

Social Intelligence and Social Sustainability of Manufacturing Firms in Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

The study was conducted to examine the social intelligence and social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. Two specific objectives were developed, which metamorphosed into four research questions and four research hypotheses. A survey research design was adapted for the study. The population of the study consisted of two hundred and forty-eight (248) staff of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. The sample size was 153 staff using Taro Yamenes sampling technique. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic (PPMC), which was used to test the hypotheses supported by Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 23). The result shows that there is a significant relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability ($r = 0.847$, $p 0.001$) and that there is a significant relationship between social skills and social sustainability ($r = 0.682$, $p 0.003$). Based on the findings, the study concluded that there is a significant relationship between social intelligence and the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. Thus, the study recommended that manufacturing firms should develop situational awareness by prioritizing the well-being of their employees and implementing welfare programs that promote a healthy work-life balance. They should actively engage with the employees and the local community to understand their needs and concerns. They should develop social skills by maintaining transparent and open communication channels with their employees, customers, and stakeholders to enhance their social intelligence and contribute to social sustainability, which will improve their overall business performance.

Keywords: *Social Intelligence, Situation Awareness, Social Skills, Social Sustainability, Manufacturing Firms, Akwa Ibom State*

Introduction

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, social sustainability has gained increasing importance for firms worldwide. Social sustainability refers to a firm's commitment to operating in a socially responsible manner by considering the well-being of stakeholders, addressing social issues, and contributing positively to society. It encompasses actions such as promoting diversity and inclusion, supporting local communities, respecting human rights, and ensuring fair labor practices. Firms that prioritize social sustainability not only enhance their reputation and stakeholder relationships but also contribute to the long-term success and

resilience of their businesses (Carroll, 1999). Elkington (1998) emphasizes the need for firms to embrace social sustainability and balance their responsibilities towards people, the planet, and profit. While Porter and Kramer (2006) focus on how firms should develop society using appropriate strategies in business in order to achieve competitive advantage through corporate social responsibility,

Scholars have demonstrated the importance of social sustainability. For instance, social sustainability plays a crucial role in fostering resilient communities, enhancing stakeholder relationships, and promoting long-term business success (Porter & Kramer, 2006). Porter & Kramer (2006) claimed that social sustainability encourages firms to actively engage with their stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities, and civil society organizations. By addressing social issues and actively listening to stakeholders' needs and concerns, firms can build strong relationships and enhance their reputation (Porter & Kramer, 2006). This, in turn, can lead to increased customer loyalty, employee satisfaction, and a positive brand image.

Social sustainability helps firms identify and manage social risks, such as labor rights violations, supply chain disruptions, or community conflicts. By prioritizing fair labor practices, human rights, and community well-being, firms can mitigate potential risks, enhance operational resilience, and safeguard their social license to operate (GRI, 2016). This proactive approach minimizes reputational damage and potential legal or regulatory challenges. Addressing social issues can drive innovation and create new market opportunities for firms. By understanding and responding to evolving societal needs and preferences, firms can develop products, services, and business models that align with social sustainability goals. For example, Elkington (1998) stated that by providing sustainable and inclusive solutions that address poverty, inequality, or environmental challenges, we can tap into growing consumer demand for responsible products (Elkington, 1998).

Furthermore, social sustainability practices can enhance firms' ability to attract and retain top talent. Carroll (1999) opined that firms appreciate employees working for organizations that demonstrate a commitment to social and environmental responsibility (Carroll, 1999). Firms that prioritize social sustainability can create inclusive and diverse workplaces, provide opportunities for employee growth and development, and foster a positive work culture, thus attracting and retaining motivated and engaged employees. Social sustainability contributes to broader societal goals, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By addressing poverty, inequality, access to education and healthcare, and environmental issues, firms can make tangible contributions to sustainable development and play a vital role in creating more equitable and inclusive societies (WBCSD, 2020). Hence, the importance of social responsibility cannot be overemphasized.

However, despite the huge benefits associated with social sustainability practices, it seems that research studies have not addressed one of the main factors that influences social sustainability, such as social intelligence, among others. The idea of social intelligence is related to the postulation of different mental decisions and aptitudes that deal with social content by having a set of talents (Rahim, 2016). This set of talents helps individuals and firms resolve their social complications, which include the aptitude to understand the feelings, thoughts, and actions of others in different circumstances and social situations (121 et al., 2013). Social intelligence

includes social awareness and the development of social skills that enable organizations to tackle challenges from the internal and external business environment. Situational awareness is the ability to understand the culture, values, and norms of employees in an organization as well as the society in which organizations operate. While social skills are practices that equip the organization to negotiate and respect employees and society through interacting with and building good relations with them,

Meanwhile, the topic of social intelligence and social sustainability within the manufacturing industry in Akwa Ibom State is at a low ebb when it comes to literature reviews. This shows that such a topic has not been explored widely in this area. This shows a significant research gap concerning the specific context of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. Thus, there is limited existing research focusing on social intelligence and social sustainability practices in manufacturing firms within this particular region. Therefore, this research aims to bridge this gap and contribute to the existing literature by investigating the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability, using situational awareness and social skills as its dimensions. By addressing these research gaps, this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on social intelligence and social sustainability in the manufacturing industry, particularly within the Akwa Ibom State context.

