

# Supervisor Relationship Quality and Employee Commitment to Change in the Ghanaian Banking Industry

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## Abstract

The success of every organization is largely dependent on the employee's commitment to change which undoubtedly becomes possible when there exist a solid relationship between leadership and their subordinates in other words, employees and their supervisors. The purpose of this study is to assess supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to change in the Ghanaian corporate organizations with emphasis on the banking sector in Ghana. The study employed descriptive survey to sample 201 bank staff from four banks through structured questionnaires. Both purposive and simple random techniques of sampling were employed by the researcher in selecting the samples. Data was analyzed and presented by the use of Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS). Tables and figures were given in frequencies and percentages and correlation and regression analysis was also performed. The study reveals that there is high quality relationship between supervisors and employees of banks in Ghana. Furthermore, affective commitment and normative commitment to organizational change predicts supervisor's relationship quality in the banking sector of Ghana. The study also discovered a positive relationship between supervisor relationship quality and the three types of commitment to organizational change in the banking industry in Ghana. This study recommended that to create and sustain growth in an organization, management is advised to create favorable conditions to employees.

**Keywords:** Supervisor • Commitment • Banking industry • Relationship

## Introduction

Organizational change is a necessity for organizations to survive and be profitable and as most organizations compete they undergo change. These constant changes are mainly due to technological progress that the world has experience over the past decades. Change is therefore an alteration in organizational process. It occurs in different part of the organization such as change in culture, structure and process design which is geared towards organization effectiveness and efficiency [1].

Many studies have revealed that the change processes in organizations can also result from difficulties encountered in the live of a company, for instance, when organizational goals are not met or organizational needs are not satisfied. Organizations need to close these performance gaps by implementing changes. These can put a lot of pressure on organizations and also on individual employees. Although organizations want these changes to succeed, they are often complex and often do not lead to improvement but lead to the emergence of new problems instead of addressing old problems. Vakola and Nikolaou, indicated that in spite of the concepts and methods in the change management literature to understand and manage changes, the

results are quite not encouraging. Thus, it is clear that many organizations fail to achieve the results they desire. On one hand, Nohria and Beer attributed lack of strategy and vision, lack of communication and trust, lack of top management commitment, lack of resources, lack of change management skills and internal resistance to change to the failure of many organizational change agenda [2].

Commitment to change is considered to be one of most important factors for the successful implementation of any change initiatives within an organization. In the field of organizational change there has also been a lot of research about work-relationships because of the psychological processes that employees experience during organizational change have received increasing attention in the past years. This interest includes the critical role that work relationships have in producing positive individual and organizational outcomes. An important requirement to for an organization to undergo a lasting organizational change may depend on the relationship that exist between employees and supervisors and may depend on the following factors: a) believing in their own ability to change b) feeling a sense of connection and c) committing to facilitate, rather than hinder, organizational change.

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Although, this is important there is merit in these assertions, yet at the same time, there are relatively few studies examining the impact of the employee-supervisor relationship quality on increasing employee commitment to change. They lack specific theoretical underpinnings that might enable a better prescription of mechanisms that impact human motivation and may therefore better predict intended outcomes [3].

The success of every organization is largely dependent on the employee's commitment to change which undoubtedly becomes possible when there exist a solid relationship between leadership and their subordinates in other words, employees and their supervisors. Most organizations in Ghana and beyond place a higher value on the quality of relationship that exist between their employees and supervisors. According to Drzensky, Egold and VanDICK, the 21<sup>st</sup> century global business can only be successful if employees are committed to organizational change principles which includes but not limited to the ability of every organization to offer world class customer care services to clients/customers, the aspiration of every organization to be the leading brand in their locus, the ability of the organization to make more profit for its shareholders etc. All these are likely to fail if the quality of employee-supervisor relationship is not checked [4].

While effective organizational change is impacted by many factors, the accumulated empirical and practice-derived evidence compellingly demonstrates employee commitment to change is one of the key considerations. If employees play a central role in change implementation and if the majority of recommended organizational change practices focus on the leader and the facilitating role they play in administering and leading organizational change, then more must be known about the quality of supervisor-employee relationship and its influence on employee commitment level to change. The readiness of individual members for change is central to any organization's ability to successfully implement organizational changes. More fully delineating the variables that increase individual readiness for change and identifying means of influencing them is paramount if organizational change is to be successful. Hence this current study seeks to assess supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to change considering the banking industry in Ghana [5].

Specifically the study seeks to address the following questions: What is the quality of supervisor's relationship with their employees in the Ghanaian banking sector? What is the relationship between the quality supervisor relations and employee commitment to change? and which types of commitment to change will be most predictable by quality of supervisor's relationship [6]

We live at a time where globalization keeps changing. The way and manner in which businesses are managed has led to most business managers demanding so much from their employees to be abreast with the changing global trends. This makes it very imperative for the need to understand how the quality of supervisor-employee's relations helps to facilitate the needed change in an organization and consequently helps managers make the needed change decision to move their companies up the global ladder [7].

