Logistic Coordination Strategy and Customer Satisfaction of Manufacturing Firms in Rivers State: The Mediating Role of Consumer Closeness

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Abstract
This study examines the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction among manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria, with consumer closeness as a mediator. Drawing on the resource-based view, relational view, and social exchange theory, it investigates how information sharing, activity coordination, and joint planning influence service satisfaction, expectation fulfilment, and overall satisfaction. A cross-sectional survey of 198 managers from 72 firms registered with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria yielded usable data analysed via multiple regression and Baron and Kenny mediation procedures with bootstrapping. Results show that all three dimensions of logistic coordination strategy positively and significantly predict customer satisfaction, with information sharing exerting the strongest effect. Consumer closeness partially mediates the relationship, indicating that coordination benefits are transmitted partly through enhanced communication, relationship interaction, and customer understanding. The findings highlight the dual importance of operational coordination and relational closeness for delivering superior customer experiences in infrastructure-challenged emerging-market settings and offer practical guidance for managers and policymakers seeking to strengthen manufacturing competitiveness in Rivers State.

Keywords: *logistic coordination strategy; customer satisfaction; consumer closeness; manufacturing firms; Rivers State.*

Introduction

In the contemporary global and local business landscape, manufacturing firms face intensifying pressure to deliver superior customer value while managing complex supply chains. Logistic

coordination strategy encompassing information sharing, activity coordination, and joint planning has emerged as a critical lever for enhancing operational efficiency and customer outcomes (Cao & Zhang, 2011; Nyaga et al., 2010). Recent scholarship continues to affirm that effective logistics coordination enables firms to respond swiftly to demand fluctuations, reduce lead times, and improve service reliability (Dai et al., 2025; Gao et al., 2026). Customer satisfaction remains a pivotal performance metric for manufacturing organisations. Satisfied customers exhibit higher loyalty, greater willingness to pay premium prices, and positive word-of-mouth, all of which contribute to sustained competitive advantage (Israel, 2025; Alsmairat et al., 2024). In emerging economies such as Nigeria, and specifically in industrial hubs like Rivers State, manufacturing firms operate amid infrastructural constraints, volatile demand, and intense competition. Consequently, the ability to coordinate logistics activities effectively is no longer optional but essential for survival and growth (Chukwudi and Charles Miyene 2026).

Beyond the direct linkage between logistic coordination and customer satisfaction, scholars have begun to explore the mediating mechanisms that transmit the benefits of coordination to end customers. One such mechanism is consumer closeness, conceptualised as the degree of communication, relationship interaction, and customer understanding that firms cultivate with their buyers (Alsmairat et al., 2024; Mori & Chavez Vera, 2026). When firms share timely information, coordinate activities seamlessly, and engage in joint planning with supply-chain partners, they are better positioned to develop closer relationships with customers, which in turn elevates service satisfaction, expectation fulfilment, and overall satisfaction (Ifekanandu et al., 2024). Despite growing interest in supply-chain collaboration and customer outcomes, empirical investigations that simultaneously examine logistic coordination strategy, consumer closeness, and customer satisfaction within the Nigerian manufacturing context remain scarce. Most existing studies either focus on developed economies or examine pairwise relationships without testing mediation (Arogundade, 2024; Onwuchekwa & Idawaribim, 2024). This study therefore addresses this gap by investigating the mediating role of consumer closeness in the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Rivers State occupies a strategic position in Nigeria's industrial landscape. As the hub of the nation's oil and gas industry and home to a growing cluster of manufacturing enterprises in food processing, chemicals, plastics, and packaging, the state offers a rich laboratory for examining logistics and customer-relationship dynamics (Christian and Miyene – 2026). Yet the same industrial concentration also exposes firms to congestion, security challenges, and infrastructural bottlenecks that amplify the importance of effective coordination. Understanding how logistic coordination strategies translate into customer satisfaction under these conditions is therefore both theoretically interesting and practically urgent.

