

# INFLUENCE OF SHARED VALUES OF UNITED PARCEL SERVICE ON CUSTOMERS' SERVICE DELIVERY IN EDO STATE

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## Abstract

*The study assessed the influence of shared values of United Parcel Service for customers' service delivery in Edo State. Four research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of all United Parcel Service customers in Edo State. The target population was infinite as there was no definite number of customers United Parcel Service renders services to. 150 customers were used as sample size. Accidental random sampling technique was adopted. The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Benin, City. Cronbach alpha was used for the reliability of the instrument and this yielded 0.75. Descriptive statistics of mean was used to answer all the research questions. A questionnaire titled Questionnaire on influence of Shared Values of United Parcel Service for Customer Service Delivery in Edo State (QISVUPSCSDES) was administered to the respondents by the researchers and one research assistant. The result revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service delivery with integrity to a high extent in Edo State. United Parcel Service renders efficient and quality customer service delivery to a high extent, it also provides customer service delivery with sustainability to a high extent and provide customer service delivery with innovativeness to a high extent. Based on the findings and conclusion, it was recommended that United Parcel Service should provide packaging for customers' service as well as guarantee safe delivery of packages, among others.*

**Key Words:** Shared value, United Parcel Service, customer Service Delivery

## Introduction

In today's highly competitive global marketplace, the pressure on organizations to find new ways to create value and deliver high quality service to their customers grows ever stronger. The increasing need for industry to compete with its product in a global market, across cost, quality and service dimensions has given rise to the need to develop logistic systems. One of the companies that offer logistics service is the United Parcel Service (UPS). United Parcel Service is an American multi-national package delivery supply chain management company founded on August 28, 1907 in Seattle, Washington, United States as a private messenger and delivery service and was incorporated on July 15, 1999 (United State SEC, 2016). United Parcel Service operates through three segments: United States Domestic Package operations, International Package operations and Supply Chain and Freight operations. The company serves the global market for logistics services, which include transportation, distribution, contract logistics, ground freight, ocean freight, air freight, custom brokerage, insurance and financing (Allen, 2016). Logistics, according to Gordan (2011), is the management of the flow of goods, information and other resources between the point of origin and the point of consumption in order to meet requirements of customers or corporation. Also, Johnson, Wood, Wardlow and Murphy (2009) posited that logistics as the part of the supply process that plans, implements and controls the efficient, effective flow and storage of goods, services and related information from the point of origin to the point of consumption in order to meet customers' requirements. However, United Parcel Service (UPS) a logistics service providing company provides customers with advanced logistics solutions made

possible by a broad portfolio of differentiated services and capabilities expertly assembled and integrated into their customers businesses. As at December 31, 2016, the company serves individuals, industries and communities in over 220 countries in North America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America (United States SEC, 2016). The categories of industries United Parcel Service serves include; aerospace, automotive, consumer service, defense, government agencies, health care, professional service, retail and consumer goods industries among others (UPS Pressroom, 2013). WorldShip, a desktop shipping application of United Parcel Service, provides middle market and customers with shipping capabilities. Customers can create custom label, set up shipment alerts, create and upload customs documentation, track and export streamline shipping with real-time connectivity. United Parcel Service marketplace shipping integrates www.ups.com with eBay, Amazon, Etsy and BigCommerce which allows marketplace sellers to ship their order through www.ups.com or WorldShip (Thomson, 2019).

In Nigeria, United Parcel Service operates an inbound and outbound delivery services (domestic and international delivery), specified the tariff guide for inbound delivery across the country and the levels of services rendered (UPS Pressroom, 2013). The levels of service rendered are UPS express plus, UPS express, UPS express saver, UPS standard and UPS expedited. UPS express plus provides early morning delivery for international shipments and its ideal for most time-sensitive shipments. UPS express provides domestic and international time and day definite delivery and ideal for time-sensitive documents, packages and multi-package shipment. UPS express saver provides fast and economical delivery. UPS standard renders a cost efficient service for less urgent shipments to destination within Europe, and UPS expedited renders scheduled day-definite delivery to destination and a cost-effective service for less urgent international shipments outside Europe. In order to ensure sustainability of business and quality customer service delivery, United Parcel Service specified its values, mission and strategy.

