NURTURING ORGANISATIONAL VITALITY THROUGH LEARNING ORIENTATION: INSIGHTS FROM MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between learning orientation and organisational vitality of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. Learning orientation was used as a unidimensional construct while organisational vitality was measured in terms of growth, resilience and responsiveness. The study adopted the cross-sectional research survey design. Primary data was sourced using the structured questionnaire. The population for the study was the four major telecommunication companies in Nigeria. Since the population of major telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria was relatively small, the entire population was studied as a census and in line with the unit of analysis which is at the macro level. However, copies of the questionnaire were distributed to forty top managers and supervisors of the major telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. The descriptive output on the univariate analysis of the study were conducted with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 26. Furthermore, the next stages of analysis involved the use of Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling for the assessment of the measurement model and structural model with the aid of SmartPLS 3.0. Findings from the data analysis showed that there was a strong and positive relationship between learning orientation and the measures of organisational vitality of mobile telecommunication companies in Nigeria. Therefore, the study therefore concludes that mobile telecommunication companies in South-South Nigeria that invest in and prioritize learning orientation tend to experience greater organizational vitality. The study therefore recommends that telecommunications companies should invest in continuous professional development programs that encourage employees to acquire new skills and knowledge.

Keywords: Growth, learning orientation, organisational vitality, resilience, responsiveness

INTRODUCTION

Digitization and its resultant effect have made it practically impossible for organizations to remain the same, imposing on organizations the duty to not just ensure their survival but also maintain their relevance in the business world. These changes are largely due to globalization and liberalization of trade and business which has altered the face of business including the composition of employees in the workplace (Tamunomiebi & John-Eke, 2020). For an organization to maintain relevance, organizations must be at the top of their game by not just foreseeing changes before they occur but ensuring that they strive to adapt and flexibly respond to foreseen and/or unforeseen changes within their domain. It is pertinent to note, however, that irrespective of how much an organization tries to pre-empt its locale, there is always need to give room for surprises. This position is sequel to the important lesson COVID-19 has taught the business world (Don-Baridam, 2020).

Hence, organizations are like living human beings. They can remain strong to do their business and make progress in some business situations that present advantages or opportunities. The organizations can also fall ill or unhealthy at some points due to situations and circumstances emerging in the business environment (Dickson, 2021; Bishwas, 2011). Therefore, organizations should be effectively managed to have strategic health and vitality in order to adapt to changing business conditions in the environment. Companies that can recreate or change themselves with respect to environmental change will remain vital in the long-term and remain competitive in the market. Vitality should be inherent in the organization and permeate all members of the workplace (Biswa, 2011). Organisational vitality alludes to the life force, the dynamism, the drive within an organization that makes it thrive and flourish. Essentially, it is how an organization contours its creativity, agility, and resilience making it receptive to changes, thereby securing its growth and success.

In today's fast-paced and competitive business landscape, telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria face numerous challenges in maintaining their vitality and staying ahead of the competition. Facing these conditions, organizations need employees who can quickly learn new skills, continuously master new roles, proactively develop their careers and adapt to new situations (van der Horst & Klehe, 2019). It is human being that constitute the main source of its capabilities as well as the main promoters and anticipators of change (Holbeche, 2018; Munteanu et al., 2020). This is particularly true where rapid technological advancements and shifting consumer demands necessitate a constant state of learning and improvement. Learning orientation refers to an organization's propensity to value, support, and facilitate continuous learning and improvement. It involves creating a culture that encourages experimentation, learning from failures, and sharing knowledge and expertise. By adopting a learning orientation, telecommunication companies can enhance their ability to innovate, improve their services, and respond to changing market conditions.

The recurring ill health among organisations in Nigeria demands empirical attention, since research is the primary generator of theory that can be applied in solving a host of organisational problems (Hornbaek, 2006). In light of this, several researchers took the mantle of investigating vitality related problems using other predictor variable (Akpotu & Konyefa, 2018; John-Eke & Gabriel, 2021; Gabriel, George & Adim, 2021; Adim & Asawo, 2021). However, the researcher observes that there has been little research effort that considers the predictive role of learning orientation on organizational vitality, hence a knowledge gap exists which this study as its points of departure filled by examining the relationship between learning orientation and organizational vitality of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study include:

i. To examine the relationship between learning orientation and organizational growth of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.
ii. To examine the relationship between learning orientation and organizational resilience of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.
iii. To examine the relationship between learning orientation and organizational responsiveness of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