Statement of the Problem

Manufacturing firms in Rivers State operate in a challenging environment characterised by inadequate transport infrastructure, frequent disruptions in the supply of raw materials, and heightened customer expectations for timely delivery and service quality. Although many firms have invested in logistics capabilities, customer complaints regarding delayed deliveries, inconsistent product availability, and poor after-sales communication persist (Tutah et al., 2025; Ezedialu et al., 2025). These shortcomings suggest that mere possession of logistics resources is insufficient; what matters is the strategic coordination of those resources across organisational boundaries. Prior research has established positive associations between supply-chain collaboration and firm performance (Cao & Zhang, 2011; Nyaga et al., 2010). More recent studies

confirm that supply-chain integration and innovative logistics practices enhance customer satisfaction in manufacturing settings (Israel, 2025; Dai et al., 2025; Arogundade, 2024). However, the pathways through which logistic coordination translates into customer satisfaction remain under-explored, particularly the role of consumer closeness. Without a clear understanding of this mediating mechanism, managers may under-invest in relationship-building activities that amplify the returns from coordination efforts. Furthermore, the majority of empirical work on logistics coordination and customer outcomes has been conducted in Asian, European, or North-American contexts. Evidence from sub-Saharan Africa, and specifically from Nigeria's oil-rich but infrastructure-challenged Rivers State, is limited. The unique institutional, infrastructural, and cultural characteristics of this setting may moderate the relationships observed elsewhere. Consequently, there is a pressing need for context-specific research that examines whether, and how, logistic coordination strategy influences customer satisfaction through consumer closeness among manufacturing firms in Rivers State. In addition, existing studies that touch on related themes in Nigeria have tended to examine either supply-chain integration and firm performance or reverse logistics and brand trust (Onwuchekwa & Idawaribim, 2024; Tutah et al., 2025). Few have isolated the specific dimensions of logistic coordination strategy or tested consumer closeness as a mediator. By addressing these omissions, the present study generates actionable insights for managers and contributes to the broader theoretical conversation on the mechanisms that convert supply-chain collaboration into market outcomes.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State, with particular attention to the mediating role of consumer closeness. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the effect of information sharing on customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.
2. Ascertain the influence of activity coordination on customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.
3. Examine the relationship between joint planning and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.
4. Investigate the mediating effect of consumer closeness on the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Research Questions

In line with the objectives, the following research questions guide the study:

1. To what extent does information share influence customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State?
2. How does activity coordination affect customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between joint planning and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State?
4. Does consumer closeness mediate the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated for testing at the 0.05 level of significance:

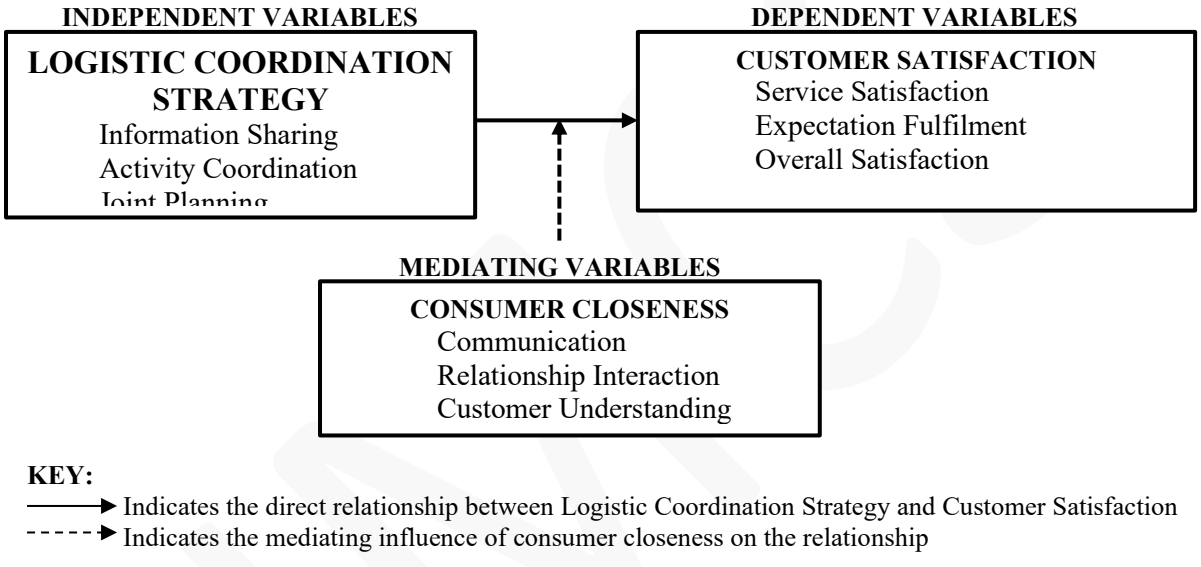
H_{o1}: There is no significant relationship between information sharing and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

