THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIOEMOTIONAL FACTORS IN SALESFORCE TRAINING ON WORKER ATTITUDE IN THE NIGERIAN SATELLITE PAY TV MARKET

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Abstract

The rapid growth of the Nigerian economy has opened up consumer markets in ways that they had not been opened in the past. With these markets come new job classifications and the need to understand the ways in which the workplace impacts these workers. The Nigerian Pay TV market is in a state of constant growth and the competitive nature makes it essential that firms attract, train and retain top talent. The current study investigated the role of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing of trainers as influencers of worker attitude factors of job satisfaction and organizational commitment changes for salesforce workers (n=132). The study also investigated the impact of these relationships when self-efficacy of sales workers was tested as a mediating factor. The findings supported rejection of null hypotheses where transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing does not predict job satisfaction (p=.000) or organizational commitment changes (p=.000). The findings also supported acceptance of the null hypotheses where self-efficacy mediated these relationships. Models where transformational leadership, emotional intelligence knowledge sharing and self-efficacy predicted job satisfaction and organizational commitment changes were significant, showing no mediation; however, these models also resulted in the independent variables explaining 37.5% and 35.4% of variance in the dependent variables, respectively. It is recommended that trainers focus on being transformational leaders, use emotional intelligence in training and effectively knowledge share so trained workers will have better work attitudes, therefore, be retained.
Keywords: emotional intelligence, Pay TV, self-efficacy, transformational leadership, worker attitude,

Introduction

The rapid growth of the consumer economy of Nigeria has led to an increase in the number of consumer products and services available in the marketplace. Telecommunication services such as satellite pay TV have become more affordable, leading to greater dependence on salesforces which understand the complexities of the needs of customers (Adi, 2015). Customized pay TV have an abundant number of options to offer to the consumer (Nwankwo, 2018), and sales staff must be instructed on how to manage and grow accounts when developing relationships with new customers. Previous research on the training of sales staff concluded that transfer of training is related to self-efficacy (Iqbal & Dastgeer, 2017). Further, that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and the worker attitude factors of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Oh & Wee, 2016; Peng & Mao, 2015; Wang, Hall & Rahimi, 2015). The results of research by Lo Iacono, Weaven & Griffin (2016) offer evidence that worker attitude plays a significant role in managing relationships with customers, assisting clients with selecting the most appropriate options and profitability. Training has also

been found to be a significant influencer of worker attitude (Zumrah & Boyle, 2015). While it is understood that worker attitude impacts the success of the business and that training impacts worker attitude, the relationship between personal factors of the trainer such as leadership, knowledge sharing behaviors and emotional intelligence and changes in worker attitudes is not yet known. Just as important, it is not yet known whether a change in self-efficacy has an impact on the relationship between these personal factors of the trainer and the change in worker attitude after salesforce training.

Background

The Nigerian telecommunications industry has grown as the economy at large has improved over the past decade. Statistics provided by the Nigerian government show a 15-fold increase in the contribution of the telecommunications sector to the GDP of the nation from 2001-2012 (Adeniyi, 2012). Until 2010, the satellite pay TV market in Nigeria was only economically feasible for the rich (Ekah, 2018). Since 2010, the satellite pay TV market has grown with several competitors entering a market that is increasingly affordable for the growing number of people in the Nigerian middle class. The diverse needs of consumers has led to the emergence of a highly customizable service experience where customers can select which services they seek and even what days they would like service (Iroegbu-Chikezie, 2018). The complex shape of the market has led to the importance of training and development so that account representatives can understand the services available to the consumer. Because of the importance of worker attitude to successful salesmanship, it is essential to understand the relationship between personal factors of the trainer and changes in work attitude, as well as whether a change in self-efficacy can have an impact on this relationship.

Problem Statement

The Nigerian retail economy has experienced rapid growth over the course of the past decade because of changes to telecommunications and banking industries (Fiorini, Hattingh, MacLaren, Russo & Sun-Basorun, 2013). A consequence of these changes to the Nigerian economy has been the need to develop salesforces which are capable of responding to diverse needs of consumers, many who require complex and customized solutions (Jedlowski, 2017). In order for firms to most effectively capitalize on their investment in training, trained workers must have a positive attitude where they are committed to the organization and satisfied with their job, while also developing a stronger self-efficacy. Their trainers must play a role in accomplishing this objective. Currently, there is paucity in research related to understanding the relationship between socioemotional factors such as leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with worker attitudes or self-efficacy. This research closed that gap in the scope of salesforce workers in the satellite pay TV industry in Nigeria.