Statement of the Problem

The manufacturing sector plays a crucial role in economic development and sustainability. In the context of Akwa Ibom State, there is a need to examine the social intelligence and social sustainability practices of manufacturing firms. Manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State may lack awareness and understanding of the concept of social intelligence and its application within their operations. Social intelligence involves the ability to understand and respond to the needs and preferences of stakeholders, including employees, customers, local communities, and government agencies (Goleman, 2006). However, there is a lack of research specifically examining social intelligence practices in the manufacturing sector in Akwa Ibom State. The manufacturing sector has a significant impact on the environment and local communities. Social sustainability encompasses practices that aim to minimize negative social impacts and promote positive social contributions (Chiu, Li, & Chiu, 2016).

Manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State may not prioritize social sustainability initiatives, resulting in potential adverse effects on the environment and local communities. Effective social intelligence and social sustainability practices require active situation awareness, social skills, engagement and collaboration with various stakeholders. However, manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State face challenges in engaging with stakeholders such as employees, local communities, and regulatory authorities. This lack of engagement can hinder the development and implementation of effective social intelligence and social sustainability strategies.

Akwa Ibom State has unique social, cultural, and environmental characteristics that influence the manufacturing sector. Existing research on social intelligence and social sustainability primarily focuses on global or national perspectives, and there is a dearth of context-specific strategies and guidelines tailored to the manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. Addressing these problems is essential for the sustainable development of the manufacturing sector in Akwa Ibom State.

Objectives of the Study

This study was undertaken to find the relationship between social intelligence and the sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. However, the following specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between situational awareness and the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State.
2. Examine the relationship between social skills and the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between situational awareness and the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State?
2. How do social skills relate to the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between situational awareness and the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between social skills and the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State.

Significance of the Study

The research will examine the level of social intelligence practices currently implemented by manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. The findings will provide valuable insights and recommendations for manufacturing firms in the region to improve their social intelligence practices and contribute to social sustainability, ultimately benefiting both the manufacturing firms and the local community.

Scope of the Study

The study centered on social intelligence and social sustainability. As such, the scope of the study covered the concept of social intelligence and two of its dimensions, as well as the concept of organizational sustainability. Equally important, the social intelligence variables used in the study are situational awareness and social skills. In terms of unit/analytical scope, individuals considered as sample size for the study were the managers, supervisors, and waiters and waitresses at the operational unit. Geographically, this study was carried out at different manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State.

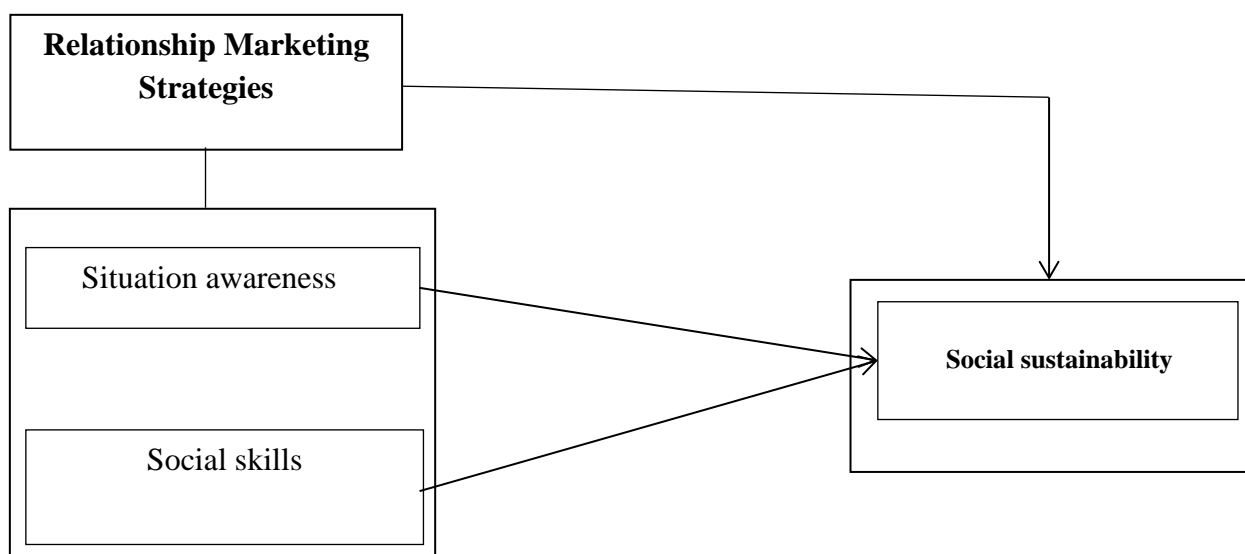
Limitations of the Study

The study centered on social intelligence and social sustainability. As such, the study is limited to the content of social intelligence and social sustainability. Equally, the social intelligence variables that were used in the study include situational awareness and social skills. Geographically, the study was limited to manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. The study made use of a questionnaire to generate responses from the respondents; hence, the result of this study was limited to the truthfulness of the responses that were generated from the respondents. Most of the respondents sampled were careful in disclosing what they refer to as "classified information," as such information is perceptively reserved for the organization's internal operations. The researcher resolves this challenge by asking questions that do not elicit information on sensitive issues within the organization. More so, social intelligence variables that predict social sustainability in manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State may not be generalized to other organizations.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Framework

The study reviewed the concept of social intelligence and organizational sustainability. Two dimensions were adopted in this study such include; situation awareness (the ability to understand the culture, values, and norms of employees and the society); social skills (skills that equip the organization to negotiate and respect employees and the society through interacting and building good relations with them). These were reviewed in connection with social sustainability (a firm's commitment to operating in a socially responsible manner by considering the well-being of stakeholders, addressing social issues, and contributing positively to society). The interrelationships of the mentioned variables are displayed in the conceptual framework below.



