

MENTORING AND GROWTH OF LOGISTICS FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the relationship between mentoring and growth of logistics firms in Port Harcourt Rivers State. This study was anchored on Social Exchange Theory and Resource-Based View Theory. The study adopted a Correlational Research Design. The population of this study consists of sixteen (16) functional logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State as retrieved from Nigeria Directory. The entire population was utilized as sample size using Census method of sampling. The research data for the study was collected mainly from the primary source. The main data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire. The research instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was adopted in assessing the reliability of the study instrument. Hypotheses 1 to 3 was tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The result showed that mentoring has a strong positive relationship with measures of organizational growth (market share, customer satisfaction) of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. It was concluded that workplace mentoring significantly contributes to organizational growth by fostering employee development, enhancing performance, and improving retention rates. Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that management of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State should embrace employee mentoring to prepare the employees for other positions. This will ultimately enhance the growth of the organizations.

Keywords: Mentoring, growth, market share, customer satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Growth has remained a major concern to every organization regardless of their size and scale of operation. Many firms desire growth because it is seen generally as a sign of success and progress. Organizational growth involves assessing activities, monitor performance and make the strategic changes that will subsequently lead to the realization and achievement of corporate goals (Tushman & Romanelli, 2015). Organizational growth in logistics firms is a crucial aspect that determines the success and sustainability of these organizations. As the services industry continues to evolve and become increasingly competitive, logistics firms must continuously seek ways to expand their operations, increase their market share, and improve their level of growth.

Together with the rapid growth of globalization and changing organizational structures there is an increasing demand for qualified managers along with a corresponding scarcity of a highly qualified managerial pool in labour markets, thus employee mentoring has emerged as one of the most important management development tools from which to gain and maintain competent

managers, thereby improving organizational growth (Wissema, Brand & Van der Pol, 2011). Mentoring refers to the process of developing formal relationships between junior and senior members of an organization. It entails the establishment of formal relationships between more experienced employees and less experienced employees (Aneeq, 2012). The formal relationships are created to develop careers of employees (Nyambura & Kamara, 2017).

Similarly, mentoring leads to increased job satisfaction, organization commitment and career achievement. Hayes (2015) argues that mentoring enables employees to connect, develop and grow along their own career paths. Mentoring encourages the less experienced employees to tap into the knowledge of more experienced employees thereby leading to improvement in their performance. Mentoring is a suitable training method in that it can be channeled to fit individual employee needs (Sweeney, 2013). This is because the ‘one size fits all’ training and development method is considered inappropriate in an era of sophisticated business needs. In supporting this view, Hayes, (2015) established that the ‘one size fits all’ method entails developing similar T&D programs for all employees on organization which ignore individual weaknesses of employees (Sweeney, 2013). A study by Hutchings *et al.* (2009) established that mentoring increases an employee’s technical and interpersonal abilities while enhancing their job satisfaction.

Studies abound on mentoring and organizational growth, for instance, Adeniyi, Tende and Emmanuel (2024) examined the effect of workplace mentoring on employees' performance in private universities in Abuja, Nigeria. Odunayo (2022) established the effect of mentoring on employee performance of selected small and medium scale enterprises in Lagos State, Nigeria. Akpebe and Baridam (2020) investigated the relationship between mentoring and organizational effectiveness. Opara and Odu, (2019) examined mentoring and employees’ commitment in manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. It is evidenced from the above that little or no studies have been conducted in Nigeria on how workplace mentoring affects organizational growth using logistics firms as a focus point. Perhaps, some of the studies were carried out in other parts of the world, leaving Nigeria aside. Thus, this study sought to bridge the knowledge gap by examining the relationship between mentoring and growth of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The specific objectives were to:

- (i) Ascertain the relationship between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- (ii) Examine the relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework

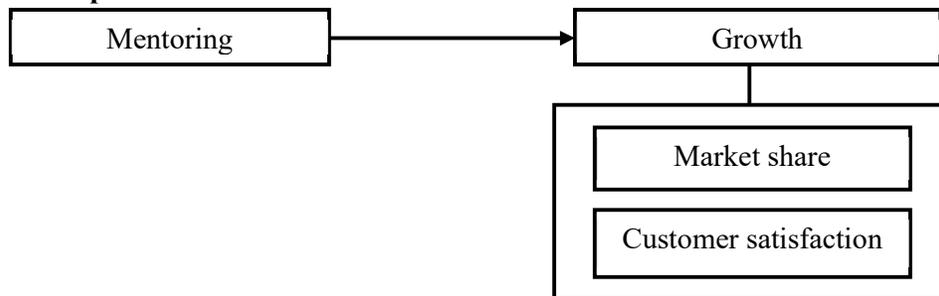


Figure 1: Mentoring and Organizational Growth

Source: From the Researcher’s Desk, (2025)

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the following research questions guided the researcher:

- i. What is the relationship between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
- ii. What is the relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were given in null form so as to arrive at a logical conclusion and to achieve its stated objectives.

Ho:1 There is no significant relationship between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Ho:2 There is no significant relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

This study was guided by the Social Exchange Theory and Resource-Based View Theory.

Social Exchange Theory

The Social Exchange Theory was put forward by George Casper Homan (1958). The social exchange theory explains interpersonal relationships by positing the economic cost benefit analysis as precondition for social engagement and exchange. The theory presupposes that the exchange of resources (material or social) is a basic form of human interaction. Social exchange is an ongoing reciprocal process in which actions are contingent on rewarding reactions from others (Gottschalk & Solli-Saether, 2005). Social exchange theory emphasizes the importance of interpersonal trust in alliances and information exchange (Gulati, 2010). A social exchange takes place within the employment relationship when a psychological contract is created containing the perceived commitments or promises that employees believe their organizations have made to them. The above theory is applicable to the study as it highlights the need for the organization to enable its resources meet two of the outlined characteristics. For an organization to remain competitive and thus improve its performance, its employees must be well managed so as to become valuable and costly to imitate. There is a need therefore for an organization to enable its employees which is the most important resource that they have, to meet the criteria. This can only be achieved through employing of effective mentoring so as to make them different and unique from the employees of other organizations.

Resource-Based View Theory

This theory was propounded by Wernerfelt, (1984). The theory argues that a firm has the ability to achieve and sustain competitive advantage if it possesses resources that are valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable and non-substitutable. Not all resources are strategically relevant within an organization. The goal of an organization is to ensure it has access to and control of valuable resources by developing and securing all the relevant resources either internally or externally. If a firm possesses critical resources that have strategic value, it is better to retain the activity in-house. Internal knowledge is recognized as one of the organization's core resources, according to the company's resource-based approach. It is an essential basis for competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Barney *et al.*, 2001). As indicated by RBV, achieving organizational growth entails developing capabilities and connecting specific competencies through improved communication, cooperation, and synchronization to achieve goals, for example, firms' scarce resources, which are valued, non-substitutable, and difficult to copy materials that are thought

to contribute to competitive advantages, are developed. Management training programs such as mentoring can help with these qualities because efficiency is linked to specialization, unity, and clarity. This theory is relevant to the present because proper mentoring activities will lead to improved organizational growth. Through management development, the organizations will be able to ensure proper attraction; development and retention of qualified and experienced staff with desired skills and knowledge. This will give the organizations a competitive edge over other firms which might be competing for the same category of employees.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Mentoring

