

LEADER-AWARENESS AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH OF OIL AND GAS COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between leader-awareness and organizational health of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. It aimed to explore how leader-awareness impacts key dimensions of organizational health, including goal focus, cohesiveness, and resource distribution. A correlational research design was adopted to examine these relationships. The study targeted five indigenous and multinational oil and gas exploration companies with operations in Rivers State, Nigeria. Data was collected from 25 representatives (five from each organization) using a structured questionnaire. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was employed to test the hypotheses and assess the correlations between leader-awareness and measures of organizational health. The analysis revealed significant positive correlations between leader-awareness and the organizational health measures. The findings indicate that leader-awareness plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational effectiveness and efficiency and suggest that improving leader-awareness can substantially benefit organizational health by fostering better goal alignment, enhancing team cohesiveness, and optimizing resource management. Organizations should thus invest in leadership development programs and adopt practices that promote cultural sensitivity and inclusivity to achieve these benefits.

Keywords: Leader-awareness, organizational health, goal focus, cohesiveness, resource distribution, oil and gas industry

INTRODUCTION

The concept of organizational health has garnered increasing attention as businesses strive to adapt and thrive in today's rapidly changing economic landscape. Hoy and Feldman (2017) define organizational health as an organization's capacity to unite around a shared vision and respond effectively to change. This capacity is crucial for maintaining high performance and achieving long-term success. Research indicates that organizational health encompasses qualities such as goal focus, cohesiveness, and effective resource distribution, which are integral to an organization's ability to function efficiently and remain competitive (Cotton & Hart, 2013; McKinsey & Company, cited in Farmanova, Bonneville, & Bouchard, 2018).

In the context of oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria, understanding the factors that influence organizational health is particularly relevant. The oil and gas industry, characterized by its complexity and competitive pressures, demands effective leadership to navigate its challenges. Scholars have identified leader-awareness, encompassing the understanding of various cultural and operational facets within an organization, as a critical factor in enhancing organizational outcomes (Haar & Brougham, 2013; Moran, Harris, & Moran, 2011). Leader-awareness enables leaders to better understand and engage with their subordinates, thereby improving goal focus, fostering cohesiveness, and optimizing resource distribution.

Research has demonstrated that leader-awareness contributes significantly to organizational effectiveness. For instance, Cletus et al. (2018) argue that leadership awareness enriches decision-making processes, particularly in human resource management and organizational policies. Leaders who are attuned to the diverse characteristics of their workforce are better equipped to build trusting relationships and create a more inclusive work environment. Additionally, leader-awareness supports the organization's capacity to remain relevant and responsive to market trends, thereby reinforcing its overall health (Landry, 2018).

By examining how leader-awareness impacts goal focus, cohesiveness, and resource distribution, this research aims to provide insights into the role of leadership in enhancing organizational performance and adaptability. The findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between

leadership awareness and organizational health, offering valuable implications for management practices in the oil and gas sector.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between leader-awareness and the organizational health of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State. To achieve this, the study focused on the following specific objectives:

1. To ascertain the relationship between leader-awareness and goal focus of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State.
2. To examine the relationship between leader-awareness and cohesiveness of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State.
3. To assess the relationship between leader-awareness and resource distribution of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State.

The conceptual framework showing the relationship between leader-awareness and organizational health is displayed in Figure 1.

