

## Organizational Trustworthiness and Employee Involvement Practices among Employees in Maritime Firms in Lagos and Rivers States

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This study examined the relationship between organizational trustworthiness and employee involvement practices in the Nigerian maritime industry. Three research questions and hypotheses were proposed to examine the relationship between organizational trustworthiness and employee involvement practices. The quantitative research data was orchestrated with the aid of a five point Likert scale questionnaire distributed to 278 which is the sample size derived from a population of 963 employees using Krejcie and Morgan's table of sample size determination. On the reliability of the study variables, they all met the Cronbach Alpha of 0.7 and above. The validity of the instruments was also ensured by experts in the field of study. The Spearman correlation was utilized to test the three hypotheses. The results of the study revealed that the predictor variable (organizational trustworthiness) has a relationship with the measures (empowerment, team orientation and capacity building) of the criterion variable (employee involvement practices). The study recommends that maritime firms should ensure the institutionalization of ethical values and norms which portray organizational sincerity and trustworthiness in order to improve employee involvement practices in organizations.

### Keywords:

Organizational Trustworthiness, Employee Involvement, Empowerment, Team Orientation and Capacity Building

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### **Background to the Study**

A plethora of studies on employee involvement abound (Marchington, Goodman, Wilkinson and Ackers, 1992; Amah and Ahiauzu, 2013). These empirical investigations reveal various aspects of employee involvement. An empirical investigation shows that employee's involvement contributes to organizational effectiveness in the form of increased productivity, profitability and market share (Amah and Ahiauzu, 2013). Research investigations in the western world have also indicated that employee involvement contributes in increased employee commitment, innovation and creativity and enhancement of profitability of organizations (Morgan and Zeffane, 2013). Research evidences on ethical behaviours in the western world abound (Stansbury and Barry, 2006). Employee involvement practices support stronger economic performance for organizations (Ichniowski and Shaw 2003). It also aids in granting decision making authority to employees. By this decision making configuration, the organizations gain specific knowledge held by the workers and adjust themselves more dynamically to turbulent market configurations. It is the contributory role which organizational trustworthiness plays in employee involvement practices that this research intends to investigate. From the foregoing it is evident that there are scholarly works on employee involvement.

Research investigations also indicate that institutionalization of facets of trustworthiness and the dual dimensions of Quality Work Life (QWL) has positive impact on three employee job related outcomes: Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee involvement and team spirit. Also as observed, Human Resource Development can influence a culture change efforts, ethics and corporate sustainability, corporate social responsibility on the various strata of the organizations and raising awareness of issues of power (Ardichvil, 2013). It is asserted that the institutionalization of various facets of trustworthiness in organizations will aid in countering a whole gamut of unethical behaviour, enhancing the organizations' reputation, trustworthiness and assist in stimulating fascination and retention of talents. It is further asserted that the institutionalization of facets of trustworthiness must be evidenced in daily practices by organizational members and anchored in the culture of the organizations so as to sustain employee trust (Ruona, 2008).

Albeit these studies exist, there is paucity of study in Nigeria on organizational trustworthiness and employee involvement practices. To fill this gap in literature, this study expounds the relationship that exists between the organizational trustworthiness and employee involvement practices in Maritime companies in the Nigerian economy. It is this lapse in literature that agitates the mind of the researcher particularly in the maritime industry which is the focus of this study especially as regards, the prevailing employee involvement practices issues such as lack of commitment, job dissatisfaction, decline in productivity, low morale of workers, inharmonious industrial relations in the maritime industry.

### **Research Questions**

The study will seek to address the relationship that exists between organizational trustworthiness and employee involvement practices among employees and managers in

the maritime industry in Lagos and Rivers States, Nigeria. More specifically, this study will seek to address the following research questions

- i. What is the relationship between trustworthiness and empowerment among maritime employees in Lagos and Rivers States?
- ii. What is the relationship between trustworthiness and team orientation among maritime employees in Lagos and Rivers States?
- iii. What is the relationship between trustworthiness and capacity building among maritime employees in maritime firms in Lagos and Rivers States?

