

A CONTINGENCY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING FUNCTIONAL FLEXIBILITY FOR SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: A STUDY OF MEDIUM-SCALE ENTERPRISES

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Abstract: *Pressure is increasing on medium-scale enterprises that operate in already volatile environments characterized by uncertainty, high business costs, intense competition, and instability. The perceived need for increasing flexibility in businesses necessitated this study which examined the extent to which functional flexibility affects organization effectiveness in medium scale enterprises in the north-central zone of Nigeria. To achieve this objective, the variables were operationalized and model specified. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Data were gathered from primary source and the study hypothesis was tested using the Multiple Regression Technique. Functional flexibility was found to have significant effect on organizational effectiveness from the result of the regression analysis. Based on these findings, the study recommended that the leadership of business enterprises should adopt formal and coordinated approaches to modifications of work behavior.*

Key Words: Functional Flexibility, Skill Flexibility, Relational Flexibility, Behavioural Flexibility, Organisational Effectiveness.

JEL Classification: M10, M11

1. Introduction

Organizations are being forced by the current unstable economic environment to quickly adjust to both new and developing changes and discover practical and efficient ways to conduct business in unusual circumstances. One of the domains primarily affected by this instability is to the development of suitable organizational structures. Businesses are under more pressure than ever because of rivals' capacity to act swiftly and decisively to upend the status quo and because technology is changing faster than ever. In order to achieve a competitive edge in the current business landscape, organizations need to adapt to the opportunities and challenges presented by the unpredictability of business environment. As noted by Alpkhan, Yilmaz, and Kaya (2007), several studies have highlighted the significance of flexibility as a means of gaining a competitive edge and as a tool for managing situations involving fast change that arise in the business environment. Organizations remain enmeshed in uncertain settings as a result of these shifts, which present both possibilities and challenges from the business environment. Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) opine that for organizations to survive in the ever-evolving and dynamic business climate, they must put the right strategies in place to protect their operations and provide the required outcomes.

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Because of their dismal performance and efficiency, particularly when it comes to sustainability, small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria have long been the subject of criticism over their efficacy. Despite the government's institutional and policy support to strengthen the ability of small and medium-sized firms, there is still a deficiency in sustainable performance. The majority of the time, external variables that affect small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria, like money, credit availability, physical and social infrastructure, government regulations, and formal education, have been blamed for their failures (Ogunro, 2014). It has become apparent, meanwhile, that these companies may face challenges beyond those that are widely recognized. It is important to highlight that these enterprises typically have rigid human resource practices because they depend on extensively on key players, whose absence can cause uncertainty, confusion, and sluggishness. This makes it more difficult for the organization to move quickly to accelerate activities on the critical path and make timely adjustments to maximize opportunities. According to (Adeleke, 2014 referenced in Oyedokun, Tomomewo, and Owolabi, 2019), these businesses eventually lose their value as a means of doing business until they are unable to continue operating. It is in the light of this that this study argues that a more enduring problem lies in the core of the management of the human resource process in entrepreneurial firms and therefore seeks to determine the extent to which functional flexibility affects organization effectiveness in the medium scale enterprises.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Functional Flexibility

Functional flexibility refers to a company's capacity to adapt and enhance the abilities of its workforce across many domains, enabling them to execute a variety of jobs in response to shifts in demand, manufacturing techniques, or technological advancements (Veise et al., 2014). Functional flexibility is further defined by Cavagnoli (2008) as a company's capacity to effectively employ human resources for a range of tasks. It explains how employees are reassigned to different jobs in order to adjust for fluctuations in demand (Desombre, Kelliherw, Macfarlane and Ozbilginz, 2006). Goudswaard and Nanteuil (2000) define functional flexibility as the notion that employees need to be taught a variety of abilities in order to be able to perform additional tasks as needed. The unlimited creative and development potential of human resources allows them to react quickly and adaptably to unforeseen changes in the environment, which makes them indispensable (Liebowitz, 2008). It necessitates skill development because it calls for optimal application. Ramendran, Raman, Mohamed, Beleya, and Nodeson (2013) posit that Employees in today's flexible businesses should be able to switch between tasks as needed while yet maintaining or, better yet, increasing overall company performance and efficiency. Workers in dynamic contexts must be adaptable and able to function well in a variety of settings (Pulakos et al., 2000). According to Beltrán-Martín et al. (2009), the sub-dimensions of intrinsic, behavioral, skill, and relational flexibility describe functional flexibility. Intrinsic flexibility indicates that employees have a wide range of skills, functions, and talents, allowing the company to use them in a variety of settings (Van den Berg and Van der Velde, 2005). The ease and speed at which employees can pick up new skills and talents is known as skill flexibility. Bhattacharya, Gibson, and Doty (2005) posit that companies can promote skill flexibility by using project-based work systems, job rotation, and multifunctional teams. Ketkar and Sett (2009) identified a number of practices that allow the organization to expand, modify and/or transform its human capital to include development-focused training programmes, performance evaluation and reward systems, career development, job rotation and empowerment, and participation practices. Relational flexibility embodies the combination of the diverse employee's competencies. In order to create new types of