The study could have been structured to include all employees in the financial sector, however the study will be limited to employees in some selected banks in Accra (Ghana). The researcher's choice of these selected banks was informed by the limited financial

resource and availability of time to cover all the banks that operates in the metropolis. The banking sector is made up of several banks ranging from traditional or local to international or foreign banks.

The study's report is organized under five sections. Section one, embodies the introduction of the study. Section two is devoted to literature review. Section three examines the research methodology used in undertaking the study while section four presents data analysis and discusses the research findings. Section five details the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendation [8].

## Materials and Methods

### Definition of terms

**Employee-supervisor relationship quality:** This is quality of an employee's relationship with their supervisor; high-quality relationships are characterized by mutual reciprocity (*viz* exchanges), respect and trust; low quality relationships are characterized as contractual and employees comply with directions out of formal obligation and motivation.

**Organizational change:** The planned change of the organizational work setting for the purpose of enhancing individual development and improving organizational performance, through the alteration of organizational members' on-the-job behaviors.

**Commitment to change:** The cognitive precursor to the behaviors of either resistance to, or support for, a change effort. Creating readiness for change may act to preempt the likelihood of resistance to change, increasing the potential for change efforts to be more effective.

**Supervisor:** The person who conducts the employee's annual performance review and/or provides on-going day-to-day supervision.

**Dispositional resistance to change:** An individual's dispositional inclination to resist change, characterized by reluctance to voluntarily initiate changes and a proclivity toward exhibiting generally negative attitudes toward change [9].

### Theoretical framework

The theoretical frame work for the study is based on the theory propounded by Elwood N. Chapman known as the "relationship channel" and cited by Doris Drury. The theory establishes three fundamental bases for supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change known as the relationship channel. According to this theory, supervisor employee relationship is best perceived and understood as a line that exists between the two, a kind of psychological channel through which all communications, reactions and feelings must flow back and forth. It explained that, through the relationship channel, each party views, interprets and reacts to the other [10]. The openness the amount of freedom or naturalness of this line contributes to the quality or tone of the relationship, which in turn leads to a commitment to change by employees in an organization. According to Elwood theory, the first fundamental principle that must guide a supervisor-employee relationship must be a two-way communication. This he explained as the lifeblood of the relationship line. According to the theory, one can keep a relationship alive and healthy through an input of words and nonverbal signals from both ends.

Just as all parts of the human body must receive a constant supply of fresh blood to survive, a relationship is kept alive with an exchange of ideas, given strength by words and kept in good repair through talking. Parties at both ends of the line must contribute. An open dialogue keeps the relationship between a supervisor and an employee healthy and ongoing. In management parlance, the operative word is feedback and both parties in the supervisor employee relationship need it continuously, even desperately at times. To repeat: Feedback is two-way, including employee to supervisor and not just supervisor to employee as is commonly assumed [11].

According to the theory, the second fundamental principle that must be observed in promoting supervisor-employee relationship quality should be guided by the mutual reward theory, according to this theory, the relationship between supervisor and employee is enhanced when a good reward exchange occurs between them. For example, the supervisor may provide the employee with the freedom to work with minimum supervision, personal recognition and involvement in decision making. In return, the employee may produce high personal productivity, dependability and cooperation with co-workers. When such an exchange takes place, both parties benefit. The employee is happy with his or her job and the supervisor's reputation is enhanced due to their ability to direct and support employees. Without a reasonably good reward exchange, a healthy, productive, long-term relationship is difficult to achieve. Trust is also violated when either person in the relationship fails to honor his or her part of the agreement in the exchange [12].

The theory also identified the presence of emotion a final fundamental principle that must be observed when trying to establish supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change. It further explained that, the relationship line can become emotionally charged. Extreme emotional feelings of either the employee or the supervisor can sometimes enter the line and make it difficult to handle or build a quality desire relationship. Therefore, both individuals must often take special care in dealing with this situation [13].

The theory advice that, both the supervisor and employee must go about their work in a quiet, sensitive and responsible way. Sparks generated by uncontrolled emotions are dangerous to the supervisor employee relationship. Although both parties share this responsibility, it is the supervisor who must keep the line under control, managing to control his or her own emotions and responding appropriately when employees' emotions run high. Henning-Thurau conducted a similar review of the literature and concluded that the interrelated core dimensions of relationship quality are satisfaction trust and commitment, therefore, it is dependable that these three related constructs have stood the test of time and scrutiny. Also, empirical research indicates that trust and satisfaction are antecedents of commitment [14].

## Commitment to change

According to Melcher, commitment to change (C2C), an essential component of a successful change implementation, is best described as a state of mind that ties a person to a particular course of action. Commitment to change is different from other commitment related concepts such as openness to change and readiness to change, in that commitment to change does not only reflects positive attitudes

towards the change, but also alignment with the change, intentions to support it, and a behavioral intention to work in favor of the change.