H_{o2}: There is no significant relationship between activity coordination and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

H_{o3}: There is no significant relationship between joint planning and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

H_{o4}: Consumer closeness does not significantly mediate the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework



***Source**:* Cao, M., & Zhang, Q. (2011). Supply chain collaboration: Impact on collaborative advantage and firm performance. *Journal of Operations Management, 29*(3), 163–180. ScienceDirect

Nyaga, G. N., Whipple, J. M., & Lynch, D. F. (2010). Examining supply chain relationships: Do buyer and supplier perspectives on collaborative relationships differ? *Journal of Operations Management, 28*(2), 101–114.

Conceptual Review

Logistic Coordination Strategy

Logistic coordination strategy refers to the deliberate alignment of logistics-related activities, information flows, and decision-making processes across organisational boundaries within a supply chain. It encompasses the mechanisms through which firms synchronise the movement of materials, products, and information to achieve collective goals (Cao & Zhang, 2011). Recent studies emphasise that coordination is not merely operational but strategic, involving shared objectives, mutual adjustments, and collaborative problem-solving (Gao et al., 2026; Dai et al., 2025). In manufacturing environments characterised by multi-tier supply chains and geographically dispersed partners, the absence of coordination produces delays, excess inventory, and stock-outs that ultimately erode customer satisfaction. Conversely, firms that treat

coordination as a strategic priority are able to convert logistics into a source of competitive differentiation. The three dimensions examined in this study information sharing, activity coordination, and joint planning represent complementary facets of this strategic capability and have been consistently linked to superior operational and market performance in both developed and emerging-economy settings.

Information Sharing: Information sharing involves the exchange of timely, accurate, and relevant data among supply-chain partners regarding demand forecasts, inventory levels, production schedules, and delivery statuses. Effective information sharing reduces uncertainty, mitigates the bullwhip effect, and enables proactive responses to disruptions (Israel, 2025; Alsmairat et al., 2024). In the digital era, technologies such as electronic data interchange, cloud-based platforms, and Internet of Things sensors have amplified the volume and velocity of shared information, further strengthening coordination capabilities (Mori & Chavez Vera, 2026).

***Activity Coordination*:** Activity coordination refers to the synchronisation of operational processes such as procurement, production, warehousing, and distribution across firms. It ensures that interdependent tasks are performed in a sequence and timing that optimise the overall flow of goods and services (Nyaga et al., 2010). Recent evidence indicates that well-coordinated logistics activities improve on-time delivery performance and reduce total logistics costs, both of which are critical antecedents of customer satisfaction (Dai et al., 2025; Onwuchekwa & Idawaribim, 2024).

Joint Planning: Joint planning entails collaborative decision-making among supply-chain partners concerning capacity, inventory, transportation, and contingency plans. By involving multiple stakeholders in the planning process, firms can align their strategies, share risks, and exploit complementary competencies (Cao & Zhang, 2011). Contemporary research highlights that joint planning enhances supply-chain resilience and responsiveness, particularly in volatile environments typical of emerging markets (Arogundade, 2024; Tutah et al., 2025).

Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is the degree to which a customer's expectations regarding a product or service are met or exceeded. In the manufacturing context, satisfaction is multi-dimensional and encompasses evaluations of product quality, delivery reliability, service responsiveness, and overall experience (Israel, 2025; Alsmairat et al., 2024). High levels of satisfaction drive repurchase intentions, positive referrals, and long-term loyalty, making it a central outcome variable in marketing and supply-chain research.

Service Satisfaction: Service satisfaction reflects customers' evaluations of the intangible aspects of the exchange, including the helpfulness of personnel, the ease of placing orders, the accuracy of invoices, and the quality of after-sales support. Logistics-related service encounters such as delivery punctuality and communication during transit play a decisive role in shaping service satisfaction (Mori & Chavez Vera, 2026).

Expectation Fulfilment: Expectation fulfilment captures the extent to which actual performance matches or surpasses the standards customers held prior to the purchase. In logistics-intensive industries, key expectations revolve around delivery windows, product condition upon arrival, and

information transparency. When firms consistently meet these expectations through coordinated logistics, fulfilment scores rise (Dai et al., 2025).

Overall Satisfaction: Overall satisfaction represents a global evaluative judgement that integrates service, product, and relational experiences. It is often measured with single-item or multi-item scales that ask respondents to rate their general contentment with the firm. Overall satisfaction is a robust predictor of behavioural loyalty and is therefore a preferred outcome metric in many empirical studies (Israel, 2025).

Consumer Closeness

Consumer closeness denotes the psychological and behavioural proximity that exists between a firm and its customers. It is manifested through frequent and open communication, interactive relationship activities, and a deep understanding of customer needs and preferences (Alsmairat et al., 2024). Closeness is both an outcome of effective coordination and a precursor of satisfaction; firms that coordinate well are better able to "get close" to customers, and closeness itself enhances satisfaction.

Communication: Communication within the closeness construct refers to the frequency, clarity, and two-way nature of information exchange between the firm and its customers. High-quality communication reduces ambiguity, builds trust, and enables rapid resolution of issues (Tutah et al., 2025).

Relationship Interaction: Relationship interaction encompasses the interpersonal and organisational activities such as joint problem-solving sessions, site visits, and collaborative improvement projects that strengthen the social bonds between firm and customer. These interactions foster commitment and mutual dependence (Nyaga et al., 2010).

Customer Understanding: Customer understanding involves the firm's ability to acquire, interpret, and act upon knowledge about customer preferences, constraints, and future needs. Superior understanding allows firms to customise offerings and anticipate demand, thereby elevating satisfaction (Alsmairat et al., 2024).

In the Rivers State manufacturing context, consumer closeness takes on added significance because many customers are industrial buyers or large distributors who value long-term partnerships over transactional exchanges. Firms that invest in closeness are better able to secure preferred-supplier status, obtain early demand signals, and collaborate on product development—activities that further reinforce satisfaction and loyalty.

Theoretical Review

Resource-Based View (RBV): The resource-based view posits that firms achieve sustained competitive advantage by possessing and deploying valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). Logistic coordination strategy can be conceptualised as a higher-order capability that integrates tangible logistics assets with intangible relational assets. When effectively orchestrated, this capability generates customer value that competitors find difficult to replicate. Recent applications of RBV to supply-chain contexts confirm that collaborative capabilities contribute to superior performance outcomes (Gao et al., 2026). The relational view extends the RBV by arguing that critical resources may span firm

boundaries and reside in inter-organisational relationships (Dyer & Singh, 1998). Information sharing, activity coordination, and joint planning are relational routines that create relational rents. Consumer closeness itself is a relational outcome that further generates value. Empirical studies grounded in the relational view demonstrate that collaborative relationships outperform transactional ones in terms of both operational and market performance (Nyaga et al., 2010; Cao & Zhang, 2011).

