

WDJHSME

**WEST AFRICA DYNAMIC JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES,
SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES AND EDUCATION
CAPE COAST, GHANA**

**PUBLISHED BY WEST AFRICA DYNAMIC JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES,
SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES AND EDUCATION
CAPE COAST, GHANA**

ISSN: 2955-0556

WDJHSME
WEST AFRICA DYNAMIC JOURNAL OF
HUMANITIES, SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT
SCIENCES AND EDUCATION: CAPE COAST,
GHANA

Volume 4, Number 1, 2023

ISSN: 2955-0556

Published by West Africa Dynamic Journal of Humanities,
Social and Management Sciences and Education: Cape Coast,
Ghana

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MANAGERIAL COMPETENCY AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS OF TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE

By

IRENE O Isaac (Ph.D.)

Department of Marketing

Faculty of Social and Management Sciences

Air Force Institute of Technology Kaduna, Nigeria

Abstract

The success of organizations has been the major concern of the 21st century business establishments and to attain it, various strategies and plans have been employed. However, this research undertaking employs competency in management to ascertain its relatedness with organizational success. This study examined the relationship between managerial competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. A cross-sectional research design was adopted in studying four (4) of these institutions. Our respondents were managerial employees constituting the population of the study. From the field survey, we retrieved and analyzed forty (40) copies of the questionnaire from the participants; Spearman's rank correlation coefficient statistical tool was used to determine the relationship existing between the variables while the p-value obtained was used to test hypotheses developed for the study. Findings revealed the existence of a significant relationship between the dimensions of managerial competency namely; knowledge competency, skills competency and value competency and organizational success. It was then concluded that competencies are abilities, behaviors, knowledge, and skills that impact the success of employees and organizations. This gave rise to our recommendations for the organizations to note that managerial competencies will undoubtedly help them to be more unified and apply a coordinated approach in designing improvements to employees and organizational learning as well as career management in their designated functions to remain competitive in the 21st-century market.

Keywords: Knowledge competency, Skills competency, Value competency and Organizational Success

Introduction

One of the most important goals of any organization is to promote efficiency and effectiveness which leads to its success. The period we are in is seen to be competitive and organization irrespective of their size, technology, and market forces tend to be having the challenge of retaining their employees. For an organization to be successful, it must have a statement, a precept, and several events and goals that are based on the skills and talents of its employees. All of these must be managed carefully so that the organization's mission is successfully cultivated (Abbaszadeh, Eyni & Rabiei, 2012).

Available literature has argued that the success of any business organization is directly linked to the performance of those who work for the organization; it has also been argued that in order for the enterprise to build and sustain a competitive advantage, proper staffing is critical (Djabatey, 2012). It behooves modern organizations as well as managers operating in this complex business environment described as a knowledge base and technologically driven one to therefore understand their competitive advantage lies within their intangible assets, namely employees (Chabault, Hulin & Soparnot, 2012; Kaye & Smith, 2012).

Any organization that has the capacity to effectively allure, hire, expound, retain, and deploy employees with the appropriate skills and abilities at all levels is been established as an efficient tool for its success. The longevity of a business corporation is a function of business success recorded from the operations and activities of such corporation; hence organizational success is a measure of business performance; all business processes are targeted at contributing to the success of the business enterprise (Malte &

Marieta, 2012).

Stafford Smith (2008) in his study on factors contributing to the success of businesses in desert Australia has pointed to the geographical location of the business (in terms of remoteness), which he argues has implications for organizational success and survival. Another factor evidenced by practice is the ability to design, produce, and market products and services that are of high quality when compared to their counterparts as determining the level of competitiveness for any given organization (D'cruz & Rugman, 1992). Organizations that learn to focus on what is working and help employees to strive toward the positive will become more successful with more satisfied employees (Anchor, 2009; Leonsis, 2010).

Several factors evidenced from extant research have been recorded as contributing to success in the organization; one of such is communication within the business system; thus, when managers openly communicate with employees and provide upward and downward lines of communication, employees felt more support from the organization and managers, then increased performance and efforts to benefit the organization are derived. Organizations experience improved productivity and bottom-line success when management actively works to improve culture by improving attitudes and job satisfaction through effective organizational communication (Anchor, 2009; Keller, 2012).

Proctor (2014) in a study examined organizational communication effects on the attitude, happiness, and job satisfaction of workers and it showed that any manager or leader that communicates often and effectively with his employees will affect the job performance, attitudes, and satisfaction of the employees; thus leading to organizational success.