According to Meyer and Allen, there are three forms of commitment. First, Affective Commitment (AC) corresponds to an employee's emotional attachment to, involvement in and identification with the organization. Second, Normative Commitment (NC) is based on a moral obligation to remain loyal. Third, Continuance Commitment (CC) is an attachment derived from the recognition of the costs associated with leaving or the perception of a lack of employment alternatives. Change is an alteration in organization process. It occurs in different part of the organization such as change in culture, structure and process design which is geared towards organization effectiveness and efficiency.

Further research on these components has shown that any one of the three components is sufficient to produce the desired behavior. While there are relatively few studies employing construct of commitment to change. However, conducted three studies to validate a model of commitment that is specific to organizational change. They defined commitment to change as aforementioned a force (mindset) that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative. In sum, the commitment to change literature indicates that distinguishing between the three different components is crucial, because they are believed to have different outcomes and because the same factor can have a different effect on the three components.

## Supervisor-employee relationship quality

Supervisor employee relationship is best perceived and understood as a line that exists between the two, a kind of psychological channel through which all communications, reactions and feelings must flow back and forth. Gerstner and Day, opined that a high-quality supervisor-employee relationship is one in which the expectation of mutual benefit and the exchange of resources is established in other words the relationship quality is defined by what the participants do in relation to one another. The relationship quality between supervisors and employees is especially relevant to dissent expression. When employees perceive a supportive climate with their supervisor, their work performance benefits and they are likely to work collaboratively in helping supervisors meet business goals. According to Mayhew, the quality of the relationship between a supervisor and employee depends on several factors. The interaction between supervisor and employee, how supervisor and employee relate to one another and the proximal outcome for the relationship between the supervisor, the employee and the relationship.

## Relationship between supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change

According to John, the concept of supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change can also be explain as one that demands a constant repair through an open door phenomenon, he explained further that, the supervisor who is easy to approach builds better relationships than the aloof supervisor who is hard to see and difficult to talk with. Encouraging employees to come to them freely with suggestions, complaints or for counsel makes an employee feel part of the organization decision making process and hence they turn to stay loyal and committed to change in the organization. To allow this communication to happen, the supervisor



must avoid building physical or psychological barriers between themselves and their employee (subordinates). According to his findings supervisors should rather, try to establish and practice an open-door policy through which free, open and healthy communication practices can be built. Fear or distrust can prevent good communication and kills relationships. Merely keeping the door to their office open and telling employees to drop by is not enough. Supervisors must work to create a nonthreatening, welcome atmosphere that will cause employees to come to them anytime.

In another study by Aron and MC Laughlin-Volpe, it is established that, effective communication *i.e.* letting people know how they are doing on their respective jobs and duties) can never be underestimated in an employee-supervisor relationship quality and commitment to change. According to their findings, supervisor-employee relationships should always be in good repair, they opined that, supervisors should take time to let employees know how they are getting along with their duties in their respective offices. Most employees (especially new ones) want to know how to do their jobs better and will welcome help if it is provided in the right way. They also want to know when things are going well and when a supervisor is pleased with their performance. Employees do not want to feel as if they are working in a vacuum and that supervisors do not care. They want to feel that they are an important part of the department in which they belong to and they know that their future depends on supervisor's training and support. An excellent way to keep the relationship in good working order is to provide both training and support. Being open to the needs of one employees will help create effective two-way communication.

Research has shown that in every change implementing process there are four kinds of employee attitude involved. Some employees will accept the change, some will resist the change. Some, indifferent and others will adopt and wait for results. This suggest that several factors impacts employee's readiness for change: The organizational environment-trust, support, relationships with coworkers, capability, capacity; organizational commitment and identification-fit with vision, values, connection and personal resources-*efficacy* beliefs, relationship with supervisor, role autonomy, perceived control, job motivation, optimism, general tendencies to resist change. For example, Jones et al. studied the implementation of a new computer system in an Australian state government department that required all employees to use the new system to access their payroll information.

They were interested in examining the relationship of organizational supports for employees and readiness for change on change success (system usage and user satisfaction). Their results showed that readiness for change was greater among individuals who perceived higher levels of organizational supports for employees and that greater readiness for change was in turn predictive of greater change success. Herscovitch and Meyer suggest three different types of commitment influence an employee's overall readiness for change: Affective commitment (based on values and desire); continuance commitment (based on logical weighing of perceived costs and benefits) and normative commitment (based on a sense of duty and obligation). They found all three forms of commitment predict employees' self-reported support of organizational change initiative, with affective and continuance commitment explaining a greater proportion of the differences.

They also found affective commitment and normative commitment are positively related to change championing and cooperating behaviors. Madsen and colleagues also found support for a strong significant link between organizational commitment and readiness to change in their studies that involved surveys from 464 employees from four different organizations in Utah (health-care product manufacturer, call center, tech-support services provider, hospital). In a study that extended this work, Parish and colleagues found higher employee perceptions of fit with organizational vision, employee-manager relationship quality, job motivation and role autonomy were all related to greater commitment to change, which in turn influenced the change implementation success.