Mentoring has gained in favour as of late as an efficient management as well as professional advancement strategy. Mentoring is becoming more popular in large government organizations as a form of employee induction, management development, and, on occasion, executive development. Mentoring is a drawn out relationship that provides psychological support and professional care to guild the mentee on a prosperous career path. Mentoring refers to the process of developing formal relationships between junior and senior members of an organization. It entails the establishment of formal relationships between more experienced employees and less experienced employees (Aneeq, 2012). The formal relationships are created to develop careers of employees (Nyambura & Kamara, 2017). Similarly, mentoring leads to increased job satisfaction, organization commitment and career achievement. Hayes (2015) argues that mentoring enables employees to connect, develop and grow along their own career paths. Mentoring encourages the less experienced employees to tap into the knowledge of more experienced employees thereby leading to improvement in their performance. Mentoring is a suitable training method in that it can be channeled to fit individual employee needs (Sweeney, 2013). This is because the 'one size fits all' training and development method is considered inappropriate in an era of sophisticated business needs. In supporting this view, Hayes, (2015) established that the 'one size fits all' method entails developing similar T&D programs for all employees on organization which ignore individual weaknesses of employees (Sweeney, 2013).

Galanou (2009) argues that mentoring process is one of the most important training methods for improvement of employee productivity and aligning individual goals to corporate goals. Further, clear mentoring policies have led to the success of many organizations because employees gain more competencies leading to improved productivity (Hamid, 2011). For this to happen, mentoring programs should be designed to meet individual employee needs (Steven, 2009). A study by Hutchings *et al.* (2009) established that mentoring increases an employee's technical and interpersonal abilities while enhancing their job satisfaction.

Organizational Growth

Organizational growth is, in fact, used as one indicator of effectiveness for businesses and is a fundamental concern of many practicing managers (Conner, 2000). Organizational growth is one of the most imperative measure in evaluating organizations, their activities, and environments. It refers to an actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives). Organizational growth involves assessing activities, monitor performance and make the strategic changes that will subsequently lead to the realization and achievement of corporate goals. Richard *et al.* (2009) organizational growth focuses on three major areas: (a) financial growth and investment; (b) shareholder expectation and economic value; and (c) production capability. Organizational growth, according to Bibhuti (2008) is the relative strength and ability of an organization to achieve corporate goals through internal work motivation, wide-ranging management style, greater commitment,

employees' retention, job satisfaction and work place opportunities which have significant and important effects on corporate success. Organizational growth is not only about increasing size or scale, but also involves a series of complex changes in the organization's structure, processes, and culture (Tushman & Romanelli, 2015). Organizational growth has been conceptualized as a process of selection and competition among firms, with growth and survival dependent on factors such as industry conditions, resource availability, and organizational adaptability (Hannan & Freeman, 2014).

Market Share

Market share is the percent of total sales in an industry generated by a particular company. Market share is calculated by taking the company's sales over the period and dividing it by the total sales of the industry over the same period. This metric is used to give a general idea of the size of a company in relation to its market and its competitors (Simon & Mark, 2019). Investors monitor increases and decreases in market share carefully as this can be a sign of the relative competitiveness of the company's products or services. As the total market for a product or service grows, a company that is maintaining its market share is growing revenues at the same rate as the total market. A company that is growing its market share will be growing its revenues faster than its competitors. The market leader in an industry is the company with the largest market share. A company's market share is its portion of total sales in relation to the market or industry in which it operates. To calculate a company's market share, first determine a period you want to examine. It can be a fiscal quarter, year, or multiple years (Hayes, 2022).

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a general psychological state which is about the expectation for emotions and experience from shopping behaviour (Oliver, 2003). Similarly, Andreassen and Lindestad (2004) pointed that customer satisfaction is the accumulated experience of a customer 's purchase and consumption experiences. In a supermarket context therefore, a client satisfaction is measured through overall satisfaction toward the services. Yi (2010) mentioned that customer's satisfaction is influenced experiences and expectations with service performance. Thus, satisfaction is similar to an attitude, as it can be assessed as the sum of the satisfactions with the various attributes of the product or service. This therefore means that customer satisfaction is expectation before purchase and perception about performance after purchase. In the service environment, customer satisfaction has been seen as a special form of customer attitude. It is a phenomenon of post-purchase reflection on how much the customer likes or dislikes the service after experiencing it , and it can be treated as a fulfillment of consumptive goals as experienced and described by customers (Oliver, 2003). Customer satisfaction can be seen as a customer's perspectives in which his or her needs, wants, and expectations throughout the product or service life cycle have been met or surpassed, bringing about ensuring repurchase and delay unwaveringness (Usta, Berezina & Cobanoglu, 2014).