collective human capital, it relies on coordinating mechanisms. According to Beltrán-Martín et al. (2009), human capital cannot be changed in nature; instead, the relationships between resources can be changed to create richer combinations. Behavioral flexibility refers to non-repetitive behavior that is not predicated on fixed, predictable, or pre-established patterns (Beltrán-Martín et al., 2009). Employee contributions to company objectives vary. The survival of Organizations no longer relies on employees to perform identical, clearly defined duties with clear differences in each employee's position (Martin & Healy, 2009). By fostering diversity of viewpoints, organizations can be forced to steer clear of simplistic interpretations and engage in productive dialogue on the best course of action. (Gressgård and Kare, 2015).

2.2 Organizational Effectiveness

The ability of an organization to get necessary resources and accomplish goals using fundamental tactics is referred to as organisational effectiveness (Ashraf and Kadir, 2012). Organisational effectiveness illustrates the goal of an organisation by supplying crucial information for decision-making, emphasizing its resources, proving its influence, and raising accountability (Zook, 2015). It gauges how well a company accomplishes its objectives. An organization's system, culture, structure, and tactics are key components in achieving effectiveness, and they all represent the organization's purpose of reaching the maximum level of effectiveness. Effectiveness of an organization extends beyond its financial results. The relational dynamics fostered by leadership are a source of stakeholder confidence, as noted by Jiang and Liu (2015) and Nienaber and Svenson (2013). The likelihood of an organization becoming effective is therefore increased by comprehending the perspectives of various stakeholders and appreciating their contributions. Zheng (2010) argues that understanding the organisation's objectives is necessary for attaining organizational effectiveness. Customer impressions of the company, customer satisfaction, staff connections, business processes, and learning affect effectiveness of any organisation.

2.3 Functional Flexibility and Organization Effectiveness

Shiva and Suar (2010) aver that improving employees' attitudes toward the company from a lower to a higher level of maturity can lead to superior performance; as a result, human capital management should be closely bonded with the concept of effectiveness. Four ways are proposed by Ashraf and Kadir (2012) to comprehend organizational effectiveness- the process approach, the objective approach, the system resource approach, and the strategic constituency approach. Relevant in this context, the process approach is concerned with determining the amount to which resources are formally utilized in the production of goods or services while also taking into account the transformation process (Schermerhorn et al., 2004). Effectiveness defines the internal health and efficiency of the organization, the smooth operation of its internal processes and procedures, and the full participation of its members. In the opinion of Heilman and Kennedy-Philips (2011), organizational effectiveness is a useful tool for evaluating how well goals and missions are being fulfilled. The interface between operations and human resource management offers multiple techniques in different aspects of a production system (Boudreau et al., 2003). Improving working conditions to enable employees to be more productive is its primary objective (Buzacott, 2002). As noted by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), organizational commitment, workplace interaction, direction, adaptability, positive work environment, appropriate resource allocation policies, and a clearly defined organizational future perspective are all associated with organizational effectiveness (Bartuševičienė and Šakalyte (2013). The triple bottom line concept currently encompasses value created from sociological (people), environmental (planet), technological (innovation), and cultural (well-being) variables in addition to measurable financial (profit) performance. The new metrics are considered essential for tracking the efficacy of organizations (Jacobson and Anderson, 2015;

