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# Strategic Sustainability and Competitive Advantage among Selected Manufacturing Firms in South-South, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study examined strategic sustainability and competitive advantage of selected manufacturing firms in south-south, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to, evaluate the effect of information technology capability on value innovation, examine the effect of strategic sensitivity on competitive advantage, explore the effect of resource fluidity on productivity. The study adopted a survey research design and primary data was mainly used to obtain accurate data based on the opinion of the respondents and backed up by reviews of information from secondary sources for validation. The target population of one thousand, eight hundred and forty seven (1,847) obtained from the eighteen (18) selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria. The sample size of three hundred and twenty nine (329) respondents was derived from Slovin formula at 5% error tolerance and 95% level of confidence. Therefore, a total of three hundred and twenty nine (329) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the various manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria. To test the hypotheses of this study, the study adopted analysis of variance (ANOVA), simple regression model and Pearson Correlation Coefficient statistical tools of SPSS Version 23.0. From the result of the findings, it showed that, information technology capability has a significant effect on value innovation of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria, strategic sensitivity has a significant effect on competitive advantage of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria, resource fluidity has a significant effect on productivity of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria and there is a significant relationship between collective commitment and organizational performance of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria. From the results of the hypotheses testing, the study concluded that strategic agility has a positive and significant effect on the sustainability of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria and recommended that management of the selected manufacturing firms should reconsider their strategic options, employ human resource management theories, concepts and practices, establish regular staff training on ICT, pay attention to their vision with a survey of the environment in line with the organization's goals, among many others.

***Keywords:*** Strategy, Strategic Sustainability , Competitive Advantage, Manufacturing Firms**,** South-south

# Introduction

Basically, strategic sustainability (SS) means that an organization can take quick, decisive, and effective actions and that it can trigger, anticipate and take advantage of the change (Doz & Kosonen, 2007 cited in Samer, 2013). Strategic agility is described as being adaptive to changes in the business context, spotting both opportunities and risks and launching new strategic initiatives rapidly and repeatedly. It takes

businesses into a domain where fundamental and time-tested assumptions are challenged (Kidd, 2015). It is described as flexibility and speed that gives organizations the ability to change the business in order to respond to changes in their markets and face substantial risks (D'Aveni, 2009). Implementing strategic agility involves new concepts concerning strategies, organization, people and technologies. It implies a paradigm shift in that old ideas need to be re-evaluated, modified and in some cases abandoned, in order to find new avenues to create value for stakeholders. Generally, strategic foresight involves multiple stakeholders and creates value through providing access to critical resources ahead of competition, preparing the organization for change and permitting the organization to steer proactively towards a desired future in order to achieve prosperity (Baskarada, Shrimpton, Ng, Cox & Saritas, 2016).

Thus, strategic sensitivity enhances the identification, observation and interpretation of corporate environmental changes and potential opportunities by determining possible implications as well as responses. Moreover, having a long-term orientation, strategic sensitivity involves broadening the menu of policy options and taking into account future scenarios that might affect present decisions and enhance firm superior performance (Baskarada et al., 2016). More so, strategic agility has to do with the capacity to respond swiftly to changing situations as demonstrated by business organizations. The ability of an organization to have the foresight to see the trend and forecast the future in order to respond appropriately defines the SA of such an organization. Tende and Ekanem (2018) opine that SA is the capability of an organization to predict, anticipate, and forecast trends and events in the business environment to fashion appropriate response with proactive moves. Therefore, survival is no longer guaranteed on the premise of having financial muscle or capital, but in the ability to adjust to changes in the environment and device means to stay relevant. Akhigbe and Onuoha (2019) posit that it is no longer the fittest organization that last longer, but organizations with high resilience and capacity to adjust.

Nevertheless, the Nigerian manufacturing sector has experienced tremendous changes in recent years. The continuous dilemma of maintaining business performance, most business organization managers finding it difficult to constantly achieve targeted business performance due to the dynamic nature, open market competition, globalization characterized with the 21st-century industry and the economy as a whole has prompted the entry of many new players into this manufacturing sector. Manufacturing firms in different industries around the globe especially in the south-south Nigeria have experienced unstable performance, seemingly uncertain on strategies to employ in reacting to flexible policies and unstable performance arising from challenges in

the local and international business context. The level of activities in this sector has decreased significantly over the past years and it is envisaged that this will not abate soon. Also, accomplishing strategic objectives is directly related to the performance of an organization. Furthermore, the performance of the organization is dependent on different elements within the organization and external elements as well. To analyze and evaluate performance of organizations, different fundamentals of strategic management have to be examined (Bakar, Tufail,Yusof & Virgiyanti, 2011).

However, there has been an immediate need within organizations to have agile and sensitive business administrators to manages all the changes and introduce the necessary transformations competencies to survive in this competitive environment. It has become a prerequisite to use agile strategies to navigate safely through various challenges they have to routinely face in the running of their organizations (Alshalabe, Aladwan, Orabi & Alwekhyan, 2017). The business environment has been undergoing massive transformation due to advancement in technology and consecutive changes are being demanded by consumers globally. In all of these, there is increasing demand and pressure on the management of these manufacturing firms to deliver on shareholders' earnings and justify increasing investment in their organizations. Therefore, in order to cater their demands and to survive in the competitive business world, the only approach is to formulate and implement robust strategic agility models, hence, the need to undertake this study strategic sensitivity and competitive advantage of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

The business environment in this 21st century is characterized with global ideal, dynamic and complex business philosophy with different organizational culture. The rapid changes in the domestic and international business policies cut across different industries in developed, emerging and developing countries and this was attributed to both microeconomic and macroeconomic factors such as; industry environmental factors, task environment, natural and technological environments, social environments, economic and cultural environments, political, law and security, consumers management, marketing content and product marketing. Zafari (2017) pointed out that most firms in Nigeria have recorded unstable performance due to slow agility response to challenges of political interference, lack of transparency, regulatory uncertainty, policy instability and poor infrastructural facilities. Furthermore, the author emphasized that the decline in performance of firms cut across developed, emerging and developing countries due to poor strategic agility and response to microeconomic and macroeconomic factors challenges like

service industry environmental factors, task environment, natural and technological environments, social environments, economic and cultural environments, political, law and security environments coupled with the management of marketing content and product marketing.

Although, poor strategic agility as an inherent challenges by firms in different industry has created unstable firm performance in Nigeria. Furthermore, in the African continent, Pricewaterhouse (2018) emphasized that most firms recorded poor performance or continuous decline in financial performance resulting from challenges of unsuitable organizational culture with global business idea, political interference in organizational decisions, lack of transparency, regulatory uncertainty, policy instability, ongoing infrastructure deficit, institutional void, general uncertainty, delays in passing laws, and inexplicable non-implementation of passed legislations and low pro-activeness in or among Government and investors.