Empirical Review

Adeniyi, Tende and Emmanuel (2024) examined the effect of workplace mentoring on employees' performance in private universities in Abuja, Nigeria. This is to evaluate the effect of Pedagogy and Psychological support on employee performance. The study adopted a survey research design, targeting a population of 2,118 employees from various private universities in Abuja. A sample size of 370 participants was determined using the Fisher formula. Data were collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using statistical regression techniques. These results indicate that psychological support has a statistically significant positive relationship with employees' performance, while Pedagogy does not demonstrate a significant relationship.

The findings of this also highlight the importance of effective psychological support programmes and services in private universities in Abuja. It is recommended that these institutions prioritize developing and implementing such programmes to enhance employee performance. By providing adequate psychological support, employees can gain valuable guidance, support, and resources to navigate their career paths, leading to improved job satisfaction and overall performance.

Odunayo (2022) established the effect of mentoring on employee performance of selected small and medium scale enterprises in Lagos State, Nigeria. Despite various entrepreneurship programs such as apprenticeship, coaching, and Employee orientation engaged in by SMEs where an employee or apprentice is taught on how business processes flow, employees' performance among SMEs in Lagos State has been found to be poor with regards to employee productivity, employee commitment, and organisational citizenship behaviour. The study was anchored Equity theory. The study used a survey research design. The unit of analysis was owners/managers of registered SMEs in Lagos State. The target population was all the registered 8,396 SMEs in Lagos State. A sample of 370 owners/managers (respondents) was selected through simple random sampling. An adapted and structured questionnaire was used in collecting primary data. A pilot study was conducted to ensure the data collection tool is reliable. The collected data was analysed using inferential statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 26.0. The study found that through Apprenticeship training, the employees are able to improve their productivity. In addition, the study found that Coaching had a significant influence on Employee Commitment. The study also found that through employee orientation, the employees are able to improve their citizenship behaviour in the organisation.

Akpebe and Baridam (2020) investigated the relationship between mentoring and organizational effectiveness. The study was premised within the context of 7 government agencies in Rivers State, from which data was generated using structured questionnaire from 46 participants. The relationship between mentoring and organizational effectiveness was tested using the Spearman's rank order correlation at a 95% confidence interval; thus a 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that at $P < 0.05$ for all hypotheses, all null hypotheses were rejected as the results showed that mentoring significantly correlates with organizational effectiveness measures – adaptability, goal attainment and service delivery. As such, it was concluded that the practice of mentoring within the examined agencies significantly enhances and contributes towards organizational effectiveness, thus enhancing outcomes of adaptability, goal attainment and service delivery.

Opara and Odu, (2019) examined mentoring and employees' commitment in manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. The objective of the study was to examine how dimensions of mentoring such as career support, psychological support, and knowledge sharing influence employee commitment. The study adopted cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study consisted of five hundred and fifty (550) staff in selected twenty-two (22) Manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size Determination Table of 1970 was used to obtain a size of 226 respondents. Out of 226 copies of the validated questionnaire distributed, 181 copies were retrieved. Bivariate analysis (test of hypotheses) was done using SPSS Version 22 at 0.05 level of significance. The analyses of data revealed that dimensions of mentoring such as career support, psychological support, and knowledge sharing are significantly and positively correlated with employees' commitment. The study concluded that mentoring ignites and sustains employees' commitment. Consequently, the study recommended among other things that experienced managers and superior officers should be

empathetic and make themselves accessible to less experienced colleagues to cement mentor mentee relationship.