Mikelsone and Leila, 2016; Warren, 2016). When an organization increases its capability, significant transformations take place. It may entail developing brand-new procedures and frameworks for the workplace in order to facilitate completely new methods of working. Both managers and staff may need to adjust how they operate as a result. It might also call for upgraded technology or infrastructure. It will be challenging to achieve effectiveness in an organization with a high staff turnover rate, a vague vision, a lack of innovation, and subpar value creation. Based on the position of this study, the following hypothesis is made:

H₁: Functional flexibility has significant effect on organization effectiveness.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

Contingency theory suggests that in order to be effective, HRM must be consistent with other aspects of the organization and/or external environment.

This study anchors on Contingency Theory which holds that organization's ability to function effectively depends on how well its human resources meet the needs of both internal and external variables, including shifting market conditions, employee capabilities, organizational culture and structure, and customer preferences. The contextualization of human resource management is emphasized by the contingency approach (Allani et al., 2003). According to this method, human resource management techniques can only improve company performance if they are tailored to the management of the company and in line with its overarching plan. When human resource management procedures and policies are not adequately linked with the organization's strategic objective, the contingency approach to human resources makes the assumption that they are of no practical value to the company (Schuler, 1992). The contingency method is predicated on two fundamental tenets: first, that an organization can enhance its performance by aligning a particular strategy with human resource management practices; and second, that the company with the best match achieves the best outcomes. The ability to quickly adapt to shifting market conditions, grab opportunities, and neutralize dangers is made possible by flexible human resources.

2.5 Empirical Review

Pradhan, Kumari, and Kumar (2017) examined the influence of human resource flexibility on organisational effectiveness and the mediating role of organisational citizenship behaviour in India. Using structural equation modelling, the study revealed significant influence of human resource flexibility on organisational effectiveness. The findings also reported that organisational citizenship behaviour has significant mediating effect on the relationship between human resource flexibility and organisational effectiveness. Ngo and Loi (2008) explored the relationships between human resource flexibility, organizational culture, and organizational performance in Hong Kong. The results of structural equation modelling (SEM) revealed the positive effects of employee behaviour flexibility and HR practice flexibility on adaptability culture. Employee skill flexibility was however found to exert no such effect. In order to determine whether resilience and perceived organizational support have predictive value for employee engagement in South Africa, Meintjes and Hofmeyr (2018) investigated the relationship between resilience, perceived organizational support, and employee engagement among pharmaceutical sales employees in a competitive sales environment. The method used was a cross-sectional, quantitative, exploratory survey. The study included a sample of 125 sales agents from a pharmaceutical company in South Africa. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), and the Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POS) were among the measuring tools. The study discovered that in a competitive sales environment, employee engagement was influenced by perceived organizational support but not resilience. This research examined the interaction between the functional flexibility factors and organization effectiveness, as a possible major role player in the sustainability of entrepreneurial firms in the north-central zone of Nigeria. Skills, behavioral, and relational flexibilities were adopted as operational

measures of functional flexibility. Sardana, Terziovski, & Gupta (2016), drawing on dynamic capabilities theory and a sample based on the Indian manufacturing industry, examined the influence of manufacturing operations' functioning, strategic alignment, and responsiveness to market need for customization on firm performance. A multi-variate regression method was applied using confirmatory factor analysis. Findings indicated that operations' strategic alignment to the firm's objectives is the single most key contributor to firm performance. The operations' capability to respond to market need for customization was also found to significantly contribute to firm performance. Plant technology capability was found to be essential to respond effectively to market need for customization, and is positively and significantly related to firm performance.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design and Population

This study adopted descriptive survey research design suitable for the collection and analysis of data for the purpose of discovering ideas and insight from an existing situation without subjecting it to any form of manipulation. The study population comprised the medium scale enterprises in North-Central Nigeria. According to SMEDAN and National Bureau of statistics collaborative survey (2021), the population of medium scale manufacturing firms is 243 across the six (6) states of the north-central zone of Nigeria, and the federal capital territory, as stated below:

Table 1: Population of the Study

States	Enterprises
Nasarawa	18
Niger	47
FCT	75
Kogi	16
Kwara	18
Benue	28
Plateau	41
Total	243