## Literature Review

### Conceptual review

### Strategic Sensitivity

Strategic sensitivity describes an organization's ability to survey and develop knowledge about its adopted context, internally evaluate its capabilities and align functions and behavior in a way that moves it towards its goals and objectives. Sensitivity can be futuristic and focus on the current functions of the organization. Its interests focus on addressing uncertainties related to environmental change (Agbeche, Lawrence & Elechi, 2021) Strategic sensitivity acts as a driving force for changes in various attitudes and behaviors among organizational members, and therefore trainers can enhance this type of support by informing organizational leaders about the sensitivity of the adopted type (Wood & Lenze, 1991 cited in Ibrahim, Isam & Areej, 2023).

Strategic sensitivity as the first dimension of strategic agility emphasizes the ability of organizations to create their own opportunities by working with customers (Omar, 2019). Strategic sensitivity represents the ability to track opportunities and threats in the external environment, and is a measure of the entrepreneurial organization's ability to detect threats and identify opportunities (Kale, Aknar & Başar, 2019).

Strategic sensitivity is defined as the sharpness of perception of, and the intensity of awareness and attention to, strategic developments (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). Strategic sensitivity means being open to as much information, intelligence and innovations as possible by creating and maintaining relationships with a variety of different people and organizations (Doz & Kosonen, 2008). Strategic sensitivity is a combination of foresight, insight and simple probing, with the most importance on insight (Doz et al., 2008). According Sull (2009) defines the same phenomenon as consistently

identifying and seizing opportunities more quickly than the competitors. In order to focus efforts, businesses need to have a small number of corporate priorities, shared real-time market data that is accurate and complete, clear performance targets for teams and individuals, and systems in place to keep employees accountable and reward them. It involves recognition and monitoring of opportunities and threats from both the external and internal environment.

Pulaj and Pulaj (2015) opined that strategic sensitivity can be futuristic as well as focused on the present functions of the organization. Primarily, it is concerned with planning the best course of action based on learning and the predictions of the future hence, its concerns are based on addressing the uncertainties of the environment. Yarmohammadian, Alavi, Ahmadi, Fatemi and Moghadasi (2016) argued that one of the ways organizations can stay ahead and sustain their effectiveness is by building capacities that are futuristic in nature; thus, availing trend setting services that in turn define the market. Zhao, Flynn and Roth (2006) reiterated that strategic sensitivity advances and necessitates particular work and behavior forms that seek to condition the organization for its current market while at the same time preparing it for a future based on its forecasts.

Dawes and Kosonen (2008) studied multinational companies and showed how companies operating globally face the need to build and maintain strategic sensitivity. On the one hand, the company must be able to adapt to changes, and on the other hand, the company must be able to act based on the changes. It also means that more emphasis is placed on understanding current situations as they develop rather than on creating insight, understanding and strategic plans (Dawes et al., 2008). This requires rich connections and networks with the outside world and within the company. However, it is not easy to build such communication because the flow of knowledge and information depends on each individual's desire and ability to achieve communication and knowledge sharing (Lehtimäki, & Karintaus, 2012). Strategic sensitivity is considered a business necessity in the competitive environment as it helps organizations stay in touch with the dynamic environment by making the required adjustments and proactive measures.

Organizations that lack strategic sensitivity therefore face problems of becoming disconnected from customers, business trends, and other stakeholders in the business (Djaja & Arief, 2015. Strategic sensitivity consists of several foundations, and through these foundations the organization can reach strategic sensitivity and thus achieve the organization's goals as quickly as possible and at the lowest costs (Muhammad, Talla, Mazen & AbuNaser, 2020). Strategic sensitivity describes an organization's ability to scan and develop knowledge about its context, internally evaluate its capabilities and align its functions and behavior in a way that moves it toward its goals and objectives. It can also be

futuristic in addition to focusing on the current functions of the organization. (Diete-Spiff, 2021).

## Indicators of Strategic Sensitivity

Uforo, Emilia, Glory and Felicia (2023) highlighted the following indicators:

- **Market Intelligence:** A firm that demonstrates strategic sensitivity collects and analyzes relevant market data and information. This includes monitoring customer trends, competitor actions, industry dynamics, and emerging opportunities. Indicators of market intelligence include the use of market research, customer feedback, competitor analysis, and industry reports.
- **Environmental Scanning:** A strategically sensitive firm regularly scans the external environment to identify potential threats and opportunities. This involves monitoring factors such as technological advancements, regulatory changes, social and cultural shifts, and economic trends. Indicators of environmental scanning include the use of scenario planning, trend analysis, and early warning systems.
- **Customer Focus:** A strategically sensitive firm places a strong emphasis on understanding customer needs, preferences, and expectations. It actively seeks customer feedback, conducts market research, and uses customer segmentation strategies. Indicators of customer focus include high customer satisfaction rates, customer loyalty, and a strong customer-centric culture.
- **Competitive analysis:** A strategically sensitive firm conducts thorough competitive analysis to understand its position in the market and identify potential competitive threats. It assesses the strengths and weaknesses of competitors, analyzes their strategies and offerings, and identifies gaps and opportunities. Indicators of competitive analysis include regular competitor benchmarking, tracking market share, and monitoring competitive pricing.
- **Adaptability and flexibility:** A strategically sensitive firm is adaptable and flexible in responding to changes in the external environment. It is quick to recognize and capitalize on emerging opportunities and is willing to adjust its strategies and operations when necessary. Indicators of adaptability include the ability to pivot quickly, launch new products or services, and adopt innovative practices.
- **Strategic Planning:** A strategically sensitive firm engages in effective strategic planning processes. It sets clear goals, aligns resources, and develops action plans that consider market dynamics and potential future scenarios. Indicators of strategic planning include the use of strategic frameworks, regular strategy review sessions, and the presence of a well-defined strategic roadmap.
- **Proactive Decision-making:** A strategically sensitive firm makes proactive decisions based on a deep understanding of the market and its own capabilities. It

anticipates potential challenges and takes preemptive actions to mitigate risks and leverage opportunities. Indicators of proactive decision-making include the ability to make timely strategic investments, pursue strategic partnerships, and introduce innovative initiatives.

- **Learning orientation:** A strategically sensitive firm has a learning-oriented culture that encourages experimentation, knowledge sharing, and continuous improvement. It values feedback, promotes a culture of innovation, and invests in employee development. Indicators of a learning orientation include the implementation of knowledge management systems, regular employee training programs, and a willingness to learn from both successes and failures.

These indicators collectively demonstrate the level of strategic sensitivity within a firm and its ability to adapt to the changing business landscape while maintaining competitiveness (Uforo et al., 2023)

## Importance of Strategic Sensitivity

Strategic sensitivity is an important tool for generating values through which organizations are able to demonstrate a tangible difference by providing performance at the internal and external levels, and also achieve continuous development of strategy and innovation through collecting and sharing knowledge at the organizational level (Hussein & Muhammad, 2022). Strategic sensitivity also enhances the organization's ability in the market and thus it becomes aware of strategic developments that allow it to renew and transform, which helps the merged companies to renew or transform their resources. It also allows for the complementarities of their resources and they become unique and therefore difficult for competitors to imitate (Junni, Sarala, Tarba & Weber, 2015). It also enables the organization to quickly reach and discuss strategic decisions and its ability to interact with the changing environment and identify strengths and weaknesses while taking corrective measures to achieve the desired goals (Alon, Madanoglu & Shoham, 2017).