Uchena and Nkechi (2019) examined “the effect of mentoring practice on employee’s performance in Nigeria. The objective of the study was to identify the nature of relationship between knowledge transfer, mentoring and career growth of junior lecturers and establish the nature of relationship between psychosocial function of mentoring and career adjustment of junior lecturers. The theoretical foundation for this study was social cognitive theory”. To achieve the objective, a survey research design was adopted. The technique employed in analysing the data were descriptive statistics and the spearman rank correlation coefficient. Through quantitative approach from 396 lecturers, the study found that there is positive and significant relationship between knowledge transfer mentoring and career growth of lecturers. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that mentoring practice has an effect on employee performance.

METHODOLOGY

In carrying out this research, the researcher adopted the Correlational Research Design. The population of this study consists of sixteen (16) functional logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State as retrieved from Nigeria Directory. The entire population was utilized as sample size using Census method of sampling. To constitute the sample elements, three (3) management staff each was drawn from 3 departments of the organizations under study making a total of 48 respondents. The research data for the study was collected mainly from the primary source. The main data collection instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire. The research instrument was subjected to face and content validity. The Cronbach alpha coefficient was adopted in assessing the reliability of the study instrument. The bivariate analysis was tested with Spearman’s Rank Correlation Coefficient (r^o). All analyses were done through the application of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 27.0).

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following results were obtained from the study:

Table 1: Summary of PPMC analysis on the relationship between mentoring and market share

		Mentoring	Market share
Mentoring	Pearson Correlation	1	.524**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	37	37
Market share	Pearson Correlation	.524**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	37	37

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The result on Table 1 shows the summary of PPMC analysis on the relationship between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The result shows that the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) is .524**. This means that a moderate and positive relationship exists between mentoring and market share of logistics

firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State at 0.05 level of significance and P.value of 0.000. Based on this result, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. It is therefore concluded that, there is a significant relationship between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Table 2: Summary of PPMC analysis on the relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction

		Mentoring	Customer satisfaction
Mentoring	Pearson Correlation	1	.714**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	37	37
Customer satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.714**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	37	37

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The result on Table 2 shows the summary of PPMC analysis on the relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The result shows that the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation coefficient (r) is .714 **. This means that a strong and significant relationship exists between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State at 0.05 level of significance and P.value of 0.000. Based on this result, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State is hereby rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. It is therefore concluded that, there is a significant relationship between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The result from table 1 and 2 above shows that a moderate and positive relationship exists between mentoring and market share of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. On the other hand, the result indicated that a strong and significant relationship exists between mentoring and customer satisfaction of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. This result is in line with the study of Akpebe and Baridam (2020) who investigated the relationship between mentoring and organizational effectiveness. The results showed that mentoring significantly correlates with organizational effectiveness measures – adaptability, goal attainment and service delivery. As such, it was concluded that the practice of mentoring within the examined agencies significantly enhances and contributes towards organizational effectiveness, thus enhancing outcomes of adaptability, goal attainment and service delivery. Opara and Odu, (2019) further examined mentoring and employees’ commitment in manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. The analyses of data revealed that dimensions of mentoring such as career support, psychological support, and knowledge sharing are significantly and positively correlated with employees’ commitment. The study concluded that mentoring ignites and sustains employees’ commitment. Consequently, the study recommended among other things that experienced managers and superior officers should be empathetic and make themselves accessible to less experienced colleagues to cement mentor

mentee relationship. The result also support the work of Fountain (2018) who examined “the relationship between mentoring and employee performance through engagement in the United States of America. The result of the inferential analysis analyses indicated that each part of mentoring variable (career support, psychosocial support and role modelling) had an independent impact on work engagement. The finding indicate that managers can achieve positive social change and improve employee well-bring within their organization by being dutifully involved in their employee work lives”.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study concludes that workplace mentoring significantly contributes to organizational growth by fostering employee development, enhancing performance, and improving retention rates. Mentoring programs create a culture of learning, support, and knowledge transfer, ultimately leading to a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce. Organizations that invest in effective mentoring programs gain a competitive edge by nurturing talent, promoting leadership, and fostering a positive work environment. The study therefore recommends that management of logistics firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State should embrace employee mentoring to prepare the employees for other positions. This will ultimately enhance the growth of the organizations.

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