

Strategic Social Capital Building in the Nigerian Medium-sized Enterprises (MEs): The Impact of Industry Specialisation

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of industry specialisation on strategic Social Capital Building (SCB) among the Nigerian Medium-sized firms. We hypothesised that organisational/industry specialisation has no impact on strategic SCB, and that indicators of organisational social capital building are not industry specific. A survey of 449 HR practitioners from seven sub-sectors of Nigerian economy was undertaken and data collected was subjected to regression and correlation analysis as well as descriptive statistics in testing the formulated hypotheses. Industry specialisation was measured using the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) 2014 sector classification; whilst strategic social capital building was measured using Likert-scale questionnaire that was developed based on the indicators of Organisational Social Capital Building (OSCB). Study results suggest a strong variation in strategic social capital building from one industry specialisation to the other. The study also found that HR practitioners in education and health and social work sectors have positive attitude towards all the seven indicators of OSCB and are more likely to use recruitment/selection and training/development functions to build OSC for their firms.

Keywords: Social Capital Building, Organisation Social Capital Building, Medium-Sized Firms, Human Resource Practitioners.

1. Introduction

The roles of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as catalyst for growth in the phase of changing socio-political and economic landscape in Nigeria cannot be underestimated, especially in the face of recent economic uncertainty and market fluidity. Realising that technology is necessary but not sufficient for organisations to achieve desired success; the Human Resource (HR) practitioners' consciousness must be jolted to effective management of employees' skills, knowledge and experiences that constitute human capital. Thus, HR used to focus only 'on within-employee' factors has changed to focusing 'on between-employee' factors to gain competitive advantage that can be realised through the connection that combines new process, products and services (Krebs, 2008:38). Social capital can therefore be said to include 'learning, trust and innovation created and enhanced during interpersonal interaction' (McGrath et al, 2005). It favours a community of practice, exchange of knowledge, free flow of information, social networking between an organisation's employee and other stakeholders (Krebs, 2008). It is the conduit pipe of different kinds of human capital.

In recent years, there have been many researches into the causal relationship between organisational social capital and numerous organisational outcomes. Akpotu et al, (2010) relate organisational social capital to increased growth and better performance, in the same way Adler and Kwon (2002), Van Buren (2008), Ofori and Sackey, (2010), and Kianto and Waajakoski (2010) have all linked it to growth and performance. Xerri and Brunetto (2011) argue that organisational social capital breeds organisation's innovation capacity and by extension organisation's employees' innovative behaviours. Mele (2003), Chow (2009) and Zarea (2012) establish the relationship between organisation social capital, citizenship behaviour and organisational humanising culture. Webb (2008), Manning (2010) and Shorunke et al (2014) advocate that in order to encourage organisational knowledge transfer and knowledge management in 21st century organisations, attentions should be shifted to building organisational social capital. Ruiz et al (2010) contend that organisational social capital is the antecedent of collective transformational leadership and servant leadership in organisations. Furthermore, Baker (2000), Cohen and Prusack, (2001), Fusell et al (2006), Maiti (2009), and Berzina (2011) argue that organisational social capital leads to personal business and organisational success; reduced

transaction costs; and increased social profits.

In the light of these established causal relationship with organisations' bottom-lines, Organisation Social Capital (OSC) is an inherent feature in virtually all organisations. For a start, social capital as a concept is defined as available organisational resources that could be leveraged on through personal network. The referred resources in this case include but not limited to ideas, useful information, potential opportunities, financial capital, influence and power, required emotional support, goodwill, cooperation and trust (Baker, 2000). Thus, it can be asserted that social capital entails close relationship, mutual understanding, trust and respect that are developed in the course of social relations that guarantee solidarity and goodwill (Kale et al., 2000) and (Gibbs et al, 2015). While contextualising OSC, (Van Buren, 2008), opined that OSC is capable of creating values through the machination of an organisation's internal relations for the firm's employees without losing sight of the significant role of the firm's external relations and the reputation before the outside world.

2. Contextualising Strategic Social Capital Building in Managing Human Resources

Human resource management (HRM) was defined by Bratton and Gold (2007) held that a distinct set of integrated employment policies, programmes and practices must be instituted in managing good employment relations that is capable of bringing out the optimum results from employees with the tendency for enhanced competitive advantage. In other words, HRM amplifies the significance of the people element in creating desired value in an organisation. It is therefore not uncommon to describe human resource as organisation's human capital given the enormous skills, tacit knowledge, intelligence, commitment and aptitude that are brought to improving organisations' productivity (Stone and Deadrick, 2015). It is incumbent on organisations to conscientiously and systematically pull-together these traits that people bring to the workplace; they need to harness the cumulative intelligence, aptitude, commitment, tacit knowledge and skills inherent in the work organisation.