Source: SMEDAN and National Bureau of Statistics Survey, 2021

3.2 Instrument Validity, Reliability, and Method of Data Analysis

For instrument validity, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KM0) measure of sampling adequacy was adopted for a post-field test conducted to examine the strength of the partial correlation between variables. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy values were 0.591, 0.672, 0.581, and 0.614. Also, this study adopted the use of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for reliability test at 5% level of significance. The reliability test indicates that the instrument measured the characteristics and behaviour within the test at alpha values of 0.91, 0.77, 0.65, and 0.84. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis to measure extent of effect. The tool was also considered suitable as it did not measure the extent of effect in isolation from the determination of the correlation and fitness of model variables. A multiple regression model was specified, and the equation logged to allow for direct estimation and interpretation of coefficients.

3.3 Estimation of Study Variables

Variables of the objective are organizational effectiveness (Y) as the dependent variable and functional flexibility(X) as the independent variable captured by skills flexibility(X1), behavioural flexibility(X2), and relational flexibility(X3).

3.4 Model Specification

The following multiple regression model was specified, and the equation logged to allow for direct estimation and interpretation of the coefficients.

$$Y = a_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu$$

Where:

- a_0 = the intercept
- $\beta_1 - \beta_5$ = the coefficient of independent variables
- Y = Organisational Effectiveness
- X1 = Skills Flexibility
- X2 = Behavioural Flexibility
- X3 = Relational Flexibility
- μ = the error term.

4. Results and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Data

Table 2: Organizational Effectiveness

Items	5	4	3	2	1
The organization achieves its daily objectives	133(55.42)	68(28.33)	15(6.25)	10(4.17)	14(5.83)
Tasks assigned to workers are usually delivered within expected time frame	77(32.08)	123(51.25)	11(4.58)	13(5.42)	16(6.67)
Most units achieve their periodic objectives	76(31.67)	134(55.83)	6(2.50)	15(6.25)	9(3.75)
We produce at the least possible cost	107(44.58)	113(4.58)	7(2.92)	5(2.08)	9(3.75)

Source: Survey, 2021

Table 3 indicates that 55.42% of the respondents strongly agreed that the organization achieves its daily objectives. 28.33% of the respondents agreed that the organization achieves its daily objectives and 6.25% of the respondents were undecided. 4.17% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the organization achieves its daily objectives and 5.83% of the respondents disagreed that the organization achieves its daily objectives. It further indicates that 32.08% of the respondents strongly agreed that tasks assigned to workers are usually delivered within expected time frame. 51.25% of the respondents agreed that tasks assigned to workers are usually delivered within expected time frame and 4.58% of the respondents were undecided. 5.42% of the respondents strongly disagreed that tasks assigned to workers are usually delivered within expected time frame and 6.67% of the respondents disagreed that tasks assigned to workers are usually delivered within expected time frame. It also indicates that 31.67% of the respondents strongly agreed that most units achieve their periodic objectives. 55.83% of the respondents agreed that most units achieve their periodic objectives and 2.50% of the respondents were undecided. 6.25% of the respondents strongly disagreed that most units achieve their periodic objectives and 3.75% of the respondents disagreed that most units achieve their periodic objectives. Finally, the table indicates that 44.58% of the respondents strongly agreed that they produce at the lowest possible cost. 4.58% of the respondents agreed that they produce at the lowest possible cost and 2.92% of the respondents were undecided. 2.08% of the respondents

strongly disagreed that they produce at the lowest possible cost and 3.75% of the respondents disagreed that they produce at the lowest possible cost.

Table 3: Skill Flexibility

Items	5	4	3	2	1
Employees always make effort to update their skills	97(40.41)	114(47.50)	6(2.50)	12(5.00)	11(4.58)
Employees learn quickly how to perform tasks they were initially unable to perform	99(41.25)	100(41.67)	15(6.25)	13(5.42)	13(5.42)
Our workers are able to perform another job when needed to do so	72(30.00)	98(40.83)	20(8.33)	26(10.83)	24(10.00)
We periodically move our employees around to different units within the organization	18(7.50)	69(28.75)	22(9.17)	71(29.58)	60(25.00)

