

WORKPLACE SOCIAL MEDIA INITIATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF PAINT MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT

¹Dr Dumo Nkesi Opara & ²Onye-Chinedu, Chioma Blessing
Department of Office and Information Management
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Email:dumopara@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of workplace social media initiatives and organizational performance of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. The objective of the study was to examine how workplace social media initiatives influence measures of organizational performance of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. The explanatory cross section survey research was adopted for the study. The population of this study consisted of nineteen (19) paint manufacturing firms operating in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. A sample of ninety five (95) respondents was obtained using census sampling technique. Structure questionnaire was use as instrument for data collection after face-validation. Cronbach alpha was use to test the internal consistency of the instrument. Out of 95 copies of the questionnaire administered, a total of 76 were retrieved. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used for univariate analysis while bivariate analysis use done using Spearman Rank Order Correction; partial correlation was applied for the multivariate analysis. The findings revealed that workplace social media have significant positive influence on organizational performance of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. It was also found that workplace digital infrastructure such as Internet Connection Infrastructure and local office information system significantly moderate the extent to which workplace social media initiatives influences on organizational performance. The study concluded that organizations such as paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, can achieve high level of performance if the workplace social media management initiative are properly employed. The research therefore, recommended that organizations should encourage the smart use of office whatsapp as an official means of information dissemination.

Keyword: Workplace Social Media, Product Innovation, Market Share and Service Delivery

INTRODUCTION

One of the major challenges faced by paint manufacturing firms in Nigeria over the years appears to be corporate under-performance. For instance, some of the paint manufacturing firms have not been able to improve their products and services by way of diversification and quality improvement (Uriarte, 2018; Akpan, et al., 2018). Some of them have not been able to innovate better customer services and this seems to have led to downsizing customer base and low sales revenue (market share). It has also been observed that across industries like Banking, Telecommunication, Oil and Gas, and Fast Food Movable Goods, some of the major players in the past have lost their competitive edge (Al-Shura, et al., 2018). Lack of improvement in product lines and downsizing market share makes it difficult for such paint manufacturing firms to secure reasonable return for their shareholders.

While the poor performance of companies could be blamable on economic realities, the underperformance of many companies in Nigeria has been attributed to inadequate adoption of emerging knowledge management systems (Ozoigbo & Chukuezi, 2017; Agwamba, et al., 2019). Although digital knowledge management initiatives like workplace social media, video tools, intranet, and communities of practices have existed in many paint manufacturing firms in Nigeria, the level of their adoption has been very low. There appears to be very little deliberate efforts

towards employing these tools in the capturing, storage, sharing, and use of implicit and explicit knowledge resources.

The importance of organizational performance and digital knowledge management initiatives has spurred various research efforts within and outside Nigeria. For instance, Rašula et al. (2012) examined the impact of knowledge management on organisational performance and it was found that knowledge management practices enhance organizational performance. Suryaningrum (2012) examined knowledge management and performance of small and medium entities in Indonesia. The study revealed that organizational learning and competitive strategy have positive correlation with knowledge management. In another study, Meihami and Meihami (2014) examined knowledge management as a way to gain a competitive advantage in manufacturing companies. The study revealed that the adoption of knowledge management enhances organizational performance, customer-oriented and product innovation. Ezinma, et al (2015) investigated knowledge management and organizational performance in selected commercial banks in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria; the study equally showed that knowledge management enhances corporate performance of Deposit Money Banks in Akwa, Anambra State, Nigeria. Bagiwa (2016) examined how digital knowledge management initiatives such as cloud storage, cloud computing Microsoft, and cloud architect influence organizational performance and it was found that cloud services enhance organizational performance.

In another case, Nada et al. (2016) examined the impact of information technology infrastructure on innovation performance in private Universities in Iraq. The study revealed that information technology infrastructures are positively correlated with innovation performance. Akpan, et al (2018) examined the relationship between social media usage and firm performance in Nigerian Telecommunication Sector and it was found that a significant positive correlation exists between workplace social media usage and the performance of Telecommunication firms in Nigeria. The weakness of this study is that it did not cover most of the prominent Telecommunication firms in Nigeria. Another study examining the role of knowledge management process and intellectual capital as intermediary variables between knowledge management infrastructure and organizational performance by Shadi, et al (2018) revealed that knowledge management infrastructure enhances organizational performance when the right intellectual capital is in place. This study amplifies the importance of communities of practices in successful knowledge management processes. Agwamba, et al (2019) theoretically examined the relationship between knowledge management and organizational innovation and it was found that knowledge management gives birth to organizational innovation and better performance.