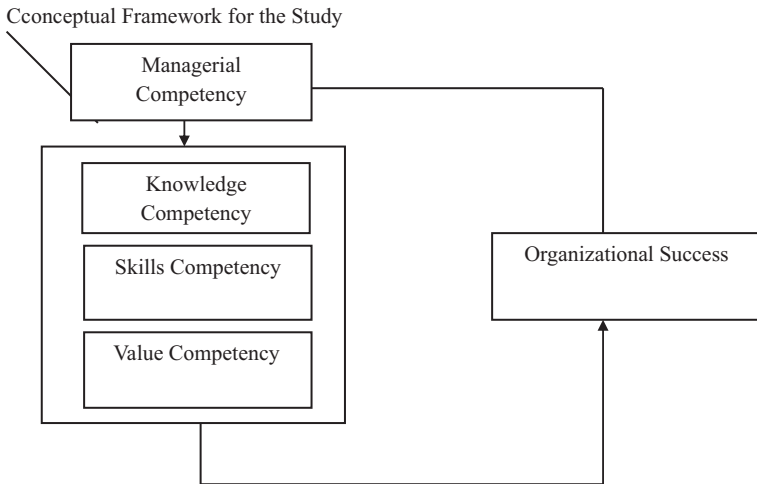
Effective leadership and organizational performance were examined by Edoke John (2012) which showed a positive relationship between effective leadership and organizational performance. He further stated that managing organizations in Nigeria in a way that is consistent with environmental variables are having in mind the culture of the people, their needs, and value preferences, thus ensuring that an effective manager/leader needs to possess all the positive qualities needed to manage the organization well which will make him succeed with the support of his superiors and subordinates.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Every business activity is carried out within an environment and the success of every organization is embedded in the nurturing of a talented workforce. Both private and public organizations are increasingly realizing the importance of nurturing a talented workforce. This is because, with a talented and well-managed workforce, everything is possible – the sky is the limit! Without it, one can count on numerous unsuccessful strategic efforts – one after another. Among the wide range of organizational processes relating to retaining high-performing employees, employee core competencies have become a focal point. What is not yet clearly known is where exactly can organizations focus resources such as incentives, coaching, and training programs to enable employees to perform maximally. By clearly identifying the right competencies.

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retaining high-performing employees, employee core competencies have become a focal point. What is not yet clearly known is where exactly can organizations focus resources such as incentives, coaching, and training programs to enable employees to perform maximally. By clearly identifying the right competencies, there will be a success.



Conceptual framework as adapted from Bakanauskienė and Martinkienė (2011) and Maltz, Shenhar, and Reilly (2003) for predictor and criterion variables respectively.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the research undertaking is to ascertain the relationship between managerial competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria; other specific objectives include;

- i. To examine the relationship between knowledge competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria

- ii. To examine the relationship between skills competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria
- iii. To examine the relationship between value competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are stated as tentative answers to the research questions;

H₀₁: Knowledge competency has no significant relationship with organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between skills competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between value competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Nigeria

2.0 Review of Literature

Theoretical Framework

Resource-Based View Theory

As a complement to this line of research, the resource-based view of the firm (Barney, 1991) contends that firm performance is a function of resource mix. When resources are heterogeneous, specific, and difficult to replicate and when a firm offering creates more value for its customers than its competitive equivalent(s) (Ansoff, 1965; DeCastro & Chrisman, 1995), then competitive advantage is achieved.

Thus, differences in performance across firms result from variances in resource portfolios. Resources are valuable when they provide organizations with the ability to implement strategies that enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Both internal and external

organizational resources are determinants of organizational strategy and performance (Barney, 1991) and include both physical and intangible resources of the organization. In business-to-business markets, internal resources may include cross-functional product development, as well as engineering, finance, and production interface. From an external perspective, the entire value chain with various alliances formed represents firm-specific resources and determines the level of performance.

Concept of Managerial Competency

The economy of the twenty-first century is based largely on knowledge and skills. For a business to remain competitive, it must follow the path of industries driven by human skills and expertise. Recognizing this, companies have begun to redefine the function of human resource development (HRD) and to rethink their expectations of it (Bates, Chen & Hatcher, 2002; Clarke, 2004; Mulcahy & James, 2000; Thurow, 1996). Many HRD-related competency studies have been conducted over the years; Pinto and Walker (1978), McLagan (1983, 1989), Rothwell (1996), and Rothwell *et al.* (1999) have carried out the most representative studies from the United States. The 1999 model (Rothwell *et al.*, 1999) is the most up-to-date US competency model. It updates and reinvents the HRD field by shifting the focus from long-term development to immediate results in performance (Abbaszadeh, Eyni & Rabiei, 2012; ASTD, 1994; Bassi *et al.*, 1997; Peerapornvitoon, 1999). This model incorporates the latest trends and current issues in the HR field for practitioners in the US and identifies competencies and roles for present and future jobs. A few HRD competency studies have also been conducted in Asia: (Abbaszadeh, Eyni & Rabiei, 2012; Kuo, 2002; Lee, 1994; Peerapornvitoon, 1999; Yang, 1994, Yoo, 1999; Zhu *et al.*, 2000). These studies ultimately will serve to prepare today's workforce for tomorrow's workplace, provide a labor market advantage, and allow Nigerian human resources development (HRD)

practitioners to devote themselves to building a 'world-class' workforce.