Objectives of Study

The purpose of this quantitative, multiple regression investigation is to understand the impact of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Further, this research examines this relationship to understand whether self-efficacy has a mediating impact on the association of the independent and dependent variables. A survey-based approach was taken to the study. The population focused upon in this study was salesforce workers in the satellite pay TV industry in Nigeria. These workers were the focus of this study because of the growth of the telecommunications industry in Nigeria (Fiorini, Hattingh, MacLaren, Russo & Sun-Basorun, 2013) and the growth of demand for salesforce workers (Jedlowski, 2017), which means

increased importance in worker development. The geographic location of this research is Nigeria. This research offers the potential for positive change because the finding of significant relationships in the data is evidence of the need for development of salesforce trainers in terms of preparing trainers to be stronger leaders with better emotional intelligence and greater skill related to knowledge sharing.

Research Questions

What impact does the transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing behaviors of salesforce trainers have on changes in job satisfaction and organizational commitment of salesforce workers in the Nigerian satellite pay TV market? Does self-efficacy have a mediating impact on this relationship?
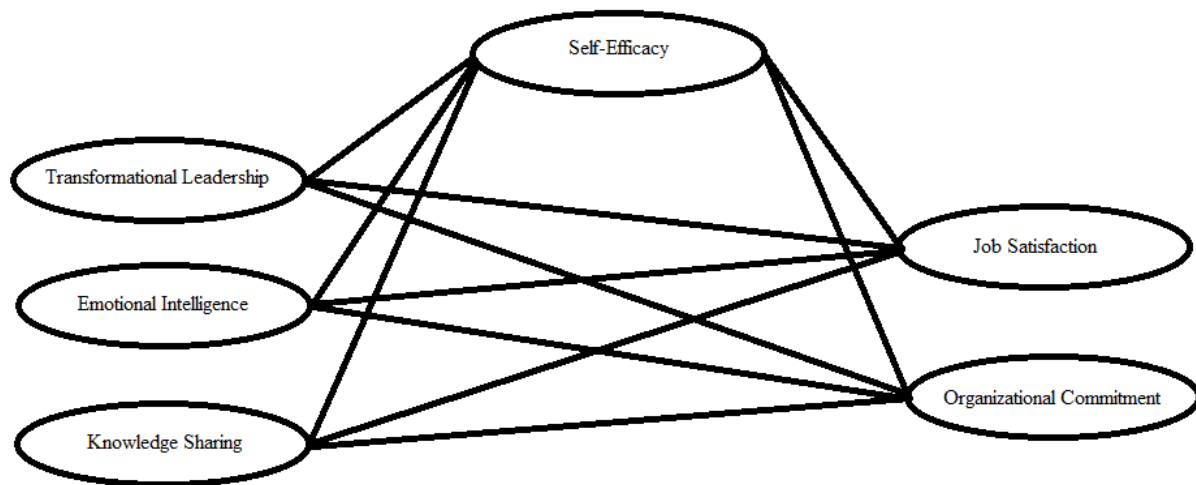
Statement of Hypotheses

$H_1 0$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is not significant at $p < .05$.

$H_1 A$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is significant at $p < .05$.

$H_2 0$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is not significant at $p < .05$.

$H_2 A$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is significant at $p < .05$.

$H_3 0$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is not mediated by self-efficacy.

$H_3 A$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is mediated by self-efficacy.

$H_4 0$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is not mediated by self-efficacy.

$H_4 A$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is mediated by self-efficacy.

Literature Review

For workers, self-efficacy is an important factor related to their success on the job (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). A worker's self-efficacy impacts the degree of effort put forth to complete tasks and the appetite of the worker to take on obstacles. Leaders and managers can play a role in influencing the self-efficacy of a worker (Pillai & Williams, 2004). Trainers are able to have the same impact on self-efficacy (Tannenbaum et al. 1991). Self-efficacy is a factor which is impacted by factors related to supervisors and trainers such as leadership (McCormick, 2001), emotional intelligence (Cherniss & Adler, 2000), and knowledge sharing (Srivastava, Bartol & Locke, 2006). With a change in self-efficacy also comes change of other factors related to performance and attitudes of workers. Self-efficacy has been found to impact both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is theorized in this study that the transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing of trainers lead to changes in job satisfaction and commitment as well as a change in self-efficacy.