Source: Survey, 2021

Table 4 indicates that 40.41% of the respondents strongly agreed that employees always make effort to update their skills. 47.50% of the respondents agreed that employees always make effort to update their skills and 2.50% of the respondents were undecided. 5.00% of the respondents strongly disagreed that employees always make effort to update their skills and 4.58% of the respondents disagreed that employees always make effort to update their skills. It indicates that 41.25% of the respondents strongly agreed that employees learn quickly how to perform tasks they were initially unable to perform. 41.67% of the respondents agreed that employees learn quickly how to perform tasks they were initially unable to perform and 6.25% of the respondents were undecided. 5.42% of the respondents strongly disagreed that employees learn quickly how to perform tasks they were initially unable to perform and 5.42% of the respondents disagreed that employees learn quickly how to perform tasks they were initially unable to perform. The table indicates that 30.00% of the respondents strongly agreed that their workers are able to perform another job when needed to do so. 40.83% of the respondents agreed that their workers are able to perform another job when needed to do so and 8.33% of the respondents were undecided. 10.83% of the respondents strongly disagreed that their workers are able to perform another job when needed to do so and 10.00% of the respondents disagreed that their workers are able to perform another job when needed to do so. Finally, the table indicates that 7.50% of the respondents strongly agreed that they periodically move their employees around to different units within the organization. 28.75% of the respondents agreed that they periodically move their employees around to different units within the organization and 9.17% of the respondents were undecided. 29.58% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they periodically move their employees around to different units within the organization and 25.00% of the respondents disagreed that they periodically move their employees around to different units within the organization.

Table 4: Behavioural Flexibility

Items	5	4	3	2	1
I alter my behaviour in response to customer requirements	23(9.58)	60(25.00)	14(5.83)	78(32.50)	65(27.08)
Our employees find it easy to change their work habits for the organisation's success	16(6.67)	19(7.92)	13(5.42)	103(42.92)	89(37.08)
Employees' work habits are usually in line with the expectation of the organization	10(4.17)	20(8.33)	8(3.33)	111(46.25)	91(37.91)

Source: Survey, 2021

Table 5 indicates that 9.55% of the respondents strongly agreed that they alter their behaviour in response to customer requirements. 25.00% of the respondents agreed that they alter their behaviour in response to customer requirements and 5.83% of the respondents were undecided. 32.50% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they alter their behaviour in response to customer requirements and 27.08% of the respondents disagreed that they alter their behaviour in response to customer requirements. The table indicates that 6.67% of the respondents strongly agreed that their employees find it easy to change their work habits for the organisation's success. 7.92% of the respondents agreed that their employees find it easy to change their work habits for the organisation's success and 5.42% of the respondents were undecided. 42.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that their employees find it easy to change their work habits for the organisation's success and 37.08% of the respondents disagreed that their employees find it easy to change their work habits for the organisation's success. The table indicates that 4.17% of the respondents strongly agreed that employees' work habits are usually in line with the expectation of the organization. 8.33% of the respondents agreed that employees' work habits are usually in line with the expectation of the organization and 3.33% of the respondents were undecided. 46.25% of the respondents strongly disagreed that employees' work habits are usually in line with the expectation of the organization and 37.91% of the respondents disagreed that employees' work habits are usually in line with the expectation of the organization.

Table 5: Relational Flexibility

Items	5	4	3	2	1
Our workers often exchange ideas with colleagues from other units	14(5.83)	12(5.00)	95(39.58)	91(37.92)	28(11.67)
Teams are made up of employees from different units	11(4.58)	15(6.25)	77(32.08)	73(30.42)	64(26.67)
Employees work hand-in-hand with other colleagues to ensure that we achieve our objectives	12(5.00)	14(5.83)	80(33.33)	74(30.83)	60(25.00)