While it is evident that the studies cited above showed how knowledge management practices has enhanced organizational performance in Anambra State in Nigeria and other countries of the world, none of these studies was done in Port Harcourt, Nigeria and within the context of paint manufacturing firms. Another issue of knowledge gap necessitating this study is that none of the studies reviewed examined how digital knowledge management initiatives such as video tools, intranet, shared database, competence network influence organizational performance of paint manufacturing firms. There is need therefore, to carry out this study.

Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives and research questions, the following null hypotheses are formulated:

- Ho₁: Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with the product innovation of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₂: Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with the market share of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Ho₃: Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with service delivery of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Relationship between Workplace Social Media and Organizational Performance

Paint manufacturing firms make use of workplace social media such as Office Facebook, whatsapp, instagram, twitter, etc to facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interests and other forms of expression to both employees and clients concerned to the conduct of their business. Other workplace social media used by paint manufacturing firms include blogs, microblogs, social networks, media-sharing sites, social bookmarking and voting sites, evaluation sites, forums, and virtual worlds (Ardam & Mohammad, 2019). These tools help user (management, employees, customers, government, etc) generate contents, which are effective in managing knowledge within or without an organization as it facilitates effective operations of their corporations. Organizations such as the paint manufacturing firms now use social media to promote their products and services in a new way, and each social media tool per se has its distinct purpose that the other media may not have. Social media helps paint manufacturing firms and their claimants access, share, co-create, discuss and participate in business dealings. This in turn enhances organizational performance among others such as Service delivery, Market Share, and product innovation.

Apparently, some paint manufacturing firms which are savvy to the use of social media tool such as blog make online journals or informational website displaying information about their offers, products, services and as well their corporate social responsibilities to their respective claimants (Syed, 2015). Today, many companies are integrating blogs into their sites to perform the same function. Product and service brands are being pivoted toward more video and social media marketing, as businesses are beginning to flesh out a marketing strategy and other knowledge management indices to boost operation and performance such as Service delivery, Market Share and service delivery. Companies use internal corporate blogs to enhance the communication, culture and [employee engagement](#) in a [corporation](#). Internal multinational corporate blogs are used to communicate news about company policies or procedures, build employee [esprit de corps](#) and improve [morale](#). External multinational corporate blogs are used for public accessibility in [marketing](#), [branding](#), or [public relations](#) purposes in the interest of the organization to boost performance such as product innovation, market share and service delivery.

In today's digital world, paint manufacturing firms are beginning to integrate WhatsApp in the sending of messages, images, audio or video as regards their products, services, reports and other necessary documents for public consumption. The whatsapp has been designed in such a way that paint manufacturing firms block contacts from within the app or send a friend's information to another user within the app. The app has a search function that lets one search by keyword, group, contact name, or phone number. One can also search for keywords in a conversation (Lewis, 2015). WhatsApp is interoperable with Google so that corporation's users can save a copy of message history to Google Drive or phone's memory, all to boost operations and performance via Service delivery, improved market share and service delivery

Paint manufacturing firms use wiki website on a principle of collaborative trust between them and their stakeholders such as employees, customers, government, vendors, etc.

In workplace social media paint manufacturing firms create a new page as well as add, edit or delete content within an existing page thereby creating a "freely, expandable collection of interlinked web pages for its designated stakeholder, thus, enhancing their performance among others such as product innovation, service delivery, and market share (Wagner, 2015). Workplace social media have been seen as a way to overcome the problem of managing knowledge in organizations such as paint manufacturing firms (Laudon & Laudon, 2013). It facilitates knowledge management processes from knowledge creation and storage to knowledge use and refinement.

These processes are carried out "conversationally", that is, through a discussion forum where the participants/stakeholders of paint manufacturing firms contribute to the discussion as regards their products and services with questions and answers, or through a blog which is typified by a process of storytelling or through a wiki using collaborative writing. This tool is inexpensive, fast and supports the collaboration of people in distributed locations.