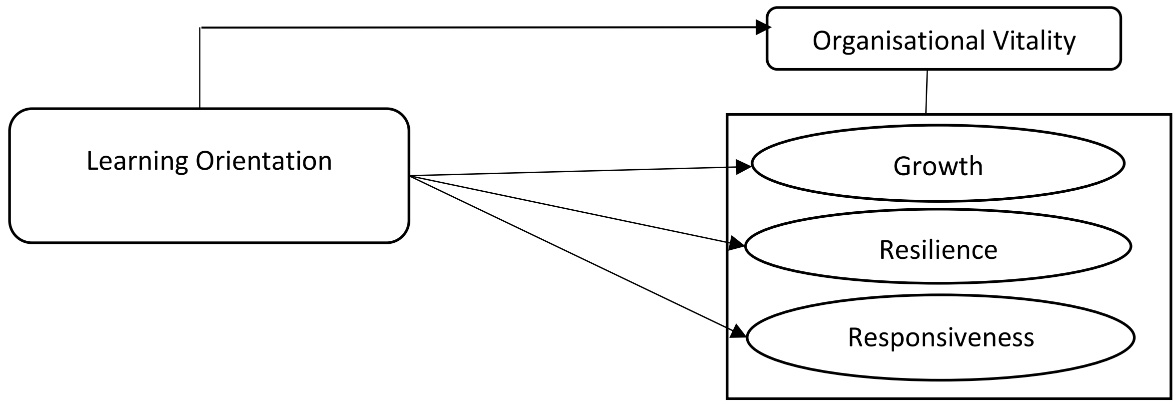

Figure 1.1: Learning orientation and organisational vitality.
Source: Researchers Conceptualisation (2024).

The following research questions were put up in line with addressing the relationship between learning orientation and organizational vitality of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. These are stated as follows:

i. What is the relationship between learning orientation and organizational growth of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria?
ii. What is the relationship between learning orientation and organizational resilience of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria?
iii. What is the relationship between learning orientation and organizational responsiveness of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The underpinning theory for this study was anchored on the human capital theory**.**

Human Capital Theory

The theory of human capital can trace it origins to macroeconomic development theory. In the 1950s, the main factors of production comprised land, labour, physical capital and management (Zarutskie, 2010). By the 1960s, however, economists had great difficulty in explaining the growth of the US economy based on the aforementioned factors of production (Lazear, 2009). It was the empirical work of Becker (Zarutskie, 2010) that challenged the prevailing assumption that the growth of physical capital is paramount to economic success. The basic premise behind human capital theory is that people's learning capacities are of comparable value with other resources involved in the production of goods and services (Lazear, 2009). Applied in the context of organisations, human capital theory suggests that individuals who invest in education and training will increase their skill level and be more productive than those less skilled, and so can justify higher earnings as a result of their investment in human capital.

As Becker (2002) suggests, 'schooling raises earnings and productivity mainly by providing knowledge, skills and a way of analysing problems. Moreover, Becker's (2002) ideas play an important role in contemporary employee development and learning literature, as human capital theory fuels the idea that employees' knowledge and skills can be developed through investment in education or training, that is, learning (Hatch & Dyer, 2004). For human capital to be unique and provide higher performance than competitors, the firm must invest in its employees in terms of time and money through training and development and education (Lazear, 2009). Human resources obtained from opponents' suit some of its competitors, although it must go through a phase of vibrant alterations in terms of cost while fitting it to the needs of the changing environment (Wang & Mahoney, 2009). Firm's knowledge, skills and experience can create superior performance in a firm if they are fruitfully used to add value in enabling learning and they are applied to making decisions which are superior to those of competitors (Lazear, 2009).

Conceptual Review

Learning Orientation

Learning orientation is a mindset in creating knowledge and an essential asset that generates an organization's superior values that cannot be easily duplicated by its competitors (Pérez, Gutiérrez & Agudo, 2019). Learning orientation is also described as an organizational approach to improve an organization's capabilities to continuously develop its activities and performance based on better knowledge, experience, and understanding (Baba, Mahmood & Halipah, 2017). Learning Orientation is a construct that acknowledges the attitude of managers to consider learning as a key resource for the organization, also understands the need to unlearn obsolete knowledge, to eliminate old mental models, and welcome new learning (Baba, 2015). The Learning Orientation is considered as a resource and organizational capability that supports companies to develop their competitiveness and organizational service delivery.