Source: Survey, 2021

Table indicates that 5.83% of the respondents strongly agreed that their workers often exchange ideas with colleagues from other units. 5.00% of the respondents agreed that their workers often exchange ideas with colleagues from other units and 39.5% of the respondents were undecided. 37.92% of the respondents strongly disagreed that their workers often exchange ideas with colleagues from other units and 11.67% of the respondents disagreed that their workers often exchange ideas with colleagues from other units. The table indicates that 4.48% of the respondents strongly agreed that teams are made up of employees from different units. 6.25% of the respondents agreed that teams are made up of employees from different units and 32.08% of the respondents were undecided. 30.42% of the respondents strongly disagreed that teams are made up of employees from different units and 26.67% of the respondents disagreed that teams are made up of employees from different units. The table indicates that 5.00% of the respondents strongly agreed that employees work hand-in-hand with other colleagues to ensure that they achieve their objectives. 5.83% of the respondents agreed that employees work hand-in-hand with other colleagues to ensure that they achieve their objectives and 33.33% of the respondents were undecided. 30.83% of the respondents strongly disagreed that employees work hand-in-hand with other colleagues to ensure that they achieve their objectives and 25.00% of the respondents disagreed that employees work hand-in-hand with other colleagues to ensure that they achieve their objectives.

The mean and standard deviation of the model variables were computed.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y	240	1.00	5.00	4.2333	1.12211
x1	240	1.00	5.00	3.9667	1.08957
x2	240	1.00	5.00	4.0542	.96442
x3	240	1.00	5.00	4.2875	.87543
Valid N (listwise)	240				

Source: SPSS version 20.00

The table 3 revealed that the result of descriptive statistics which indicated the mean and standard deviation as well as minimum and maximum value of the variables. The mean value of organizational effectiveness (y) is 4.23, the mean value of skills flexibility (X1) is 3.96, the mean value of behavioural flexibility (X2) is 4.05, the mean value of relational flexibility (X3) is 4.28. Standard deviation values of the variables were also indicated in the table.

4.2 Test of Hypothesis

Decision Rule: Accept the alternate hypothesis if p-value < 0.05

Regression Output on Functional Flexibility and Organizational Effectiveness

Dependent Variable: Organizational Effectiveness

Method: Ordinary Least Square

Table 7: Results of Organizational Effectiveness Equation

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-.057	.134	-.422	.673
Skills Flexibility	.908	.089	10.160	.000
Behavioural Flexibility	-.332	.110	-3.018	.003
Relational Flexibility	.474	.060	7.950	.000

Sources: Extract from SPSS Ver. 20

Adjusted R² = 0.877

Prob (F-Statistic) = 0.000

Result Summary:

The first model examined the extent to which human resource flexibility affects organizational effectiveness in medium scale enterprises in North- Central Nigeria. The regression analysis result reveals that the model is fit for the study as the f-statistics is significant at 0.000 level of significance. This implies that all the variables used in the model are fit and are correlated. The result of the regression analysis reveals significant relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. While, skills flexibility and Relational flexibility were found to be statistically significant with P-values of less than 5%, and having positive effect on organizational effectiveness, behavioural flexibility was found to have significant but negative effect on organizational effectiveness with P-value of less than 5%. Thus, we concluded that skills flexibility has positive and significant effect on organizational effectiveness, behavioural flexibility has negative but significant effect on organizational effectiveness, and relational flexibility has positive and significant effect on organizational effectiveness in medium scale firms in North- Central Nigeria. The Adjusted R-squared (R^2) value of 0.87 indicates that 87% variation in the dependent variable can be explained by variation in the independent variables and 13% can be explained by other factors not noted in the regression model but captured as the error term. The result indicates that the independent variables (human resource flexibility factors) put together have significant effect on the dependent variable (organizational effectiveness). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis that human resource flexibility has no significant effect on organizational effectiveness and conclude that human resource flexibility has significant effect on organizational effectiveness in medium scale firms in North- Central Nigeria.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one regressed organizational effectiveness on skills flexibility, behavioural flexibility, and relational flexibility. The result of the analysis indicates that human resource flexibility significantly affects organizational effectiveness in medium scale enterprises in North- Central Nigeria. In the model, organizational effectiveness was used as dependent variable while skills flexibility, behavioural flexibility, and relational flexibility were used as proxy for human resource flexibility as the independent variable. The result showed that skills flexibility and relational flexibility assume the positive sign and are statistically significant while behavioural flexibility although found to be statistically significant assumed a negative sign. These imply that human resource flexibility has significant effect on organizational effectiveness. This finding is in line with the views of Bhattacharya et al. (2005); García-Tenorio, Sanchez, and Holgado (2011); Pérez-López, Montes-Peón and Vázquez-Ordás (2006) who have emphasised that organisations need to implement practices specifically designed to increase human resource flexibility to facilitate the achievement of their goals. This finding is in line with the findings of Pradhan, Kumari, & Kumar (2017) which suggests that human resource flexibility is required for any organisation to deal with global business demands in a timely manner for maximum benefits. It is also consistent with the position of Hang-Yue & Raymond (2008) that human resource flexibility culture affects both human resource-related and market-related performance in a positive manner.