The literature identifies two interrelated sets of managerial competencies: technical and generic (Boyatzis, 1982). Technical managerial competencies connote having the knowledge and skills that enable the manager to give an effective performance in specific areas of management such as marketing. Generic managerial competencies refer to managers' capability of self-regulation and self-control at work (Kanungo & Misra 1992). It also covers other individual characteristics such as attitudes, motivation, or personality traits that involve coping with less programmed and technical tasks and more generic situations (Agut, Grau & Piero', 2003).

Many studies also make a distinction between soft and hard competencies: personality traits were considered as soft, and job-specific abilities were considered as hard (Parry, 1996). Several studies have identified lists of relevant managerial competencies, for instance, Boyatzis's (1982) executive level managerial competencies, Spencer and Spencer's (1993) competencies of top performing executives, Byham's (1990) executive level dimensions, Cox and Cooper's (1988) competencies of chief executives, and Kotter's (1982) general managerial competencies.

Knowledge Competency and Organizational Success

The concept of competence is being broadened to capture underlying knowledge and behaviors rather than simply functional competencies associated with specific occupations that is why Hodkinson and Issitt (1995) argued for a more holistic approach to competence in the caring professions, integrating knowledge, understanding, values and skills that 'reside within the person who is the practitioner.' Similarly, Cheetham and Chivers (1996, 1998) claimed to develop a holistic model of professional competence,

comprising five sets of inter-connected competences and competencies; one of which is cognitive competence; this includes underpinning theory and concepts, as well as informal tacit knowledge gained experientially. Knowledge (know-that), underpinned by understanding (know-why), is distinguished from competence (Cheetham & Chivers, 1996).

Domain competence describes the willingness and ability, on the basis of subject-specific knowledge and skills, to carry out tasks and solve problems and to judge the results in a way that is goal-oriented, appropriate, methodological, and independent. General 'cognitive competence' which is the ability to think and act in an insightful and problem-solving way is a prerequisite for 'developing' which therefore includes both cognitive and functional competencies (Delamare Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). A competency framework is typically viewed as a mechanism to link HRD with organizational strategy; 'a descriptive tool that identifies the skills, knowledge, personal characteristics, and behaviors needed to effectively perform a role in the organization and help the business meet its strategic objectives (Abbaszadeh, Eyni & Rabiei, 2012; Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). Gangani *et al.* (2004) similarly argue that 'competency-based practices utilize a competency framework to align the strategic objectives of an organization with its key HR business processes'; within this tradition, modularization and generic competencies are regarded with suspicion since these may damage the unity of the craft. From the 1980s, the concept of 'key qualifications' appeared, including personal competencies, such as the 'ability to act autonomously and to solve problems independently', 'flexibility', 'ability to cooperate', 'practical ethics and moral maturity'. While 'qualifikation' signifies the ability to master concrete (generally professional) situation requirements (so is clearly application-oriented); 'kompetenz' refers to the capacity of a person to act and is more holistic, comprising not only content or subject knowledge

and ability, but also core and generic abilities (Arnold *et al.*, 2001).

Thus, knowledge (and understanding) is captured by cognitive competence, skills are captured by functional competence and 'competencies' (behavioral and attitudinal) are captured by social competence.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between knowledge competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Skills Competency and Organizational Success

Katz has investigated skills of a successful manager in an essay in 1974 and has given threefold skill for the managers as follows;

- i. Technical skills; this is the ability for productivity from technical knowledge, methods and processes in order to do duties.
- ii. Human skills; ability for working with people
- iii. Cognitive skill or conceptual skill; power of understanding an organization through a general unit;

This model is a demanding model which can be used in different levels of the organization (Yousefi & Erfani, 2009). On the basis of Katz' opinion, technical skill is important in low levels of management, cognitive skill is important in high levels of management and human skills is important for three levels of management (Laguna, Wiechetek & Talik, 2012; Watt, 1998).