Learning orientation is one of the crucial weapons to ensure organizational survival and success (Atitumpong & Badir, 2018). Learning process helps organizations to improve their actions through knowledge and also it creates a better understanding of the external environment (Ojha, Struckell, Acharya, & Patel, 2018). It leads to a great increase in organizational knowledge capability and also helps organizations in searching for information and assimilating, developing and creating new knowledge (Huang & Wang, 2011). It encourages organizations and individuals to build their proficiency and acquire new knowledge, abilities, and competencies. Thus, they would pursue interesting and difficult tasks that enable them to learn from mistakes and concentrate on unfamiliar and new knowledge domains that allow them to learn the most (Attumpong & Badir, 2018). In addition, learning orientation reinforces the organization’s learning behavior and transforms its climate into a more advanced market and entrepreneurial-oriented, ensuring long-lasting growth and continued existence.

Organisational Vitality

Bishwas (2011) explains that vitality generally refers to health or growth, which means that the organization's health or development is determined by the organization's financial, intellectual, and creative growth. Organisational vitality is the general well-being of the workplace. It is the current health and energy status of the organization which defines it fit to do work in relative environmental conditions. Malik, Maclntosh and Mcmaster (2015) contends that, organisational vitality is the physical and mental wellbeing of the workplace. Like human being, organizations can remain strong to do their businesses and make progress, they can fall ill at some point due to situations and circumstances emerging within the company or in the business environment. Therefore, corporations need to be healthy to continue in business irrespective of the situations prevailing in the company's internal and external environment (Akpotu & Ozioko, 2020). The health and vitality of the firm enables the organization to adapt to situations and circumstances emerging in the business environment. Lack of energy and good wellbeing of the organization may threaten its continuous performance in the market. Therefore, the strategic or long-term performance of an organization requires organizations to have sound health and vitality just like a living human being who requires good energy fit to do work (Akpotu & Konyefa, 2018). Hence, the organization must be with a sound health for it to be a going concern and perform exceptionally and consistently maximize shareholders value.

Measures of Organisational Vitality

Growth

The construct of growth is one of the measures of organisational vitality and a corporate strategy which is used to measure increase in productivity of the work organization. Business growth measures increase in sales, assets, net profit and an opportunity to leverage the experience curve in order to reduce per unit cost of products in order to increase profitability (Ngek & Vanzyl, 2014). Business growth is a stage where the business organization reaches the point for expansion and demand additional alternatives to generate more profit (Gailly, François, Diambeidou, Verleysen, & Wertz, 2004). Business growth is a function of the business lifecycle, industry growth trends and the owners desire for equity value creation and maximization of shareholders value (Sumari, 2013; Gerald & Elsifa, 2013). Growth in business is associated with some indicators; expansion in number of branches and subsidiaries, number of employees, number of oversea or international subsidiaries etc. Again, business growth can also be measured by sales growth, market share, revenue growth (Iacobucci & Rosa, 2010).

Resilience

Every organization is unique as an entity. This entity is evident in organizations exposed to challenges or adverse experiences. There exist wide variations in the way companies respond to stress. Some organizations appear to be relatively unaffected, while others develop a variety of behavioural, psychological and physical consequences (Hormor, 2016). Hence, resilience is the process of adapting an organization well in the face of adversity, trauma and threat, or even a significant source of stress such as business relationship problems, workplace financial stress. It means the capacity to withstand and bounce back from unstable experiences and challenges while remaining unbroken as well as progressive (Hormor, 2016; Gabriel & Zeb-Obipi, 2019). Hormor (2016) maintains that, resilience is a dynamic construct. It could be defined as the overcoming of adversity or stress by the organization. It encompasses positive adaptation for the company to regain mental health status irrespective of prevailing situations confronting the organization. Resilience is considered an imperative for organizations during crisis events or situations as it ensures the continuity of the business and its survival (Don-Baridam, 2020). Organizations need to constantly respond not just to one time crisis or disaster event but to continuously anticipate and adjust to trends that permanently impair the earning power of the organization.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness refers to the extent to which firms react rapidly to changes in a business environment to seize potential opportunities (Gabriel, George & Adim, 2021). Responsiveness refers to the extent to which firms react rapidly to changes in a business environment to seize potential opportunities (Bernardes & Hanna, 2009). This responsiveness reflects the efficiency and effectiveness with which firms' sense, interpret, and act on market stimuli (Garrett, Covin & Slevin, 2009), and has been treated as a competitive advantage. For example, Wei and Wang (2011) proposed that this responsiveness represents a competitive marketing advantage by deploying resources to satisfy customer needs. Inman, Green and Whitten (2011) noted that a firm with a high level of responsiveness outperforms its competitors in terms of operations. Inman et al. (2011) noted that a firm with a high level of responsiveness outperforms its competitors in terms of operations. Day (2005) stated that organisational responsiveness is anchored on organisational learning and knowledge transfer which serve to inform and upgrade the dynamics of the organization in such a way that enhances its ability to perform adequately. Organisational responsiveness builds on its relationships and its ability to follow the trends and features that shape its environment.