Source: Goleman and Boyatzis (2008).

Concept of social intelligence

As defined earlier, social intelligence is the ability to understand the culture, values, and norms of employees and society as a whole. Gardner (2013) defined social intelligence as the ability to recognize and understand others according to mood, desire, motivation, and intentions. In the words of Eshghi et al. (2013), they defined social intelligence as the ability to read non-verbal cues and the ability to achieve the relevant objectives of specific social situations. Social intelligence develops from experience with people and enshrines learning from successes and failures in social settings; it may also be referred to as tactfulness. The concept of social intelligence gained significance in 1982, when Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner proposed the theory of multiple intelligences in his work "Frame of Minds". The author found that human beings possess not only cognitive intelligence but also social intelligence (Gardner, 1983).

Social intelligence is a valuable aspect of one's life that helps an individual interact socially in his or her work environment. It is from this perspective that this concept attracts the attention of scholars and researchers. The idea of social intelligence is related to the postulation of different mental decisions and aptitudes that deal with social content by having a set of talents (Rahim, 2016). This set of talents helps individuals resolve their social complications, which include the aptitude to understand the feelings, thoughts, and actions of others in different circumstances and social situations (Eshghi et al., 2013).

Most initially very successful organizations often find themselves dwindling along their course of life for reasons traceable to human relationships (Riggio, 2014). Frankovsky and Birknerová (2014) claim that social intelligence depends on knowledge and awareness, which means that it is not enough to know, be aware of, and predict the behavior and experience of others; in addition to this, it is imperative to know and comprehend our own capacities and abilities. It is clear that there are many definitions of social intelligence. Although there are many researchers in different fields and disciplines, they all agree on one definition: the ability of individuals to understand and respond to others in social situations through interacting with others, following verbal and non-verbal communication, and influencing them.

Situational Awareness

Rahim (2014) has defined situational awareness as the employee's ability to collect information for inspection and formulation of problems. This ability is very important for an employee's success in life and leadership. The procedural definition of situational awareness is: It is a set of practices that are exercised to read the situation by evaluating and analyzing the conflict issues. Situational awareness is the ability of an individual to sense, articulate, and reflect on their emotional state and understand how it affects their performance. It is associated with being able to (1) detect which emotions, moods, and impulses one is experiencing, (2) why they are experiencing them, and (3) how they affect others and their performance (Polychroniou, 2009).

According to Kunnanatt (2008), situational aware individuals are able to read and link their feelings with what they think and how they act. Individuals with high situational awareness don't allow their emotions to rule them; they keep them under control at all times. An example

could be an individual who is able to realize that when he or she is in a state of anger, it clouds their judgment and prevents them from making critical decisions while in the state of anger. Luca and Tarricone (2001) emphasize that situational awareness is important in guiding interactions among colleagues and establishing a positive and productive workforce. Luca and Tarricone (2001) argue that workers need to be aware of their feelings as they may allow uncontrolled emotions to impact the dynamics and culture of the workforce. Situational awareness forms an important building block for social awareness and self-management.

Social Skills

Rahim et al. (2016) define social skills as the ability to speak clearly, negotiate, and manage conflict by building and maintaining positive relationships with employees. It is a set of practices that are exercised in order to negotiate with and respect employees through interacting with them and building good relations with them. Social skills are an extension of social intelligence. Such skills are key components of social intelligence, in which people with such skills have the ability to express themselves in social interactions, read and comprehend various societal circumstances, understand social roles, norms, and scripts, have interpersonal problem-solving skills, and have social role-playing skills (Riggio and Reichard, 2008). Social skills refer to the ability to fine-tune behaviors when you find yourself in different situations and when creating new relationships (Promsri, 2017).

Rahima et al. (2016) stated in another opinion that social skills are the ability to communicate in clear language, negotiate, and manage conflict by building and maintaining positive relationships with employees. In addition, Hogan and Shelton (1998) in Jureviciene et al. (2012) have described social skills as the level or degree of personality whereby a person demonstrates personal social knowledge and the ability to manage social interactions. Based on the various definitions that have been stated, social skills are important for harmonious survival in any societal group. It has also been claimed to be an appropriate behavior (the ability to choose behavior according to the situation and meet the expectations of behavior, to express positive and negative feelings without the loss of social support, etc.) (Jureviciene et al., 2012). Research has proven that individuals who possess social skills are found to be unique in nature and adapt to conditions, while those without such skills become dependent on people within their environment (Gedviliene & Bauziene, 2008).

Concept of social sustainability

A generic definition of social sustainability does not exist; rather, various researchers took on the charge to define social sustainability in their own ways. Neubaum and Zahra (2006) refer to social sustainability as the ability of an organization to nurture and support growth over time by effectively meeting the expectations of diverse stakeholders. Coetzee (2017) further stressed that social sustainability refers to the reduction of social risk and then increasing the likelihood that an organization will survive and thrive in the future, coupled with the mitigation of any harm to the things and people around it. Hence, the sustainability of an organization is judged according to its economic, environmental, and social performance.