According to Cole (2010), work organisations are where people come together and develop a culture – specific ways of working, creating invisible rules and rituals that regulate activities, dictating which behaviours, or ways of communicating, and even which ways of dressing are acceptable and which are unwelcome. He further stresses that there exists official hierarchy of each and every organisation which is very important, but reckons that of more importance is the unofficial relationship, the networks of relationships and the 'political' structures inherent in every work organisation.

All these networks of relationship are critical to organisational success (Harzing and Pinning, 2014); hence, the responsibility of organisations to build, nurture and sustain good work relationships falls within the realm of strategic human resource management and indeed, human resource practitioners. As work organisations are premised on negotiated order, that is, recognising that the differences of interests and power arising in organisations both emanate from and contribute to the class, power, gender and ethnic differences prevailing in society at large continually emerge with patterns of activity which evolve from the interplay of individual and group interests.

It could therefore be asserted that HRM is about the management of the interplay of individual and group interest, ideas, initiative and reactions (negotiated order) fostered through social interactions. This position tallies with that of Baughn, et al's (2011) assertion that human resource management's (HRM) activities need to pay attention to the issues of conflicts and control with the establishment of necessary tools that can enhance trust. These are the basic components and sub-components of organisational social capital – trust and associability (Van Buren, 2008). They further contend that in the face of the inherently unstable international joint venture relationship and dynamic global business operating environment, the need to create trust and collaborative arrangement in management processes become almost inevitable.

Intangible resources such as the one derivable from and through human social interactions, that is, social capital, and in the case of an organisation, organisation social capital play crucial roles in creating sustainable competitive advantage (Sirmon and Hitt, 2003) and (Shorunke et al, 2014). As a result of the causal ambiguities that are inherent in resources intangibility, it becomes more challenging for imitators and hence leading to enduring contributions (Zahra, 2010) citing Nahapiet and Ghoshal, (1998). Social capital is an intangible resource to a firm as it refers to the goodwill derived from its connections and relationships within the organisation (Arregle, et al., 2007, Al-Arkoubi and Davis, 2013, and Gibbs et al, 2015)

Hence, we opine that strategic organisational social capital building can be aptly defined as the conscious and deliberate attempt and efforts by an organisation to integrate and synchronise individual trust (IT) and organisational trust (OT) for the purpose of endearing commitment, identification and spirit of collectivism towards the attainment of organisational outcomes. In practical term, OSCB entails the use of the various HR practices to ensure the integration of

individual trust with organisational trust leading to accumulating and harnessing commitment, identification and spirit of collectivism necessary for the achievement of organisational outcomes; that is seeing OSCB as a key HR function. From the foregoing definition of OSCB and perspective lenses of HR, this study proposes seven (7) sub-components and indicators of OSCB in an organisation to be: (1)encouraging effective and affective social interactions at work, (2) existence of personal/dyadic trust amongst employees, (3) encouragement of friendship relationships, (4) employees' commitment to organisation's mission and vision, (5) employees' identification with organisation's purpose , (6) helping behaviours at work and (7) cooperation and knowledge-sharing among employees.

3. Nigerian Organisational and Industry Specialisation Classification

HR practices in Nigeria cannot be totally divorce from its socio-economic and cultural compositions. Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, eight most populated in the world, with an estimated population of over 170 million (NBS, 2014). As regards development and growth of HRM practices in Nigeria, Okpara and Wynn (2008) reveal that human resource management practices which include recruitment, training, compensation and reward systems, and performance appraisal are evident albeit with heavy presence of issues of tribalism. In view of these, HR practices in Nigerian SMEs and more specifically Medium-sized Enterprises (MEs) has been fraught with difficulty of measurement, even though SMEs in Nigeria have been highly dynamic and has contributed immensely to household incomes and the growth of the economy in general (Ekpo and Umoh, 2010). According to Fajana et al. (2011), HRM practices in Nigeria are still in infancy stage because of lack of indigenous and comprehensive HRM model as majority of HRM principles and practices evidenced in Nigeria workplaces seems to have been adopted from the developed economies. Thus, for Nigerian MEs to deliver the vision of the Nigeria strategic plan called the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the important role of human resource management in the attainment of the objectives of the SMEs can not be over-emphasised. More so, as organisation's any type of failure or success is largely dependent on the quality of management available to them, the ability of a group of people to work together and achieve desired results is predicated on the management team's effort to harness the individual's capabilities (Okorator and Ebiringa, 2010). For Muogbo (2013), organizational control in Nigeria is evidently vested in management's hand in which the management's role is to ensure judicious matching of the number of employees to the organisation's objectives.