In the study of Mayer and Allen the concept of supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change is said to be explained based on the theory of Elwood N. Chapman. In their study they define this concept as being a very complex yet mutualistic paradigm that demands the commitment of both the supervisor and the corresponding employee in order to establish a perfect and harmonious working environment. It is said that, employee commitment to change is a global psychological state that characterizes the relationship between employees and their supervisors. The focal behavior associated with this kind of commitment is the decision to maintain membership in an organization based on the relationship quality employees established with their supervisors in an organization.

### **Empirical studies (employee's perception on relationship quality)**

On employee perception of relationship quality, Thomas and Ken, investigated the perception of employees on relation quality in their various organizations in southern Nigeria, their study findings indicated that, majority of employees especially in the government sector are only ready to give off their best when they find their supervisors being ready to cooperate with them, assist them when the need arise and give them the due credit when necessary. In this same study, findings revealed that, employees in the private sector seem to cooperate more with their supervisors as against their counterparts in government sector or public institution, this according to them informs the high level of productivity in private sector in comparative to the government sector.

In another study by Robbins, he concluded that, employees perceive relationship quality to mean upholding trust, care, competence and above all a supervisor's commitment to assist them deliver their daily duties when the need arise. His finding also indicated that, supervisors are seen in the light of superior as well as leader in the discussion while employees are seen as subordinate who takes instructions from their superiors to accomplish an organizational text. With these perception employees feel empowered when their supervisors are competent and able to assist them achieve their set target and goals. Majority of respondents in this study stated that, relationship is not a toy or game with which a supervisor is free to experiment and hence relationships should be honored and treated with deep respect and sensitive consideration. If a supervisor hurt the quality of relationship with their employees, they may end up lowering productivity since employees will fail to give off their best.

Amanda argued that, the goal of the supervisor should be to build and keep relationships with all employees equally. Like the parent of several children, the supervisor should show no favoritism, despite the fact that one employee may need more help than another. In building one relationship, it is easy to neglect others, resulting in increasingly negative reactions from the other employees. In her study she likens the perceive relationship quality of a supervisor-employee to the problem faced by the stagecoach driver who attempts to get each of six horses to pull an equal share of the weight at the fastest possible speed over the long haul. It is difficult to hold the reins with just the right touch. To avoid imbalances, the supervisor must occasionally review the state of relationships with all employees in the departmental levels, small groups and the entire organization. If one relationship has been built at the expense of another, immediate repair work should be the first priority according to Amanda.

### Quality of employee-supervisor relationships

In general, employee-supervisor relationships that have developed a high degree of partnership are characterized by high quality exchanges that more closely resemble peer-to-peer equity. In such relationships, employees are willing to and usually do, exert extra effort because they feel empowered and motivated to take personal initiative. High levels of liking, loyalty, trust, latitude, support and attention also characterize high quality employee-supervisor relationships. On the other hand, low quality employee-supervisor relationships are contractual in nature. Contractual employee-supervisor relationships are characterized by employees complying with directions out of formal obligation and motivation to act in their own self-interests due to the economic rewards the supervisor controls. The quality of employee supervisor relationships is impacted by and in turn impacts, task interdependencies, work quality, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors.

Considering at the impact of employee-supervisor relationship quality and organizational change, studies have found that high quality relationships reduce employee resistance to change, increase employee commitment and willingness to participate in making the changes successful, as well as overall commitment to the organization. In a random sample of 395 nurses, high quality employee-supervisor relationships and perceptions of open communication about organizational changes predicted more positive expectations about the likelihood of change implementation participation and success than low quality relationships. In a combined sample of 137 employees (82 from a large oil industry and 55 from a bank), Furst and Cable found a low association between employee-supervisor relationship quality and resistance to change ( $r=-0.16$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Van Dam and colleagues, found a moderate association between employee-supervisor relationship quality and resistance to change ( $r=-0.38$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) among 235 employees of a recently merged Dutch housing corporation.

A study also demonstrate a connection between the positive impact of supervisors' relationship with employee and organizational outcomes, such as increased organizational commitment, productivity and job satisfaction and lower employee turnover. Gilley and her colleagues surveyed MBA and OD master's level students (representing a variety of manufacturing, education, professional and governmental job sectors at all job levels)

to collect perception of the frequency with which (never to always) organizational leaders effectively implemented change. Their response rate was 93%. The average was about 3 (sometimes) with a standard deviation of approximately one. Gilley and colleagues subjected this data to a multiple regression analysis. The significant predictors of perceived frequency of leader effectiveness in implementing organizational change were communicating, motivating, involving and coaching. Communication and motivation explained 35% and 30% of the variance respectively, while the full set of variables accounted for 55% of the variance assert that it is incumbent upon supervisors to establish a collegial partnership with their employees that is safe, personal, yet professional, based on nonjudgmental, two-way communication to enable and support their employees' renewal capacity and resilience, which in turn leads to organizational success. Further, Gilley et al. admonish supervisors to move beyond the command-and-control mode of managing because it keeps organizations stuck in the status quo.