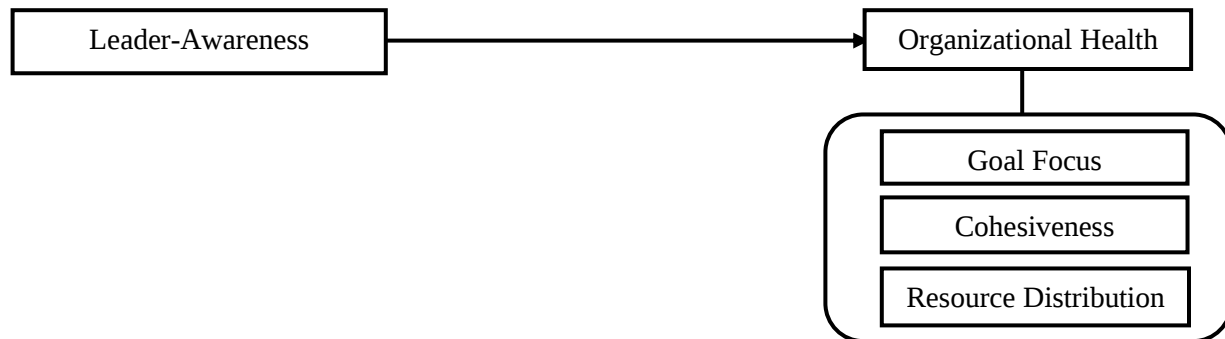


Figure 1: Leader-awareness and Organizational health
Source: Desk Research, 2024.

Based on these objectives, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between leader-awareness and goal focus of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between leader-awareness and cohesiveness of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between leader-awareness and resource distribution of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory emphasizes the importance of societal norms, values, and institutional structures in shaping organizational behavior and practices. It posits that organizations are influenced by the environment in which they operate, which includes formal rules, regulations, and informal cultural expectations (Scott, 2014). In the context of leader-awareness, institutional theory suggests that leaders' ability to recognize and adapt to external pressures and internal organizational norms is crucial for maintaining organizational health. Leaders who are aware of these influences can better align their strategies with institutional expectations, fostering a healthier organizational environment. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), organizations seek legitimacy by conforming to institutionalized norms and practices. Leaders who are aware of these norms can ensure that their organizations remain aligned with institutional expectations, thereby maintaining organizational legitimacy and, by extension, organizational health.

In alignment with institutional theory, Scott (2014) argues that organizational health is partly a function of how well an organization conforms to external institutional pressures. Leaders play a vital role in navigating these pressures. For instance, a leader's awareness of evolving regulatory standards in the oil and gas industry can help ensure compliance, which contributes to organizational stability and health (DiMaggio &

Powell, 1983). Leaders who are attuned to the cultural norms within their organization can better foster an environment of collaboration and goal alignment, which are essential components of organizational health. As highlighted by Selznick (1996), institutional leadership involves embedding organizational values that promote both performance and social cohesion. Leaders who understand and manage these values effectively contribute to stronger organizational health by enhancing both operational efficiency and employee satisfaction.

Conceptual Review

The Concept of Leader-awareness

Leader-awareness refers to a leader's ability to perceive and understand various factors affecting both internal and external environments of an organization. This includes the awareness of personal biases, emotional intelligence, organizational culture, team dynamics, and broader industry trends. According to Goleman (1998), emotional intelligence is a key component of leader-awareness, as it enables leaders to recognize their own emotions and those of others, thus facilitating effective decision-making and interpersonal relationships. Leaders who are emotionally aware can better navigate complex social dynamics, build stronger teams, and promote a positive organizational climate.

Additionally, leader-awareness involves an understanding of organizational culture and its impact on performance. Schein (2010) argues that leaders play a pivotal role in shaping and maintaining organizational culture. By being attuned to the underlying values, beliefs, and norms within their organization, leaders can foster a culture that aligns with strategic goals and promotes employee engagement. This type of awareness allows leaders to anticipate challenges and address them proactively, ensuring the organization remains adaptable and competitive.

Leader-awareness also extends to recognizing the influence of external factors such as market conditions, regulatory changes, and technological advancements. For instance, a leader who is aware of emerging trends in the industry can better position their organization to take advantage of new opportunities or

mitigate potential risks (Kotter, 2012). This external awareness is critical in today's rapidly changing business environment, where leaders must be agile and responsive to shifts in the marketplace.

Furthermore, Yukl (2013) highlights the importance of self-awareness in leadership. Leaders who are conscious of their own strengths and weaknesses are more likely to seek feedback, engage in continuous learning, and adapt their leadership style to suit the needs of their team and organization. This self-awareness contributes to more effective leadership by fostering authenticity and humility, which can strengthen trust and collaboration within the organization.