Apparently, when paint manufacturing firms adopt workplace social media such as blogs, whatsapp and wikis in the creation, sharing and utilization of knowledge, better service delivery is enhanced. This is because the total service delivery system such as processes and methods used to transforming [tangible](#) inputs (raw materials, semi-finished [goods](#), subassemblies) and [intangible](#) inputs (ideas, [information](#), knowledge) into goods or [services](#) are improved. It also helps to improve service delivery because of the promptly shared ideas, instruction and knowledge among employees and other concerned stakeholders for the benefit of the organization (Sanket, 2017). Workplace social media such as blogs, whatsapp and wikis enables paint manufacturing firms to deliver value to their customers, get processes under control through prompt interaction among employees and shorten throughput times with fast communication, The adoption of workplace social media among paint manufacturing firms helps to improve product, thus promoting the product's fitness for use, consistence, conformance to consumer's needs, or poor/inferior quality of raw material entering into the plant/enterprise or improper techniques/method and processes being followed in the plant (Minakshi, 2018). Injection of these workplace social media in paint manufacturing firms also enhances product diversification through direct or indirect contact with its end users, customers or consumers. These platforms enable customers to tender their complaints about the products and services of the organization. When these are promptly redressed, product diversification can occur as a result of a shift in the previous brand offered by the corporation to boost customers' satisfaction and other augmented benefits (Waheed, et al, 2017). Through workplace social media such as blogs, whatsapp and wikis a paint manufacturing firms can call for product rebranding through the establishment of a new name, slogan, tagline or design of a product (Sundus & Naintara, 2014). The inclusion of blogs, whatsapp and wikis in the management of knowledge among paint manufacturing firms can create more awareness to its target market and as well boost sales which is a gateway to Market Share (Adam, 2019). Thus, a paint manufacturing firms's market share can be transcended from its present status to higher status through effective use of workplace social media.

It is undoubted that most people in Nigeria from 18 years and above are adapting to the use of phones that contain workplace social media such as Office Facebook and whatsapp for interaction. Management of paint manufacturing firms can seize this opportunity to interacting with their target market and other existing ones to boost advert and sales, thus expanding the horizon of its operations. Market expansion is a strategy of attracting new customers or increasing usage of existing customers of a product category. Schmenner (2012) stated that paint manufacturing firms can search new users through social media platforms such as blogs, whatsapp and Office Facebook invitation. The large number and wide variety of market expansion strategy decisions required to strategize and deliver a service are made at several levels in paint manufacturing firms, from the strategic level to the operational and service encounter levels. They do these to expand their markets' order to grow and survive (Storbacka in Tanguis & Omar, 2017).

Paint manufacturing firms can build their customer base through recurring revenue, loyal and all customers with the help of workplace social media such as facebook and whatsapp. Paint manufacturing firms study their customer base to cater their [products](#) and offers in efforts to improve sales (Rouse, 2019). They can also expand their customer base as a way to increase sales. Increasingly, a customer base is often a targeted [demographic](#) or group of people with similar interests, which make their interest in a product or service more likely. Repeat buyers in a customer base often return to a company that has successfully filled their needs. These repeat customers may make patronage of a company habitual. These customers often serve as free

marketing by way of word of mouth, providing they remain satisfied. Active adoption of workplace social media increases sales volume (Madison, 2018).

It is believed that paint manufacturing firms who make use of workplace social media in the management of knowledge tend to promote service delivery through the fulfillment and gratification of their interests. Client's satisfaction among other things is an overall evaluation of the paint manufacturing firms' products and services. Higher client's satisfaction is one indicator of improved products and services (Ahmed, et al 2014).

Mores so, workplace social media help paint manufacturing firms to save clients' time since it is a direct access or contact with the organization. Workplace social media try to shorten the ending length of time required for attending or servicing customer's interests (Yasodara, et al, 2016). Social medial tools such as blogs, whatsapp and wikis make it easy for customers to reach management or staff of paint manufacturing firms for business dealings, provide self-service as well for stakeholders, try to solve the problem within first contact and keep their customer service staff well-trained. Maximization of shareholders' return is a strategic decision that top management of paint manufacturing firms face, and better educated managers at top management of paint manufacturing firms are more confident of their strategic decision. This is because they are better positioned to analyze the outcome of their strategic choices (Shiao, 2012). Product innovation can be promoted through the continuous adoption of workplace social media such as wiki, whatsapp and blogs in the management of knowledge of paint manufacturing firms (Rouse, 2019).