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Trustworthiness**

Trust is an extraction from trustworthiness. It is therefore expedient to define and expound trust construct as a basis for defining trustworthiness. Trust has become a cardinal issue in various disciplines including management, ethics, sociology, psychology and economics. This has enlarged the level of literature on trust (Bigley & Pearce, 1998, Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer, 1998). Trust refers to the willingness of a trustor to be vulnerable to the action of a trustee which is anchored on the expectation that the trustee will carry out a particular action (Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995). This implies that trust means the willingness of the trusted person to perform action expected of him. Trust is a psychological state encompassing the intentions to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of the actions of the trustee (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer, 1998). Trust is defined as the expectations that the other will perform a certain action important to the trustor in environments characterized by uncertainty and information incompleteness (Toma, 2011). Trust is only solicited in the presence of risk when the trustee's motives and abilities are unknown and there is the possibility of betrayal.

Another condition for trust is the vulnerability of the trustor, who must depend on the trustee for the fulfillment of certain expected outcomes (Toma, 2010). Trustworthiness is a multi-faceted construct that captures the competence and character of the trustee (McKintosh and Lacroix, 1996, Williams, 2001). Trustworthiness is akin to trust. It is a characteristic of the trustee that indicates he or she is worthy of trust. It is the attributes in the trustee that he can trust (Toma, 2010). Management must consider the employee as possessing the attributes of trust. The involvement or participation of employees in the decision making of an organization possesses some element of risk. It is possible for employees to explore that golden opportunity for their selfish motive and purpose. It is therefore expedient that the employee or group of employees to be involved in organizational decision making must be trustworthy (possess the attribute that they can be trusted). The condition of "vulnerability" is also evident in the relationship between the trustee and trustor. The management of organization are vulnerable to the trustee believing that they will deliver on promises or as expected. Trustworthiness is the individual's evaluation of how much and for what type of performance a trustee can be trusted (Hardin, 2002). Trust is anchored on "good reasons" constituting evidence of trustworthiness (Lewis and Weigert, 1985). Those "good reasons" are defined in terms of ability, benevolence and integrity (Mayer, Davis and Schoorman, 1995).

Previous scholarly works indicate that relationships with both human resources practices and procedural justice are partially mediated the way organizational trustworthiness (in terms of perceived ability and trustworthy intentions of the organizations). This underscores the essence of trustworthiness on the part of both the employers and employees alike (Searle, Hartog, Weibel, Glespie, Six, Hatzakis and Skinner, 2011). It is therefore expedient that organization members manifest the veritable attribute of being trusted. Communication in organization also contributes to the development of trust within organization. This purports that trust between co-workers and trust between subordinates and superiors. It is therefore imperative that organizational managers should utilize this essential tool effectively in order to establish and sustain trust within organizations. It is therefore pertinent to state that from the foregoing that trust in an organization is a two way traffic expected both from the employers and the employees. An empirical study reveals that connectivity mediates between trust and thriving and that thriving mediates the relationship between connectivity and innovative behaviours (Carmeli and Spreitzer, 2011).

### **Employee Involvement Practices**

There is increasing demand for employee participation in decision making in their various organizations. The participation in decision making organization gives organizational members a sense of ownership in eliciting inputs from employees. Organizations enhance the quality of decisions and decision making (Denison, 2007). Employee involvement is also termed participative decision making (PDM). It refers to the degree to which organization members share information, knowledge, and power throughout the organization (Randolph, 2000). Employee involvement entails building human capacity ownership and responsibility. The practice is expedient as it leads to sharing of vision, values and purpose (Amah and Ahiauzu, 2013). This is vital to an organization as its members share in the same vision, values and intention. They will jointly and purposely work towards the attainment of organizational goals. Employee's involvement is intended to gain the commitment of the employees in the attainment of organizational goals. It also makes employees to take responsibility for their roles and functions in an organization (Foy, 1994).