The Concept of Organizational Health

Hoy and Feldman (2017) define organizational health as an organization's ability to align around a shared vision and adapt to changes in order to achieve its goals. In essence, it reflects a company's capacity to thrive in an ever-evolving business environment. Given that today's business landscape is characterized by constant change, organizational health has become increasingly crucial. It encompasses various qualities that contribute to creating a forward-thinking, collaborative, and innovative organization, which is both high-functioning and high-performing over the long-term (Cotton & Hart, 2013).

Miles, as cited in Nair, Kumar and Sri Ramalu (2015), describes organizational health as an organization's ability to sustain itself within its environment, continuously grow and develop, effectively handle challenges, and build the capacity to do so. This concept is regarded as a critical factor for success in modern business organizations. Organizational health, therefore, is more than just short-term performance—it also reflects the organization's ability to evolve and maintain its vitality over time.

McKinsey & Company, as cited in Farmanova, Bonneville and Bouchard (2018), further elaborates on organizational health by emphasizing three key capabilities: alignment around a clear vision, strategy, and culture; excellence in execution; and the ability to renew focus by adapting to market trends and fostering innovation. This ability to balance alignment, execution, and renewal is vital to maintaining an organization's long-term relevance and success. The health of an organization profoundly impacts

employees, influencing their work, engagement, and capacity to achieve both individual and shared goals (Smith et al., 2012).

Measures of Organizational Health

Goal focus

Emmons (2016) emphasizes that focus is a critical ability that enables individuals to complete tasks efficiently, thereby enhancing productivity in their professional lives. Learning strategies to improve concentration can help people stay on track, achieve their goals, and minimize distractions. Goals, as defined by Shan and Kruglanski (2002), are cognitive representations that link the means to the desired outcomes. For instance, the goal of obtaining a college degree involves both the desired outcomes (e.g., securing a job or gaining approval) and the means to achieve them (e.g., studying diligently and resisting distractions). Goals, being composed of both means and ends, can act as frameworks for acquiring new knowledge and structuring information in terms of objectives and the methods to attain them (Woiike, Lavezzary, & Barsky, 2001). As knowledge structures, goals adhere to principles of activation, change, and organization, similar to other cognitive representations (Higgins, 2016). They serve as building blocks for developmental tasks, with their successful attainment fostering long-term patterns of personal development (Freund & Riediger, 2006; Emmons, 2017). In this context, goals imbue life with meaning, providing individuals with structure and direction (Emmons, 2016).

Goals are integral to the cognitive aspect of well-being because achieving them contributes to life satisfaction. Cognitive well-being often involves evaluating how successfully one is progressing toward important goals. Satisfaction results from goal achievement, while failure to achieve goals leads to dissatisfaction (Diener, 2014; Brunstein, 2013; Emmons, 2016; Klug & Maier, 2015). This concept aligns with control theory (Carver & Scheier, 2013) and goal-setting theory (Latham & Arshoff, 2013), both of which posit that goals are effective because they establish acceptable performance standards.

Cohesiveness

Cohesiveness plays a crucial role in the success of organizations in today's modern economy, where the use of teams has expanded significantly in response to competitive pressures. Research shows that teamwork can achieve outcomes that individuals working in isolation cannot, but for teams to be effective, they must be cohesive (Haslam, Cruwys, Haslam, & Jetten, 2015). Cohesiveness refers to the dynamic process by which team members remain united in pursuit of common goals, either to meet instrumental objectives or to fulfill their emotional needs (Eys, Hardy, Carron, & Beauchamp, 2003). It reflects the forces that attract individuals to the team and keep them committed to its success.

Cohesiveness is, therefore, a fundamental aspect of effective teamwork. It involves a strong bond that pulls members toward group participation and resists any forces that might lead to separation (Fox & Spector, 2000). For a team to maintain high levels of cohesiveness, most, if not all, members must have a strong desire to remain in the team. It is a team phenomenon that requires members to feel connected and mutually accountable for task accomplishment. As Carron (2002) explains, cohesiveness is a social process that characterizes groups whose members interact closely and share a collective identity, creating a powerful force that draws members together.