In the bid to ensure Nigerian MEs sub-sector is geared towards making coherent management and HR policies that fit closely with overall business strategy, the Nigerian government established the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) in 2003 to among many other objectives, advocate policies for improved business operating environment and stimulate entrepreneurship and enterprise development. SMEDAN's (2014) survey report categorized SMEs in Nigeria by the nature of their business, that is, industry specialization and grouped them into twelve (12) sub-sectors, namely; agriculture, mining and quarrying, hunting, manufacturing, forestry and fishing, building and construction, hotels and restaurants, transport, wholesale and retail trade (including, repair of motor vehicles and household goods), storage and communication, financial intermediation, real estate, renting and business activities, education, health and social work, other community and social and personal service activities. In terms of the number of SME firms in each sub-category, the survey report (SMEDAN, 2010:60) concluded that 'manufacturing sector has the highest number of enterprises, followed by wholesale and retail trade, repairs of motor vehicles and household goods'. The report further distinguished between the number of small enterprises, that is, firms employing between 10-49 people, and the number of medium-sized enterprises, that is, firms employing between 50-199 people in each subsector, and pointed out that all the subsectors have more than fifty per cent of small firms in them, while only four sectors have more than ten per cent and above medium-sized firms in them.

4. Research Methods

For the purpose of this study, investigations of HR practitioners' responses to indicators of strategic social capital building in seven key sub-sectors of Nigerian SMEs were considered. The choice has met all the above criteria considering that these seven have the highest concentration of the country's medium-sized enterprises (SMEDAN, 2014). The samples in this study were selected on a *disproportionate stratified sampling* basis. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), Bryman (2012) and Zikmund et al. (2012), stratified samples are appropriate when the selection of samples needed separation into mutually exclusive, homogeneous segments (strata) where simple random sample selection is further possible from each of the segment. Disproportionate stratified sampling selection may be made on the basis that they are a fair and balanced representation of the larger sample.

Using disproportionate stratified sampling of unequal allocation technique, specifically, an average of 60 (sixty) practitioners from seven (7) different sectors of the economy that have over one hundred (100) medium-sized enterprises firms were selected for this study. This study gave consideration to the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria's (SMEDAN) survey report of 2014 on numbers of MEs by sector, namely, manufacturing sector (713), wholesale and retail trade sector (125), hotels and restaurants sector (121), transport, storage and communication sector (131), financial intermediation sector (158), Education sector (101), and health and social work sector (113) (SMEDAN, 2014).

5. Research Hypotheses

Furtherance to achieving the set objectives of this study, the following null hypotheses are stated:

5.1 Hypothesis one:

Organisational/industry specialization has no impact on strategic organisational social capital building

5.2 Hypothesis two:

Indicators of organisational social capital building are not industry specific.

Table 1.0: Organisational Specialisation of Nigeria MEs HR Practitioners

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Organisational Specialization (Sector):	Education	38	8.4	8.4	8.4
	Financial Intermediation	82	18.2	18.2	26.6
	Health and Social work	59	13.1	13.1	39.7
	Hotels and Restaurants	65	14.4	14.4	54.1
	Manufacturing	114	25.3	25.3	79.4
	Transport, Storage and Communication	46	10.2	10.2	89.6
	Wholesale and Retail trade	47	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	451	100.0	100.0	