Strategic sensitivity is also the ability through which a company obtains inputs from the environment, discovers key market opportunities, and recognizes internal strengths/constraints related to its strategic priorities and market conditions. Strategic sensitivity enables the company to constantly reinvent its value propositions to pursue opportunities. Untapped market and meeting customers' changing needs and preferences over time. Strategic sensitivity also enhances a company's awareness in terms of allowing it to evaluate the cost structures and revenue streams associated with its value propositions and configure its activity systems more effectively (Clauss, Abebe, Tangpong & Hock, 2019). Strategic sensitivity increases the sharpness of perception, intensity of awareness, and interest in strategic issues. Increasing strategic sensitivity requires expectation,

experimentation, distancing, and reformulation in order to achieve the strategic goal for which the organization was established (Djaja, & Arief, 2015). The continuous success of organizations in achieving their goals requires the correct availability of a number of organizational variables, the most important of which is strategic sensitivity (Hamed, 2023)

## Dimensions of strategic sensitivity

Adim and Maclayton (2021) identified two dimensions of strategic sensitivity, which are (strategic foresight and strategic acumen).

- **Strategic foresight:** As Slaughter (1997) cited in Ibrahim et al., (2023) pointed out, strategic foresight has a logical basis that indicates that the world is not static but is changing rapidly.

Strategic foresight is required when there is a high degree of uncertainty surrounding changes in the relevant future context, and this applies to important decisions as much as it applies to more specific decisions in certain sectors or areas (Battistella, 2014). It is also referred to as a systematic approach to looking beyond current expectations and considering a variety of plausible future developments in order to determine the implications for current policies, by revealing implicit assumptions, and challenging perspectives and engaging in sudden and important turmoil that may be overlooked (Battistella, 2014). It is also a systematic participatory process that aims to create medium and long-term visions and identify opportunities and risks in the social, cultural, political, environmental, economic, technological and competitive fields, which aims to support decision-makers in initiating innovative processes, identifying new business models, formulating and communicating with future scenarios (Wyrwicka & Erdeli, 2018). It is also a practice rooted in future studies that is designed to help better understand, prepare for, and influence the future, and thus helps reveal points at which today's decisions and actions can be leveraged to move toward a desirable future (Streit, Felknor, Edwards & Howard, 2021).

Strategic foresight enables the organization to obtain multiple perspectives regarding the future and gain resources significantly. This involves interpreting trends, various signals and other drivers. The most important part of strategic foresight is to see and identify future sources of competitive advantage in order to gain advantage of them (Pulsiri & Vatananan, 2021). Foresight is often used in strategic planning or analysis and accordingly, as Spoelstra (2009) share a number of common goals using strategic foresight, some of which include promoting collaboration and linkage between science, technology and innovation (Ferriolo, 2019). Strategic foresight works as part of strategic agility, identifying, monitoring and interpreting the factors that drive change, and identifying the impacts specific to the organization and eliciting appropriate organizational responses. Strategic foresight includes appreciation,

learning, and anticipation of trends in the business environment and relies heavily on pattern recognition and focuses on the short and long term, which is called the path of changes.

- **Strategic acumen (insight):** Insight is the ability to know the present and act in it in order to meet the individual's needs related to the future in order to achieve the desired goals. Insight refers to understanding complex strategic situations as they develop and being prepared to benefit from them when they are discovered and in the present by extracting knowledge from complex strategic situations as they emerge and analyzing them so that the organization can benefit from the situations as they emerge (Terouhid & Ries, 2016). Foresight is also a systematic approach to looking beyond the expectations obtained, taking into account developments related to the future in order to determine the implications of the organization's policies today (Lari, Lari & Lari, 2020). Conduct a systematic survey to identify opportunities and developments and what business options are currently open, then follow up analytically to determine alternative future outcomes (Martin, 2010).
- **Adaptability and flexibility:** Adaptability is described as the ability to assess the environment, interpret information about it, and make decisions to combat it. He rejects positions such as rationalism and resists complexity when explaining the importance of change. Organizational environment is considered dynamics therefore creates perturbation in a system generating instability and impelling to system to obtain a new equilibrium. In respect to this, adaptability implies: scanning the environment, interpreting it and giving an answer to it. He recognizes elasticity as a capacity to absorb information from the environment. And adaptability needs to manage the organization-environment border. Mavengere (2013) considers flexibility as the shaping of networks among subjects in the organization, and their ability to change in an uncertain environment and claims that multihierarchical or horizontal companies tend to work in education and rotation of personal for gaining flexibility in front of environmental uncertainty, using open space, informal communication, team work, but he recognizes that the flexible structure generates information and duplication of work.
- Hitt, Ieland and Hoskisson (2016) found adaptability on flexibility and they study the latter into two topics: structural flexibility and capabilities for flexibility (heterogeneity in background and scope of managerial expertise). These capabilities generate the abilities of absorption and creativity. In addition, these authors, considering institutional theory, analyze adaptability examining possibilities of over passing isomorphism or assimilation of common practices by means of innovation in activities and strategies (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983 cited in Uforo et al., 2023). Moreover, they stress on five determinants of flexibility: low macro culture embeddedness, heterogeneity of dominant coalition, low grade of centralization and formalization, and environmental and organizational identity.
- **Firm's competitiveness:** Competition describes the level of aggressiveness

that the organization leads towards its success and goals (Jiang, Chai, Shao & Feng, 2018). When an organization needs to adapt its work resources to attract customers as well as other organizations with similar goals, market competition is considered inevitable. In other words, businesses with organizations competing for attention and shared customer attention will join the competition or see themselves as competitors. Mavengere (2013) argued that competition keeps the organization relevant and alive, and organizations need to adopt norms and standards that are attractive, as well as updates that fill existing gaps. Competition is considered of relative importance and, as mentioned earlier, is more serious in some cases than in others. Lee and Walsh (2016) confirmed that the service industry is the most competitive. This has brought about advances in technology and procedures that can often be destructive and harmless.

The competitive advantage can result owing to two factors: lower cost and differentiation, while competitive scope has to do with the breadth or size of the target market of which a business organization decides to adopt in the choice industry (Streit et al., 2021). Hence, Singh (2014) posits that the relative position of a business organization is determined by its competitive advantage which can be pursued on the basis of cost leadership, product differentiation, focused low and focused differentiation. It is one thing for a business organization to craft corporate strategy in answer to the question of where to invest and another thing to have what it takes to compete in the choice industry (Grant, 2008).

The first ability in strategic agility is strategic sensitivity which is defined as the ability to predict markets and become a leader in the industry Doz et al. 2007). Strategic sensitivity is a combination of foresight, insight and simple probing, with the most importance on insight (Doz & Kosonen, 2008). Strategic sensitivity means being open to as much information, intelligence and innovations as possible by creating and maintaining relationships with a variety of different people and organizations (Doz & Kosonen, 2008). Sull (2009) defines the same phenomenon as consistently identifying and seizing opportunities more quickly than the competitors. According to him, companies need to have shared real time market data that is detailed and reliable; small number of corporate priorities in order to focus efforts; clear performance goals for teams and individuals; and mechanisms to hold people accountable and to reward them. What it takes from the management is following the flow of information, sustaining a sense of urgency, maintaining focus on critical objectives, and recruiting entrepreneurial employees (Sull, 2009).