United Parcel Service (UPS) shared values for effective customer delivery are; integrity, teamwork, service, quality and efficiency, safety, sustainability and innovation (UPS Pressroom, 2013). Shared values are at the heart of organizational behavior. Buchko (2007) defined shared values as a common set of shared beliefs on the goals, means, and ends which together create and provide coherence and a sense of purpose to an organization. Barnard (2008) suggested that shared values are useful in addressing the problem of managing and coordinating complex organizations. Selznick (2007) asserted that organizations become mature and institutionalized only when leaders infuse them with values. Others have noted the importance of shared values in creating a strong organization culture (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 2005; Schein, 2005), motivating behavior by providing direction and emotional intensity to action (Schwartz, 2012), representing standards to judge and justify actions (Mills & Spencer, 2005), and socialization activities and individuals to organization and leadership (Grojean, Resick, Dickson, & Smith, 2004). However, shared values are organizational values that are usually developed by the organization's leadership and then adopted by the other members of the organization. The values are shared and followed by all members of the organization when acting on behalf of the organization. It may also be known as core values. Marie (2010) saw core values of an organization as a set of beliefs that specify universal expectations and preferred modes of behavior in a company. Values point the way to purposeful action and approved behavior. Marie further stated that core values create a foundation of attitudes and practices that supports long term success, provide reference point for shaping and building the business and they affect organizational performance.

Consequently, the aspects of organizational shared values for customer service delivery in satisfying customers' needs are indispensable. In this vein, Buchanan (2011) defined customer service as an organization ability to meet the needs and desires of its customer. The researcher also asserted that

customer service is the ability of an organization to constantly and consistently exceed the expectations of its customers. Therefore, to be able to consistently exceed customers' expectations, there should be the recognition that every aspect of the business has an impact on customers' service. Koller (2007) asserted that customer service entails attention, courteous words, smiles, enthusiasm, response, warmth, understanding, patience, sincerity, consideration, remembering details, facts creative ideas, giving, action and appreciation. Effective customer delivery or service is paramount for sustainability and growth of a business as customers tend to patronize such company as their needs are well satisfied.

However, there is need to assess the extent of customer service delivery of logistics companies. The World Bank, with its professional and academic partners developed Logistics Performance Index (LPI) which is an interactive bench mark tool to help countries identify the challenges and opportunities they face in their performance on trade logistics and what they can do to improve their performance (World Bank, 2013). The Logistics Performance Index weighted the average of countries scores six dimensions which are; efficiency of the clearance process, quality of trade and transport related infrastructure, ease of arranging competitively priced shipments, competence and quality of logistics services, ability to track and trace consignments and timeliness of shipments in reaching destination within the scheduled or expected delivery time (World Bank, 2013). Consequently, since Logistics Performance Index is designed to measure countries logistics performance, there is need for United Parcel Service to assess the extent to which their shared values are used to render quality service to their customers.

### **Statement of Problem**

Business organizations are today facing increasing levels of competitive pressure and difficulty with regard to maintaining and improving profitability with minimal expenses such as shipment cost either outside or within the country which makes logistics organizations indispensable. Logistics has become an enormously important component to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of industrialized nations and thus affects the rate of inflation, interest rates and other aspect of the economy as well (Shuang, 2009). The ever changing business environment due to globalization contributed to the interest of logistics and the increase of global competition all underline logistics as a strategic source of competition advantage. Logistics companies such as United Parcel service, FedEx among others are faced with the pressure of satisfying business organizations or customers' needs in accordance with the shared values of the organization.

Consequently, the shared values of United Parcel Service (UPS) are; integrity, teamwork, service, quality and efficiency, safety, sustainability and innovation. However, the inability of customers to create custom label, set up shipment alerts, create and upload custom documentation, track and export streamline shipping with real time connectivity through the use of WorldShip, a desktop shipping application or the official website, [www.ups.com](http://www.ups.com), then there is need to question the credibility of integrity, innovation, service, quality and efficiency which are part of the shared values of United Parcel Service (UPS).