Liang, Civelek, and Rahim (2016) see sustainability as a critical part of most organizations today, and one of the basic rationales behind social sustainability is to improve social effectiveness. This implies that for social sustainability strategies to be successful, organizations must pay careful attention to the demands of their current economic operating environment. Sustainability can be achieved if organizations motivate staff by training them in social intelligence skills such as communication, listening, persuasion, self-control, trustworthiness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence in order to sharpen their social skills (Nwokorie and Obiora, 2018). Since social intelligence is all about reading the mind and reflectively regulating the emotions of your customers, It is worthy of note that, for workers to deliver effective service, they should acquire these social skills, which will help them act wisely in diverse situations.

Social sustainability plays a crucial role in social success as it involves managing the impacts of businesses on people and fostering positive relationships with stakeholders. Social sustainability practices, such as fair treatment of employees, community engagement, and ethical behavior, contribute to building a positive reputation and fostering trust among stakeholders. Research has shown that organizations with strong social sustainability performance tend to enjoy enhanced reputation and trust, leading to improved social success (Crane et al., 2014). Organizations that prioritize social sustainability are more likely to attract and retain top talent. Employees today value companies that demonstrate a commitment to social and environmental responsibility. Studies have found a positive relationship between social sustainability practices, employee engagement, job satisfaction, and social commitment (Othman et al., 2019).

This, in turn, enhances social success by fostering a motivated and dedicated workforce. Socially sustainable organizations actively engage with stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities, and NGOs. By involving stakeholders in decision-making processes, organizations can gain valuable insights, build partnerships, and address societal concerns effectively. Such engagement promotes social capital, improves social resilience, and enhances overall success (Elkington and Hartigan, 2008). Organizations that consider social sustainability factors are better equipped to manage risks and adapt to changing societal expectations. By proactively addressing social issues, organizations can mitigate potential risks related to reputation damage, legal compliance, and stakeholder backlash. Research has shown that proactive social sustainability practices positively impact social performance and long-term success (Gond et al., 2017).

Social sustainability practices can drive innovation and provide a competitive advantage. By integrating social considerations into their products, services, and business models, organizations can tap into new markets, meet evolving consumer demands, and differentiate themselves from competitors. Numerous case studies highlight the positive impact of social innovation on social success (Bocken et al., 2014). Thus, social sustainability is intricately linked to social success. By prioritizing social sustainability practices, organizations can enhance their reputation, attract and retain talent, engage stakeholders effectively, manage risks, foster innovation, and gain a competitive advantage. Embracing social sustainability is no longer just a moral imperative; it has become a strategic necessity for organizations aiming for long-term success in a rapidly changing world.

Situational Awareness and Social Sustainability

Situational awareness and social sustainability are two distinct concepts, but they are interconnected and can have a significant impact on each other. Situational awareness refers to the ability to perceive and comprehend the elements of one's environment, understand their meaning, and project their status in the near future. On the other hand, social sustainability focuses on creating and maintaining a society that enhances the well-being of individuals and communities, ensuring social justice, equity, and inclusivity. The relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability lies in their shared goal of promoting resilience and adaptability in a rapidly changing world.

Situational awareness plays a crucial role in the development and implementation of early warning systems for various social and environmental hazards. These systems help communities prepare for and respond to disasters, such as natural calamities or disease outbreaks. By being aware of potential risks, societies can take proactive measures to mitigate the impact on vulnerable populations, thus fostering social sustainability (Mileti, 1999).

Situational awareness provides decision-makers with timely and accurate information, enabling them to make informed choices regarding resource allocation and policy development. By considering social factors, such as equity, access to basic services, and the needs of marginalized groups, decision-makers can ensure that social sustainability principles are integrated into their actions (Clark et al., 2016). Situational awareness encourages active community engagement and participation in decision-making processes. By involving community members in identifying and analyzing social issues, their knowledge and experiences can be integrated into sustainable solutions. This inclusive approach helps build trust, strengthens social cohesion, and promotes sustainable development (Kates et al., 2005).

Situational awareness assists in assessing social vulnerability and resilience. Understanding the factors that contribute to vulnerability, such as poverty, inequality, or limited access to resources, can guide efforts to enhance social sustainability. By addressing these underlying issues, societies can build resilience and reduce the impact of future shocks and stresses (Adger, 2000). It is important to note that while situational awareness can contribute to social sustainability, social sustainability itself involves a broader range of considerations, such as economic viability and environmental stewardship. Achieving social sustainability requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses social, economic, and environmental dimensions (United Nations, 2015).

Social skills and social sustainability

Social skills are any competence facilitating interaction and communication with others where social rules and relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and nonverbal ways. The process of learning these skills is called socialization. Lack of such skills can cause social awkwardness (Leary, 1957). Social skills are important because they can help you communicate more effectively and, as a result, help you build, maintain, and grow relationships with colleagues, clients, and new contacts. These skills are important to maintain and improve, no matter your position, industry, or experience level. When these skills are acquired, they help stabilize the organization, thereby bringing sustainability to it.

