

Leadership and Organisational Efficiency in selected Small/Medium Enterprises (SME) in Port Harcourt Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

Overtime, the role of leadership in enhancing efficiency in work place has been emphasized. Such emphasis has been placed on the fundamental role leadership can play to meet strategic goals and objectives, whether it is an individual-owned enterprise, government organization, or a joint partnership. This study is an examination of the impact of leadership on organizational efficiency in small and medium organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis. In this study, organizational efficiency is measured in the light of leadership pattern and effective communication. However, the instrument for data collection was the questionnaire, which was used to solicit information from 76 respondents who were determined using Taro Yamane technique and selected via simple random sampling method from four (4) small-scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis. Data for the study was analyzed using a non-parametric statistical technique - Chi-square (X^2). The study reveals that the Leadership pattern adopted by a small organization correlates positively with the performance of the organization. The study also revealed that effective communication in small organizations' is directly relates to employees high input to their organization, and this translates to customer satisfaction in the selected small scale industries. The study has also reveal that attending to the general welfare needs of employees would go a long way in mitigating low morale amongst employees and drive efficiency. The study recommends that Leaders of small organization should be respectful, responsible, accountable and inspirational to their subordinates

Key Words: Leadership; efficiency; communication; inefficiency; small-scale organization.

INTRODUCTION

The place of leadership in organizational performance and/or efficiency cannot be over-emphasized. Conversation surrounding the concept of leadership holds a fundamental place in work place and organizations, whether it is an individual-owned enterprise, government organization, or a joint partnership. The import of leadership style materializes in the performance of employees made visible in the organizations realization of its corporate goals, whether volume of sales, customer satisfaction, profit margin, and or return on investment (ROI). With diminishing operational cost in place and other factors that dramatically affect work place dynamics, proper leadership is quintessential to managing people so as to drive efficiency especially in small-scale work places. Several research studies (Ikejiani-Clark, et al. 1995; Michael, 2011) have shown that one of the most important

reasons for organizational inefficiency is poor leadership. Organizational efficiency is dependent on each manager or line manager, executing its function and contributing to the achievement of the organization's business priorities. Hence the pattern of leadership is directly related to how efficient an organization turns out. The style of decision making/taking a leader assumes in delegating responsibility and of course in relating with can affect the organization either positively or negatively. Employees of an organization remain a valuable asset and their contribution can create incremental improvement in productivity for the organization. But to a large extent, the style of leadership deployed can gravely undermine the value of such effort. Autocratic pattern of leadership to a large extent may erode efficiency, and lead to employee turnover. Whereas a leader with a more refined leadership style assents idea from staffs and makes use of such ideas to advance the work process. A motivated employee that believes in the organization's vision and objectives can be productive. Effective leadership has a direct relationship with employee morale especially in small scale-like organizations. Small organizations with poor leadership environment, especially poor communication with staff and employee are generally a denominator that generates an inefficient work place (VanBrouaene, 2011).

Various work-related studies have shown that workers are satisfied with reference to workspace environment, particularly certain features of the work place environment (Ajala, 2012). These characteristics predilection by workers are highly substantial to their productivity and workspace contentment, and the very essence of this is leadership (Veitch et al 2004; Humphries, 2005). Employees' interaction in the workplace, the style in which they are led and the way they perform their task is impacted upon by the organization's physical environment. A conducive and friendly environment according to (Cole, 2002) is that organization that takes care of employee welfare. Taking care of employees' welfare however includes taking care of the physical characteristics of the work place, to prevent a direct effect on the sensibility cum interaction of workers. Leadership is one of the essential conditions for organizational success. But research has found that sometimes organizations excel even without top rate leadership if they have striking organizational culture that sustains a high level of people engagement. Although it is quite clear that without an effective leadership, organizational culture becomes difficult to maintain. The narrow and unsettled condition of research conclusions in this space largely suggests the rationale to further scrutinize the nexus between leadership and organizational efficiency in small and medium size organizations. This work views leadership within the background of a small-scale enterprise as the exploit of managers/owners of the enterprise to contribute their efforts to the purpose of the enterprise. In this way, small-scale enterprise is viewed here as an organization with comparatively lesser number of workers and low capital base. This study therefore defines a small-scale enterprise as one that has no fewer than twenty employees as its workforce and whose capital expend is less than 3million naira.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine leadership and organizational efficiency in small and medium organizations in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives are;

- To examine the impact of pattern of leadership on sales performance in selected small-scale industries in Port Harcourt metropolis.
- To examine the significance of effective communication on employees and customer satisfaction in small scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Research Questions

- Has the pattern of leadership any direct influence on the value of sales in small-scale organisations in Port Harcourt metropolis?
- What is the significance of effective communication on employees and customer satisfaction in small scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Hypotheses

- There is a direct relationship between leadership pattern and sales performance in selected small-scale industries in Port Harcourt metropolis.
- Effective communication is likely to have a significant relationship on employees and customer satisfaction in small scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis?