Many previous studies presented this capability, because this ability is the basis for subsequent strategic decision-making and action. Usually, it takes a long time for the organization to realize the need for change. The environment often

provides some sign of change, but many organizations are not alert and ready to make changes if the signs of change have not been felt strongly (Gunasekaran, 2009). Therefore, organizations must have a higher level of awareness, sustainable awareness including honest and open strategic discussions among leaders, managers, and other stakeholders, so that there will be different opinions and inputs in an effort to make changes further (Doz & Kosonen,2007). Thus, strategic sensitivity depends on accepting and analyzing various types of information to understand the environment to decide on effective actions (Hamel, 2007). Reading the environment effectively, analyzing and managing market information, and understanding the market environment are very important in order to be flexible and achieve success. Strategic sensitivity is very important to create a shared vision among leaders. Collaborating with consumers enables leaders to increase market needs and strategic sensitivity.

## Collective Commitment

Collective commitment or leadership unity requires managerial leadership to work together in making important decisions and avoiding political conflict and self-interest (Doz & Kosonen, 2007). Collective commitment also refers the ability of the senior management to make and implement bold joint strategic decisions fast, without being caught up in win-lose politics. Thus, is how company management can make quick and right decisions without take organizational politics as consideration (Morton et al., 2018; Doz, 2020). One aspect of collective commitment is organizing for mutual dependency along the value chain or functions, for example by giving individual executives responsibility for different stages in the company's value chain, instead of only giving them formal responsibility for a business unit. Common functions and value creation logic can be utilized as integrators. Common, horizontal functions serve all the vertical units and therefore they have a companywide understanding of the needs of different units. Common value creation logic on the other hand helps to maintain a shared approach between different units, which prevents being divided into separate silos. Also distributing corporate wide leadership roles beyond the unit responsibilities enhances collective commitment (Doz et al., 2008). Learning to work together is not easy for executives that have their own units, but it is crucial when it comes to reaching collective commitment. This can be helped by focusing on corporate issues instead of unit level issues, and creating a shared incentives plan as well as transparent goals and a fair process (Doz et al., 2007). Overlapping areas of expertise within top management are a source of strength, and they should be utilized to relate and build on one another's points of view instead of just arguing (Doz et al., 2008). However, it is also important to embrace conflicts rather than avoid them, as well as to keep the dialogue direct and informal.

Besides the faster leaders can make important decisions; the faster

organizations can take advantage of opportunities (Ojha, 2008). Establishing strong shared goals strengthens trust among leaders for more committed and united teams (Lee & Hau, 2007). A critical view on how organizations with organizational leaders work together, especially in developing markets, achieving the possibility of success, especially when operating quickly. Speed, conflict and cooperation allow the organization's leadership team to create effective strategies in a dynamic environment and ambiguity (Oetinger, 2007). Furthermore, the author also noted that formulating simple rules increased the ability of the organization's leadership team to act fast based on overall market knowledge. Thus, the importance of healthy market understanding is to plan proactively in anticipating potential environmental turbulence.

## Strategic Foresight

The idea of foresight goes back to the Arab scholar and historian Ibn Khaldun, the author of the famous introduction to the Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldun, where he gave the first elaborate and arranged presentation on foreseeing human urban development in the future and the stages of the rise and fall of civilizations in the future. Berger Gaston, who founded the international center for foresight in 1957 to deal with analyzing and planning the future, but the book the Art of forecasting by Bertrand de Jouvenel issued in 1964 was the most influential in the progress of forward-looking studies in France because it contained tools for future analysis and prediction (Farouk, 2020). **T**he concept of strategic foresight has taken great interest by many researchers and scientists until it has become more widespread, especially with the increasing speed of changes in various fields in the world, as their focus on it as a purposeful thinking and vision by organizations for a positive impact in the future through a purposeful scientific method to explore the future (Hamad, 2019).

Many researchers presented multiple definitions of strategic foresight. Slaughter (1997) cited in Alhajahjeh and Alkshali (2023) defined it as the ability of the organization to create a future vision of high quality and use new ideas that benefit the organization organizationally, as if it combines methods of exploring the future and strategic management. Strategic foresight is an organized scientific endeavor, through which it aims to formulate a set of conditional predictions that contain the main features and pillars of the conditions of a particular society or organizations during a certain period of time (Kadduri & Al-Alousi, 2018), foresight is the ability to predict how you might interpret the future, which means that it is an important and crucial strategic ability for effective planning at the long level (Peter & Denise, 2013). Iden, Leif and Gunnar (2017), sees the use of foresight as a personal force as the ability to predict. (Kuosa, 2014), saw that foresight is not a prediction, but rather a demonstration of a full set of

future alternatives through which problems in organizations can be addressed. Foresight is a set of practices that support the exploration of new business by identifying drivers of change (perception) (Rohrbeck, 2017). Strategic foresight is to enhance the organization's ability to understand emerging risks and opportunities, and motives, which constitute a possible, reasonable, and potential or preferred future space, so that the organization can make informed and better equipped decisions. Arokodare (2020) opines strategic foresight as the ability of companies to implement actions that reflect critical decision-making and to be aware and able to perceive and interpret weak signals and infer the course of relevant actions (Sarpong, Amstéus, Amankwah-Amoah & Appiah, 2015). Haddadin (2014) stressed that strategic foresight is a future dialogue related to thinking about the future and discussing its formations in order to enhance decision-making and future dynamic ability. This study aims at how organizations explore how to identify, anticipate and manage imbalances, prepare for an uncertain future and work to maintain a distinct competitive position, as well as conduct continuous survey and interpretation of reactions to these changes (Rohrbeck & Gemünden, 2008).

Futurism captures the idea of studying the future, learning from it, and integrating the acquired knowledge into present-day decision-making (Burns, 2021). This concept emerged due to the velocity, uncertainty, and complexity of environmental changes of our time which lowered scholars' and professionals' confidence in the effectiveness of decisions based solely on past data (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014; Hobday, Boschetti, Moeseneder, Stephenson, Bessey & Bulman, 2020). Instead, they started to integrate evaluations of trends and environmental discontinuities into their decision making in an effort to reduce the faced complexity (Rohrbeck & Kum, 2018). One especially prominent and increasingly researched example of such futures studies is "foresight" (Ballandonne, 2020).

Fundamentally, the concept of foresight builds on the assumption that while there are multiple possible futures, drivers of change can be identified, studied, and used to influence the future (Bezold, 2010). This epistemologically differentiates foresight from forecasting, which rather tries to predict one, scientifically justifiable future (Martin, 2010). "Strategic" foresight connects this idea to corporate organizations and describes a firm level process of "identifying, observing, and interpreting factors that induce change, determining possible organization specific implications, and triggering appropriate organizational responses" (Rohrbeck, Battistella, & Huizingh, 2015). In practice, firms facilitate this with the aim of understanding change before the competition to proactively shape their behavior and achieve better firm performance (Yoon, Kim, Vonortas & Han, 2018).