Empirical Review

Akeke, Akeke and Oyebanji, (2022) examine the effect of learning orientation on performance of Nigerian small and medium enterprises. The research was conducted using a cross-sectional descriptive methodology to examine the owners of small and medium scale business covering the states of the Southwest Nigeria. A total sample of 1,366 respondents was obtained through a multistage sampling technique. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data collected. The results of the research indicate that all the three main constructs of learning orientation and their factors contribute to the regression weights of learning orientation. Specifically, it indicates that all the factors of commitment to learning, shared vision and open mindedness significantly high in regression weights. It is concluded that SMEs can benefit from learning orientation by their shared vision and commitment to learning.

Sawaean, and Ali (2021) examined the impact of learning orientation on organizational performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) via the mediating role of total quality management (TQM) practices and the moderating role of innovation culture SMEs'. This study adopted a quantitative approach based on a cross-sectional survey and descriptive design to gather the data in a specific period. The data were collected by distributing a survey questionnaire to the owners and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Kuwaiti SMEs using online and on-hand instruments with 384 useable data obtained. Furthermore, the partial least square-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis was performed to test the hypotheses. The results in this study revealed that learning orientation had a significant impact on organizational performance of SMEs in Kuwait. It could be observed that TQM practices play an important role in mediating the relationship be-tween learning orientation and performance of SMEs, as well as that innovation culture plays an important moderating role in the same relation.

Jeihoony, Jabarzadeh, Kumar, and Garza-Reyes (2019) explore the effect of learning orientation on innovation performance with the mediating role of operations strategy (cost, quality, flexibility, and delivery). Environmental uncertainty plays a moderator role in this model. Using a questionnaire to measure variables, data were collected from 243 UK production companies. Structural Equations Modelling used for data analysis and hypothesis testing. The results support 9 out of thirteen research hypotheses. Learning orientation influences innovation performance and two dimensions of operations strategy (delivery and quality) mediates this relationship. Also, environmental uncertainty positively moderates the relationship between quality and flexibility strategies with innovation performance.

Adegbuyi, Adegbuyi, Ogunnaike, Ibidunni, and Fadeyi (2018) investigated the role of learning orientation and SMEs' performance. A descriptive research design was adopted to gather information from registered SMEs as captured by Corporate Affairs Commission in Nigeria. The data gathered were sourced via the administration of structured questionnaire to 436 owner-managers of SMEs. The study employed the use of standard multiple regression analysis to test the hypothesis. The results from statistical analysis indicates that among the diverse dimensions of learning orientation that were adopted for this study, the greatest and most significant influence came from new strategy, innovative products and new knowledge sharing. Consequently, the research results points to the fact that SMEs operators and managers should focus on continuous learning that emphasizes the capability of the firm and its members to understand and adapt to the competitions in its chosen product-market through dynamic strategies that can achieve and sustain their firms' competitive position. One finds that while previous studies appear to support learning orientation as a possible antecedent of improved organizational outcomes – there is however scant empirical focus on its relationship with organizational vitality, hence the following hypotheses are stated:

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between learning orientation and growth of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between learning orientation and resilience of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

HO_3: There is no significant relationship between learning orientation and responsiveness of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts the explanatory cross-sectional survey as its design for investigating the relationship between learning orientation and organizational vitality. The population was the four (4) major mobile telecommunication companies (MTN, Airtel, Glo and 9-Mobile) in Nigeria. Therefore, for the purpose of data gathering in this study and in line with the study unit of analysis which was at the macro level, copies of questionnaire were distributed to forty (40) senior managers and supervisors from the four (4) mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. The data were collected through a survey questionnaire method that is widely used for data collection. The 38 copies of the questionnaire that were retuned were used for analysis with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, in addition to adopting the variance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) technique using the Smart-Partial Least Square (PLS) software. The Cronbach Alpha Coeficient test of reliability of the instrument is shown in table 1.