With the practice of employee involvement, employees exercise some degree of authority in decision making which was not within the confines of their power to exercise (Mishane and Von Glinow, 2003). This enables employees in organizations to increase their level of commitment to their organizations. It also aids in influencing decisions and an operation of organizations. Employee involvement is a key component to increased performance in organizations (Cotton, 1993, Lawler, Mohran and Benson, 2001). For a firm to be said to be of high performance, it must utilize the knowledge, skills and abilities of the employees in organizational productivity. It is imperative to state that the workplace is made up of self-managed work units who are equipped with skills and technology focused on satisfying customer needs as efficiently and effectively as possible (White, 1999). Employee involvement brings about organizational effectiveness which measured in profitability, market share and productivity (Amah and Ahiauzu, 2013). The above study indicates that the involvement of employees bring about organizational effectiveness which is measured in terms of profitability of organizations, expansion of market share and enhancement of productivity. To involve employees is to solicit the commitment of employees to the

attainment of organizational goals and this is put in terms of empowering workers to take responsibility for their roles and activities in an organization (Holden, 2001). This practice will minimize supervision and the cost of implementation as employees are integral part of organizational decisional making. There are three elements cardinal to the concept of participation viz. influence, interaction and information sharing. The definitions of this concept were classified into three: some that refer to employees taking part or making an input or participating in decision making with no attempt to quantify their impact on the process; those that refer to participation as concerned with the extent to which employees may influence managerial actions and those that link together participation and the control over decision making (Marchington, Goodman, Wilkinson and Ackers, 1992).

Other dimensions which these definitions need to consider include:(1) The degree of involvement (the extent to which employees influence the final decision (2) The level of involvement (whether at job, departmental or organizational level (3) The forms of involvement (direct, indirect and financial) (4) The range of the subject matter being considered in the involvement scheme (5) Downward communications (top down) this is a communication from the managers to other employees (Marchington, Goodman, Wilkinson and Ackers, 1992). Employee involvement practices include job rotation, quality circles, self -directed teams, and most implementations of total quality management (TQM) (Handel and Levine, 2006).The varied definitions of employee involvement notwithstanding, most studies have shown that these practices support stronger economic performances for organizations (Black and Lynch, 2001, Ichniowski and Shaw, 2003).

Employee involvement practices are used to accord decision making authority to employees. These practices permit firms to benefit from specific, specialized knowledge which workers possess. Employee involvement is a broad concept that encapsulates a wide spectrum of practices. It is considered here to be the exercise of influence by employees over how the work is organized and carried out (Fenton-O'Creevy, 2001). The definition of involvement allows a wide range of arrangements and practices. Involvement is deemed to be equivalent to participation and distinguishes four elements such as power, information, knowledge and rewards (Lawler,1994). Yet other scholars see involvement as influence sharing, participative decision making, empowerment, participation and consultation (Black and Gregersen, 1997).

### **Empowerment**

The notion of the concept empowerment is obtained from theories of participative management and employee involvement. The theories of participative management entail that 'manager's share decision making power with employees to enhance performance and satisfaction (Wagner, 1994). The theorization of employee involvement stresses cascading power, information, rewards and training to the lowest ebb in the hierarchy of an organization. A plethora of scholars have redefined empowerment “unidimensionally” as self-efficacy or self-determination/autonomy (Liden, Wayne, Sparrowe and Bradway, 1993). Contemporary conceptualization of empowerment is wide and broader in scope. Empowerment is defined as a constellation of experienced psychological states or cognitions. Empowerment is conceptualized as “the gestalt of four cognitions: a sense of

meaning, competence, self-determination and impacts. These dimensions are the very essence of the concepts. Meaning or purpose, involves a fit between the needs of one's work role and one's values, belief and behaviour (Brief & Nord, 1990). Competence or self-efficacy is a belief that some possess the skills and abilities expedient to carry out a job or task well. The skills and abilities is requisite to self-determination in the belief that one has the autonomy or control over the way an individual carries out his/her work. Impact is the perception that an individual has altered a strategic administrative or operating out zones at work in order to make a difference. Empowerment is the employee's mechanism through which they are energized concerning works. It is imperative also to note that "if employees heat are not in their work - if work activity conflicts with their value systems - then they will not feel empowered" (Thomas and Volthouse, 1990). Empowerment is a change management tool which helps organizations create an environment.