## Information Technology Capability

Capabilities are defined as "a firm's capacity to deploy resources, using organizational processes, to affect a desired end (Haeussler, Patzelt & Zahra, 2012). From this perspective, capabilities can be understood as a firm's orientation to integrate and reconfigure its resources and processes and, even more importantly, transform its processes in response to foreign environments to achieve competitive advantage (Wang & Ahmed, 2007). In general, capabilities show the organization's ability to combine resources, which leads to better performance. Capabilities also lead to the ability to combine a company's unique capabilities with resources to differentiate that company from its partners. Information technology capabilities directly contribute to the improvement of organizational processes such as coordination, investment in exchanges, absorption capacity, and monitoring and control. These, in turn, improve the strategic and operational performance implications of the organization (Croom, 2018). Also, this capability is noticeable in the areas of planning, investment decision making, coordination and control (Kim, Shin, Kim & Ho, 2011). However, introduction of ICT in organizations is expected to enhance proper utilization of resources, reduced workload, increased efficiency and productivity (Kimaro, 2016).

The definition of information technology (IT) capability is combinations of IT-based resources and with other resources implement in value-adding ways (Fink, 2011). Technological capabilities is the ability to perform any relevant technical function or volume activity within the firm including the ability to develop new products and processes and to operate facilities effectively, (Authors 2017). Technological capability is the ability to make effective use of technological knowledge in production, engineering and innovation (Srivastava, Gnyawali & Hat, 2015). It has the capacity to enable a firm in creating new technologies and to develop new products and processes in response to their changing economic environment. The various activities undertaken to acquire intangible assets for technological learning are a major process for building and accumulating these capabilities. Technological capability extends beyond having advanced technology and incorporates intangible asset of the firm in the form of knowledge about that technology (Srivastava et al., 2015). Many researches have been conducted about IT capability from different viewpoints. At first concept, IT capability is defined by Ross (1996) cited in Bakan and Sekkeli, (2017) as the ability to control its IT expense and cost, and deliver in time to realize the firm's targets. Then Bharadwaj (2000) cited in Bakan et al., (2017) defines organizational IT capability as a firm's ability to mobilize and deploy IT based resources. Sambamurthy and Zmud (2000) cited in Bakan et al., (2017) define IT Capability as unification of IT-based assets and routines that support business conduct in value-adding methods. Zeng and Huang (2003) cited in Bakan et al., (2017) defined IT capability as a competence that a firm mobilizes its

related IT resources to achieve operation goals. Santhanam and Hartono (2003) cited in Bakan et al., (2017) define IT capability as an aggregate concept/feature of the firm.

IT capability has four sub-dimensions as IT infrastructure, IT business experience, IT relationship resources and IT human resources. IT infrastructure includes communication technologies for firms to share information across varying functions, and react to changes in the market. IT business experience is a competence to integrate IT strategy and business strategy. IT relationship resources are abilities to associate IT functions into business units and IT resources.

## Information technology organizational capabilities

The skills that organizations need to gather, integrate, and implement IT resources in order to meet the needs of their organizational processes are presented in the specialized literature as IT capabilities (Liu, Huang, Wei & Huang, 2015). These capabilities are a set of IT-related resources, skills, and knowledge, which are exercised through business processes with the aim of improving organizational results (Stoel & Muhanna, 2009). In this sense, based on the theory of the Resource Based View (RBV), the literature presents evidence that IT capabilities, rather than direct investments in technology, can effectively improve organizational performance (Stoel et al., 2009). The literature points out that IT capabilities provide organizations with several benefits, such as improving business processes and organizational agility, increasing the capacity to innovate, as well as improving organizational performance and offering competitive advantages (Chen & Tsou, 2012; Kim, Shin, Kim, & Lee, 2011).

In this sense, the literature contains several proposals for the definition and operationalization of IT organizational capabilities. For example, Yoon (2011) defines the concept of corporate IT capabilities as the total IT capability that a company must maintain to efficiently support its management activities and improve its business performance in an IT environment, and he operationalizes the concept in terms of four dimensions, namely IT strategy, IT knowledge, IT operations and IT infrastructure. In turn, Lu and Ramamurthy (2011) focus on operationalized IT capabilities as a latent construct composed of three dimensions: i) IT infrastructure capacity; ii) IT business capability; and iii) proactive IT capability. As for Kim et al. (2011), from a Dynamic Capabilities perspective, the dimensions of organizational IT capabilities should be: i) IT expertise; ii) IT infrastructure flexibility; and iii) IT management capability.

## Theoretical Framework

The study adopted resource-based view theory propounded by Jay Barney (1991) in his article "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage". The RBV states that

organizational resources which are valuable, rare, and difficult to duplicate and substitute are a source of competitive advantage, which can improve business performance (Barney, 1991). The RBV of organization argues that access to strategic resources in terms of agile workforce, information technology capability and business opportunity foresight by founders is an important predictor of blue ocean opportunity-based entrepreneurship, new venture growth and competitive advantage (Arokodare & Asikhia, 2020). This theory stresses the importance of agile workforce environment, business foresight and information technology capability as firm strategic resources (Zhou, Zhang, Chen, & Han, 2017). Thus, access to these strategic resources enhances the ability of the firm to detect and act upon discovered opportunities, take risks, and be proactive, thus increasing firm market share competitive advantage (Davidson & Honing, 2003).

According to Barney (1991), the RBV rests on three assumptions: that firms seek to earn above average returns; that resources are asymmetrically distributed across competing firms; and that differences in resources lead to differences in product or service characteristics that result in variations in firms' competitive advantage. The theory also assumes that individuals are inspired to make maximum use of economic resources available and rational choices that a firm makes which are shaped by economic framework (Barney, 2007). The theory goes beyond the issues of strategy implementation and analysis of organizational processes. These two issues constitute the preoccupation of most of the earlier works carried out on the strategic implications of the firm's internal environment, which eventually gave rise to strategies (Grant, 2001).

Many scholars (Kumar & Gulati, 2010; Kuncoro & Suriani, 2018) have supported the RBV that market competitive advantage requires four characteristics of resources and capabilities as determinants of the sustainability of market competitive advantage. These are durability, valuable and rare, ease of imitation, transferability and substitutability of firm resources like information technology capability (Grant, 2001). Similarly, Arokodare et al., (2020) stressed that for any firm to gain and maintain competitive advantage over its competitors, the firm must possess agile workforce environment, business environmental foresight, human resource capability, information technology capability, strategic sensitivity, resource fluidity and collective commitment. Therefore, this study is anchored on the RBV as its underpinning theory

## Methodology

In this study, a survey design was adopted to obtain accurate data based on the opinion of the respondents and the researcher used primary data to obtain information from the respondents. The researcher used mainly the primary source of data to

obtain information from the respondents. The target population comprised of the staff of the eighteen (18) selected Manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria and the choice of these manufacturing firms was based on their size, informed reality of their operations and their duration in existence. The population of the study was 1847. The researcher adopted the Slovin (1960) formula in determining the sample size. The Slovin's formula is used to determine the sample size of 329. For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted questionnaire designed from dependent and independent variables as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was grouped in two **(2)** sections **A** and **B.** The section **"A"** contained items that linked to the bio data of the respondents while section **"B"** contained questions intended to answer the research questions and the study hypotheses.