Table 3: Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability and AVE

Latent Variable	**Convergent Validity**	**Internal Consistency Reliability**	
	Average Variance Extracted (AVE) >0.50	**Composite Reliability >0.70**	**Cronbach's Alpha (CA) >0.70**
Growth	0.681	0.895	0.842
Learning Orientation	0.777	0.933	0.902
Resilience	0.731	0.915	0.877
Responsiveness	0.744	0.92	0.885

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output, 2024.

The reliability results for both Cronbach Alpha and Composite reliability in table 1 are well above the required threshold of .70 (Hair et al., 2011). Hence, reliability was established.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Univariate Analysis

The univariate distributions for the constructs are presented on table 1.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Constructs	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Learning Orientation	38	1.50	4.50	3.6184	.84577
Growth	38	1.50	4.75	3.8092	1.00914
Resilience	38	1.75	4.25	3.4934	.81888
Responsiveness	38	2.00	4.50	3.7632	.76438
Valid N (listwise)	38				

Source: SPSS Output, 2024

The Table 2 illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distribution which is based on a 5 – point Likert scale format of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The distributions for the variables demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to range mostly between x = 3.0 – 4.0, it is evident that constructs such as learning orientation, growth, resilience and responsiveness are substantial and well manifested realities within the context of the study.

Bi-variate Analysis

Measurement Model

The measurement model displays the relationship between the constructs and the indictor variables, hence, no items were removed for further analysis. Factor loadings for each of the items are presented in table 3. The first component of the measurement model is the reliability analysis which includes Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability. The desirable cutoff value for the composite reliability is 0.70 (Ringle et al., 2018). Consequently, all the latent constructs of the model possess Cronbach Alpha and composite reliability (Table 3). The second component of the measurement model is convergent validity. The measure of convergent validity is the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for which the cut-off criterion value is 0.50 (Ringle et al., 2018). Hence, constructs posseses convergent validity (see Table 4). The component used to access the discriminant validity of the constructs is the square root of its AVE and should be more than its correlation with all other latent variables (Chin, 1998). Hence, discriminant validity is attained (see Table 4).

Table 3: Factor Loading of Indicators

Growth	Learning Orientation	Resilience	Responsiveness
0.798	0.771	0.796	0.875
0.857	0.878	0.889	0.758
0.758	0.953	0.893	0.915
0.882	0.913	0.838	0.895

Source: SmartPLS 3.0, 2024

Table 4: Test of Discriminant Validity

	Growth	Learning Orientation	Resilience	Responsiveness
Growth	**0.825**			
Learning	0.692	**0.881**		
Resilience	0.795	0.759	**0.855**	
Responsiveness	0.738	0.572	0.851	**0.863**

Source: Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output (2024).