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Peter Drucker "Leadership is all about results" and this result is created through positive influence on people. Generating outcomes in modern day dynamic and ever more competitive world needs a completely distinct type of leadership from what was previously feasible in the past. Although in time past, organization leaders managed a relatively complex organization, in a rather more or less stable and predictable society. Today, organizations exist in a rather complex and globalized networked world. The globalized networked society is driven by technology and is steadily prone to constant change. Organizations and leaders in this type of world are constantly coping with dynamics in the business environments. The work environment has become really flexible and is driven by the information/communication technology (ICT), here employees interface with one another flexibly in real-time and of course are the critical resource of the various organizations (Reger, 2001; Koech & Namusonge, 2012). In view of the fact that organizations are in a more dynamic world, a rather more dynamic leadership is equally concurrently required that will be steadfast with eyes on the employees to motivate and encourage them to achieving their aligned goals for effective organizational performance.

The customer base is therefore very crucial for any organization in this era, leaders that can drive that focus to enable the organization succeed are key. Previous studies had explored several factors to elucidate on firm growth, but the role of the leadership style of the Managing Director/Chairman Executive Officer of the small scale firm has not been studied. Comprehending associations between leadership styles, business strategy, efficiency and management systems should provide indications to the growth pathways of progressive firms/organizations. Earlier research according to (Begley & Boyd 1987, Barringer & Greening 1998) focused on sundry personal, firm, and market characteristics that interact to impact small business success. This paper goes beyond such research by

explicitly examining the effects of leadership style on the success of small businesses. The primary premise of this study is that, just like big corporations or organizations, behavioral composition (i.e., the attitudes and behaviors) of the leaders significantly form the functioning of smaller businesses. In fact, the owner of a small enterprise has a strong influence on firm performance. The CEO as it were of a small enterprise, like a printing press, a small local salon, a restaurant or real estate, is often the operational manager plus the leader of the firm. These CEOs are the ones that relate steadily with customers and vendors of the firm, they are accountable for the financial activities and reporting systems and they manage/supervise operations as well as take personal decisions. As CEOs, they are responsible for the framing of the organization's vision and this they actualize through strategic development. To this extent, small-scale organizations leadership style, which is a veritable indication of their inclination in managerial behaviors and actions, is an important element in the blend of factors that influence the success of an organization (Tharenou -& Lyndon, 1990; Bass, 1990, Yukl, 1998; Owolabi & Chukwuma, 2007).

In another study, which was carried out on Malaysian companies, results of the thesis revealed that corporate leadership type was significantly related to financial performance. The factors of financial performance measured were current ratio, return on investment and return on assets (Rashid Sambasivan & Johari 2003). In a related study conducted by Mashud (2006) to further comprehend the interface between such variables, the evidences however revealed that human resource policies designed to motivate individual leadership training are among the strongest forecasters of organizational performance. In another dimension, using correlational analysis to determine the leadership – efficiency nexus amongst academics in the University, (Nasir; Nordin; Abu Seman & Rahmat, 2014) study found that a specific type of leadership behaviour played a rather dominant role in determining efficiency amongst academic leaders in the University. According to them, the leader's transformational skills were perhaps the game changer.