Social Exchange Theory: Social exchange theory suggests that relationships evolve through reciprocal exchanges of resources, information, and socio-emotional support (Blau, 1964). When manufacturing firms invest in coordination activities that benefit customers—such as sharing real-time delivery information or involving customers in joint planning—customers reciprocate with higher satisfaction, loyalty, and willingness to continue the relationship. The mediating role of consumer closeness aligns with this theoretical logic: coordination investments foster closer social exchanges, which in turn produce positive affective and evaluative responses (Alsmairat et al., 2024). Taken together, the resource-based view, the relational view, and social exchange theory provide a multi-level theoretical foundation for the study. RBV explains why logistic coordination can be a source of sustained advantage; the relational view explains how that advantage is co-created across firm boundaries; and social exchange theory explains the psychological processes through which coordination investments are converted into customer satisfaction via closeness. This integrated theoretical lens guides the formulation of hypotheses and the interpretation of empirical results.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The population comprised the 87 manufacturing firms registered with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Rivers State branch. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, a sample of 72 firms was drawn. Three key informants (logistics/operations, marketing/sales, and customer-service managers) were selected from each firm, yielding 216 questionnaires; 198 usable responses were retained (response rate 91.7 %). All constructs were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Logistic coordination strategy items (information sharing, activity coordination, joint planning) were adapted from Cao and Zhang (2011) and Nyaga et al. (2010). Customer satisfaction items were drawn from recent logistics studies (Israel, 2025). Consumer closeness items were refined from the relational literature (Alsmairat et al., 2024). Content validity was established via expert review; construct validity was confirmed by CFA (loadings > 0.70; AVE > 0.50). Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability for all constructs exceeded 0.80. Data were analysed with SPSS 27 and the PROCESS macro. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation (with Sobel test and bootstrapped confidence intervals) were employed. Missing values were minimal (< 2 %) and replaced with series means; VIFs were below 2.5, indicating no multicollinearity concern. Ethical approval was obtained; participation was voluntary and anonymous.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 198 respondents. The sample was dominated by male managers (62.1 %). The largest age group was 36–45 years (41.4 %), followed by 46–55 years (28.3 %). With respect to educational qualification, 54.5 % held a bachelor's

degree and 31.3 % held a postgraduate degree. In terms of managerial experience, 47.5 % had served between 6 and 10 years, while 27.3 % had more than 10 years of experience. The food and beverages sector accounted for 54.5 % of the firms, followed by chemicals and pharmaceuticals (22.2 %), plastics and packaging (15.2 %), and other manufacturing categories (8.1 %).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 198)

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	123 (62.1 %)
	Female	75 (37.9 %)
Age	25–35 years	38 (19.2 %)
	36–45 years	82 (41.4 %)
	46–55 years	56 (28.3 %)
	56 years and above	22 (11.1 %)
Education	Diploma / HND	28 (14.1 %)
	Bachelor's degree	108 (54.5 %)
	Postgraduate degree	62 (31.3 %)
Experience	1–5 years	50 (25.3 %)
	6–10 years	94 (47.5 %)
	Above 10 years	54 (27.3 %)
Industry Sector	Food & Beverages	108 (54.5 %)
	Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals	44 (22.2 %)
	Plastics & Packaging	30 (15.2 %)
	Others	16 (8.1 %)

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Reliability and Validity Assessment

Table 2 reports the reliability and convergent validity statistics. All Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, while average variance extracted (AVE) values were above 0.50, confirming adequate internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 2: Reliability and Convergent Validity Statistics

Construct	No. of Items	α	CR	AVE
Information Sharing	5	0.86	0.89	0.62
Activity Coordination	4	0.84	0.88	0.65
Joint Planning	4	0.83	0.87	0.63
Consumer Closeness	6	0.89	0.91	0.64
Customer Satisfaction	6	0.91	0.93	0.68

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations of the study constructs. All mean scores exceeded the scale midpoint of 3.00, indicating generally favourable perceptions of logistic coordination practices, consumer closeness, and customer satisfaction among the sampled firms.