Structural Model

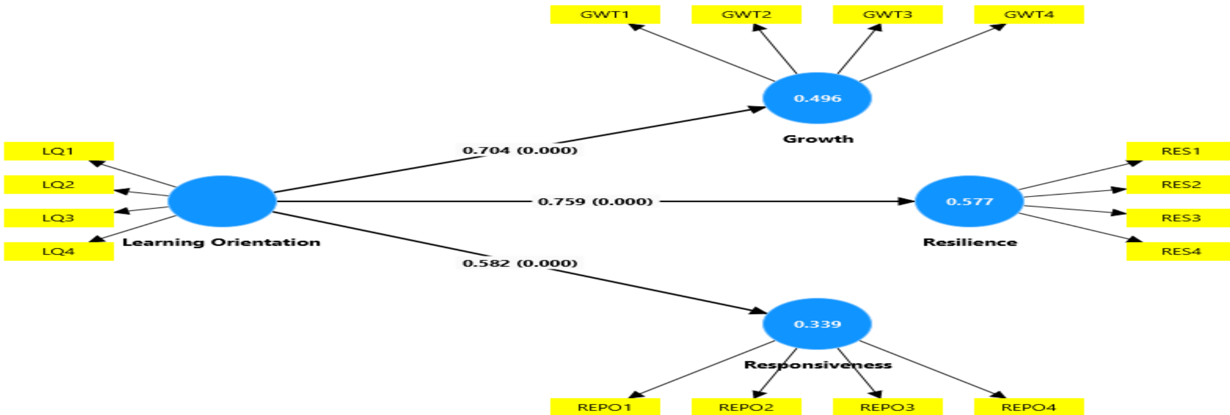

Figure 2: Structural model on the relationship between learning orientation and measures of organisational vitality

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output (2024)

The structural model displays the relationships (paths) between the constructs on the proposed study model. The hypothetical statements addressed the relationship between learning orientation and measures of organisational vitality. Using the structural model, the result is presented on figure 2 and Table 5.

Table 5: Summary output for Learning Orientation and Organisational Vitality measures

Path (Relationship)	Path Coefficient (β)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Learning Orientation -> Growth	0.704	0.703	0.131	5.365	0.000
Learning Orientation -> Resilience	0.759	0.744	0.133	5.722	0.000
Learning Orientation -> Responsiveness	0.582	0.594	0.144	4.032	0.000

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output (2024)

Learning Orientation and Growth

The result in Figure 2 and Table 5 indicates a path coefficient (β) of 0.704 on the relationship between learning orientation and growth. This value implies that a strong and positive relationship exists between learning orientation and growth of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination r^2 was 0.496 which shows a moderate level of variance in the endogenous variable (growth) explained by the exogenous variable (learning orientation). This implies that approximately 49.6% of the changes and manifestations of growth in the mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria was explained by learning orientation. The statistical test of significance (p-value) which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtained from table 5, the sig- calculated is less than significant level ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and also the t-value= 5.365 > 1.96. Drawing on the results generated, the related null hypothetical statement of no significant relationship between learning orientation and growth of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria is on this basis was rejected. Thus, the result shows that there was a significant relationship between learning orientation and growth of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Learning Orientation and Resilience

Figure 2 and Table 5 indicates a path coefficient (β) of 0.759 on the relationship between learning orientation and resilience. This value implies that a strong and positive relationship exists between learning orientation and resilience of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination R^2 was 0.577 which shows a moderate level of variance in the endogenous variable (resilience) explained by the exogenous variable (learning orientation). This implies that approximately 57.7% of the changes and manifestations of organisational resilience in the mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria was explained by learning orientation. The statistical test of significance (p-value) which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtained from table 5, the sig- calculated is less than significant level ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and also the t-value= 5.722 > 1.96. Drawing on the results generated, the related null hypothetical statement of no significant relationship between learning orientation and resilience of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria is on this basis was rejected. Thus, the result shows that there was a significant relationship between learning orientation and resilience of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Learning Orientation and Responsiveness

Result in Figure 2 and Table 5 indicates a path coefficient (β) of 0.582 on the relationship between learning orientation and responsiveness. This value implies that a strong and positive relationship exists between learning orientation and responsiveness of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria. The coefficient of determination R^2 was 0.339 which shows a weak level of variance in the endogenous variable (responsiveness) explained by the exogenous variable (learning orientation). This implies that approximately 33.9% of the changes and manifestations of responsiveness in the mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria was explained by learning orientation. The test of significance (p-value) which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtained from table 4.5, the sig- calculated is less than significant level ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and also the t-value= 5.722 > 1.96. Drawing on the results generated, the related null hypothetical statement of no significant relationship between learning orientation and responsiveness of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria is on this basis was rejected. Thus, the result shows that there was a significant relationship between learning orientation and responsiveness of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

The relationship between learning orientation and the measures of organizational vitality demonstrates the role of learning orientation in reinforcing and strengthening the ability of telecommunication companies to be healthy and operational in the turbulent environment. Learning orientation is a critical factor that significantly impacts the organizational vitality of telecommunications companies in South-South Nigeria. Learning orientation refers to an organization's commitment to creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. In the highly dynamic telecommunications sector, companies with a strong learning orientation are better equipped to adapt to technological advancements, regulatory changes, and market demands. The impact of learning orientation on organizational vitality can be seen in several ways.