There seems to be delay in shipment delivery, unreliable system information on the notice of price charges, shipping delay and other status information, shipment are damaged or loss in transit. There is therefore need to question the quality of services rendered to customers. If the shared values of United Parcel Service for customer service delivery are not assessed, then there are possibilities that unmet or unsatisfied customers might lose trust on the services rendered, decrease their level of patronage or discourage other potential customers of United Parcel Service. This is the worry of the researcher.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of United Parcel Service shared values on customer service delivery in Edo State. The specific objectives determined were:

1. the extent to which United Parcel Service provides customer service with integrity in Edo State;
2. the extent to which United Parcel Service provides effective and quality customer service delivery and efficiency in Edo State;
3. the extent to which United Parcel Service provides customer service delivery with sustainability in Edo State;
4. the extent to which United Parcel Service provides customer service delivery with innovativeness in Edo State;

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does United Parcel Service provide customer service with integrity in Edo State?
2. To what extent does United Parcel Service provide effective and quality customer service delivery and efficiency in Edo State?
3. To what extent does United Parcel Service provide customer service delivery with sustainability in Edo State?
4. To what extent does United Parcel Service provide customer service delivery with innovativeness in Edo State?

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings may likely be of immense benefit to logistics companies, business organizations, customers and the government.

The findings will be of benefit to logistics companies such as United Parcel Services, FedEx, DHL, EMS SpeedPost, Zenith Cartex International Limited, Red Star express among others to be conscious of their impact on the daily lives of individual consumers, business organizations (that is, manufacturing, merchandizing or service business organizations) as well as the economic state and development of the economy through the upgrade of their system software, training of staff, effective use of customers' suggestion/complaint box, redefining standard operating procedures and consistent assessment of their customers level of satisfaction in order to render quality services and on time delivery of shipment as at when, where and how needed or requested for by their customers. The findings will also help logistics companies to know the level of customer delivery services they render through in order to develop strategies that will help them improve and sustain the quality of services rendered to their customers.

The findings will be of benefit to business organization be it manufacturing, merchandizing or service businesses to know the impact of unmanaged logistics expenditures, unreliable information system and unstable chain distribution to the profitability and survival of their businesses in order to strategize means to cut down or reduced logistics cost through a thorough research and training on logistics management and tariff rate for shipment for business organizations to choose the logistics company with a minimal tariff rate, faster and reliable shipment duration so as to reduced distribution system malfunction and increase product availability to meet the demand of their customers and make profits.

The findings will be of benefit to customers of United Parcel Service to be conscious of the level of quality service they ought to enjoy and the varieties of services available to them through self-acquisition of information about the company's service offer and policies in order to fully utilize the services available and lay complaints when necessary.

The findings will be of benefit to the government and government agencies such as Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Nigerian Shippers Council among others, to understand the key role logistics play in the economy in the support of the movement and flow of many economic transactions, and how

unchecked logistics expenditure can translate into higher prices for consumers, lower profit for businesses or both, resulting in lower standard of living for everyone. The findings will help the government/ government agencies to put in place measures that will slow down the rate of cost increase through the provision of good and reliable transportation network, fair rate on imported/ exported commodities so as to enable businesses make profit and most importantly to improve citizens standard of living.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study assessed the extent United Parcel Service shared values used for customer service delivery in Edo State. The study covered the extent to which United Parcel Service in Benin City, Edo State provides customer delivery service with integrity, innovativeness and creativity and renders quality and efficient customer service. The respondent will be United Parcel Service customers.

### **Methods**

The design that was adopted for this study was descriptive survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it deals with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting existing conditions from a few sample representative of the population. The target population for this study consisted of all United Parcel Service customers in Benin City, Edo State. The target population is infinite as there is no definite number of customers United Parcel Service render services to. For the purpose of this study, the researcher employed non-probability sampling. A total of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents were used for this study. The respondents were chosen using accidental random sampling technique. The accidental sampling technique is the method where researcher interview respondents as at when they meet them. It involves the researcher standing close to the place where the respondents are mostly found and in the case of this study, the United Parcel Service premises was where questionnaires were administered to the respondents to solicit their responses.

The instrument that was used for this study for the collection of data was a structured questionnaire titled, "Questionnaire on Influence of Shared Values of United Parcel Service on Customer Service Delivery in Edo State" (QISVUPSCSDES). It comprises of two sections A and B. Section A seeks information on the demographic variable which was the name of the customer. Section B consisted of 27 item statements in which 7 items were raised from research question one, 9 items for research question two, 5 items for research question three and 6 items for research question four. The responses to each item in section B were weighed using a 4-point scale; Very High Extent (VHE) – 4 points, High Extent (HE) – 3 points, Low Extent (LE) – 2 points and Very Low Extent (VLE) – 1.