Resource Distribution

Resources are defined as any asset that individuals perceive as beneficial in helping them achieve their goals (Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014). These resources enable employees to effectively complete tasks and meet objectives, which in turn enhances their well-being and capacity to perform at a high level (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Balducci, Schaufeli, & Fraccaroli, 2011). In this context, we focus specifically on workplace resources—those assets that organizations can cultivate to assist employees in achieving work-related goals. We exclude external resources and the work–family interface, acknowledging the ongoing debate over whether organizations should or even can influence resources beyond the workplace (Hall & Richter, 2018).

A recurring critique in existing research is the lack of clarity in the identification of resources. To address this, we build on prior studies on how organizations can foster a psychologically healthy work environment, classifying resources according to their source (Day & Nielsen, in press; Nielsen & Abildgaard, 2013). These workplace resources can be operationalized at various levels within the organization, specifically the IGLO (Individual, Group, Leader, and Organization) levels, to enhance organizational health (Day & Nielsen, in press).

Empirical Review

Kumra, Hsu, Cheng, Marsteller, McGuire and Cooper (2020) conducted a study on the association between organizational cultural competence and teamwork climate in a network of primary care practices. The aim of the study was to determine whether an association exists between perceptions of organizational cultural competence and teamwork climate among employees in a health system. One thousand eighty employees in a primary care network consisting of 49 ambulatory practices were surveyed on their perceptions of senior management's efforts in organizational cultural competence and teamwork climate in their own work setting using 5-point Likert scales. Linear regression models were used to evaluate the association between organizational cultural competence and teamwork climate. The study revealed that the overall organizational response rate for the survey was 84%. Higher perception of organizational cultural competence was associated with better teamwork climate (coef. = 0.4, $p < 0.001$) after adjusting for gender, age, years in specialty, race, and position type. The association was stronger in magnitude for support staff compared to administrators and clinicians and stronger for younger compared to older age groups. The study concluded that higher employee perceptions of organizational cultural competence are associated with better self-reported teamwork climate, and this relationship is magnified for support staff and younger employees.

Gould (2018) conducted a study on cultural awareness and transformative learning through participation in study abroad. The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between cultural awareness and transformative learning. This study was conducted at Rowan University in Glassboro, NJ. The students in

this study have participated semester long study abroad during fall 2016, spring 2017, or fall 2017 semesters. For some this was their first time travelling abroad. The literature strongly suggests that there are many benefits for students that participate in study abroad. The data analysis suggests that respondents increased their cultural awareness and have more appreciation for those that are different than them. In addition, that this was also a transformative learning experience for them as they had adopted new idea, beliefs, and values by participating in this study tour. Overall, the data suggests that subjects benefited from their study abroad experience.

Yan (2015) carried out a study on how cultural awareness works: An Empirical Examination of the Interaction between Social Workers and Their Client. Cultural awareness has been a long standing but unexplored principles of cross-cultural social work and few studies have investigated how it actually works. A study of 30 frontline social workers examines how social workers interact in their self-identified cultures when working with a client from a different culture. The results indicate that the participants in the study carry a certain experiences and aspect of culture with them when working with culturally different clients. Participants identified two sets of strategies, intended either to control or to use their culture in these interventions. The findings also reveal that the pursuit of cultural competence through cultural awareness may have negative implications for achieving social justice, both for practitioners and for their clients.