### **Team Orientation**

Team is been defined as miniature group of interdependent employee who share responsibility for results and team-based structures play an enhancing vital role in organizations (Ilgen, 1999). This definition connotes collaborative efforts in the bid to attain organizational objectives. It is pertinent to state that the effort of employees in team situation is interdependent. Team work is defined as the co-operative and co-ordinated efforts on the part of a group of persons who work together as a team. It is therefore to state the synergistic benefits of team work is enormous, hence it is always employed from time to time. A team is said to exist when efforts and skills are integrated with team work in the pursuit of common objectives. This is geared towards producing fundamental result team members on one hand and the entirety of the organization on the other (Adeyeye, 2010). It is vital to state that the absence of team work in organization has led to co-ordinated and articulated work groups so as to harness from the human capital in their organizations. A team attempts to explore the synergy of the combination of individual strengths/skills with shared commitment to perform for the good of their organizations. It is a consensus in literature that teamwork promotes organizational adaptability and creates individual roles that are wider, more socially linked and more imperative for individuals (Maynard, Rapp and Gilson, 2008). Although teams exist there are still diversities in them. It is incumbent on those teams to close their ranks and work towards the attainment of team goals which culminate in to organizational goals. Team Orientation is the process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve goal. The synergistic benefit of working together is inestimable. Team orientation can only be feasible in the atmosphere of civility. The team can then attain set goals. If civility is integrated in capacity building it will go along to building civil, courteous and friendly teams that can achieve organizational goals. Executive satisfaction with decision making process is cardinal, and a major determinant of satisfaction is teamwork. This refers to the extent to which management perceive themselves as part of a team rather than as individualistic decision makers.

A strong team orientation entails group members' perceptions that their interactions, communication styles, and levels of trust and participation all enhance working towards the attainment of group goals. The positive perception of the group member's participation in decision and trust reposed on its members assist in the attainment of group goals and concomitantly organizational goals. A strong team orientation can subsist conterminously

of teams working consensually on decisions (Isabella and Waddock, 1994). The mind-set of the members of a team will always be towards attaining team goals and eventually organizational goals. It is therefore imperative for members of a team to possess that perception of joint contributions in the attainment of group goals. It is asserted that firm's diversification positively determines the degree of integration in the various departments which in turn impinges on the ideal composition of its corporate top management teams. The outcome however negates experience principally organic functions of organization among top team members even in their interdependent firms and it gives negative impact on high interdependent firms (Ilegen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, Jundit, 2005). It is therefore expedient for organizations to determine the diversities of teams in organizations and work towards their integration.

### **Capacity Building**

The skills, knowledge and abilities (SKA's) requisite for members of work teams, quality circles and other forms of employee involvement practices is not static. With the intensity of competition and innovative enquiry of better ways of achieving quality, customer satisfaction, it becomes expedient for the continuous improvement of capacity of organizational members. This is because the quality of team members will to a great extent inform the quality of decisions taken to enhance firms' productivity. Capacity building seeks to enhance the performance of work units, departments and the whole organization (Rickett, 2000). Capacity building can be within the framework of group members (teams), individualistic and organizational. The term capacity building refers to building as a long term continual process of development that entails the involvement of stakeholders, including ministries, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, professionals, community members, academics and more. Capacity building entails using a country's human, scientific, technological, organizational, institutional and resource capabilities to achieve set goals. The goal of capacity building is to tackle problems that pertain to policy and methods of development while considering the potential limits and needs of the employees of an organization and people of a particular country. Capacity building is essential and veritable both for productions, works units, teams, states and nations. This is because problem solving which is the goal of capacity building is a continuous one (Lawler, Mohran and Benson, 2001; Ilegen, Hollenbeck, Johnson, Jundit, 2005).

### **Materials and Methods**

#### **Research Design**

The study adopted a cross sectional survey of quasi-experimental design. The cross sectional survey was chosen because the data for the study was collected only once. This approach is considered appropriate because it aided the elicitation of primary data on particular problems and gave the researcher first-hand information on the subject studied. It presupposes that the respondents will remember their past activities, evaluate their present operations and forecast future occurrences as they make necessary input in the study being conducted (Baridam, 2001).