Socio-Technical Theory

This theory was originated by to [Eric Trist](#), Ken Bamforth and [Fred Emery](#), during the World War II era, based on their work with workers in English coal mines at the [Tavistock Institute](#) in [London](#). The socio-technical theory is made up of two main constructs joined together:

1. Socio: It has to do with people and society
2. Technical: It has to do with machines and technology.

Thus, the socio-technical refers to the interrelatedness of social and technical aspects of an [organization](#). The socio-technical theory is founded on two cardinal assumptions:

1. The interaction of social and technical factors creates the conditions for successful (or unsuccessful) system performance" (Walker, et al, 2016). These interactions are comprised partly of linear 'cause and effect' relationships, the relationships that are normally 'designed', and partly from 'non-linear', complex, even unpredictable relationships, which are those that are often unexpected.
2. The second major principle of socio-technical theory is that "optimization of either socio, or far more commonly the technical, tends to increase not only the quantity of unpredictable, 'un-designed', non-linear relationships, but those relationships that are actually injurious to the system's performance" (Walker, et al., 2016). Thus, second principle of socio-technical theory hinges on joint optimization. This second principle holds that improving only one aspect of the organization (e.g. workforce) and abandoning the other element (technical computer systems, and other knowledge management infrastructure) will be detrimental to the system. Both the human and technological resources of an organization must be optimized simultaneously for expected results to be achieved. The implication of the joint optimization principle of socio-technical theory in paint manufacturing firms is that continuous capacity building to increase workers' awareness of how to use digital knowledge management initiatives may not lead to organizational performance in the workplace except it is matched with an upgrade of sophisticated knowledge management systems. In this jet age, where knowledge is the life blood of any organization; a multinational company may not be able to outperform its competitors if its digital knowledge management initiatives are not properly harnessed and shared within the horizon of the organization.

The socio-technical theory holds that business organizations are made up of human beings working together in social groups using equipment, tools, methodologies and knowledge to achieve desirable changes in the system and to bring about the achievement of corporate goals as well as outperforming competitors (Walker, et al, 2016). This theory holds that changes in organizations and the capacity of organizations to compete favourably in the market are influenced by demands from the external environment which impacts information systems changes in an organization. The socio-technical theory describes how societal changes provoke or necessitates changes in the techniques, procedures, infrastructure and technologies used in organizations (Jon & Randy, 2015). Paint manufacturing firms more than ever are been confronted with ardent competition from sister companies especially in the developing countries and as a way of coping and outperforming their competitors, they has to adopt digital knowledge management initiatives such as workplace social media, video tools, acquisition/preservation tools and competence networks to exploit and maximize the organizational performance (Service delivery, Market Share and effective service delivery). The justification of the socio-technical theory as the theoretical foundation of this study is based on the fact that the theory talks about how the interaction between people and modern socio-technical tools affects organizational performance. It is therefore reasonable to adopt a theory such as this since the work is aimed at getting empirical evidence on how digital knowledge management initiatives interact with organizational performance.

METHODOLOGY

The work adopted the cross-sectional explanatory survey research design. The population of the study consisted of fifty (50) Paint manufacturing firms twenty operating in Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt. The sample size of this study is the nineteen (19) paint manufacturing firms operating in Rivers State. This implies that the entire population of nineteen (19) paint manufacturing firms was used for the study. Thus, this study adopts the census sampling technique. In terms of respondents, a total of five (5) top managers was selected to provide relevant information on behalf of the organizations. The categories of top managers that was selected include General Manager, Operations Manager, Information Technology Manager, Customer Relations Manager, and Marketing Manager. Thus, a total of ninety-five (95) managers served as respondents on behalf of their organization. A total of ninety-five (95) copies of the questionnaire was administered with the aid of two independent research assistants, The researcher was able to retrieved seventy-six copies. Simple percentage was used for the demographic analysis while the univariate analysis was done using mean and standard deviation. The bivariate analysis was done using Spearman Rank Order Correlation while Partial Correlation Technique was employed for the multivariate analysis

