, I was skeptical, but rotating through the risk management and compliance departments gave me a deeper understanding of the bank's operational risks and regulatory requirements. "Most significantly, my rotation in the financial planning and analysis department honed my analytical skills, allowing me to better forecast and manage budgetary allocations. I've become more confident in my ability to make informed decisions and provide actionable insights. "The rotational program has not only broadened my skill set but also expanded my professional network. I've built meaningful relationships with colleagues from diverse backgrounds, fostering a collaborative spirit that transcends departmental silos. "Overall, job rotation has transformed my banking career, equipping me with the expertise, adaptability, and strategic thinking required to excel in this dynamic industry." (Female, 29 years, Credit Unit, Unity Bank 2024)

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings indicate a moderate positive impact of job rotation on employee skill improvement and development. This aligns with previous studies (Chen et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020) highlighting job rotation's role in skill development. Job rotation provides opportunities for employees to learn new skills, apply existing skills in new contexts, and develop a broader organizational understanding. This fosters a culture of continuous learning, driving employee growth and organizational competitiveness.

In the banking sector, job rotation is particularly crucial due to the rapidly evolving landscape. Employees must

adapt to emerging technologies, regulatory changes, and shifting customer expectations. Job rotation equips employees with the necessary skills to navigate these challenges, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in their roles. Furthermore, job rotation encourages knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation, essential for driving organizational success.

This study revealed that employees in money deposit banks acquire a diverse range of skills through job rotation, including technical, business, and soft skills. This supports previous research (Ingram & Simons, 1995; Koch & McGrath, 1996) emphasizing the importance of developing a broad skill set in the banking sector. Job rotation enables employees to develop transferable skills across different roles and contexts, enhancing their versatility and value to the organization.

The acquisition of technical skills, such as financial analysis and risk management, is critical in the banking sector. Job rotation provides employees with hands-on experience in various technical areas, ensuring they develop a comprehensive understanding of banking operations. Business skills, including communication, leadership, and strategic thinking, are also essential for success. Job rotation helps employees develop these skills through exposure to diverse business contexts and challenges.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings indicate that job rotation has a positive influence on employee skill assessment, improvement, and development in the banking sector. The questionnaire results revealed that job rotation helps identify and assess employee skills, leading to more accurate performance evaluations and targeted development initiatives. Additionally, employees acquire a diverse range of skills, including technical, business, and soft skills, through job rotation. However, job rotation also presents skills-related challenges, including continuous learning, adaptability, and resilience.

The interview findings corroborated the questionnaire results, with interviewees confirming that job rotation provides opportunities for skill development, improvement, and broadening of skill sets. They also highlighted the importance of support mechanisms, such as training and mentoring, to help employees navigate skills-related challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of the study, following recommendations were made;

1. The top management should pair employees with experienced mentors and coaches who can provide guidance, support, and valuable insights throughout the job rotation process. This will facilitate knowledge transfer, ease the transition, and enhance skills acquisition.
2. The banks should establish open communication channels to ensure employees understand the purpose, expectations, and goals of job rotation. Regular feedback mechanisms should be implemented to monitor progress, identify challenges, and provide constructive feedback for improvement.
3. Regular job rotation strategy is germane and should be incorporated into the human capital development and training programs of all deposit banks in Nigeria.

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