The questionnaire was designed in a five (5) point Likert scale structure which consisted of closed-ended questions that would be easier for the respondents to answer because of the fixed presentation of questions and responses. Each item required the respondent to indicate the frequency of his or her various opinions under Strongly Agree (SA) =5, Agree (A) =4, Undecided (UN) =3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1. Very Large Extent=VLE (5), Large Extent=LE (4), Undecided= UN (3), Low Extent= LOE (2) and Very Low Extent=VLOE=1. The researcher adopted both inferential and descriptive statistics to analyze the data for the study and in order to realize the objectives of the study, Objectives (i), (ii) and (iii) were analyzed using simple linear regression model to evaluate the effect of information technology capability on value innovation, examine the effect of strategic sensitivity on competitive advantage and explore the effect of resource fluidity on productivity of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria while objective

## Results and Discussions

### Rate and Return of Questionnaire

**Table 1: Return of questionnaire**

| Selected Manufacturing Firms | Questionnaire Distributed | % | Questionnaire Retrieved | % | Questionnaire Lost | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Champion Breweries Plc | 29 | 8.8 | 24 | 7.3 | 5 | 1.5 |
| Kings Flour Mill Limited | 21 | 6.4 | 17 | 5.2 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Jubilee Syringe Manufacturing Company Limited | 16 | 4.9 | 14 | 4.3 | 2 | 0.6 |
| Alphastar Paints Industries Limited | 15 | 4.5 | 13 | 4.0 | 2 | 0.6 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bayelsa Plastic Industry Limited | 15 | 4.5 | 14 | 4.3 | 1 | 0.3 |
| Senalux Paint | 14 | 4.2 | 11 | 3.3 | 3 | 0.9 |
| Omni-Errands Manufacturing Limited | 19 | 5.8 | 15 | 4.6 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Combination Industries Limited | 25 | 7.6 | 19 | 5.8 | 6 | 1.8 |
| Excel Plastic Industry Limited | 15 | 4.5 | 11 | 3.5 | 4 | 1.2 |
| **Anudu Plastics Nigeria Limited** | 14 | 4.3 | 11 | 3.3 | 3 | 0.9 |
| Olite Manufacturing Company Limited | 19 | 5.8 | 14 | 4.2 | 5 | 1.5 |
| Beta Glass Plc | 20 | 6.1 | 16 | 4.9 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Okomu Oil Palm | 22 | 6.7 | 18 | 5.5 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Integrated Rubber Products Nigeria Plc | 20 | 6.1 | 17 | 5.2 | 3 | 0.9 |
| Presco Plc | 19 | 5.8 | 15 | 4.5 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Hidoz Filtration and Equipment Company Limited | 17 | 5.2 | 13 | 4.0 | 4 | 1.2 |
| Hopeup Integrated Industries Limited | 15 | 4.5 | 12 | 3.6 | 3 | 0.9 |
| **Demcok Paints Limited** | 14 | 4.3 | 10 | 3.0 | 4 | 1.2 |
| **Total** | **329** | **100** | **264** | **80.5** | **65** | **19.5** |

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

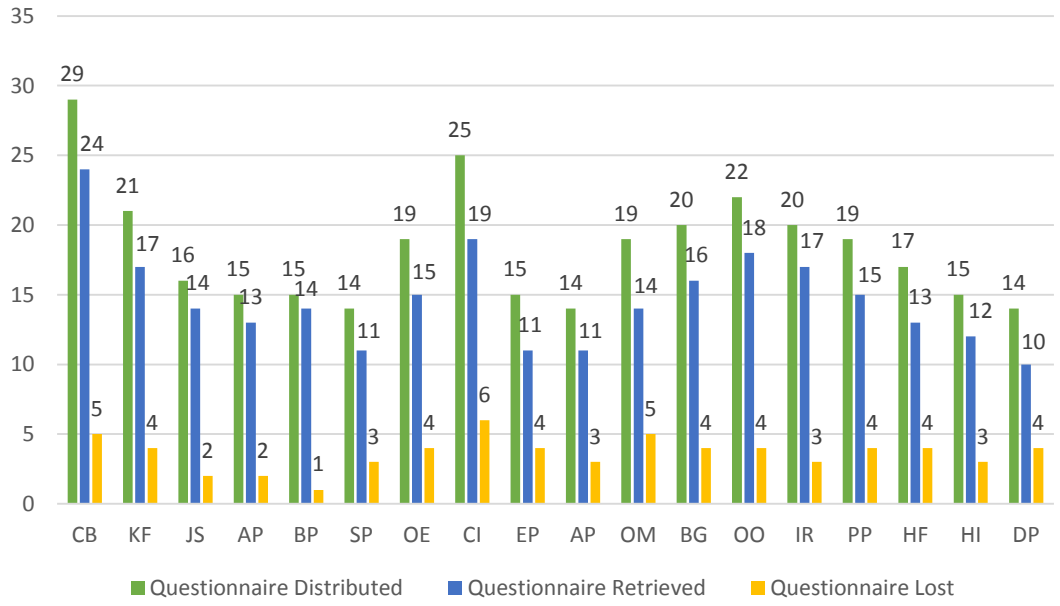


**Figure 4.1: Analysis of the rate of questionnaire distributed, retrieved and lost**

Table 4.1 and figure 4.1 revealed that a total of three hundred and twenty nine (329) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the various manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria. Out of this number, sixty five (65) copies of questionnaire were lost/wrongly filled with percentage ratio of 19.5% while two hundred and sixty (264) copies of questionnaire were correctly filled and returned with percentage ratio of 80.5% and this formed the basis of the study.

**Table 4.2: Respondents' distribution by gender status**

| Gender Status | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 145 | 54.9 |
| Female | 119 | 45.1 |
| **Total** | **264** | **100** |

**Source; Field Survey, 2024**

Table 4.2 and figure 4.2 revealed that majority 145 with percentage ratio of 54.9% were male respondents while 119 with 45.1% were female respondents. This shows that the difference in gender distribution is not much. Hence, male respondents constitute the study more than female.