The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor and two other experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Benin, Benin City. Their comments and suggestions were drafted into the final instrument. Thus, the content validity of the questionnaire was guaranteed. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha. The instrument was administered on 20 customers of United Parcel Service and a co-efficient of 0.75 was obtained.

Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer all the research questions. Questionnaires items related to the research questions had four response categories. To determine the influence of United Parcel Service shared values on customer service delivery in Edo State, a decision rule was taken as Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, Very Low Extent. The level of influence of each questionnaire cluster related to the research questions was determined based on grand mean.

**Data presentation and analysis**

The data in Table 1 reveal the mean responses and standard deviation on customer service delivery with integrity. The value of the mean responses range from 2.55 to 3.25 revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to render customer service with integrity to a high extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.69 to 0.97 further revealed that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.93 conclusively showed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to render customer service with integrity to a high extent.

**Table 1.** Respondents’ Mean Responses on Customer Service Delivery with Integrity

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	S.D	Remark
1	UPS provides value added service such as collection and delivery options for customers	3.25	0.69	HE
2	UPS notifies customer when shipment is delayed	3.03	0.79	HE
3	UPS notifies customers of rescheduled date of delivery when original delivery date is not met	3.06	0.84	HE
4	UPS fulfils the delivery times based on the deals or agreements with customers	3.05	0.76	HE
5	UPS offers speedy package delivery to customers	3.01	0.85	HE
6	UPS deliver packages with damage or loss	2.59	0.97	HE
7	Lost or damaged packages are unmitigated by insurance cover.	2.55	0.89	HE
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.93</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>HE</b>

**Source:** Researchers’ field work (2019)

The data in Table 1 revealed the mean responses and standard deviation on integrity on customer service delivery. The value of the mean responses range from 2.55 to 3.25 revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service have value for the integrity of its customers to high extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.69 to 0.97 further revealed that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.93 conclusively showed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service have integrity for its customers to a high extent.

**Table 2.** Mean Responses on Efficient and Quality Customer Service Delivery

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	S.D	Remark
8	UPS offers substandard services to their customers	2.63	0.94	HE
9	UPS delay in response to customers complaints	2.81	0.80	HE
10	UPS send and receive packages through UPS access point network.	2.95	0.88	HE
11	UPS analyze all logistics components including inbound and outbound transportation	3.19	0.73	HE
12	UPS guarantee safe delivery of packages	1.85	0.57	LE
13	UPS provide an ideal choice for urgent shipments that must arrive at the stipulated customers time	2.90	0.70	HE
14	UPS provide free packaging for customers’ convenience.	2.23	0.76	LE
15	UPS delay in providing solution to problems that may appear during the transportation	2..65	0.92	HE
16	UPS ensure full support problem solving before, during and after the transportation for the benefit of their customers	2.85	0.75	HE
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>HE</b>

**Source:** Researchers' field work (2019)

The data in Table 2 revealed the mean responses and standard deviation on efficient and quality customer service delivery. The value of the mean responses range from 1.85 to 3.19 revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide efficient and quality customer service to a high extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.57 to 0.94 further revealed that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.67 conclusively showed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide efficient and quality customer service to a high extent.

**Table 3.** Respondents' Mean Responses on Customer Service Delivery with Sustainability

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	S.D	Remark
17	UPS provide unreliable online platform for customers' to make delivery orders	2.81	0.95	HE
18	UPS smart pickup available for UPS account holders for all service delivery from any validated pickup location is unreliable	2.66	0.88	HE
19	UPS smart pickup notification time is generally an hour to scheduled pickup time.	2.20	0.76	LE
20	UPS smart pickup customers receive PDF invoice containing detail information of customer's shipped goods	2.92	0.72	HE
21	UPS provide customer with the assess to track, define delivery windows and re-route packages as at when convenient	2.99	0.86	HE
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.71</b>	<b>0.83</b>	<b>HE</b>

**Source:** Researchers' field work (2019)

The data in Table 3 reveal the mean responses and standard deviation on customer service delivery with sustainability. The value of the mean responses range from 2.20 to 2.99 revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service delivery with sustainability to a high extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.72 to 0.95 further revealed that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.71 conclusively showed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service with sustainability to a high extent.