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations and Inter-Correlations (N = 198)

Construct	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Information Sharing	3.87	0.71	1				
2. Activity Coordination	3.79	0.68	0.58**	1			
3. Joint Planning	3.72	0.74	0.54**	0.61**	1		
4. Consumer Closeness	3.91	0.66	0.67**	0.59**	0.54**	1	
5. Customer Satisfaction	3.95	0.69	0.62**	0.58**	0.55**	0.71**	1

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Regression Analysis – Direct Effects

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the direct effects of the three dimensions of logistic coordination strategy on customer satisfaction (Table 4). The overall model was statistically significant, $F(3, 194) = 68.42$, $p < 0.001$, and explained 51.4 % of the variance in customer satisfaction (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.514$). All three predictors made significant unique contributions: information sharing ($\beta = 0.31$, $t = 4.87$, $p < 0.001$), activity coordination ($\beta = 0.27$, $t = 4.12$, $p < 0.001$), and joint planning ($\beta = 0.24$, $t = 3.65$, $p < 0.01$). Consequently, null hypotheses H01, H02 and H03 were rejected.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Results – Direct Effects on Customer Satisfaction

Predictor	B	SE	β	T	Sig.
(Constant)	0.82	0.21	—	3.90	0.000
Information Sharing	0.29	0.06	0.31	4.87	0.000
Activity Coordination	0.26	0.06	0.27	4.12	0.000
Joint Planning	0.22	0.06	0.24	3.65	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2026.
Model summary: $R = 0.722$; $R^2 = 0.521$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.514$; $F(3, 194) = 68.42$, $p < 0.001$. Dependent variable: Customer Satisfaction.

Mediation Analysis

The mediating role of consumer closeness was examined using the Baron and Kenny (1986) four-step procedure and confirmed with the Sobel test and bootstrapped confidence intervals (Table 5). In Step 1, the composite logistic coordination strategy significantly predicted customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). In Step 2, logistic coordination strategy significantly predicted consumer closeness ($\beta = 0.59$, $p < 0.001$). In Step 3, when both predictors were entered simultaneously, the coefficient for logistic coordination strategy declined to $\beta = 0.28$ ($p < 0.01$) while consumer closeness remained significant ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$). The Sobel test yielded $z = 6.87$ ($p < 0.001$). Bootstrapped 95 % confidence intervals for the indirect effect (0.21 to 0.38) did not contain zero, confirming partial mediation. Null hypothesis H04 was therefore rejected.

Table 5: Mediation Analysis Results (LCS = Logistic Coordination Strategy; CC = Consumer Closeness; CS = Customer Satisfaction)

Path / Effect	β	SE	t / z	p-value
LCS → CS (total effect, c)	0.64	0.05	12.80	< 0.001
LCS → CC (a)	0.59	0.05	11.80	< 0.001
CC → CS controlling for LCS (b)	0.52	0.06	8.67	< 0.001
LCS → CS controlling for CC (c′)	0.28	0.06	4.67	< 0.01
Indirect effect (a × b)	0.31	0.04	6.87 (Sobel)	< 0.001
Bootstrapped 95 % CI (indirect)	0.21 – 0.38	—	—	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Summary of Hypotheses Tests

Table 6 summarises the outcomes of all hypothesis tests. All four null hypotheses were rejected at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 6: Summary of Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypothesis	Statement (Null)	Decision
H01	No significant relationship between information sharing and customer satisfaction	Rejected ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$)
H02	No significant relationship between activity coordination and customer satisfaction	Rejected ($\beta = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$)
H03	No significant relationship between joint planning and customer satisfaction	Rejected ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.01$)
H04	Consumer closeness does not significantly mediate the LCS–CS relationship	Rejected (partial mediation confirmed)