Theoretical Framework

We looked at the theoretical framework that supported this work. They were appraised one after the other.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) Blau (1921)

Social exchange theory was propounded by Blau in 1964. Blau (1964) posits that people enter into a relationship because of the social or economic benefits. In the words of Blau (1964), social benefit is built on trust that someone to whom good gestures have been extended would definitely reciprocate in the future, while economic exchange is purely based on economic gains, such that there would be an adequate pay for good performance and patronage by customers. Put together, the basic mantra of social exchange theory is that a good gesture that is being demonstrated between contractual parties will eventually elicit positive behaviors such as trust, commitment, loyalty, support, and continuous engagement in helping behaviors. Such positive attitudes create a norm of reciprocity, which would serve as a template whereby each party would always reciprocate for kind gestures received (Gouldner, 1960).

The stylized fact in social exchange theory is the principle of reciprocity. This principle of reciprocity cuts across different phases of an organization. Customers always want to patronize places where there is good hospitality and where they will derive maximum satisfaction from the services rendered to them. For the employees, they always want to show loyalty to fellow employees as well as remain committed to the course of the organization, which helps enhance the sustainability objectives of an organization. They want to value whatever contribution they render to their fellow employees as well as the organization. At every point in time, this array of contributions, in the form of helping behaviors that exist among employees, helps on a large scale in achieving social sustainability. When the good gestures received are returned, it ultimately leads to general trust among employees, resulting in teamwork and collaborative efforts in pursuit of the organization's sustainability goals. However, where the norms of reciprocity are downplayed, both by employees, customers, and the organization, employees are bound to withdraw a set of positive behaviors as a measure of equity or balance, which inevitably affects social sustainability pursuits. Thus, social exchange theory serves as a theoretical underpinning that aptly explains the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability.

Human Relations Theory, Elton Mayo (1933)

The Human Relations (HR) theory propounded by Mayo (1933) was adopted as the theoretical framework. The HR theory attempts to provide a perspective on organizations and the imperativeness of cooperative relationships. This theory was propounded by Elton Mayo, a sociologist. The human relations approach or theory starts with the postulate that in organizations, there is always disorder. This disorder emanates as a result of the widened gap between technological development and social development (Ekpenyong, 1993). In organizations, frantic efforts are usually made to advance the cause and usage of technology, while a less commensurate effort is made on the nature and mode of the social relationships existing in the organization or organizations. This widening gap between technological

advancement and social development tends to have adverse consequences for social disorder in the workplace. Elton Mayo, being a social scientist, was therefore concerned and worried about the consequences of this imbalance. His uttermost focus was therefore on how order and stability can be restored and maintained in a disorderly and unstable organization.

Self-Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (1985)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), propounded by Deci and Ryan (1985), is an important theory of motivation that addresses issues of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. People have three innate psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy. The theory argues that if these needs are met, people will function and grow optimally to actualize their inherent potential. The social environment needs to nurture these needs. However, self-determination theory (SDT), as defined by the authors, is a macro theory of human motivation and personality that concerns people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. It is concerned with the motivation behind the choices people make without external influence or interference. SDT focuses on the degree to which an individual's behavior is self-motivated and self-determined.

Self-efficacy Theory Bandura (1977)

Self-efficacy, propounded by Bandura (1977), refers to an individual's belief in his or her capacity to execute behaviors necessary to produce specific performance attainments (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997). Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment. These cognitive self-evaluations influence all manner of human experience, including the goals for which people strive, the amount of energy expended toward goal achievement, and the likelihood of attaining particular levels of behavioral performance. Unlike traditional psychological constructs, self-efficacy beliefs are hypothesized to vary depending on the domain of functioning and the circumstances surrounding the occurrence of behavior.

Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) has had considerable influence on research, education, and clinical practice. In the field of health psychology, for example, the construct of self-efficacy has been applied to social intelligence behaviors. In synopsis, this research work is anchored on the theory of human relations by Elton Mayo in 1927, because the approach is therefore relevant for the study in that it brings to the fore not just the essence of motivation as an instigator for a harmonious and cordial working relationship by the workers/labor and the management, but it also exposes us to a labored for a labor management relationship, which is a precursor to social stability/homeostasis and survival.

Empirical Review

The study reviewed past studies in relation to social intelligence and social sustainability. Mohadesi (2021) carried out a study on the relationship between social intelligence and organizational commitment among the school managers of Kashmar and Khalilabad. The main objective of this research is to examine the relationship between social intelligence (SI) and organizational commitment (OC) among male and female managers of boys' and girls' schools

in the two Iranian cities of Kashmar and Khalilabad. The statistical population of the study included all the managers of the aforementioned schools in two cities, for a total of 204 people based on the information received from the local education bureaus. The study is based on the correlation method. Pearson's correlation coefficient, multiple regressions, and an independent t-test were carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software for data analysis. The results revealed that there was a relationship between SI and OC; meanwhile, SI could somehow predict and explain the alterations in OC. Also, there was a meaningful association between the subscale of patience and OC, where patience had an impact on OC and its dimensions.