**Table 4.** Respondents' Mean Responses on Customer Service Delivery with Innovativeness.

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	S.D	Remark
22	UPS use tracking solution to show the progress of shipment of customers' packages for safe delivery	2.87	0.79	HE
23	UPS streamline their distribution network in order to reduce cost	2.82	0.92	HE
24	UPS provide insight into logistics design, re- engineering and supply chain management for better customer service delivery	2.85	0.84	HE
25	UPS implement leading-edge information systems to enhance good customer relation	2.83	0.87	HE
26	UPS implement benchmarking processes to measure productivity	2.71	0.78	HE
27	UPS provide slow webpage loading for their customers	2.50	0.93	HE
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.76</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>HE</b>

**Source:** Researchers' field work (2019)

The data in Table 4 reveal the mean responses and standard deviation on customer service delivery with innovativeness. The value of the mean responses range from 2.50 to 2.87 revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service with innovativeness to a high extent. The values of the standard deviation range from 0.78 to 0.93 further revealed that the responses were relatively in consensus with the mean values. The grand mean of 2.76 conclusively show that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service delivery with innovativeness to a high extent.

### **Discussions of Results**

The discussions of the results obtained in this study were organized based on the research questions that guided the study. The findings in Table 1 revealed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to render customer service with integrity to a high extent. This is in agreement with Lambert (2010) who posited that leading edge companies go one step further and not only seek an international reputation for overall effectiveness of flexibility, responsiveness, customer focus and continuous improvement but also a competitive edge and position of enduring superiority over competitors in terms of customer preference such as possessing a superior level of logistics as a competitive weapon to secure and maintain customer loyalty. The finding is also in consonance with Bendnarski (2019) that integrity gives a business a competitive edge, helps save face during crises, makes difficult decisions easier, costs less in the long run, and helps secure favourable publicity.

The findings in Table 2 showed that respondents agreed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide efficient and quality customer service to a high extent. This is in agreement with Dawes and Swailes (2012), who opined that service businesses which provide greater value or quality service to their customers motivate them to uphold strong patronage and loyalty which boost the profitability rate of the business. They further posited that, understanding customers' need and satisfying their needs with high standard and values gives the business competitive advantage over other competitors. The finding is also in consonance with Queensland Government (2017) that customers' service helps you to know what your customers consider to be good customer service, take the time to find out customers' expectations, follow up on both positive and negative feedback you receive, ensure that you consider customer service in all aspects of your business and continuously look for ways to improve the level of customer service you deliver

The findings in Table 3 showed that respondents agreed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service delivery with sustainability to a high extent. This is in line with Gattona and Walters (2006), who stated that business organizations that use and or improve their system software and information technology boost accurate and reliable information for management decision making, speedily response to customers' problems, greater knowledge and understanding of marketplace and enable the business to reinforce its competitive advantage. They further posited that, a world-class and leading edge organization is that whose key to differentiation is continuous improvement as this enables the organization to respond faster, to be more effective and efficient than competitors doing so on global basis.

The findings in Table 4 showed that respondents agreed that the respondents agreed that the shared values of United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service with innovativeness to a high extent. This is in line Christopher (2008) who opined that leading edge businesses implement innovative methods, systems and technologies to better their logistics activities. He further stated that such organizations are flexible, committed to their customers and aware of their results, are more likely to embrace technology and are involved in their company strategic directions. The finding is also in



agreement with Startup Hong Kong Limited (2018) that innovation brings about solving problem easily, increases productivity, markets business and beats competitors

## **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that the shared values United Parcel Service are used to provide customer service delivery with integrity to a high extent in Edo State. United Parcel Service renders efficient and quality customer service delivery to a high extent, they also provide customer service delivery with sustainability to a high extent and provide customer service delivery with innovativeness to a high extent.

## **Recommendations**

From the findings of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. United Parcel Service should provide packaging for customers' service as well as guarantee safe delivery of packages.
2. United Parcel Service should understand their customers' needs and wants and try to increase satisfaction level of customers by improving on quality services provided. There should be a consistent effort to collect information on customers' new expectations so as to render services that will meet their needs.
3. United Parcel Service should implement benchmarking process to measure productivity to a very high extent.

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