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Discussion of Findings

The findings demonstrate that information sharing, activity coordination, and joint planning each exert a positive and statistically significant influence on customer satisfaction among manufacturing firms in Rivers State. These results are consistent with recent international evidence that supply-chain integration and collaborative logistics practices enhance delivery performance and customer outcomes (Dai et al., 2025; Israel, 2025; Gao et al., 2026). In the local context, the results corroborate earlier Nigerian studies that linked supply-chain collaboration to improved customer satisfaction in the noodles and food-and-beverage sectors (Arogundade, 2024; Ezedialu et al., 2025). The relative strength of the coefficients suggests that information sharing is the most potent dimension of logistic coordination in this setting. This finding aligns with the view that timely and accurate information reduces uncertainty and enables firms to meet customer expectations more reliably (Alsmairat et al., 2024; Mori & Chavez Vera, 2026). Activity coordination and joint planning also matter, indicating that operational synchronisation and collaborative decision-making contribute incrementally to satisfaction beyond the benefits of information exchange. Of particular theoretical and practical interest is the partial mediating role of consumer closeness. The results indicate that a substantial portion of the effect of logistic coordination on customer satisfaction operates through enhanced communication, relationship interaction, and customer understanding. This finding extends the relational view of the firm by showing that coordination routines generate relational capital (closeness) that, in turn, translates into market outcomes (satisfaction). It also resonates with social-exchange logic: investments in coordination signal commitment, which customers reciprocate with higher evaluative judgements (Blau, 1964; Alsmairat et al., 2024). The persistence of a significant direct effect after controlling for consumer closeness implies that logistic coordination also influences satisfaction through additional channels possibly improved product availability, reduced delivery lead times, or lower logistics costs that are not fully captured by the closeness construct. Future research could incorporate these alternative mediators to develop a more comprehensive process model.

From a managerial standpoint, the results counsel against a purely technology-centric view of logistics improvement. While digital tools for information sharing are valuable, their impact on customer satisfaction is amplified when they are embedded in broader relationship-building practices. Managers should therefore allocate resources not only to systems and process redesign but also to the soft skills and organisational routines that foster communication, interaction, and deep customer understanding.

The study also carries implications for industrial policy in Rivers State and similar emerging-market industrial clusters. Public and private stakeholders seeking to enhance the competitiveness of local manufacturing should support initiatives that strengthen inter-firm coordination capabilities and customer-relationship competencies. Training programmes, shared digital platforms, and industry forums that facilitate joint planning can serve as catalysts for the kinds of coordination and closeness that this study has shown to be consequential for customer satisfaction.

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction of manufacturing firms in Rivers State, with consumer closeness as a mediating variable. Drawing on survey data from 198 managers across 72 manufacturing firms, the study found that information sharing, activity coordination, and joint planning each positively and significantly influence customer satisfaction. Moreover, consumer closeness partially mediates the relationship between logistic coordination strategy and customer satisfaction. The findings contribute to the supply-chain and marketing literatures by providing context-specific evidence from an under-researched African industrial setting and by clarifying a key mediating mechanism. Practically, the results underscore the dual importance of investing in coordination capabilities and of cultivating closer relationships with customers. Manufacturing firms that excel at both coordination and closeness are better positioned to deliver superior customer experiences and to secure long-term competitive advantage. Like all research, this study has limitations. The cross-sectional design precludes strong causal inference; longitudinal or experimental designs would strengthen confidence in the directionality of the relationships. The sample is restricted to manufacturing firms in Rivers State, limiting generalisability to other sectors or regions. Future studies could examine additional mediators and moderators such as digital maturity, supply-chain complexity, or cultural orientation and could extend the analysis to other Nigerian states or comparative African contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Manufacturing firms in Rivers State should institutionalise formal information-sharing protocols with key suppliers and customers, leveraging digital platforms to ensure real-time visibility of inventory, orders, and delivery status.
2. Managers should prioritise cross-functional and inter-organisational activity coordination, establishing joint operational teams and shared performance metrics to synchronise procurement, production, and distribution processes.
3. Firms are encouraged to engage customers and major suppliers in joint planning exercises particularly capacity planning, contingency planning, and new-product introduction so that strategies are aligned and risks are shared.
4. Beyond operational coordination, firms should deliberately invest in building consumer closeness through regular two-way communication, collaborative problem-solving sessions, and systematic efforts to understand evolving customer needs.
5. Policy makers and industry associations in Rivers State should facilitate capacity-building programmes and digital infrastructure initiatives that enable manufacturing firms, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, to adopt advanced coordination and relationship-management practices.

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