Moreover, the results show that there is a strong impact among social intelligence variables (organizational awareness, social skills, empathy, situational awareness, and situational response) on organizational conflict management strategies (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising). This study recommends the organizations in the Jordanian telecommunication sector should carry out training to raise awareness of social intelligence among all employees. In addition, the organizations have to encourage employees to exchange experiences that will reduce conflict among themselves. Finally, the study recommends studying organizational conflict management strategies from other psychological perspectives.

Tamunosiki-Amadi et al. (2020) carried out a study on social intelligence and employee commitment in the Bayelsa State Health Sector. The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between social intelligence and employee commitment in the health sector in Nigeria. The research design adopted for this study is a cross-sectional survey design. A total of 339 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 313 were retrieved, of which 273 were found usable. The study employed Taro Yamene's technique to arrive at the sample size of 339. Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient was used for the bivariate analysis, and partial correlation was used for the multivariate analysis with the aid of SPSS 20.0. The findings revealed a highly significant level of relationship between the dimension (clarity) of social intelligence and the measures (affective, continuance, and normative commitment) of employee commitment. In conclusion, the study found that social intelligence influences employee commitment, which enhances outcomes such as maintaining high performance standards and achieving high performance goals.

Serrieh et al. (2017) carried out a study to investigate the impact of social intelligence on the organizational conflict management strategies of Jordanian telecommunication companies. The main objective of this study is to determine the impact of social intelligence on organizational conflict management strategies. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the data were collected through answering questionnaires by using simple random numbers for a sample of 350 employees who are working at Jordanian telecommunication companies (Orange and Umniah). In addition, the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 for descriptive and analytical statistics. The study concluded that there is an impact of social intelligence on organizational conflict management strategies in Jordanian telecommunication companies.

Ebrahimpoora et al. (2013) carried out a study of the relationship between social intelligence and organizational performance among Ardabil Regional Water Company's managers. The

main objective of this study was to investigate the relationships among dimensions of social intelligence, social skills, social information processing, social awareness, and the social desirability of organizational performance. Methods: This research was a descriptive study. The population in this study comprised all experts, assistants, and managers of regional water companies in Ardabil province and was about 164 randomly selected people. And to gather data from field methods, questionnaires were used. The Tromso questionnaire was chosen and designed to measure social intelligence and organizational performance by assessing specific questions about the Balanced Scorecard as an independent variable. To achieve the multiplier effect of each variable on the dependent variable, a Pearson correlation test was performed. Results indicated that social skills, social information processing, social awareness, and social desirability of improving organizational performance played the most important roles in social information processing, and social awareness and social skills played a secondary role in improving performance.

Marecki (2014) carried out a study on the importance of social intelligence for entrepreneurial leaders. The main objective of this study is to explore the importance of social intelligence for entrepreneurial leaders, with particular regard to encouraging entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors in employees. In order to explore this, a qualitative study in the form of standardized, open-ended, in-depth interviews was conducted. The population selected for this study is composed of leaders and managers, respectively, who are represented by a sample unit consisting of different types of managers of both profit and non-profit organizations. Defining an appropriate sample size for qualitative studies is rather difficult since no rule of thumb exists. However, following Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam (2003), sample sizes in qualitative studies are mostly under 50. Mason (2010), who conducted research on sample sizes in qualitative studies, has found out that most of the researchers, namely 80%, follow Bertaux's (1981) guideline of a sample size of at least 15. He adds that a sample size of 20 to 30 is the most common sample size in qualitative interviews. Hence, this study determines a sample size of 25 managers, namely the median of 20 to 30, as the most common sample size. The selection of the 25 managers was based on purposeful criterion sampling, meaning managers were chosen based on whether they met specific criteria and requirements (Patton, 1990). Managers had to meet two requirements: having at least one year of experience in a leadership position and at least three direct reports. The sample of 25 managers is composed of 21 male and 4 female managers, all of them aged between 25 and 62. All 25 managers are leaders in companies located in Germany. As a result, a causal-network model was developed to present the connections that have arisen from the findings. The findings illustrate that an entrepreneurial leadership style might encourage entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviors in employees.

Gap in Literature

The literature gap regarding the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State suggests that there is limited research on this specific topic. Although social intelligence and social sustainability have been studied separately in various contexts, there is a lack of comprehensive research that investigates their interconnectedness within the manufacturing sector in Akwa Ibom State. Existing studies have explored social intelligence in relation to interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, and leadership effectiveness. Similarly, social sustainability has been examined in terms of environmental sustainability, corporate social responsibility, and stakeholder engagement.

However, the specific link between social intelligence and social sustainability in manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State remains largely unexplored.

3.0 Methodology

This study was conducted using a cross sectional research design. A cross sectional research design seeks data through cross examinations of the variables in question from more than one or two organizations. A cross sectional research design is a branch of quasi-experimental research where the researcher has no control over the variables. A cross sectional research design enables the researcher to collect data from all aspect of the variables through a structured questionnaire. Hence, the researcher can analyze such data collected to generate findings. The population for the study consisted of fifteen (15) manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. The study adopted census method which involves studying all manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. The unit of analysis was the two hundred and forty eight (248) staff of the manufacturing firms.

Since the population of the study is 15 manufacturing firms. Regarding the respondents, all categories of staff which amount to 248 staff as respondents was large and demands the need for sample size determination. In this situation, the study employed a sample size of 153 to represents the population of the study. The sampling technique employed for this study was the Yamene's sampling technique. Thus, from the computation, the sample size was 153 from a population of 248. The source of primary data was the respondents because data from this source was a firsthand data which has not been processed. The data collected from this source helped in obtaining first hand data for analysis to generate findings and making acceptable conclusion on the relationship between talent management and organizational success.