**Table 4.3: Respondents' distribution by age range**

| Age Range | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Below- 20 years | 41 | 15.5 |
| 21-30 years | 68 | 25.8 |
| 31-40 years | 102 | 38.6 |
| 41 years and above | 53 | 20.1 |
| **Total** | **264** | **100** |

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

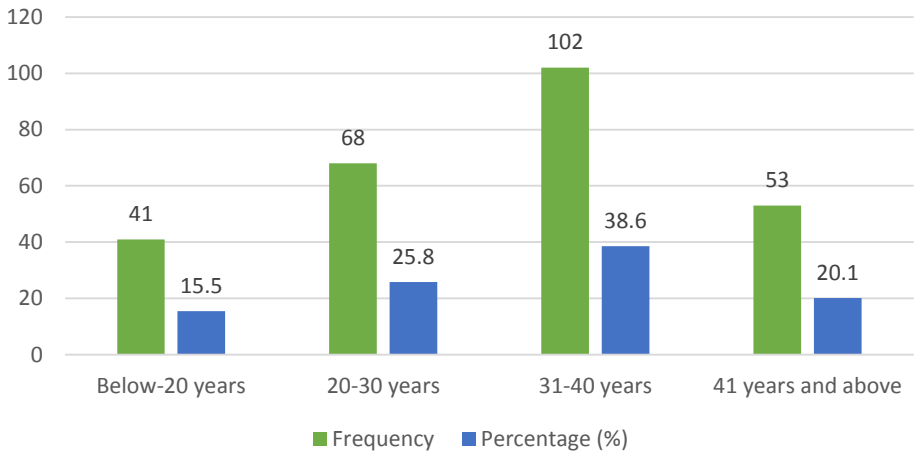


**Figure 4.3: Analysis of respondents' distribution by age range**

Table 4.3 and figure 4.3 revealed that majority 102 respondents with percentage ratio of 38.6% were between the age range of 31-40 years, 68 respondents with percentage ratio of 25.8% were between the age range of 20-30 years, 53 respondents with percentage ratio of 20.1% were between the age range of 41 years and above while 41 respondents with percentage ratio of 15.5% were between the age range of below-20 years. This showed that majority of the respondent were matured in age and in experience.

**Table 4.4: Respondents' distribution by marital status**

| Marital Status | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Single | 93 | 35.2 |
| Married | 124 | 5.0 |
| Others | 47 | 17.8 |
| **Total** | **264** | **100** |

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

## Data Presentation

Evaluate the effect of information technology capability on value innovation of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria

**N=264**

| RESPONSES | SA 5 | A 4 | UN 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | TOTAL | MEAN | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interpreting business problems and developing appropriate technical solutions enhance organizational effectiveness | 138 | 98 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 1144 | 4.3 | .908 |
| Firms' ability to selects, accepts, configures and implements information technology improves organizational efficiency | 129 | 101 | 17 | 9 | 8 | 1126 | 4.3 | .946 |
| IT infrastructure such as; hardware, software, support staff, tools and other resources contribute to firms innovative ability | 137 | 103 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 1152 | 4.4 | .843 |
| Ability of a firm to develop new combination of already known elements in products, processes, technologies, or management boost organizational performance | 147 | 93 | 11 | 5 | 8 | 1158 | 4.4 | .894 |

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table above showed effect of information technology capability on value innovation. Majority of the respondents with the highest mean scores of 4.4, 4.4, 4.3 and 4.3 respectively strongly agreed that ability of a firm to develop new combination of already known elements in products, processes, technologies, or management boost organizational performance, IT infrastructure such as; hardware, software, support staff, tools and other resources contribute to firms innovative ability, interpreting business problems and developing appropriate technical solutions enhance organizational effectiveness and firms' ability to selects, accepts, configures and implements information technology improves organizational efficiency. Therefore, since the mean of all the responses is ≥ 3.5 this shows that information technology capability has a significant effect on value innovation of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**Table 4.10: Examine the effect of strategic sensitivity on competitive advantage of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria**

**N=264**

| Responses | SA 5 | A 4 | UN 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | TOTAL | MEAN | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interpreting trends, various signals and other variables are firms' sources of competitive advantage | 134 | 98 | 18 | 8 | 6 | 1138 | 4.3 | .899 |
| Understanding complex strategic situations and extracting knowledge from them as they emerge boosts organizational sustainability | 129 | 101 | 14 | 9 | 11 | 1120 | 4.2 | .999 |
| Creative capacity related to product and service offerings that match latent satisfaction gaps of the customers enhances organizational performance | 138 | 99 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 1145 | 4.3 | .904 |
| A systematic survey to identify opportunities, developments, business options that are currently open and following up analytically to ascertain alternative future outcomes promote organizational effectiveness | 128 | 102 | 13 | 11 | 10 | 1119 | 4.2 | .994 |

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table above showed effect of strategic sensitivity on competitive advantage. Majority of the respondents with the highest mean scores of 4.3, 4.3, 4.2 and 4.2 respectively strongly agreed that
creative capacity related to product and service offerings that match latent satisfaction gaps of the customers enhances organizational performance, interpreting trends, various signals and other variables are firms' sources of competitive advantage, understanding complex strategic situations and extracting knowledge from them as they emerge boosts organizational sustainability and a systematic survey to

identify opportunities, developments, business options that are currently open and following up analytically to ascertain alternative future outcomes promote organizational effectiveness. Therefore, since the mean of all the responses are ≥ 3.5, this shows that strategic sensitivity has a significant effect on competitive advantage of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**Table 4.11:** Explore the effect of resource fluidity on productivity of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria

**N=264**

| RESPONSES | SA 5 | A 4 | UN 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | TOTAL | MEAN | Std. Dev. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adjusting business systems and relocate resources quickly according to needs and circumstances improves organizational productivity | 132 | 102 | 13 | 8 | 9 | 1132 | 4.3 | .948 |
| Investing heavily in promising opportunities boost revenue growth | 122 | 91 | 26 | 15 | 10 | 1092 | 4.1 | .724 |
| Providing multiple channels for accessing resources enhance work flexibility | 132 | 94 | 18 | 11 | 9 | 1121 | 4.3 | .992 |
| Disciplined processes for evaluating individual units and reallocating key resources promotes employee's efficiency | 131 | 104 | 12 | 9 | 8 | 1133 | 4.3 | .932 |

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table above showed effect of resource fluidity on productivity**.** Majority of the respondents with the highest mean scores of 4.3, 4.3, 4.3 and 4.1 respectively strongly agreed that disciplined processes for evaluating individual units and reallocating key resources promotes employee's efficiency, adjusting business systems and relocate resources quickly according to needs and circumstances improves organizational productivity, providing multiple channels for accessing resources enhance work flexibility and investing heavily in promising opportunities boost revenue growth. Therefore, since the mean of all the responses is ≥ 3.5 this shows that resource fluidity has a significant effect on productivity of selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**$H0_1$: Information technology capability has no significant effect on value innovation of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria**

**Table 4.15: Simple regression analysis on information technology capability and value innovation**

| Variable | Parameters | Coefficient | Std error | t – value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | $\beta_0$ | 2.164 | 0.143 | 5.356 |
| ITC ($X_1$) | $\beta_1$ | 0.312 | 0.030 | 3.472** |
| **R-Square** | | 0.852 | | |
| **Adjusted R – Square** | | 0.804 | | |
| **F – statistics** | | 99.508*** | | |

**Source: Field Data, 2024**

Table above showed simple regression analysis on information technology capability and value innovation. The coefficient of multiple determination ($R^2$) was 0.804 which implies that 80.4% of the variations in dependents were explained by changes in the independent variable while 19.6% were unexplained by the stochastic variable indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 1% probability level.