Theoretical Framework

Figure 1. **The framework of the study.**

Methods

A quantitative, multiple regression analysis was performed to understand the influence of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing on worker attitudes. A survey-based study of change between $Time_1$ and $Time_2$ rather than an experimental design because of the value in understanding the impact of the independent variables when there is no random assignment to groups. Dalecki and Willits (1991) support the research design in the current study, noting the value of understanding the relationship between independent variables with change in dependent variables, and that it is difficult to determine the significance of relationships when an experimental design is in place. As the theoretical framework of this study is also based on the hypothesis that self-efficacy mediates the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables, the research design of this study is the most feasible attempt at testing theory at the core of this study.

Research Design

The research was designed to measure the difference in worker attitudes related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment of salesforce workers in the Nigerian satellite pay TV market. The setting was a large satellite pay TV firm. To ensure the privacy of respondents, the name of this firm cannot be disclosed. The firm designed a training program for the salesforce in 2015. Training staff was trained on methods to use in training in order to effectively share knowledge with workers; however, staff was not trained on leadership or emotional intelligence. The training program was a high-intensity training regimen where sales staff was developed to more effectively respond to the needs of customers and understand how to develop business opportunities based on customizable solutions in both residential and business pay TV options. The training program ran through 4 sessions that workers would participate in for 2.5 days in a 5-day work week for 4 weeks with one session per week. Beginning in February 2016, sales staffs were offered the opportunity to take part in research to understand the impact that the new salesforce training program was having on worker attitudes. The same offer was made to sales staff participating in training for the following 2 years, with data collection concluding in August 2018. One week prior to salesforce training, a

survey instrument was distributed to workers. Factors measured were related to worker attitudes and worker self-efficacy. One week after training, a closing session was held and workers who offered to take part in the research study were given a second survey to complete, where the same worker attitudes and self-efficacy survey; however, additional items measured the level of transformational leadership emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing by the trainer.

Independent, Mediating and Dependent Variables

The independent variables in this study were transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing. The dependent variables in this study were job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The mediating variable in this study was self-efficacy. Based on the theoretical framework of the study, it was proposed that leadership focused on intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, inspirational motivation and idealized influence, when paired with emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing will impact the self-efficacy of salesforce workers. At the same time, self-efficacy has some degree of impact on the relationship between these factors and worker attitudes as identified by job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Transformational leadership: Transformational leaders are leaders that identify change, create vision to guide through inspiration and execute change through the commitment of workers (Bass & Avolio, 1995). Transformational leadership was measured using the Bass and Avolio Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5X short-form (MLQ5X). This scale was determined by Bass and Avolio to be valid and reliable. Cronbach's alpha test of internal consistency on the data in the current study supports previous findings where the scale was found to be reliable as the score was found to be.

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence is the capacity of an individual to be aware of, control and express emotions where they may handle relationships with judiciousness and empathy (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence was measured using the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (Schutte et al., 1998). This scale was designed based on the emotional intelligence model designed by Salovey and Mayer. While Ciarrochi, Chan and Bajgar (2001) discovered poor reliability when using the scale, Petrides and Furnham (2000) established that the scale has strong validity and reliability through factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha score in the current study was .940.

Knowledge sharing: Knowledge sharing is the activity of sharing relevant knowledge to workers. Yi (2006)'s scale of knowledge sharing was utilized in this study. Yi established that the scale has a high degree of reliability and validity. The Cronbach's alpha score in the current study was .913.

Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy is the belief of an individual that they can succeed in specific situations or accomplish specific tasks (Bandura, 1978). Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995)'s generalized self-efficacy scale was utilized in this study. The researchers established the scale as having a high degree of validity and reliability in measuring self-efficacy with Cronbach's alpha scores between .76 and .90, with the construct being significantly correlated with emotion, optimism, work satisfaction, depression, stress, health complaints, burnout and anxiety. The Cronbach's alpha score in the current study was .937.

Job satisfaction: Job satisfaction is a feeling of contentment and accomplishment with a job (MacDonald & MacIntyre, 1997). MacDonald and MacIntyre's generic job satisfaction scale was utilized in this study. MacDonald and MacIntyre established the validity and reliability of the scale, as the Cronbach's alpha score was .77 and factor analysis concluded with the finding that all items on the scale measured one factor. The Cronbach's alpha score in the current study was .945.