### Empirical study of types of commitment to change predicted by supervisor-employee relationship quality

Employee involvement in the missions and vision of an organization and the types of employee commitments towards an organization remain at the center of designing any management strategy (employment crossing). Business leaders have led through the centuries by understanding employee psychology, employee emotions and employee expectations and by catering for employee needs in a manner that resulted in a win-win situation for both employer and employee. This situation guaranteed organizational commitment of the employee and in turn helped the organization realize its goals.

The term employee commitment to change has become so much a part of management jargon today, that many of us use it every day without clearly visualizing the norms and parameters associated with it. Failure to understand the nature and predictors of commitment to change by employees in an organization leads to a lack of understanding of employee attachment to the organization and in turn leads to deficient management and supervisory strategies that fail to reach their goals. In a study by Doris Drury, she defines employee commitment to change (C2C) in simple words, as the strength of the attachment an employee feels towards an organization. It may be measured by the degree to which an individual is ready to adopt to organizational values and goals. It may be measured by the degree to which an employee fulfills his/her job responsibilities. And it may also be measured by behavior observed in the workplace.

Allen and Meyer proposed an analytic view of commitment to change predicted by supervisor-employee relationship quality, splitting it into three definable components-affective, continuance and normative commitment. According to them affective commitment is the emotional attachment of an employee to organizational values how much an employee likes the organization. Continuance commitment they said is a measure of the willingness of an employee to continue working for the same organization. Normative commitment, they stated deals with the feelings of obligation or sense of responsibility an employee feels towards the organization.

They further explained that, affective commitment or how much an employee actually likes or feels part of an organization has a

tremendous effect on employee and organizational performance. High levels of affective commitment in employees will not only affect continuance commitment, but also encourages the employee to try to bring others into the talent pool of the organization. An employee with high levels of affective commitment acts as a brand ambassador of the organization. On the other hand, an employee with high continuance commitment (due to lack of alternatives), but poor affective commitment may harm the organization by criticizing it in his/her social circles.

On continuance commitment, Allen and Meyer explained that, when continuance commitment is not completely driven by affective commitment, it usually boils down to the costs that an employee associates with leaving the organization. Continuance commitment is also driven to a great extent by organizational culture and when an employee finds an organization to be positive and supportive, he/she will have a higher degree of continuance commitment. Important organizational factors like employee loyalty and employee retention are components of continuance commitment.

They finally explained that, normative commitment builds upon duties and values and the degree to which an employee stays in an organization out of a sense of obligation. This type of commitment to change is very critical as in times, when payments are delayed in an organization and the employees have to suffer pay cuts or deferred pay, but they stay on, because they do not want to leave an employer during bad times. Normative commitment to change comes from a sense of moral duty and the value system of an individual. It can be a result of affective commitment or an outcome of socialization within the workplace and commitment to co-workers.

Normative commitment is seen to be higher in organizations that value loyalty and systematically communicate the fact to employees with rewards, incentives and other strategies. Normative commitment in employees is also high where employees regularly see visible examples of the employer being committed to employee well-being.

## Summary

It is obvious from available literature that, supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change is at the heart of every positive and progressive organization. Literature revealed that, supervisors can employ many relationship-building techniques, depending on their styles and environments, such as good listening skills, flexibility, consistency in style, being a good one-on-one counselor etc. Nevertheless, the literature review on supervisor-employee relationship quality and commitment to change seem to have been limited to other parts of the world. This calls for a necessity to investigate this important subject matter in the Ghanaian business environment.

## Research methods

The study used descriptive survey to analyse supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to change. Irrespective some of disadvantages, the descriptive survey is still appropriate for the study and the researcher confidently believes that this design will elicit the responses needed to answer the research questions raised and further help in the generalisation of the findings. The population for this study are employees of Ecobank, Cal bank, Fideility bank and Capital bank in Tema. It comprises

staff and management of these banks, whose responses are relevant to the study. A sample size of 201 respondents was chosen from Ecobank, Cal bank, Fideility bank and Capital bank in the Tema metropolis it comprised 91 male and 108 female employees whose responses were relevant to the study. There were however two people who didn't indicate their gender. Out of this number, 24 of the respondents were employees of Ecobank, 57 from Fidelity bank, 60 from Capital bank and 60 from Calbank. The researcher used the convenience sampling technique to choose respondents for the study. This allowed the use of participants who are available and willing to respond to the questionnaire. This is because, as one of the ethical provisions underlying a behavioural research, no participant will be forced to respond to the questionnaire against his or her will. In this study however, the researcher employed a self-designed questionnaire characterised by close-ended and open-ended questions as a research instrument to collect data. The close-ended questionnaires were constructed based on the Likert-scale where respondents were given alternatives of options to choose from. This made it easier for participants to respond accurately to issues on the topic.