#### **Population and Sampling Procedure**

The population of this study consists of all employees in the maritime organizations located in Port Harcourt and Lagos. These are maritime firms listed in the corporate diaries of the Nigerian Shippers Council. A total of 4205 employees situated in 96 maritime firms in Port

Harcourt and Lagos is our targeted population. The accessible population of the study is 963 employees obtained in twenty(20) firms and the sample size utilizing the Krejcie and Morgan's table of sample determination is 278. The selection of the companies was done using the number of companies that have 47 employees and above as benchmark. This implies that we administered structured questionnaires to twenty companies (20) and two hundred and seventy eight (278) employees in the selected maritime firms in Port Harcourt and Lagos, Nigeria. Sarantakos (2005) states that the use of tables is an easier way of estimating the sample size from a given population. Accordingly, in determining the sample size of this study, we adopted the Krejice and Morgan (1970) table (Sekaran 2003).

### Determination of Individual Company's Sample Size

For the determination of the study's stratified proportional sample for individual organization from the total sample, Bowley's (1964) Proportional sampling method was adopted utilizing the formula below:

$$N_h = \frac{nN_h}{N}$$

Where:  $N_h$  = the number of unit allocated to each company;  $N$  = the total sample size;  $N_h$  = the number of employee in each company and  $n$  = the population size

### Test of Reliability

Cronbach Alpha was utilized to test for reliability in our study.

**Table 1:** Reliability Analysis Scale-(Alpha)

Variables	No. of items	Alpha Coefficient
Trustworthiness	6	0.933
Empowerment	2	0.785
Team orientation	2	0.869
Capacity Building	2	0.919

**Source:** Data output, 2015

## Results

### Field work

The researcher was able to distribute research questionnaires personally and also made use of agents to aid us in liaising with maritime firms in order for to gain expeditious access into maritime firms. This effort was geared towards distributing questionnaire copies to employees within the sample size. Our sample of 278 employees out of a population 963 was adequately reached. The table 2 expounds the number of questionnaires administered, the number returned and usable copies of the retrieved questionnaire for our analysis.



**Table 2. Response Rate from Field Data Collection**

	<b>No of cases</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Copies of questionnaires	278	100%
Copies of questionnaires returned	268	96%
Copies of questionnaires not returned	10	4%

**Source:** Data output, 2015

From the foregoing data on table 4.1 a total of 278 copies of structured questionnaires were personally administered out of which 268 copies were returned. This indicates that 96% of the aggregate numbers of questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents. While 10 copies of the questionnaires were not retrieved from the respondents. This is as a result of interminable excuses of the busy work schedules, absence of the respondents at the periods of visits and uncooperative attitude of the respondents, and engagement in official meetings during the time of visit to retrieve the questionnaires.

#### **Demographic Data**

**Respondents' Job Experience:** From the demographic data available, 59 respondents representing 33% indicate that employees with the job experience bracket of 5-7 years are more in Lagos. This indication correlates with the findings in Port Harcourt where 25 representing 27% of the respondents show higher job experience. On the aggregate, it is also evident that 84 representing 31% of the respondents indicate that more employees have higher job experience. The managerial import of this is that maritime firms have many employees who have reasonable experience on the job to move the industry forward.

**Respondents' Gender:** The demographic data available with respect to gender of respondents show that there are more male employees in Lagos maritime firms. The employee's respondents in that state are 142 representing 80% of the total respondents. In Port Harcourt, there are 61 male employees representing 67% of the respondents. On the aggregate, it is evident that 203 representing 76% of the respondents are male employees in the maritime industry with 24% of the female workers supporting the operations of the industry.

**Respondents' Educational Qualification:** On the basis the demographic data, it is evident that 71 employee's respondents possess first degree in Lagos. In Port Harcourt also, 30 employees representing 37% of the respondents possess first degree. On the aggregate, it is evident that 100 respondents representing 37% of the total respondents possess first degree. The managerial import is that the maritime industry has the workforce that possesses basic qualification to advance the course of the maritime industry. There is also a high propensity that they might progress professionally and academically to higher echelons in the future. This actually portends good for the maritime industry in Nigeria.