Results

Workplace social media and Organizational Performance

- Ho₁: Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with the service delivery of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₂: Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with the market share of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho₃: Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with service delivery of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 4.17: Relationships between Workplace social media and Organizational Performance

	Workplace social media	Product Innovation	Service Delivery	Market Share
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Spearman's rho	Workplace social media	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.666**	0.697**	0.547**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76
	Product Innovation	Correlation Coefficient	0.666**	1.000	0.793**	0.794**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76
	Service Delivery	Correlation Coefficient	0.697**	0.793**	1.000	0.666**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	76	76	76	76
	Market Share	Correlation Coefficient	0.547**	0.794**	0.666**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	76	76	76	76

** . Relationship is Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output

Column two of table 1 above shows r value of 0.666 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating to Workplace social media and service delivery. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) which states that Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with the service delivery of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_{a1}) is accepted. This implies that workplace social media has high positive relationship with organizational performance in terms of product innovation in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Column three of table 1 above shows r value of 0.697** at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating workplace social media and market share. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) which states that Workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with the market share of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_{a2}) is accepted. This implies that workplace social media has high positive relationship with organizational performance in terms of market share in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Column four of table 1 above shows r value of 0.547** at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 for the hypothesis relating workplace social media and product innovation. Since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) which states that workplace social media does not have any significant correlation with product innovation of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_{a3}) is accepted. This implies that workplace social media has high positive relationship with organizational performance in terms of product innovation in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

These results show that workplace social media has high positive relationship with organizational performance in terms of product innovativeness, service delivery and market share of paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.

Discussion of Findings

Workplace Social Media and Organizational Performance

The test of hypotheses one, two and three revealed that there is a very strong relationship between workplace social media and organizational performance in terms of product innovation, service delivery and market share in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt. This implies that paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt with the smart action of adopting workplace social media have the potential of outperforming other organization who neglected the social media for organizational communication. In the same progression Ardam and Mohammad (2019) averred that the workplace social media help user (management, employees, customers, government, etc) generate contents, which are effective in managing knowledge within or without an organization as it facilitates effective operations of their corporations. Organizations such as the paint manufacturing firms now use social media to promote their products and services in a new way, and each social media tool per se has its distinct purpose that the other media may not have. They added that social media helps paint manufacturing firms and their claimants access, share, co-create, discuss and participate in business dealings. This in turn enhances organizational performance among others such as Service delivery, Market Share, and product innovation.

Similarly, Syed (2015) noted that some paint manufacturing firms which are savvy to the use of social media tool such as blog make online journals or informational website displaying information about their offers, products, services and as well their corporate social responsibilities to their respective claimants.

Moreso, Lewis (2015) submitted that in today's digital world, paint manufacturing firms are beginning to integrate WhatsApp in the sending of messages, images, audio or video as regards their products, services, reports and other necessary documents for public consumption. The whatsapp has been designed in such a way that paint manufacturing firms block contacts from within the app or send a friend's information to another user within the app. The app has a search function that lets one search by keyword, group, contact name, or phone number. One can also search for keywords in a conversation. He noted that WhatsApp is interoperable with Google so that corporation's users can save a copy of message history to Google Drive or phone's memory, all to boost operations and performance via Service delivery, improved market share and enhance product innovation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analyses of data and discussion of findings, the study concluded that organizations such as paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, can achieve high level of performance if the workplace social media are properly employed. It was also concluded that workplace social media influences organizational performance in terms of product innovation, service delivery and market share in paint manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Organizations should encourage the smart use of office whatsapp as an official means of information dissemination.
2. In the advertisement of the rebranded products to the general public by an organization, such as paint manufacturing firms, the use of office facebook should be adopted as an organizational channel to enhance market share.
3. Organization should create an advertisement/media department to show organizational products tagged new media to enhance workplace social media.

4. The acquisition and preservation of tools application in the dimensions of the database management system and intranet, organizations should create database management system that will seamlessly accommodate especially the authorized persons.

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