The open-ended questions made space for participants to respond to questions in their own words without being constrained to choose out of limited alternatives. The workforce was asked to indicate the extent to which they disagreed or agreed with the items. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert-scale that ranges from; 1=strongly disagreed, 2=disagreed, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. The Likert-scale is a method of measuring people's attitudes by combining their scores on a variety of items into a single index. Scaling is achieved by ensuring that high-scoring and low-scoring individuals differ in their responses on each of the items selected for inclusion in the index and the distance is assumed to be the same between categories. The questionnaire is made up of three sections. Section A comprises of demographics of the respondents which includes age, gender, type of bank, work experience, has company undertaken any change management program over the last three years and nature of change. Section B, which seeks to identify employee commitment to change (C2C) adopted Herscovitch and Meyer's C2C which consist of eleven items. Items for each of the dimensions affective, continuance and normative commitment and responses were given on a five-point scale.

In all three dimensions coefficient of 0.80 was adopted. Section C also consists of supervisor's relationship quality by employing Rotter's standard scale for measuring S-E relationship quality which contains fifteen items. Internal consistency and reliability for supervisor's relationship quality yielded Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.782. In this study, a Cronbach alpha coefficient of at least 0.7 was obtained which gives the indication that the items have relatively high internal consistency as suggested by Nunnally. A formal letter of introduction was to Ecobank, Cal bank, Fideility bank and Capital bank in Tema, where questionnaires were administered. With a follow-up on the letter, the researcher was directed to appropriate officers-in-charge who assisted in several ways in rationally persuading workers to respond to the questionnaires. On each questionnaire, respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and the fact that the purpose of the study was for academic reasons. In an attempt to increase the number and honesty of responses the period of collection was one week after submission of the letter and questionnaire. In all 201 questionnaires were

correctly filled and returned. Data from the structured self-administered questionnaire was properly organized through data coding, cleaning and entering and was then processed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 20.

Descriptive statistics by percentages, figures and tables were generated from the software to establish relationship among variables. The relevant information was obtained in a standard form using mean scores, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages to analyse and interpret the information. The results were finally presented in charts and tables. These techniques and processes were used to ensure easy understanding of the analysis. The inferential statistics employed included correlational analysis and regression analysis which were used to determine statistically, the relationship between the quality of employee-supervisor relations and commitment to change. All inferential statistical analyses were performed at a 95.0 percent confidence interval. Thus, statistical significance was tested at a five percent significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ).

Quality determinant	M	SDV
<b>Trust</b>		
I usually know where I stand with my supervisor	3.76	1.02
I can count on my supervisor to back me up when I really need it	3.78	1.16
I like my supervisor very much as a person	4.06	1.04
I respect my supervisor's knowledge on the job	4.04	-
<b>Support</b>		
My supervisor helps me out when I am in a difficult situation	3.87	1.06
My supervisor is interested in my well-being	3.91	1.05
My supervisor appeared interested in Development as a professional	4.02	1.63
<b>Communication</b>		
My supervisor's feedback on my performance is constructive	3.98	1.53
My supervisor is respectful of my views and ideas	3.89	1
My supervisor makes sure we get the credit when we accomplish something substantial on the job	4.02	1.08
<b>Identification</b>		
My supervisor's kindness is the reason for my hard work	3.91	1.12
My supervisor and I are equal partners in supervision	3.69	1.21
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this supervisor	3.86	1.08

**Table 1.** Supervisor's relationship quality.

Furthermore, the variables were categorized into the following themes, trust, support, communication or exchanges, identification. According to Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, high quality

## Results

### What is the quality of supervisor's relationship with their employees?

From the results, it is noticed that the banking employees who participated in this study reported having high-quality relationships with their supervisors. This is evident in the fact that while some of the variables used in measuring relationship quality score close to the average rating of 3.89, others also scored above average rating. Specifically, factors such as "I like my supervisor very much as a person", "My supervisor is interested in my well-being", "My supervisor appeared interested in my development as a professional", "My supervisor's feedback on my performance is constructive" among others have been scored above the average score of 3.89. The results above indicate that the respondents therefore agree to a large extent that overall supervisors have good quality relationship (Table 1).

employee-supervisor relationships are characterized by mutual communication (i.e., exchanges), respect and trust that resemble peer-to-peer equity rather than superior-subordinate hierarchy (Table 2).



Relationship quality	Mean	SDV	Std. Error of mean	Rank
Trust	3.87	1.07	8.2	3
Support	3.93	1.25	8.06	2
Communication (exchanges)	3.96	1.2	7.71	1
Identification (linking)	3.82	1.14	6.39	4

**Table 2.** Summary of Supervisor’s relationship quality.

The results of the study suggest that there is high quality communication between supervisors and employees of the banks in Ghana. The high quality employee-supervisor relationships reported by the bank employees in this study suggest there are high degrees of mutual exchanges, trust, liking and support.

**The relationship between supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to change**

This section of the study examines the relationship between supervisor relationships quality and employees’ commitment to

Variables	C2C	SRQ
C2C	1	-
SRQ	0.880**	1

**Note:** \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**Table 3.** Relationship between C2C and SRQ.

An assessment of the results showed that there is a strong and significant positive correlation between supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to organizational change (r=0.880, p-value=0.00). This indicates a strong positive relationship between supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to change.