Theoretical Framework

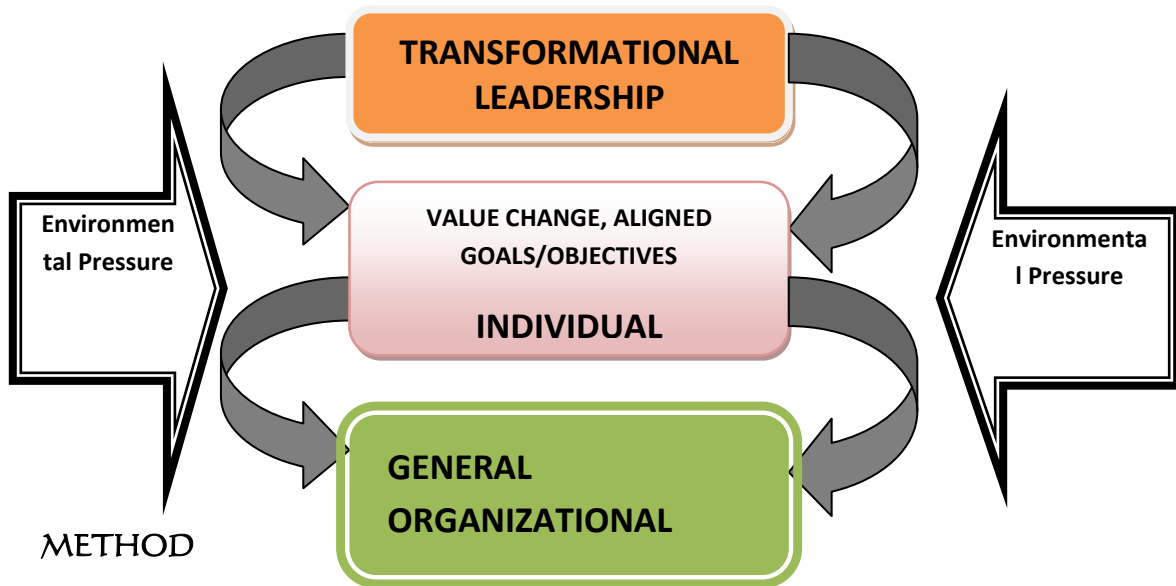
This work is anchored on the Transformational Leadership theory, developed by Bass (1985, 1996). Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT), is ideologically an off-shoot of the Transforming Theory of Leadership which was originally developed by Burns (1978), attributed with revolutionizing the understanding of leadership amongst scholars and practitioners alike. Transforming leadership according to Burns (1978) arises when multiple individuals are involved with one another in ways that leaders and followers advance each other to higher pedestal of motivation and standards. Burns theory is a clear assertion that in a Transforming scenario, only followers can define their needs, meaning that followers must maintain freedom of choice between real alternatives.

Bass reconstructed and refined Burns novel theory of Transforming leadership. He practically experimented the theory and called it "Transformational Leadership Theory" (TLT). The basic differentiation between these two is that whereas Burns (1978) theory entails social transformation by moral advancement of follower's ideals and desires, Bass's Transformational Leadership Theory pays more attention on achieving material organizational objectives (Yukl, 2010). In Bass's assertion, organizations where its leaders

demonstrate transformational leadership naturally involve in several dimensions of behaviours, and these behaviours practically boost follower motivation and performance. Transformational theory emphasizes that the transformational leader has the capacity to accomplish (3) categorical items: (A) create amongst followers the awareness of the significance of task outcomes, (B) persuade followers to go beyond personal enthusiasm for the team or organization's glory, (C) and propel followers in the direction of higher-order-needs. Contextually, the Transformational theory is seen in relation to the notion of change. That is, as the process of inculcating new value system into the follower (in this case workers) to drive a corresponding transformation in both attitude and individual objectives that drive the general performance of an organization. Change management represents an important concept in our study, since it suggests the capacity for improvement in the general objective of the organization. From the perspective of organizational efficiency the concept of change management is conceptualized as the process of delivering continuous productive capacity through the work force. In many cases, though the environment upon which the organization exists is harsh and exerts pressure on the worker in various forms, especially to leave the organization for a better prospect. The presence of a transformational leader would always compel in the worker the desire to stay and look beyond his personal interest but to align his objective with that of the work place. Such internal environment impacts positively upon the worker to be productive.

In summary, the transformational theory of leadership is an integrated approach whose principal assumptions are known from the environment, needs based and a general prosperity framework of both individual and the firm. It appreciates a standard methodology based on the action paradigm of change and the goal to succeed seeing that it generally impresses upon the worker to assent and embrace change in terms of nascent objectives and dynamics in auctioning task/duties.