Firstly, a learning-oriented organization fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. Employees are encouraged to seek new knowledge, share insights, and apply innovative solutions to challenges, leading to enhanced operational efficiency and service quality. For instance, according to Calantone, Cavusgil, and Zhao (2002), learning orientation positively influences a firm's innovative capabilities, which in turn drives its competitive advantage and sustainability. Secondly, learning orientation enhances employee engagement and retention. When employees perceive that their organization values learning and professional development, they are more likely to be motivated, committed, and satisfied with their jobs. This alignment of individual and organizational goals strengthens the overall vitality of the organization by reducing turnover rates and fostering a stable and experienced workforce.

Furthermore, learning orientation contributes to better decision-making processes. Organizations that prioritize learning tend to gather and analyze a wide array of information from both internal and external sources. This comprehensive understanding enables management to make informed strategic decisions, mitigate risks, and capitalize on opportunities. As Baker and Sinkula (1999) highlight, learning-oriented organizations are adept at sensing and responding to environmental changes, which is crucial for maintaining vitality in the fast-paced telecommunications industry. learning process helps organizations to improve their actions through knowledge and also it creates a better understanding of the external environment (Ojha, Struckell, Acharya, & Patel, 2018).

The findings of this study corroborate those of earlier studies such as that of Akeke, Akeke and Oyebanji, (2022) whose study examines the effect of learning orientation on performance of Nigerian small and medium enterprises. The research was conducted using a cross-sectional descriptive methodology to examine the owners of small and medium scale business covering the states of the Southwest Nigeria. The results of the research indicate that all the three main constructs of learning orientation and their factors contribute to the regression weights of learning orientation. Specifically, it indicates that all the factors of commitment to learning, shared vision and open mindedness significantly high in regression weights. It is concluded that SMEs can benefit from learning orientation by their shared vision and commitment to learning.

The study also gives credence to the study of Jeihoony, Jabarzadeh, Kumar, and Garza-Reyes (2019) on the effect of learning orientation on innovation performance with the mediating role of operations strategy (cost, quality, flexibility, and delivery). Environmental uncertainty plays a moderator role in this model. Using a questionnaire to measure variables, data were collected from 243 UK production companies.

Structural Equations Modelling used for data analysis and hypothesis testing. The results support 9 out of thirteen research hypotheses. Learning orientation influences innovation performance and two dimensions of operations strategy (delivery and quality) mediates this relationship. Thus, demonstrating the significance of learning orientation as a vital driver to outcomes of organisational vitality for telecommunications companies in South-South Nigeria. It promotes a culture of innovation, enhances employee engagement, and supports strategic decision-making, all of which are essential for sustaining competitiveness and growth in the dynamic telecommunications sector.

These findings support the Human Capital Theory's assertion that investing in employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities drives organizational performance and competitiveness. By fostering a learning orientation, telecommunication companies in South-South Nigeria can enhance their organizational vitality, leading to improved innovation, customer satisfaction, and financial performance. Telecommunication companies that invest in employee training and development experience increased organizational vitality, measured by innovation, customer satisfaction, and financial performance (Oluwafemi et al., 2019). Learning orientation fosters a culture of continuous improvement, leading to increased adaptability, innovation, and competitiveness in the rapidly changing telecommunication industry (Eke et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research affirms to the significance of learning orientation in bridging the gaps and challenges associated with the organisational vitality of telecommunication companies in South-South Nigeria. The study therefore concludes that mobile telecommunication companies in South-South Nigeria that invest in and prioritize learning orientation tend to experience greater organizational vitality. As the learning orientation within these companies increase, their organizational vitality also significantly improves. This means that learning orientation is a key factor that contributes to the overall health, success, and sustainability of mobile telecommunication companies in South-South Nigeria. By prioritizing learning and development, these companies can achieve sustainable growth and expansion, ability to withstand challenges and crises and agility and responsiveness to changing market conditions. Therefore, organizations that prioritize learning are better equipped to innovate and adapt to market changes. Based on the conclusion, the study recommends that (i) telecommunications companies should invest in continuous professional development programs that encourage employees to acquire new skills and knowledge. This can include regular training sessions, access to online learning platforms, and partnerships with educational institutions. (ii) Encouraging knowledge sharing and creating opportunities for cross-functional collaboration can also reinforce this culture.

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