Source: Authors' result from SPSS data

The HR practitioners in the study were requested to indicate the specialisation of their organisation in terms of the sector of the economy their organisation is situated. These sectors are as shown in table 1.0 above and their responses are detailed as shown. According to the table above, 25.3% of the HR practitioners surveyed ply their trade in the manufacturing sector. 18.2% of the respondents work in organisations in the financial intermediation sector of the Nigerian economy. There were 14.4% of the total HR practitioners practicing in hotels and restaurants sub-sector of the economy. 13.1% of the respondents work in health and social work sector. The Nigerian MEs' HR Practitioners surveyed in this research consist of 10.4% for wholesale and retail trading sector. 10.2% practitioners were in transport, storage and communication sector, while there were 8.4% HR practitioners in the education sector. The SMEDAN report of 2014 indicates that wholesale and retail trade activities constitutes the majority of businesses engaged in by most Nigerians. The report however shows that just 3.10% of such companies are in the medium-sized category whereas manufacturing sector has 713 formal medium-sized enterprises constituting (10.72%). In the same report, the financial intermediation sector has 158 firms in the medium-sized category. However, Lagos State, which is where the majority of the respondents for this survey are being carried out, has the highest concentration of financial intermediation firms being the commercial nerve capital of the Federation and the most populous state in the country with over 20 million inhabitants (NPC, 2014)

Table 2.0: Demographic characteristics of the respondents (N=451)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Position in Organisation		
Junior Manager	116	25.7
Middle Manager	228	50.6
Senior Manager	107	23.7
Total	451	100
Numbers of Employees Control		
Less than 10	68	15.1
10 -20	151	33.5
21 - 30	159	35.3
30+	72	16.0
Missing	1	.2
Total	451	100
Organisation/Industry Specialization		
Education	38	8.4
Financial Intermediation	82	18.2
Health and Social work	59	13.1
Hotels and Restaurants	65	14.4
Manufacturing	114	25.3
Transport, Storage and Communication	46	10.2
Wholesale and Retail trade	47	10.4
Total	451	100
Gender		
Female	189	41.9
Male	260	57.6
Missing	2	.4
Total	451	100
Religion		
Christian	250	55.4
Muslim	136	30.2
Traditionalist	39	8.6
Others	24	5.3
Missing	2	.4
Total	451	100
Marital Status		
Divorced	46	10.2
Married	261	57.9
Separated	55	12.2
Single	81	18.0
Widowed	8	1.8
Total	451	100
Age Group		
20 - 25	36	8.0
26-30	59	13.1
31-35	90	20.0
36-40	111	24.6
41-45	102	26.6
46-50	45	10.0
50+	8	1.8
Total	451	100
Number of Years of Practice as HR Manager		
1 - 5yrs	108	23.9
5 - 10yrs	198	43.9
10 - 15yrs	110	24.4
20+	32	7.1
Missing	3	.87
Total	451	100

Educational Background		
Doctoral Degree	28	6.2
First Degree	165	36.6
Masters Level Degree	179	39.7
Professional Qualification	77	17.1
Other	2	.4
Total	451	100

The collected data were put into test in two forms. For clear understanding and appreciation of the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, frequency distribution of responses was calculated and the use of descriptive statistics employed to determine the extent of influence that industry specialization has on the attitude of the respondents to the indicators of strategic social capital building. In addition both correlation and regression analyses were adopted as tools to refute or validate the research hypotheses.

6. Test of Hypotheses

6.1 Hypothesis One: Organisational/industry specialisation has no impact on strategic organisational social capital building

Table 3 shows that, there is a mild but positive relationship between organisational/industry specialisation and strategic organisational social capital building with a multiple correlation (R) of 0.286. The adjusted R² of 0.063 implies that 6.3% of the variations in strategic social capital building in Nigerian MEs were explained by the intricacies of organisation/industry specializations.

Table 3.0: Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary ^a				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.286 ^a	.082	.063	2.032

6.2 Hypothesis Two: Indicators of organisational social capital building is not industry specific

From table 4 below, indicators of strategic organisational social capital building were, in different dimensions, dependent on industry specialisation of firms in Nigerian MEs subsector. In other words, developing some of the indicators of OSCB depends to a large extent on the nature and type of business activities of the organisation as much as it depends on the size of the organisation. Specifically, demonstration of concern for friendship relationships between employees at work by HR department and practitioners is significantly dependent on the nature of business and industry specialization of the firm, considering a t-value of 3.378 as evidenced in table 4 below. Also, use of HR recruitment and selection function to build OSC for a firm is also significantly dependent on industry specialization, with a positive t-value of 2.253, the possibility of using recruitment and selection function in a MEs firm to build and develop OSC for a firm will depend on the nature of operations undertaken by the firm.

It is worthy to note that all other indicators of OSCB were though not significantly dependent on industry specialization, but they all have different degrees of correlation with industry specialization. Therefore, it can be deduced that indicators of OSCB are invariably industry specific.