The increasing complexity of society, scientific progress, technology, necessities and development of organizations cause skilled and efficient managers to be used in organizations, because the intellectual efficiency of managers causes the organization to be improved (Irannezhad & Sasangohar, 2008). The effectiveness and efficiency of managers also need the management skills and the lack of these skills decreases the probability of managers' success and finally the organization's success will be decreased.

Therefore, each one of these skills is important for doing management duties (Anderson, 1988).

Katz describes Human Skills as "... the executive's ability to work effectively as a group member and to build cooperative effort within the team he leads. As technical skill is primarily concerned with working with "things" (processes or physical objects), so human skill is primarily concerned with working with people. This skill is demonstrated in the way the individual perceives (and recognizes the perceptions of) his superiors, equals, and subordinates, and in the way he behaves subsequently. A person with highly developed human skills is aware of his own attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs about other individuals and groups; he is able to see the usefulness and limitations of these feelings. By accepting the existence of viewpoints, perceptions, and beliefs which are different from his own, he is skilled in understanding what others really mean by their words and behavior. He is equally skillful in communicating to others, in their own contexts, what he means by his behavior" (Katz, 2009). This means that the Human Skills involve two different sets of skills: self-management skills, and interpersonal skills.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between skills competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Value Competency and Organizational Success

Additionally, Porter (1985) created a value chain model and value chain analysis as tools for evaluating organizational resources: these can be used for defining key functions, i.e. functions that are crucial in offering added value for clients; knowledge base management has the goal of creating value added (Irannezhad & Sasangohar, 2008).

According to Marchand (2000), this can be done in four ways: through risk management, through lower costs, through the creation of customer value-added, and through the creation of

something new. When one undertakes to strengthen a company's competitiveness via its knowledge base, one is led directly to questions about human resource management and especially competence management. This is when one necessarily gets fully involved with people management, and this is also when one must address value choices. Companies do things that they feel are valuable. If no explicit decision has been made to give value to some matter, then it is also not felt important to spend energy and resources on it.

Values drive the entire organization and its operations. Values are understood as prerequisites for success, and they should be reflected in all organizational activities. Values reflect an organization's long-term goals and operating practices. They speak about trends that remain stable for years ahead. They provide a basic sense of security in a continually changing environment and also stand for continuity. Values are commonly accepted operating principles. A company's entire staff should participate in their definition, be aware of the company's shared value base, and understand the relevance of the values to one's personal tasks. This is, above all, a challenge for top management. Aaltonen and Junkkari (1999) are of the opinion that joint value formulation leads to visible results such as better customer service, better workplace well-being and a better-functioning workplace community.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between value competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Methodology

This study adopts a cross-sectional survey research design in studying four (4) telecommunication firms which form our accessible population, however, our study units include the managerial employees of the firms having that our unit of analysis

is organizational and such employees are to stand in proxy for the organization. The human resource department provided us with data on functional departments within the organization. We conducted a census study and retrieved as well as analyzed forty (40) copies from managers who were our study objects. The instrument with which we elicited data from the respondents is the questionnaire which was analyzed using Spearman's Rank order coefficient of correlation statistical tool.

Results and Discussion

Table 1.1: Spearman' rank order correlation coefficient: A test of association between the variables

		Knowledge.Com	Skills.Com	Value.Comp	Org. Success
Spearman's rho	Knowledge.Com	1.000	.972**	.763**	.887**
	Correlation Coefficient				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48
	Skills.Com	.972**	1.000	.770**	.818**
	Correlation Coefficient				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48
	Value.Comp	.763**	.770**	1.000	.725**
	Correlation Coefficient				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	48	48	48	48
Org. Success	.887**	.818**	.725**	1.000	
Correlation Coefficient					
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	
N	48	48	48	48	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SPSS output, Version 20 – Field Survey, 2018

Table 1.1 presents Spearman's rank order correlation run to ascertain the relationship between knowledge competency and organizational success as reported by forty (40) respondents. A strong positive correlation coefficient value was reported between statistically significant variables ($\rho = .887^{**}$, $p = .000 < 0.05$ (alpha value) this suggests that there is a significant relationship between knowledge competency and the criterion variable; also skills competency and organizational success reported significant

values of correlation ($\rho = .818^{**}$, $p = .000 < 0.05$); accordingly, value competency and the criterion variable (organizational success) reported significant values of correlation ($\rho = .725^{**}$, $n = 40$, $p = .000 < 0.05$).