Fig. 1: A Model of Transformational Theory and Performance



The study adopted the survey research design. The design is adopted since it provides methodological parameters to gather information from a wide range of respondents. The population for this work is the employees of four (4) small enterprises in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Information for the study was gathered using structured questionnaires, interviews and direct field observations. For ethical reasons, we have decided to tag the sampled small organisations A, B, C and D. As this was the promise made to them. The sample size for this study was determined using the Taro Yamane technique. The purpose of using this approach to determine the sample size, according to Baridam (2001:91) is to help the researcher establish the representativeness of the sample on an acceptable level of probability. The sample size for the study is seventy-six (76), determined from a population of ninety (94). Simple random sampling was used to randomly select the respondents each from the selected small scale organizations for the study. Data collected for this study were analyzed using simple percentages, as well as a non-parametric statistical technique - Chi-square. This was used to test the two hypotheses; the formula is given as;

$$\text{Expected Frequency } (Fe) = \frac{RT \times CT}{GT}$$

Where:

RT = Roll Total

GT = Grand Total

CT = Column Total

C = No. of columns

R = No. of rows

Whereas, to compute the Chi-square the formula is thus;

$$\text{Chi-square} = \chi^2 = \sum \left(\frac{Fo - Fe}{Fe} \right)^2$$

Where:

χ^2 = computed

Fo = Observed Frequency

Fe = Expected frequency

Σ = Summation sign

Level of significance = 0.05

Degree of freedom (d.f) = (C-1)(R-1)

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Table 1.1: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of respondents Information (n = 76).

Variables		
Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-19	11	14.5
20-24	28	36.8
25-29	30	39.5
30 and above	7	9.2
Total	76	100
Sex of Respondents		
Sex		
Male	43	56.6
Female	33	43.4
Total	76	100
Education of Respondents		
Highest Level of Educational Attainment		
None	-	-

Table 1.1 Above provides data on the socio-demographic information of respondents. It reveals that majority of the respondents 30(39.5%) are within the age bracket of 25-29, while 28 (36.8%) are between 20-24 years. Few of the respondents 7(9.2%) are in the age bracket of 30 and above whilst 11(14.5%) are within the cohort of 15-19. More of the respondents are males 43 (56.6%), while 33(43.4%) of the respondents are females. The distribution reveals that relatively more males are employed in the organisations vis-à-vis females. Educationally, the table shows that more of the respondents 34(44.7%) have Ordinary National Diploma (OND) educational qualification, 19(25%) have secondary/Commercial education, another 19(25%) of the respondents have other post-secondary or university education, and 4(5.5%) have Master's degrees as their highest educational attainment. The data on marital status of respondents revealed that 48(63.2%) of the respondents are single, 26(34.2%) of them are married, while 2(2.6%) of the respondents are separated. None of the respondents is divorced or even widowed, which clearly shows that the respondents are very young persons.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

In this section, the stated hypotheses are subjected to statistical. These hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Test of Hypothesis 1

H_1 : There is a direct relationship between leadership pattern and sales performance in selected small-scale industries in Port Harcourt metropolis.

H_0 : There is no direct relationship between leadership pattern and sales performance in selected small-scale industries in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Table 1.2: Contingency table for Leadership pattern and overall Sales

Sales Performance						
Leadership Pattern	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D	Total	%
Autocratic	3(6.5)	15(6.5)	4(6.5)	4(6.5)	26	34.2
Participative	6(4)	2(4)	5(4)	3(4)	16	21.1
Inspirational/people centred	9(7.3)	2(7.3)	7(7.3)	11(7.3)	29	38.2
Situational	1(1.3)	-	3(1.3)	1(1.3)	5	6.5
Total	19	19	19	19	76	100

Calculated $X^2 = 25.9$; $df = 9$; $\alpha = 0.05$; Tabulated $X^2 = 16.9$

Given that the calculated Chi-Square (X^2) is greater than the tabulated Chi-square (X^2_t), the difference between the observed frequency and the tabulated frequency is statistically significant. Therefore the Null Hypothesis is rejected and the Alternate hypothesis which states that, there is a direct relationship between leadership pattern and sales performance in selected small-scale industries in Port Harcourt metropolis is hereby accepted.

Test of Hypothesis 2

H_1 : Effective communication is likely to have a significant relationship on employees and customers satisfaction in small scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis?

H_0 : Effective communication has no significant relationship on employees and customer satisfaction in small scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Table 1.3: Contingency table for Effective communication and satisfaction in

Employees and Customer satisfaction						
	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D	Total	%
Effective Communication	4(2.25)	5(2.25)	7(2.25)	3(2.25)	19	25
	2(2.75)	4(2.75)	5(2.75)	-	11	14.5
	10(5.5)	-	3(5.5)	9(5.5)	22	28.9
	3(6)	10(6)	4(6)	7(6)	24	31.6
Total	19	19	19	19	76	100