Table 4.0: Indicators of Organisation Social Capital

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.292	.401		8.213	.000
	encouraging social interactions at work	-.314	.106	-.192	-2.945	.003
	personal/dyadic trust amongst employees	-.095	.115	-.056	-.823	.411
	friendship relationships at work	.369	.109	.224	3.378	.001
	employees commitment	-.120	.117	-.073	-1.023	.307

employees identification with organisation's purpose	-.011	.113	-.006	-.096	.923
use of HR recruitment/selection function to build OSC	.225	.100	.138	2.253	.025
helping behaviours at work	.002	.096	.001	.020	.984
cooperation and knowledge-sharing among employees	-.066	.088	-.044	-.754	.451
use of HR training/development function to build OSC	.101	.087	.064	1.156	.248
Dependent Variable : Organisational Specialization (Sector)					

Table 5.0 below further depicts the responses of HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs to seven (7) questionnaire items weaved round the indicators of OSCB as defined in this study.

Table 5.0: HR Practitioners responses to indicators of OSCB

Industry/Specialisation	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Indifference (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
It is my responsibility to ensure employees socially interact with each other at work					
Education	13.8	12.4	30.3	27.9	32.3
Financial Intermediation	10.3	23.8	7.0	14.0	2.4
Health and Social Work	10.3	8.6	10.6	20.9	22.0
Hotels and Restaurants	13.8	12.54	7.0	16.3	8.7
Manufacturing	20.7	28.6	16.9	4.7	15.0
Transport, Storage & Communication	27.6	12.4	8.5	2.3	3.1
Wholesales & Retail Trading	3.4	1.9	19.7	14.0	16.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100
It is HR's responsibility to ensure personal trust exists amongst employees					
Education	10.7	18.5	29.3	24.4	29.7
Financial Intermediation	21.4	17.6	9.6	4.4	4.5
Health and Social Work	3.6	9.3	15.9	22.2	16.2
Hotels and Restaurants	10.7	12.0	7.0	13.3	11.7
Manufacturing	17.9	27.8	15.9	13.3	14.4
Transport, Storage & Communication	32.1	12.0	3.8	2.2	8.1
Wholesales & Retail Trading	3.6	2.8	18.5	20.0	15.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100
HR must be concerned with friendship relationships between employees					
Education	8.0	24.0	35.9	21.7	19.3
Financial Intermediation	20.0	26.0	5.6	4.3	5.0
Health and Social Work	0.0	7.3	11.3	19.6	22.9
Hotels and Restaurants	20.0	10.4	8.5	19.6	7.1
Manufacturing	16.0	22.9	27.5	6.5	10.0
Transport, Storage & Communication	36.0	7.3	4.9	4.3	9.3
Wholesales & Retail Trading	0.0	2.1	6.3	23.9	26.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100
It is important for HR managers to identify individuals that are committed to the organisation					
Education	0.0	18.6	24.8	31.1	28.4
Financial Intermediation	21.7	33.9	9.5	13.1	2.0
Health and Social Work	0.0	0.0	10.5	13.1	22.4
Hotels and Restaurants	21.7	18.6	8.6	11.5	7.0
Manufacturing	17.4	18.6	33.3	9.8	12.9
Transport, Storage & Communication	39.1	10.2	5.7	4.9	7.0
Wholesales & Retail Trading	0.0	0.0	7.6	16.4	20.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100
It is important for HR managers to identify employees that understand the purpose and mission of the organisation					
Education	0.0	12.2	26.3	27.3	29.9
Financial Intermediation	51.9	24.4	6.1	9.1	4.6
Health and Social Work	0.0	4.9	11.1	18.2	18.0
Hotels and Restaurants	7.4	24.4	14.1	6.8	7.2
Manufacturing	11.1	19.5	30.3	13.6	14.9
Transport, Storage & Communication	29.6	14.6	6.1	10.2	4.6
Wholesales & Retail Trading	0.0	0.0	6.1	14.8	20.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100
HR should recognise employees who are more concerned with personal ambitions than employees who are more concerned with helping other colleagues.					
Education	33.3	26.7	25.9	21.2	21.1