Decision: The null hypotheses stated are rejected and we state that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of managerial competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The study examined the relationship between managerial competency and organizational success of telecommunication firms in Rivers State; three hypotheses were formulated as tentative answers to research questions raised and were tested to find support for the propositions, thus; The result of the tested $H_{0,1-3}$ reported the existence of a significant relationship between the dimensions of managerial competency (knowledge competency, skills competency and value competency) and organizational success; ($\rho = .887^{**}$, $p = .000 < 0.05$; $\rho = .818^{**}$, $p = .000 < 0.05$; $\rho = .725^{**}$, $p = .000 < 0.05$); this empirical position is supported by Delamare Le Deist and Winterton (2005) in positing that domain competence describes the willingness and ability, on the basis of subject-specific knowledge and skills, to carry out tasks and solve problems and to judge the results in a way that is goal-oriented, appropriate, methodological and independent; also general 'cognitive competence' which is the ability to think and act in an insightful and problem-solving way is a prerequisite for 'developing' which therefore includes both cognitive and functional competences. Again, our empirical finding is corroborated by Irannezhad and Sasangohar (2008) in asserting that the increasing complexity of society, scientific progress, technology, necessities, and development of organizations cause skilled and efficient managers to be used in organizations, because the intellectual efficiency of managers causes the organization to

be improved. Similarly, Aaltonen and Junkkari (1999) who are of the opinion that joint value formulation will lead to visible results such as better customer service, better workplace well-being and a better-functioning workplace community; altogether resulting to organizational success support the findings as well.

Conclusion

Empirical reports from the data analyzed provide the following conclusions relative to the scope of our study; Managerial competency is an attribute of an individual that is “causally related to effective or superior performance in a job. Competencies are abilities, behaviors, knowledge, and skills that impact the success of employees and organizations. The possession of certain sets of competencies helps managers in being successful in enhancing organizational performance. Possessing certain competencies is crucial for managers, and this is especially so when managerial roles continually evolve.

Skills and knowledge are behavioral attitudes that mostly predict success, and are considered behaviors important for any organization to think strategically and seek prosperity. From the research undertaking, competencies are clusters of related knowledge, skills characteristics and attitudes that correlate with effective performance and are able to be measured evaluated and strengthened through training and development programs to affect success within the organization

Recommendations

The following recommendations come about as a result of prior findings and conclusions reached relative to the variables studied, thus;

- i. Every business organization needs these competencies in their workforce because they explain the mechanism which links human resource development to organizational strategies.

- ii. Managerial competencies will help organizations to be more unified and apply a coordinated approach in designing improvements to employees and organizational learning as well as career management in different sectors.
- iii. In today's highly competitive and dynamic business environment; it is very important for business organizations to identify, develop, and retain talented people; thus, making them more functional in their designated roles.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Section

Section A

Instruction: Please answer the following questions sincerely and tick (✓) where necessary

1. Name of Organization
2. Your Functional Unit/Department.....
3. Your position in the organization.....
4. Gender: (a) Male [] (b) Female []
5. Marital Status: (a) Married [] (b) Single []
6. Age: (a) below 35 years [] (b) 36 – 40 years [] (c) 41 – 45 years [] (d) 46 – 50 years [] (e) Above 50 years []
7. How long have you worked with your organization? (a) 1–5 years [] (b) 6–10 [] (c) 11–15 [] (d) Above 15 years []
8. Academic Qualification: (a) SSCE/GCE/Equivalent [] (b) NCE/OND/Equivalent [] (c) B.A/B.Sc/B.Ed/HND [] (d) MBA/MSc/M.Ed/MA [] (e) Ph.D [] (f) If others, please specify.....

Section B

This copy of the questionnaire has been constructed on a 4 point Likert' Scale – indicating; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD).

Dimensions of Managerial Competency

S/N	Knowledge Competency	Scale				
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	We have the know-how to translate information technology management into competitive strategy					
2	From the wealth of our knowledge we undertake risks as requisite management steps					
3	In project management; processes are designed to enhance work flow					
4	The supply chain management critically follows up our customer demands					

S/N	Skills Competency	Scale				
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Members have general computer literacy which facilitates services delivery					
2	Managers possess requisite skills necessary in interpersonal relations					
3	Skills for motivating the workforce to elicit better performance levels abound with our managerial employees					
4	We have benchmarking skills that enable us to adapt and align our strategies to current trends in the market					

S/N	Value Competency	Scale				
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	We have strong work ethics that guide our operations					
2	Our leadership approach is charismatic thus engendering motivation among workers to achieve set results					
3	We are customer oriented					
4	We are good listeners both to members and our stakeholders; from this, we are adaptable to change					

Organizational Success

S/N		Scale				
		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	We are very responsive to our customers relative to their needs and expectations					
2	Our leadership approach is charismatic thus engendering motivation among workers to achieve set results					
3	We are customer oriented					
4	We are good listeners both to members and our stakeholders; from this, we are adaptable to change					