### Descriptive Statistics on the Variables

Presented in Table 3 is the Descriptive Statistics for the Study Variables

Table 3. Descriptive statistics on variables

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trustworthy	268	4.1001	.88441
Empower	268	4.1381	.81854
Team	268	4.1250	.84814
Capacity	268	3.8228	1.09362
Valid N (listwise)	268		

Source: Data output, 2015

### Relationship between Trustworthiness and Employee Involvement Practices

The result of the spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient for the relationship between trustworthiness and empowerment is presented in Table 4.17. Embedded in the table is the statistical Test of significance (p-value), which assist us answer the prime research question and generalize our findings on the population of the study.

Table 4. Hypotheses Testing

	Trustworthy	Empower	Team	Capacity
Trustworthy	1.000	.454**	.627**	.712**
Sig.		.000	.000	.000
Empower	.454**	1.000	.376**	.544**
Sig.	.000		.000	.000
Team	.627**	.376**	1.000	.452**
Sig.	.000	.000		.000
Capacity	.712**	.544**	.452**	1.000
Sig.	.000	.000	.000	

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

Source: Research data, 2015 (SPSS Computation)

*Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): There is no significant relationship between trustworthiness and empowerment in the organization.*

The findings show significant relationship trustworthiness and empowerment in organizations where rho = .454; and p-value = 0.05 where significance is at a 95% confidence interval; therefore we reject the null hypothesis based on the adopted criteria of p<0.05. There is a significant relationship trustworthiness and empowerment.

*Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): There is no significant relationship between trustworthiness and team orientation in the organization.*

The findings show significant relationship between trustworthiness and team orientation in organization where rho = .627; and p-value = 0.05 where significance is at a 95% confidence interval; therefore we reject the null hypothesis based on the adopted criteria of p<0.05. There is a significant relationship between trustworthiness and team orientation.

*Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>): There is no significant relationship between trustworthiness and capacity building in the organizations*

The findings show significant relationship between trustworthiness and capacity building in organizations where  $\rho = .712$ ; and  $p\text{-value} = 0.05$  where significance is at a 95% confidence interval; therefore we reject the null hypothesis based on the adopted criteria of  $p < 0.05$ . There is therefore a significant relationship between trustworthiness and capacity building.

The result of the spearman correlation in table 4 indicates that there is a significant relationship between trustworthiness and empowerment in the maritime industry in Nigeria. It could be suggested that employees to be placed in positions of decision making on behalf of the employers on specific issues must show the attribute of being trusted. This is pertinent because a deviation from the expected track will enormously mar the expectation of the employers and jeopardise the operations of the organizations. Its implications can be both suicidal and inimical to both fellow employees and the employers in such organizations. This is very pertinent given the strategic position of the maritime industry both to the country and in the international community. This can be either on the positive or the pejorative perspective. It is equally expedient that employees trust the managers that they also are worthy of being trusted with the affairs of the employees.

Table 4 also indicates that there is significant relationship between trustworthiness and team orientation. This signifies that employees have a propensity of achieving the synergistic results in team work. The team work will be efficacious when there is proper orientation of the operations of the team. The interfacing of the various members of the team is imperative to ensuring success. The team can be in the form of quality circle, team working, business re-engineering among others. Our result from table 4 indicates vividly that there is a significant relationship between trustworthiness and capacity building in Nigerian maritime firms. This connotes that trustworthiness demonstrated by employees will attract managers to recommend the development of novel skills, knowledge and aptitudes requisite to ensure organizational success. The employers will gladly do so because of the expectation that the human capital development of manpower in the light of contemporary business operations both nationally and internationally

- i. Accordingly, we found that trustworthiness in maritime firms in Lagos and Rivers States is associated with the empowerment of employees.
- ii. We equally found that trustworthiness in maritime firms in Lagos and Rivers States affects employee team orientation.
- iii. Also, trustworthiness in the maritime firms in Lagos and Rivers States is associated with employee capacity building.