Financial Intermediation	19.4	13.7	6.7	9.1	8.8
Health and Social Work	0.0	5.3	9.6	27.3	30.7
Hotels and Restaurants	19.4	6.1	11.1	18.2	8.8
Manufacturing	5.6	12.2	34.8	0.0	14.9
Transport, Storage & Communication	22.2	14.5	5.9	3.0	1.8
Wholesales & Retail Trading	0.0	21.4	5.9	21.2	14.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Ambitious, independent employees deserve more praise than cooperative and knowledge sharing employees.					
Education	39.3	19.9	23.9	25.8	25.6
Financial Intermediation	12.5	14.0	11.9	3.2	6.0
Health and Social Work	3.6	2.9	9.2	25.8	34.2
Hotels and Restaurants	16.1	5.9	14.7	19.4	6.0
Manufacturing	10.7	19.1	31.2	6.5	12.0
Transport, Storage & Communication	14.3	18.4	4.6	0.0	0.0
Wholesales & Retail Trading	3.6	19.9	4.6	19.4	16.2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

7. Results

451 questionnaires were distributed to HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs across seven different sectors out of which 449 were completed and found usable. This represents 99.5 percent response. There is no discrimination in terms of recruitment of HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs on the basis of marital status, as according to this survey, HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs are spread across marital status categories as evident in table 2. More interestingly, there are 57.9% married HR practitioners spread across all age groups which indicate compliance with enabling employment laws and regulations guiding against, and protecting employees from unnecessary discrimination on the basis of age, gender, and marital status (Tiemo and Arubayi, 2012). This study pointed out that most of the HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs are matured in age and of the younger generation, 88.3% of HR practitioners in Nigerian Medium-sized Enterprises are below 46 years old and mostly occupy (60.1%) middle management position in their organisation. This is not surprising, given that MEs ownership structure in Nigeria is characterised by and mainly revolves around one man or family, (Onugu, 2005). The view of Onugu (2005) presupposes that HR practitioners/Managers in MEs firms should be next in the hierarchy to the owner(s), which may account for why HR practitioners in this study comprises half (228) 50.6% in the middle management position.

Moreover, it is worth pointing out that it seems the higher the age category, the fewer the HR practitioners. This is an indication that organisations are considering the age of practitioners as one of the determining factors in recruitment; hence, this study discovered that there is a rich blend of age group, years of practicing as HR manager, and position in the organisation of HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs, as more than half of HR practitioners surveyed (225) are in middle management position. 63.6% of these practitioners has 6 – 10 years practice experiences as HR managers; justifying the position of Muogbo (2013) that most HR managers in Nigerian MEs (though concentrating on paint manufacturing SMEs in Nigeria) are concentrated within the age bracket of less than 35 years to 40 years. Majority of HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs are highly educated, although few have professional qualification which is understandable, given the peculiar challenges of SMEs in Nigeria in general and MEs in particular. Cardon and Stevens (2004) identify scarcity of financial resources in small firms as one of the reasons why they are unable to embark on massive and intensive human capital development, thus leading to the lack of appointment of professional HR practitioners in small and medium-sized firms (Ojokuku, 2012). These then imply that HR practitioners'/ managers' educational qualification is a significant factor in reaching managerial position in Nigeria. In other words, the higher the education obtained, the higher the position of the practitioner/manager in the organisation. It should be noted that lack of enough professionally qualified HR practitioners in Nigerian MEs in general has been of serious concern to professional body like the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigerian (CIPMN) (Fajana et al, 2011). Being the leading HR professional body, CIPMN did sponsor a bill in the Nigerian National Assembly to legislate that any firm employing more than 50 employees must have a professionally qualified HR person performing the duties of HR manager (Nnodim, 2012)

This study found that majority of Nigerian MEs' HR practitioners in sectors that are less susceptible to use of machineries, rules and regulations and lone working, but rely more on human interactions and face- to- face dependent such as education sector (60.1%) and health and social work sector (44.9%) are more receptive to the notion that it is their responsibility to ensure that employees socially interact with one another at work. They believe it is very important for HR managers to identify individuals, who are committed to, and understand the purpose and mission of their organisation and concerned about promoting and encouraging friendship relationship between employees. They

accepted that it is their responsibility to ensure dyadic/personal trust exists amongst employees; accepted that cooperative and knowledge sharing employees are necessary for OSCB. With respect to use of HR recruitment and selection and training and development function to build OSC, substantial majority of HR practitioners in Nigerian SMEs across all sectors, with the exemption of the financial intermediation sector, consented that social interaction capability potentials should form one of the criteria for recruitment and selection. Also, majority of HR practitioners in Nigeria MEs across all sectors, again with the exemption of the financial and intermediation sector, believed that training and development programme in an organisation should focus on the social nature of work rather than on the efficient process of work.