Furthermore, an analysis of subscales of the relationship between supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to organizational change was found to be significant. Specifically, the study found a significant positive relationship between supervisor trust and employees affective commitment to organizational change (r=0.988 p-value=0.00), signifying that about 98.8% of the variations in employee affective commitment to organizational change can be explained by the quality of trust in the supervisor relationship. Similarly, affective commitment is also significant to supervisor support (r=0.961, p-value=0.00), communication (exchanges)(r=0.992, p-value =0.00) and liking or identification (r=0.976, p-value=0.00). Furthermore, continuance commitment to organizational change was also found to be positive and significantly related to supervisor, trust, support, exchanges and identification. Hence, there is an indication that continuance commitment to organizational change is largely influenced by supervisor relationship quality.

Portoghese et al., found that high quality employee-supervisor relationships and perceptions of open communication about organizational change predicted more positive expectations about the likelihood of change implementation participation and success

organizational change. In this regard a correlational analysis was conducted to ascertain the perceived relationship.

Correlation is used as a statistical measurement to measure if there is a possible linear relationship between two or more variables on the same subject or entity (Table 3).

than low quality relationships. Similarly, Robbins, concluded that, employees perceive relationship quality to mean upholding trust, care, competence and above all a supervisor’s commitment to assist them deliver their daily duties when the need arise. His finding also indicated that, supervisors are seen in the light of superior as well as leader in the discussion while employees are seen as subordinate who takes decision from their superiors to accomplish an organizational text. With these perception employees feel empowered when their supervisors are competent and able to assist them achieve their set targets and goals. Details of the results could be seen in appendix B.

**Type of commitment to change that will be most predictable by quality of supervisor’s relationship**

The mean and standard deviation scores for each of the employee commitment scales are ranked by respondents as affective commitment has 4.00 and 1.05, continuance commitment has 3.62 and 1.21 and normative commitment has 3.93 and 1.13, respectively. Further analysis revealed that from highest to lowest mean scores, respondents ranked their “Affective commitment” with highest mean of 4.00 whereas their “Continuance commitment” having lowest mean of 3.62 from total. Similarly, from the standard deviation scores, continuance commitment posted the highest value among the three variables within the banking sector. The results are presented above (Tables 4 and 5).



Type of change	Mean	SDV	Rank
Affective commitment to organizational change	4	1.05	1
Continuance commitment to organizational change	3.62	1.21	3
Normative organizational commitment to change	3.93	1.13	2

**Table 4.** Summary of employee commitment to organizational change.

Model	Variable		Coefficient		S.E	t-value	Model summary	Sig
	Dependent	Independent	Constant	Predictor	Predictor		R-square	Predictor
1	Affective	SRQ	2.794	0.315	0.105	3.005	0.819	0.035
2	Normative	SRQ	2.334	0.411	0.058	7.11	0.902	0.019
3	Continuance	SRQ	-0.489	0.63	0.204	2.242	0.834	0.267

**Table 5.** Regression results.

Model 1 predicts the association between affective commitment to organizational change and supervisor relationship quality. From the results the model was shown to be significant ( $p$ -value=0.035). Furthermore, affective commitment explained 81.9% of the supervisor's relationship quality variance. The results also showed that the overall model's coefficient was significant and positively related. Similarly, model 2 also predicts a positive relationship between supervisor's relationship quality and normative commitment to change. Furthermore, the regression model suggests that the relationship between supervisor's relationship quality and normative commitment to change is significant ( $p$ -value=0.019) and explained about 90% variation in normative commitment to organizational change. Model 3 also predicted the relationship between continuance commitment to change and supervisor's relationship quality in the banking sector. The results showed that supervisor's relationship quality and continuance commitment to change is not significant. However, the sign of the beta coefficient is in the positive direction, signifying a positive relationship between supervisor's relationship quality and continuance commitment to change. Furthermore the study found that continuance commitment to change accounted for about 83.4% of the total variation in supervisor's relation quality. From the analysis, normative commitment to organizational change is likely to be better predicted by supervisor's relationship quality compared to continuance and affective commitment since about 90 percent of the variance may be explained by supervisor's relationship quality.

## Discussion

### Perceived supervisor relationship quality

Shanock and Eisenberger, found that employees reported accurate feedback, fair evaluation and sufficient help and assistance in the development of their expertise and in the accomplishment of various tasks from their supervisors. From the results, the respondents indicated good quality supervisor relationship in the bank.

This is evident in the fact that while some of the variables used in measuring relationship quality score close to the average rating of 3.89, others also scored above average rating. Specifically, factors such as "I like my supervisor very much as a person", "My supervisor is interested in my well-being", "My supervisor appeared interested in my development as a professional", "My supervisor's feedback on my performance is constructive" among others have been scored above the average score of 3.89. Furthermore, the study found that there is high quality communication (exchanges) between supervisors and employees of the banks in Ghana. The high quality employee-supervisor relationships reported by the bank employees in this study suggest there are high degrees of mutual exchanges, trust, liking and support. Michael found that supportive supervisor communication would play an intervening role in the relationship between employee and supervisors. This finding corroborates earlier findings by Shanock and Eisenberger.