Calculated $X^2 = 29.6816$; $df = 9$; $\alpha = 0.05$; Tabulated $X^2 = 16.9$

From the above, the calculated Chi-Square (X^2) is greater than the tabulated Chi-square (X^2_t), we reject the null hypothesis to accept the alternative hypothesis that is also statistically significant. Hence, the existence of an effective communication is significantly

related to employees and customer's satisfaction in selected small businesses in Port Harcourt metropolis.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The major objective of this study was to examine leadership and organizational efficiency in small and medium scale organizations in Port Harcourt metropolis. Organizational efficiency in the light of this study was defined and measured as sales performance and customer satisfaction, and data for the study was accessed from four small scale business organizations. Two hypotheses were developed and tested using a non-parametric statistical technique – Chi-square (X^2). The socio-demographic indices of the study revealed informed respondents with requisite educational qualifications, although with significant male employees. It further revealed a young sampled population justifying the few married respondents.

The current study found that leadership pattern has direct significant relationship with organizational efficiency in small scale organizations in Port Harcourt Metropolis. This finding corroborates the findings of Owolabi & Chukwuma, (2007) whose work this study however replicates as well as Karamat (2013). From the presentation and analysis of the data, the test of hypothesis one revealed a high calculated chi-square value of 25.9156, which made us accept the alternate hypothesis as against the null. Observations from the study indicate that organizations with better leadership pattern enjoy better sales performance than those who rather deploy bad/poor leadership. The leadership pattern in these organizations however accounts for the organizations inefficiency as sales performance to a large extent was low or poor as it were. Organisations A and D were better placed than the other two as the transformational leadership pattern (which is people centered) reasonably motivated their employees to be effective, leading to increased sales performance. Leadership in these organizations are not autocratic but inspires the workforce and is people centered. Thus, indicating that transformational leadership pattern significantly translates to organizational efficiency. The result of the second hypothesis shows that the existence of an effective communication structure/environment however enhances employee's satisfaction, which engenders high input to their organization in the selected small businesses and leads to customer satisfaction. Like in the first hypothesis, the calculated Chi-square for this hypothesis was reasonably higher than the tabulated chi-square (29.6816 > 16.919), hence the reason for the acceptance. Employees are pressured by both the internal and external environment especially customers. These pressures reinforce employees turnover were their own environment does not impact positively. An organization where communication is rather effective breeds informed workers. Thus when these employees do not feel any form of distrust in communication, they are rather relaxed and feel at home. This aspect of the organization excites their effectiveness to productivity and of course stakeholders or customers to the organization in this case are satisfied with the performance of such organization. The present finding is however consistent with the works of Koech & Namusonge (2012), Obiwuru, et al (2011).

CONCLUSION

Every organization is set up for a purpose, and that, without much ado is to make profit. But to make such profits requires the hiring of functional and effective workforce that can align to such goals. But workers are humans, and as humans have their own needs and of course want. Gaining employment in an organization means that the worker(s) expects his/her own objective to be fulfilled by same organization. Filling this gap to align with organizational goals requires leadership that can inspire, mentor, coach and commit the employees to ensure performance. As this study has shown, organizational efficiency, and or performance is clearly a function of the type of leadership employed in the organization. The autocratic leader would undermine progress as workers would have no trust and personality clashes may result more frequently than can be expected. Commonly, the basic underlying factor to poor performance in small scale organizations is the lack of qualitative leadership style and skill by the owners who at the same time are CEO's. The relapse into superiority claim in terms of decisions and ignorance to staff general welfare constitutes the bedrock of low morale and to the extent organizations inefficiency. When the working environment is conducive to employees, commitment on their part will enhance performance. Though the second hypothesis was validated in this study, yet, the small-scale organizations studied do not have an effective communication environment that can sustain employees trust going forward. In the long run, these small organizations may experience workers' turnover. We therefore submit that steady turnover rate which is a derivative of the leadership style of the organization and the general friendliness of such an organization to the worker is what would determine the sustainability of a small-scale industry or organization. In view of the outcome of the study, the following are recommended:

- Small organizations should operate on more recent leadership theories and jettison earlier autocratic models.
- Leaders of small organization should be respectful, responsible, accountable and inspirational to their subordinates.
- Communication should be open and flow down. They must be ready to support staffs attain their individual needs, goals/aspiration by coaching and mentoring employees, as this will improve employees' commitment to the organization. Basically, this will underscore improvement in performance, enhance employee satisfaction and satisfaction of parties and upturn organizations bottom line. Though this study achieved its goal, yet we recommend that future studies should employ a larger sample size and data should be analyzed with a broader parametric technique.

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