8. Discussion

It is however not unexpected that HR practitioners in financial intermediation sector, comprising banks, insurance companies, mortgage banks and all other financial institutions, would not focus on social interaction capability potentials of employees during recruitment and selection process; as well as design their training and development programmes to focus on the social nature of work rather than on efficient process of work (Gberevbie, 2010).

On the contrary, HR practitioners in manufacturing, transport, storage and communication, financial intermediation sectors, who rely more on the use of machineries, software and electronic devices for the completion of their work and thus requires less human face- to- face interactions at work, were averse in their perception of strategic organisation social capital building as it relates to ensuring, encouraging, promoting, and appreciating the various indicators of OSCB as enumerated in this study.

These findings are contrary to that Herrero (2008) who suggested that irrespective of organisation specialisation, social capital of an organisation relied upon internal and external relationships that produce mutual benefits for the individual and the organisation itself. It was indeed expected that HR practitioners in Nigeria MEs would encourage and promote affective social interaction amongst their employees through leadership appeal for collective goals, recognising that real added value is generated and real differences are made when employees get along with themselves through collective collaboration which entails 'going the extra mile' rather than just getting on with their jobs by just fulfilling their job descriptions (Gibbs, et al, 2015). The finding of negative inclination of Nigerian MEs' HR practitioners towards ensuring employees social interaction with each other contradicts Cohen and Prusack (2001) and Seeman (2001) cited in (Cunningham, 2002) positions where they stated that human capital is vested people, whereas social capital rests in the relationships among them, which HR practitioners are expected to develop.

However, some of the findings in this study conform with and corroborate Kianto and Waajakoski's (2010) conclusion that it is important to tune social capital of an organisation to contextual requirements, bearing in mind that the maintenance of social capital is expensive and often require close and trustful relationships and shared mind-sets, both within the firm and inter-firm collaboration, which may have negative consequences on organisational success. It also supports the views of Orga and Ogbo (2012) that see work as having spiritual meaning, buttressed by behavioural norms such as honesty, diligence, friendliness and frugality which ought to be promoted and encouraged by the unit in an organisation responsible for managing people in the organisation – HR department. These findings further support the conclusion of Gbadamosi (2003) who concludes that African managers and indeed Nigeria HR practitioners must show serious concern in employees' job environment as well as their career development. They also should give their decision concerning employees human face through humane disposition towards non-work activities that might influence employees' organisational commitment and affect employees' performance.

Thus, HR practitioners in sectors that are susceptible to use of labour and face- to- face dependent, such as education and health and social work sector are more likely to ensure employees interact socially with one another at work. They are likely to ensure personal trust exists amongst employees. They will promote and provide platforms that encourage friendship relationships between employees. They will also identify and motivate individuals that are committed to the organisation, and those that understand the purpose and mission of the organisation. They will also likely praise and recognise employees who exhibit ethical helping behaviours at work and as well appreciate and motivate cooperative and knowledge-sharing employees. The same cannot be said about HR practitioners in manufacturing, transport, storage and communication and financial intermediation sectors, because they rely more on the use of machineries, software and electronic devices for the completion of their works and thus require less human interaction, be it social or official.

9. Conclusion

The significance of this study cannot be over emphasised especially when viewed from the lenses of the results which indicate that strategic OSCB is moderately practiced by companies operating in the Nigerian MEs sector. Specifically, HR practitioners, and by extension firms, in education and health and social work sub-sector of the Nigerian MEs are positively, in terms of their perception, disposed to strategically building organisational social capital for their firms through the use of their various HR practices to ensure the integration of individual trust with organisational trust leading to accumulation of and harnessing commitment, identification and spirit of collectivism that are requisite for the achievement of organisations' desired outcomes.

The study has provided evidence for the value-added nature of strategic SCB through the integration of individual trust, organisation and associability in the workplace. Be that as it may, it remains worrisome whether or not the challenge at hand a conceptual issue or that of data collection, specification, procedure adopted or even that of interpretation of results. However, managers of all kinds irrespective of sector of operation seems to be facing similar challenges of having to improve the numerous organisational outcomes and bottom-line problems with limited organisational scarce resources, putting priorities in perspectives, motivation of staff, initiation of change and demonstration of measurable results. Strategic SCB in concept and practice is about managers leveraging on the inherent values in human social interactions to confront the challenges at hand if organisational set objectives must be achieved.

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