The coefficient of information technology capability was statistically significant and positively related to value innovation at 5 percent level (3.472**). Therefore, we reject null hypothesis and uphold the alternative hypothesis which states that information technology capability has a significant effect on value innovation of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**$H0_2$: Strategic sensitivity has no significant effect on competitive advantage of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.**

**Table 4.16: Simple regression analysis on strategic sensitivity and competitive advantage**

| Variable | Parameters | Coefficient | Std error | t – value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | $\beta_0$ | 2.554 | 0.274 | 8.297 |
| SS ($X_1$) | $\beta_1$ | 0.732 | 0.017 | 4.654** |
| **R-Square** | | 0.890 | | |
| **Adjusted R – Square** | | 0.871 | | |
| **F – statistics** | | 23.479*** | | |

**Source: Field Data, 2024**

Table above showed simple regression analysis on strategic sensitivity and competitive advantage. The coefficient of multiple determination ($R^2$) was 0.871 which implies that 87.1% of the variations in dependents were explained by changes in the independent variable while 12.9% were unexplained by the stochastic variable indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model

adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 1% probability level.

The coefficient of strategic sensitivity was statistically significant and positively related to competitive advantage at 5 percent level (4.654**). Therefore, we reject null hypothesis and uphold the alternative hypothesis which states that strategic sensitivity has a significant effect on competitive advantage of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

**$H0_3$: Resource fluidity has no significant effect on productivity of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.**

**Table 4.17: Simple Regression Analysis on resource fluidity and productivity**

| Variable | Parameters | Coefficient | Std error | T – value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | $\beta_0$ | 2.264 | 0474 | 7.343 |
| RF ($X_1$) | $\beta_1$ | 0.812 | 0.027 | 3.478** |
| **R-Square** | | 0.847 | | |
| **Adjusted R – Square** | | 0.824 | | |
| **F – statistics** | | 11.153*** | | |

**Source: Field Data, 2024**

Table above showed the simple regression analysis on resource fluidity and productivity. The coefficient of multiple determination ($R^2$) was 0.824 which implies that 82.4% of the variations in dependents were explained by changes in the independent variable while 17.6% were unexplained by the stochastic variable indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 1% probability level.

The coefficient of resource fluidity was statistically significant and positively related to productivity at 5 percent level (3.478**). Therefore, we reject null hypothesis and uphold the alternative hypothesis that resource fluidity has a significant effect on productivity of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria.

Simple linear regression on hypothesis one showed that information technology capability has a significant effect on value innovation of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria. The study further showed that majority of the respondents with the highest mean scores of 4.4, 4.4, 4.3 and 4.3 respectively strongly agreed that ability of a firm to develop new combination of already known elements in products, processes, technologies, or management boost organizational performance, IT infrastructure such as; hardware, software, support staff, tools and other resources contribute to firms innovative ability, interpreting business problems and developing appropriate technical solutions enhance organizational effectiveness and firms' ability to selects, accepts, configures and implements

information technology improves organizational efficiency.

The finding of this study is in tandem with the findings of Teddy (2018) on the effect of Information Technology (I.T) capabilities on firm performance. The analysis showed that IT infrastructure flexibility which entails flexibility in hardware, operating software, communications and other technology equipment that enable business applications to run, statistically predicted firm's performance and was presented as ($\beta$ = .489, t = 4.984, out that $p<.05$). This means, one unit of increase in IT infrastructure flexibility increased the firms' performance unit by .489. The study therefore recommended that firms should aim to have proactive IT managers and personnel that build relationships with all business functions and promote the effective use of Information. The finding was also supported by the findings of Safaie and Abedi (2020) on the effect of information technology capabilities of the organization on marketing performance mediated by intra-organizational governance of Mellat Bank in Tehran.

The results of the data analysis showed that the information technology capability of the organization has a significant impact on the marketing performance and governance within Mellat Bank branches and recommended that Mellat Bank's senior management in Tehran should to keep pace with advances in technology around the world and to afford the high cost of switching hardware to provide strong infrastructure for service delivery, avoid making the wrong decisions by creating strong databases of information in relation to required data and timely updating them, they should periodically hold group meetings and consult with staff and receive feedback on improving marketing performance in the areas of customer loyalty and after evaluation and selection the best view, implement it, the senior management of Mellat Bank in Tehran should provide all staff with the existing statute of duties after updating and making the necessary changes and to provide clear standards for the prevention of violations and finally the Mellat Bank senior management in Tehran should use video conferencing online for conferences or training sessions to show colleagues that their time is valuable to the bank and that they need cooperation in all situation

The findings revealed that strategic sensitivity relate with innovative capability among software development companies in south- south, Nigeria and recommended that software development companies should have the right staff with the proper skills and competencies if the will want to stay relevant in the software development industry and modern management styles and operational techniques must be put in place for a better and sustainable advantage. The finding is also in line with the findings of Oyeinkorikiye and Rachel (2023) on the relationship between strategic sensitivity and firm competitiveness of the Nigerian content development and monitoring board in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The result indicated that a positive link exists between the variables and recommended that the management of NCDMB should

leverage on strategic foresight and strategic agility to enhance performance of the board. The management of NCDMB should also invest in developing robust strategic foresight to improve the board's overall performance in the global competitive market

## Conclusion

**The study therefore concludes that:**

- Information technology capability has a positive significant effect on value innovation of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria ($R^2$ = 80.4%, t-value = 3.472** at 5 percent significant level).The R2 accounts for 0.804 approximately 80 percent indicates that the independent variable accounts for 80 percent of the variation in the dependent variable and this shows goodness of fit.
- Strategic sensitivity has a positive significant effect on competitive advantage of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria ($R^2$ = 87.1%, t-value = 4.654** at 5 percent significant level).The R2 accounts for 0.871 approximately 87 percent indicates that the independent variable accounts for 87 percent of the variation in the dependent variable and this shows goodness of fit.
- Resource fluidity has a positive significant effect on productivity of the selected manufacturing firms in South-South, Nigeria ($R^2$ = 82.4%, t-value = 3.478** at 5 percent significant level).The R2 accounts for 0.824 approximately 82 percent indicates that the independent variable accounts for 84 percent of the variation in the dependent variable and this shows goodness of fit.

## Recommendations

- It is imperative for management of the selected manufacturing firms to establish regular staff training on ICT to keep them abreast of the current innovations in the use of ICT because innovation experience and opportunities may occur through unexpected occurrence, ingenuities, process needs, industry and market changes, demographic changes, changes in perception and new knowledge. All these when properly understood and managed promote technology innovation. Also, investment in ICT should form an important component in the overall strategy of the firms operation as intense investment in ICT products will facilitate speed, convenience, and accurate services that will make manufacturing firms to be efficient, profitable, and competitive together with coping with the changes and challenges of ICT controlled globalized economy.
- Management of the selected firms should constantly pay attention to their vision with a survey of the environment in line with the organization's goals, involve experts and insightful resources together with building strong capabilities and good foresight to constantly analyze the dynamic business environment, mitigate strategies, carefully analyze opportunities and threats and lower production costs than other competitors.
- Management of the selected manufacturing firms should

proactively focus on resource fluidity as a strategic tool to improve firm competitive capacity. Furthermore, corporate managers should strategically re-allocate organizations resources, both human capital; knowledge mobility and materials resources across appropriate units to improve firm competitiveness and enhance output.

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