The primary data was gathered through a simple structured questionnaire which was titled "Talent Management and Organizational Success Questionnaire". Questionnaire was employed in data collection because it allowed respondents to meaningfully answer questions from their comfort. The study's questionnaire was divided into three sections: 'A', 'B'. and 'C'. Section 'A' contained data on the respondents' demographic characteristics or profile, whereas Section 'B' gathered data on the independent variables while section 'C', sought data from dependent and moderating variable. An operational measurement of the variables was ascertained to provide clarity in understanding the concepts of talent management and organizational success. Only measuring instruments with proven validity and reliability were used to measure the variables. Additionally, the use .questionnaire attracts low cost of data collection.

The independent variable was talent management and its dimensions include; talent mapping, training and development, while the dependent variable was organizational success. These variables were measured on Likert's 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Where Strongly Agree scored (SA) = 5: Agree (A) =4: Undecided (U) = 3; Disagree (D) =2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1.

3.1 Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through Cronbach Alpha reliability test as promoted by Cronbach in 1951. However, when it comes to internal consistency, most experts agree on a minimum of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). This was achieved by loading all variables on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0, a statistical data programming tool

developed to handle complex analysis. Table 3.3 below contained the result from the test of the reliability of instrument.

Table 1 Reliability Coefficients of variable measures

| S/No | Dimensions/Measures of the study variable | Number of items | Number of Cases | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------|---|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | Situation awareness | 4 | 121 | 0.894 |
| | Social skills | 4 | 121 | 0.877 |
| | Social sustainability | 4 | 121 | 0.758 |

Source: Research Data Reliability Test Output (2023).

The Cronbach Alpha model was employed to test the reliability of the instrument in this survey. The above result shows the reliability of the research instrument was above 0.7 benchmark which implies that the instrument used in this research was reliable.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

153 copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents. 121 copies of questionnaire representing 73.1 percent were returned while 32 copies of questionnaire representing 20.9 percent were not returned. This shows that 121 copies representing 121 of questionnaire were correctly filled and thus suitable for data analysis.

Responses to Research Questions One

Table 1: Analysis of Responses to Situational Awareness

| | Situational Awareness | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean | Std. |
|---|--|----|-----|----|----|----|------|-------|
| 1 | I am aware of the nature of my work in terms of customers and management | 27 | 121 | 12 | 9 | 9 | 3.75 | 1.113 |
| 2 | Some clients are difficult to satisfy | 11 | 57 | 19 | 22 | 12 | 3.27 | 1.162 |
| 3 | Most of times customers leave dissatisfied | 13 | 57 | 19 | 22 | 12 | 3.47 | 1.009 |
| 4 | I understand the environment of my organization | 11 | 52 | 41 | 5 | 12 | 3.37 | 1.050 |

Source: Research Survey 2023)

From table 1 in response to item one, respondents affirmed that they are aware of the nature of their work in terms of customers and management. This is accounted for 3.75 high mean score. Similarly, they agreed that some clients are difficult to satisfy. This is also confirmed by the high mean score of 3.27. More so, the third item got similar approval as respondents agreed that most of times customers leave dissatisfied by not showing appreciation for their efforts. The mean score of 3.47 also speaks volume of this fact. Finally, it was agreed that most of the respondents expressed that they understand the environment of their organization. This is confirmed by a high mean score of 3.37.

Responses to Research Questions Four

Table 4.5: Analysis of Responses to Social Skills

| | Social Skills | SA | A | N | D | SD | Mean | Std. |
|---|---|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | My firm does not have any difficulty to open a dialogue with employees and society. | 10 | 52 | 38 | 11 | 10 | 3.34 | 1.037 |
| 2 | My firm respects employees and the community opinions whatever their opinions are. | 8 | 60 | 20 | 22 | 11 | 3.26 | 1.116 |
| 3 | We have developed the ability to negotiate with employees and the community effectively on social issues. | 13 | 56 | 28 | 13 | 11 | 3.39 | 1.106 |
| 4 | Development of social skills enable our firm to continue operation. | 27 | 52 | 22 | 9 | 11 | 3.62 | 1.178 |

Source: Research Survey 2023)

From table 2 in response to item one, respondents affirmed that they their firm does not have any difficulty to open a dialogue with employees and society. This is accounted for by the high mean score of 3.34. Similarly, the respondents agreed that their firm respects employees and the community opinions whatever their opinions are. This is also confirmed by the high mean score of 3.26. More so, the third item got similar approval as respondents agreed that they have developed the ability to negotiate with employees and the community effectively on social issues. The mean score of 3.39 also speaks volume of this response. Finally, they agreed that development of social skills enable their firm to continue operation. This is confirmed by a high mean score of 3.62.

Testing of Hypotheses

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used to analyze the data in order to determine the relationship between the variables using Statistical Package Social Science (SPSS version 21).

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability.