Organizational commitment: Organizational commitment is the connection and attachment of an individual with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meyer and Allen's scale measuring organizational commitment was utilized in this study. There have been some challenges to the validity of this scale. Jaros (2007) examined the validity of the subscales of affective, normative and continuance commitment; however, these challenges were based on findings such as some items not loading well when factor analysis was performed. The Cronbach's alpha score in the current study was .890.

Population

The population was salesforce workers in Nigeria, specifically those working in the Nigerian pay TV industry. Retail sales is a growing element of the Nigerian economy (Fiorini, Hattingh, MacLaren, Russo and Sun-Basorun, 2013); therefore, it is essential to understand the influence that training has on retail sales people as the population will likely grow with time.

Data Sources

Primary data was collected from participants who were salesforce workers in a Nigerian pay TV organization from 2016-2018.

Sampling Method

A convenience sample was taken from the Nigerian pay TV organization. Data was collected from one organization and was collected based on workers willing to take part in the survey. This sampling method was chosen based on ease of access to data sources. A priori power analysis was used to determine the sample size for the study. G*Power Vers. 3.1.9.2 Was used to perform the test. Table 1 presents the input and output parameters for the priori. The results of the priori supported the use of a total sample size of 132 participants.

Table 1.

The parameters of the priori analysis

Input Parameters	
Tails	2
Effect size f^2	.1
α err prob	0.05
Power (1-β err prob)	0.95
Number of predictors	4
Output Parameters	
Noncentrality parameter δ	3.63
Critical t	1.98
Df	127
Total sample size	132
Actual power	0.95

Reliability and Validity of Instrumentation

Scales selected for this study were selected based on previous success of other researchers related to establishing the reliability and validity of these scales. In the current research, reliability was established through the use of Cronbach's Alpha as a way to determine an acceptable level of internal consistency for items measuring each construct on the survey.

Data Analysis Procedure

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. As the purpose of the research was to measure the impact of the independent variables on a change in the dependent variables, the scores used to measure the dependent variables were the change between the time prior to (Time$_1$) and after the implementation (Time$_2$) of salesforce training. Dalecki and Willits (1991) concluded that when multiple regressions is used to measure the impact of independent variables on a change in dependent variables that a difference score (Time$_2$ – Time$_1$) should be used as the dependent variable; however, Time$_1$ should be used as a covariate. There are several key assumptions which are associated with multiple linear regressions. These include multivariate normality, no multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. Multivariate normality was tested through the use of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Multicollinearity was tested through a correlation matrix to determine if the correlation between independent variables was .80 or greater. Homoscedasticity was determined by a scatterplot of residuals and predicted values to determine if a pattern emerged. Means and standard deviations were reported to describe the sample. SPSS was utilized to determine the results. Mediation was used to test hypotheses 3 and 4.

Findings

The findings in this section first present descriptive statistics related to the sample, then the testing of hypotheses. Table 1 is a correlation matrix with the skewness and kurtosis. Skewness and kurtosis support there being a normal distribution of the data. While there are significant relationships between several of the factors that work as independent variables in this study, the correlation statistics were below the .80 threshold.

Table 1.
A Correlation matrix with means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis.

	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Transformational Leadership	25.99	5.89	0.88	0.97	---					
2. Emotional Intelligence	25.87	5.83	-0.67	1.32	.296**	---				
3. Knowledge Sharing	25.58	5.12	-0.1	-0.69	.411**	.202*	---			
4. Self-Efficacy	19.66	5.71	-0.12	-0.27	0.133	.303**	.172*	---		
5. Job Satisfaction Change	7.93	2.57	-0.32	-0.34	.313**	.312**	.317**	.557**	---	
6. Organizational Commitment Change	8.46	2.35	0.12	-0.55	.243**	.361**	.215*	.563**	.568**	---

NOTE: N=132. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

H_10: The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is not significant at $p < .05$.

H_1A: The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 2 is the multiple regression model representing hypothesis 1. The findings support rejection of the null hypothesis. The alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 2.
A table of the test for hypothesis 1.

	Unstandardized			
	B	Beta	t	sig.
(Constant)	1.426		1.135	0.259
TransformationalLeadership	0.071	0.163	1.796	0.075
EmotionalIntelligence	0.111	0.223	2.649	0.009
KnowledgeSharing	0.092	0.205	2.322	0.022

NOTE: N=132. Adj. R2=.166. F(3,127)=9.639. Model p=.000.

H_20: The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is not significant at $p < .05$.