### **Discussion of Findings**

We have found in this study that trustworthiness exists in the Maritime firms in Lagos and Rivers State. This influences employees to be integrated into the decision making mechanism of their organizations. Employees who are known as being trustworthy are integrated into the decision making mechanism of their organizations. According to (Hardin, 2002), trustworthiness when manifested by employers constitutes the basis on

which employees can repose their confidence on them and appropriately position them in offices that require trust. We may deduce that employers evaluate their employees in the various assignments given to them and endeavour to determine whether the employees are trustworthy or not. It is therefore expedient for employees to manifest the desirable attribute of trust (Searle, Hartog, Weibel, Glespie, Six, Hatzakis and Skinner, 2011). It is also expedient to assert that trustworthiness as a multifaceted construct indicates the character and competence of the trustee in an organization (McKight and Lacroix, 1996 and William, 2001). This is in consonance with our findings which indicate that when the employees can be trusted, the employers will then empower them, integrated into various teams in their organizations and enlist them into their capacity development programmes (Koonmee, Singhpakdi, Virakuull, Lee, 2001).

In our study, we carried out full scale empirical investigation on maritime firms listed in the Nigerian Shippers Council (NSC). We found that trustworthiness enables employees to be integrated into management decision making mechanisms, to be involved in team works and be considered for enlistment into capacity development programmes of their organizations. Our finding is in line with (Kucharcikova, 2011). Employees will be more committed to their organizations, have job satisfaction and have team spirit. Our result indicates that when organization members are entrusted with responsibilities demanding the manifestation of trust, they become more committed to their organizations. It also injects team spirit into them that enable them to work together as teams with other employees in the organizations.

### **Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations**

This study has contributed immensely to the development of literature on organizational trustworthiness as a means of enhancing employee involvement in maritime organizations. When employees are trusted and integrated into decision making roles in organizations, it contributes in empowering them and making them more committed and transparent in their dealings within the organizations. This assists the organizations in articulating its resources. The trusting of employees will equally endanger them to eschew dishonest and shady dealings in the positions of trust where they are placed. In this study, we utilized triangulation of the structured questionnaires and interview. This has amply contributed in enriching the findings of this study and from where we draw our inferences about our proposed hypotheses. The triangulation of our study has brought out the utilization of a hybrid of nomothetic and ideographic configuration.

This study has theoretical implications as it attests to the findings of other studies in the maritime industry in, the use of trustworthiness positively affects empowerment. Employees who are adjudged to be trustworthy in organizations will always endeavour to maintain the moral strength (value) upon which is the basis of which they were placed in positions of authority on behalf of their employers. The fact that organizational trustworthiness is appreciated has contributed to the development of moral strength in the workplace (Verschoor, 2004). It will also culminate into re-introduction of personal values (Grates, 2004). Our findings are also in consonance with (Toma, 2010) who asserted that for employees to be empowered to influence decisions in organizations they must have the cardinal attribute of being trustworthy.

As revealed in this study, the use of trustworthiness contributes to a high level of employee empowerment. Accordingly, managers' are enjoined to watch out for employees who have demonstrated the attribute of trust and get them involved in the operations and decision making processes of their organizations. The research finding of (Caydon and Doyle, 1996) indicates that empowerment re-expresses the relevance of trust in empowering employees. It also underscores cost minimization and short term profit maximization in organizations. The relationship between trustworthiness and employees empowerment suggest that managers in the maritime industry are advised to place premium on trustworthiness in the empowerment of employees. This is quite crucial as those to be empowered must have been proven to be worthy by the management. This is essential as those employees will be elevated to positions of authority and decision making. This to a great extent will determine the success, effectiveness and attainment of organizational goals.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited to maritime firms in Lagos and Rivers States .It does not cover maritime firms in other parts of Nigeria. This study is also circumscribed to maritime firms and does not encapsulate other sectors of Nigeria economy. This is a snapshot study whose outcome may differ from a longitudinal investigation of the same subject.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study is not exhaustive of all the studies in this area. This study can also be replicated to ascertain whether it will have the same investigative outcome. This study can also be conducted in other sectors of the Nigerian economy. This research investigation can also be carried out with other criterion variables.

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