Table 4.6 Correlations between Situational Awareness and Social Sustainability

| | | Situational awareness | Social sustainability |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Situational awareness | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .682 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | N | 121 | 121 |
| Social sustainability | Pearson Correlation | .682 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| | N | 121 | 121 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.03 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Computation

From Table above, the correlation(r) value of 0.682 indicates that there is a relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability. Also, since the p -value (0.001) is less than the level of significance of 0.01 (2 tailed). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability.

Hypothesis Two:

Ho: There is no significance relationship social skills and social sustainability.

Table Correlation between Social Skills and Social Sustainability

| | | Social skills | Social sustainability |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Social skills | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .682 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .001 |
| | N | 121 | 121 |
| Social sustainability | Pearson Correlation | .682 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .001 | |
| | N | 121 | 121 |

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

Source: SPSS Computation 2023

From Table above, the correlation(r) value of 0.682 indicates that there is a relationship between Social Skills and Social Sustainability. Also, since the p -value (0.001) is less than the level of significance of 0.05 (2 tailed). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between social skills and social sustainability.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The first objective was to find the relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability. The result indicates that there is a relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability. Also, since the p -value (0.003) is less than the level of significance of 0.05 (2 tailed test). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between Situational awareness and Social Sustainability. This collaborates with the study and finding by Tamunosiki-Amadi, Sele, and Ernest (2020), who carried out a study on social intelligence and employee commitment in bayelsa state health sector.

The second objective was to examine the relationship between social skills and social sustainability. The result indicates that there is a relationship between social skills and social sustainability. Since the p -value (0.001) is less than the level of significance of 0.05 (2 tailed test). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between social skills and social sustainability. This is in agreement with the finding by Ebrahimpoora, Zahedb, and Elyasic (2013), who carried out a study on the relationship between social intelligence and social performance of Ardabil regional waters company’s managers.

Findings

- i. There is a significant relationship between situational awareness and social sustainability of Manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State;
- ii. There is a significant relationship between Social Skills and Social Sustainability of Manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State.
- iii.

Conclusion

The study examined social intelligence and social sustainability using manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. The correlation analysis shows that situational awareness and social skills have a significant relationship on the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. Thus, this research concluded that social intelligence variables have significant relationship on the social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State of Akwa Ibom State.

Recommendations

Manufacturing firms should develop situation awareness by prioritize the well-being of their employees, implementing welfare programs that promote a healthy work-life balance. This can include providing healthcare benefits, flexible work hours, paid time off, and opportunities for skill development and career advancement.

Firms should actively engage with the local community to understand their needs and concerns. This can be done through regular dialogues, partnerships with local organizations, and participation in community development projects. By involving the community, firms can address social issues and contribute to the overall development of the region.

Manufacturing firms should provide regular training programs that enhance the skills of their workforce, empowering them to take on higher responsibilities and contribute more effectively to the organization.

Manufacturing firms should collaborate with government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the field of social sustainability. This collaboration can lead to the exchange of knowledge, sharing of best practices, and joint initiatives to address social issues and create a positive impact on society.

Manufacturing firms should develop social skills by maintaining transparent and open communication channels with their employees, customers, and stakeholders. This includes sharing information about the company's social initiatives, progress, and challenges. Transparent communication builds trust and enhances the firm's reputation in the community.

Therefore, this study asserts that by implementing these recommendations, manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State can enhance their social intelligence and contribute to social sustainability while also improving their overall business performance.

Contribution to Knowledge

Understanding the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability in this particular context is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, the manufacturing sector plays a significant role in the socio-economic development of Akwa Ibom State. Examining how social intelligence contributes to social sustainability within manufacturing firms can provide insights into strategies that enhance both the well-being of employees and the overall performance of the firms. Secondly, social sustainability is increasingly recognized as a vital aspect of organizational success.

By focusing on social intelligence, manufacturing firms can effectively address social issues and concerns, establish meaningful relationships with employees and stakeholders, and contribute to the well-being of the local community. Therefore, bridging the literature gap by investigating the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability in manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State would contribute to both academic knowledge and practical implications. It would provide a foundation for future research and offer recommendations for manufacturing firms to enhance their social intelligence practices, ultimately leading to improved social sustainability outcomes.

Suggestion for Further Research

One area for further research could focus on developing a comprehensive framework to measure and assess social intelligence within manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. This framework can include various dimensions such as cultural sensitivity, emotional intelligence, communication skills, and empathy.

Conducting surveys or interviews with employees, managers, and stakeholders can provide valuable insights into the social intelligence levels of manufacturing firms in the region. Relationship between Social Intelligence and Social Sustainability: Another research area could investigate the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability of manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. This can involve studying how social intelligence practices and strategies employed by firms contribute to enhancing social sustainability outcomes, such as community development, employee well-being, stakeholder engagement, and environmental stewardship. This research can help identify the specific mechanisms through which social intelligence impacts social sustainability.

Another relevant area for further research is identifying the barriers and enablers to the adoption of social intelligence practices in manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State. This can involve examining factors such as organizational culture, employee attitudes, resource constraints, and regulatory frameworks. Understanding these factors can help design effective strategies and interventions to overcome barriers and promote the widespread adoption of social intelligence practices.

By exploring these areas for further research, a deeper understanding of the relationship between social intelligence and social sustainability in manufacturing firms in Akwa Ibom State can be achieved. The findings can help inform strategies, policies, and interventions to enhance social intelligence practices and promote sustainable manufacturing in the region.

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