### Relationship between the quality of employee-supervisor relations and commitment to change

The relationship between supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to organizational change was found to be significant. The study found that 88.0% of the total variation in commitment to change is accounted for by corresponding change in quality of supervisor's relationship. More so, the study found a significant positive relationship between supervisor trust and employees affective, continuance and normative commitment to organizational change. Hence, there is an indication that continuance, normative and affective commitment to organizational change is largely influenced by supervisor relationship quality. Neves and Caetano found that trust in the supervisor fully mediates the relationship between affective commitment to change and the three work outcomes. Similarly, Dunham, Grube and Castaneda found that when supervisors provided feedback about performance and allowed employees to participate in decision-making, employee levels of affective commitment was stronger than both continuance

and normative. That is, employees indicated staying with the organization was more related to wanting to, rather than needing to or feeling they ought to.

### **Type of commitment to change that will be most predictable by quality of supervisor's relationship**

From the results, it is indicated that from highest to lowest mean scores, respondents ranked their "Affective commitment" with highest mean of 4.02 whereas their "Continuance commitment" having lowest mean of 3.62 from total. Similarly, from the standard deviation scores, continuance commitment posted the highest value among the three variables of commitment to change within the banking sector. The results of this study showed that the pattern for mean scores is consistent with the findings of Allen and Meyer and other researchers as mentioned above where affective commitment has highest score followed by normative commitment and then continuance commitment has the least score.

Furthermore from the regression results above supervisor's relationship quality were found to be significant in predicting affective commitment and normative commitment. On the other hand, supervisor's relationship quality was not significant in predicting employee's continuance commitment. Although continuance commitment to organizational change positively relates to supervisor's relationship, supervisor relationship was not significant in predicting continuance commitment to change.

This outcome was consistent to findings by Dunham, Grube, Castaneda. Neves and Caetano found continuance commitment to change was not significantly related to supervisor relationship quality. The findings of this study corroborate the outcome of the study by Neves and Caetano. Hence we conclude that supervisor's relationship quality predicts affective commitment and normative commitment to organizational change in relationship to employees in the banking sector of Ghana.

## **Conclusion**

The study found that there is high quality communication (exchanges) between supervisors and employees of the banks in Ghana. The high quality employee-supervisor relationships reported by the bank employees in this study suggest there are high degrees of mutual exchanges, trust, liking and support. The study revealed that from highest to lowest mean scores, respondents ranked their "Affective commitment" with highest mean of 4.02 whereas their "Continuance commitment" having lowest mean of 3.62 among the three outcomes. Similarly, from the standard deviation scores, continuance commitment posted the highest value among the three variables of commitment to change within the banking sector. The lowest mean of continuance commitment to organizational change implies that the respondents felt that the leadership of the banking institutions are not paying enough attention to the rewards in exchange of efforts they provide to the organizational change compared to others. Supervisor's relationship quality predicts affective commitment and normative commitment to organizational change in the banking sector of Ghana. Continuance commitment to organizational change was not significantly related to supervisor relationship quality. The study found that there is a strong and

significant positive correlation between supervisor relationship quality and employee commitment to organizational change.

The study investigated three types of commitment to change *i.e.*, affective, normative and continuance. These three types of commitment to change were found to have a relationship with supervisor relationship quality, thus supervisor relationship quality affect employees commitment to change. This study concludes that employee's commitment to organizational change in the banking sector is largely influenced by supervisor relationship quality. The results inform approaches that increase the likelihood of employee commitment to organizational change enactments and thereby increase the likelihood of organizational change implementation success within the banking industry. The finding that supervisor's relationship quality positively relates to affective commitment implies that leaders should emphasize on the social exchange relationships with their subordinates. This can be done by developing partnerships based on trust and respect that honour employees' needs and expectations, leaders are able to induce affective supervisor commitment, thus motivating subordinates to engage in behaviours that go beyond their immediate job description in order to achieve organizational success. Employee and supervisor relationships in general were found to be the prerequisite for organizational success and employee well-being in the banking sector.

## **Recommendations**

- To create and sustain growth in an organization, management is advised to create favorable conditions for employees.
- To improve upon continuance commitment in the banking sector management should try to improve their payments and other benefit systems to develop employee commitment otherwise they need not stay there.
- It is imperative to establish a sound system of benefits, promotion and development in order to increase employees' organizational commitment and then raise productivity.
- To facilitate the development of positive relationships between supervisors and employees measure should be taken by providing leaders with measures, tools and organizational freedom to develop their employees' skills, incorporate their feedback, considering their needs and organize how the work is done.
- The organization can provide the supervisors with the necessary training and development to be able to recognize employees' potentials and the organizational context to act on them.
- Organizations can foster not only the relationships between the supervisors and employees, but also the relationship between the supervisor and the next hierarchical level of the organization.
- Further research should also involve a nationwide survey covering samples from the whole population of banks in Ghana.

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