H_2A: The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 3 is the multiple regression model representing hypothesis 2. The findings support rejection of the null hypothesis. The alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 3.
A table for the test of hypothesis 2

	Unstandardized			
	B	Beta	t	sig.
(Constant)	2.855		2.447	0.016
TransformationalLeadership	0.043	0.107	1.171	0.244
EmotionalIntelligence	0.141	0.307	3.604	0
KnowledgeSharing	0.045	0.109	1.223	0.224

NOTE: N=132. Adj. R2=.14. F(3,128)=8.137. Model p=.000.

H_30: The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is not mediated by self-efficacy.

H_3A: The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with job satisfaction is mediated by self-efficacy.

Table 4 presents evidence related to hypothesis 3. When Table 2 and Table 4 are examined together, there is a lack of evidence of mediation. The null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4.

A table for the test of hypothesis 3

	Unstandardized			
	B	Beta	t	sig.
(Constant)	1.43		1.383	0.169
TransformationalLeadership	0.042	0.105	1.326	0.187
EmotionalIntelligence	0.078	0.171	2.229	0.028
KnowledgeSharing	0.022	0.053	0.684	0.495
SelfEfficacy	0.159	0.488	6.579	0

NOTE: N=132. Adj. R2=.354. F(4,127)=18.939. Model p=.000.

$H_4 0$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is not mediated by self-efficacy.

$H_4 A$:   The relationship between transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing with organizational commitment is mediated by self-efficacy.

Table 5 presents evidence related to hypothesis 4. When Table 3 and Table 5 are examined together, there is a lack of evidence of mediation. The null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5.

A table for the test of hypothesis 4

	Unstandardized			
	B	Beta	t	sig.
(Constant)	-0.112		-0.101	0.92
TransformationalLeadership	0.071	0.161	2.056	0.042
EmotionalIntelligence	0.044	0.089	1.169	0.245
KnowledgeSharing	0.067	0.149	1.943	0.054
SelfEfficacy	0.172	0.483	6.585	0

NOTE: N=132. Adj. R2=.375. F(4,126)=20.48. Model p=.000.

Discussion

The findings of this research are evidence that the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of salesforce workers in the Nigerian Pay TV market is significantly impacted by several factors related to their trainers. Trainer transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, knowledge sharing and self-efficacy each significantly impact these factors. At the same time, transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing also impact self-efficacy (Table 2). Based on these findings, it is essential that trainers function as developers of both technical knowledge and socio-emotional experience with the organization. Salesforce trainers should be selected based on the degree of transformational leadership and emotional intelligence they show, and should be selected based on the amount of knowledge they hold. An implication of this finding is that trainers who have emerged as leaders and who hold a high degree of knowledge should be selected for training positions.

In the scope of the hypotheses, null hypothesis 1 and 2 were rejected, while 3 and 4 were accepted. Tables 5 and 6 are evidence that multiple regression models where transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, knowledge sharing and self-efficacy predict job satisfaction and organizational commitment changes, these four factors work together to effectively predict

changes, but there is a lack of mediation in the model. Tables 3 and 4 present similar findings without self-efficacy as a factor of the model. Based on these findings, transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing can work together to impact a high degree of both job satisfaction and organizational commitment changes.

It is essential that trainers have an impact on the job satisfaction and organization commitment work attitudes of salesforce workers. This is because as workers are trained, they develop new knowledge that could be taken to other firms; hence, it is both a loss for the organization to lose these workers and a gain for other organizations which gain access to these workers. Self-efficacy was proven to play some degree of impact in the multiple regression models, and while it does not mediate the strength of the multiple regression models, it does have implications for the impact on worker attitudes. Future research should focus on understanding the impact that self-efficacy has on work attitudes and ways in which trainers develop it. Further, future research should look at other forms of leadership to understand the impact of leadership in general from the standpoint of the trainer as a leader.

Conclusion

The impact of leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing on worker attitude factors is significant, and organizations must focus on nurturing worker growth through their interactions with people in position of leadership and personal development. Trainers have a great opportunity to pass along knowledge to workers, while also having a positive impact on their perception of the firm, while using leadership tools to contribute to their attitude and personal development. The findings of this research supported the impact of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and knowledge sharing as contributing factors to the development of salesforce workers, and while self-efficacy will not mediate the relationship it does have an impact. Work is a social activity and socio-emotional factors will have an impact in that they will improve worker attitude, while encouraging workers to stay with a firm.

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