The coefficient of skills flexibility assumes a positive sign and is statistically significant. This shows that the organisations easily find new and better ways to create value to meet

changing market demands when their employees can quickly learn new procedures and update their skills, thus increasing the diversity of skills in such organisations. This is in line with the work of Wu (2011) who observed that firms with high level of skill flexibility will have broad, heterogeneous skills of the workforce which can be quickly redeployed, and that employees' multiple skills help firms to adapt effectively to changes in demand pattern for HR skills and companies can benefit from their capability of quickly redeploying their employees' skills. It is also in line with the view of Bhattacharya et al. (2005) that skills possessed by employees but not currently used may open up new opportunities of business for the firm.

The coefficient of behavioural flexibility has a negative sign and its P-value shows that it is statistically significant. The implication of this is that alterations in work behaviours inversely affect increase or decrease in organizational effectiveness. This is inconsistent with the findings in the study of Wu (2011) which posit that the extent to which employees possessed a wide range of repertoire of behavioral scripts that might be exhibited appropriately in different situations is advantageous to organisations. This finding is also inconsistent with the view of Hang-Yue & Raymond (2008) which indicates positive effect of employee behaviour flexibility on performance. This may imply that in the firms under study, alterations in work behaviours are not formally directed, controlled, or periodically reviewed against the organisations' goals to ensure that employees' work behaviours remain in line with the firms' expectations of them.

The coefficient of relational flexibility assumed a positive sign and its P-value is less than 0.05, showing that it is statistically significant to the dependent variable. This implies that increase in relational flexibility causes a corresponding increase in organizational effectiveness, and vice versa. This is line with the study of Bhattacharya et al. (2005) which argues that an organisation that has the ability to use human capital in various tasks or jobs and situations will be able to combine and reorganize their skills to a variety of situations, adapting the organization to external and internal changes. The ability of employees to come together as a team to take up responsibilities that cut across several units will increase the identification and implementation of new ideas regarding the performance of tasks, and thus enable better performance.

5. Conclusion

Following the findings, this research concludes that functional flexibility facilitates and sustains organizational effectiveness through the deployment of skills, behavioural, and relational flexibility. Functional flexibility significantly affects effectiveness, and thus any firm that fails to embrace this may not survive in the dynamic market environment because the possession of only stand-alone resources may no longer be sufficient to sustain performance. The leadership of business enterprises should increase focus on implementing practices specifically designed to increase human resource flexibility. Management should adopt formal and coordinated approaches to modifications of work behaviours when required. This can be achieved by having periodic reviews of individual employee's work behaviour against the organisations' goals to ensure that employees' work behaviours remain in line with the firms' expectations of them. Where there is misalignment, the management must create a practical presentation of the desired workplace behaviours as against the different situations requiring these behaviours.

6. Study Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies

This study was geographically limited to the north-central zone of Nigeria and therefore, the application of its findings across other geopolitical zones should be done with utmost sensitivity. This study was originally designed to examine performance sustainability of medium scale enterprises using historical data. Historical data on the related variables were however unavailable/inaccessible. Based on the limitations identified and findings of the current research, this study proposes the following for future research undertakings:

1. This study adopted the use of questionnaire for data collection which is prone to response bias. To minimize the effect of response bias, future research undertakings may gather data from sources other than the primary source. Although this study was initially designed to capture historical performance data covering a long period of time, it was unable to do so as a result of unavailability of historical data. Therefore, to fully capture the extent to which resilience affects sustainable performance over time, future research may look into the consideration of historical performance data that will cover a period of time.
2. Future research in this area may seek to expand on geographical coverage to capture other geopolitical zones of Nigeria and their individual characteristics, as this study was geographically limited to the north-central zone of Nigeria.

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