Kaihlanen, Hietapakka and Heponiemi (2019) conducted a study on increasing cultural awareness: qualitative study of nurses' perceptions about cultural competence training. The study examined the perceptions of nurses about the content and utility of cultural competence training that focuses on increasing awareness of one's own cultural features. The training was conducted at one primary care hospital in southern Finland. Participants were registered nurses ($n = 14$) and practical nurses ($n = 6$) from different hospital units. Four 4hours training sessions—including lectures, discussions and short web-based learning tasks—were arranged during a four-week period. Semi-structured, small group interviews were conducted with 10 participants to examine their perceptions about the content and utility of the training. Qualitative content analysis with a conventional approach was used to analyse the data. The study results revealed that

Personal utility pertains to the opportunity to become aware of one's own cultural features, to change one's way of thinking, to obtain a new perspective on one's own communication practices and to receive justification for carrying out particular workable practices. The study concludes that Training that increases healthcare professionals' awareness of their own cultural features was perceived as useful and thought-provoking. Increased awareness might facilitate the communication between healthcare professionals and patients, which is a crucial component of quality healthcare.

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In line with the foregoing, the following hypotheses are stated.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between leader-awareness and goal focus of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between leader-awareness and cohesiveness of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between leader-awareness and resource distribution of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The design adopted for this research is the correlational design. This is based on the nature of the study and the goal of ascertaining the relationship between leader-awareness and organizational health of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State. There are a total of 28 indigenous multinational oil and gas production companies as listed on the year 2024 directory of the Independent Petroleum Producers Group (IPPG); however, the accessible population for this research is five (5) indigenous and multinational oil and gas exploration companies with either their main or branch offices in Rivers State, Nigeria, as sourced from the directory IPPG (2024). 25 representatives (5 from each organization) were selected from the organizations under review as the study elements and respondents for data collection. Data was therefore generated from primary sources using the structured questionnaire instrument. For the test of the hypotheses and the assessment of the correlations between the variables, the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation

Coefficient (PPMC) was adopted as the basis for the test for the relationship between leader-awareness and the measures of organizational health.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation Between Leader-awareness and Measures of Organizational health of oil and gas multinational companies in Rivers State

		Leader-awareness	Goal Focus	Cohesiveness	Resource Distribution
Spearman's rho	Leader-awareness	1	.778**	.740**	.649**
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	25	25	25	25
Goal Focus	Pearson Correlation	.778**	1	.862**	.841**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	25	25	25	25
	Pearson Correlation	.740**	.862**	1	.908**
Cohesiveness	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	25	25	25	25
	Pearson Correlation	.649**	.841**	.908**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
Resource Distribution	N	25	25	25	25
	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N				

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2024

The relationship between leader-awareness and the measures of organisational health are revealed to be significant where evidence shows that leader-awareness significantly impacts on the goal focus ($R = 0.778$ and $P = 0.000$), cohesiveness ($R = 0.740$ and $P = 0.000$) and resource distribution ($R = 0.649$ and $P = 0.000$) of the oil and gas companies in Rivers State. Evidence from the analysis indicates that leader-awareness contributes meaningfully to the organisational capacity to maintain focus on its goals, carry out its operations in a cohesive and unified manner and also effectively and efficiently distribute its resources. Thus, all related null hypotheses for the relationship between the variables is rejected as the findings show that:

- i. There is a significant relationship between leader-awareness and goal focus of oil and gas companies in Rivers State
- ii. There is a significant relationship between leader-awareness and cohesiveness of oil and gas companies in Rivers State
- iii. There is a significant relationship between leader-awareness and resource distribution of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results from the analysis on the relationship between leader-awareness and organizational health reveal that leader-awareness significantly enhances key outcomes such as goal focus, cohesiveness, and resource distribution in oil and gas companies in Rivers State. These results align with the assertions of Haar and Brougham (2013), who emphasized the importance of leaders being aware and conscious of the various cultural facets that influence their organizations. Such awareness allows leaders to navigate cultural complexities and improve workplace dynamics.

Moran et al. (2011) also highlighted the crucial role of leader-awareness in enhancing leaders' effectiveness and their ability to engage subordinates. Their observations suggest that leader-awareness fosters a deeper understanding of others within the organization, thereby improving interpersonal relationships and organizational effectiveness. Similarly, Cletus et al. (2018) affirmed that leadership awareness strengthens decision-making processes, particularly in the context of human resource management and people-related policies. When leaders are aware of the diverse characteristics that define their workforce, they are better equipped to build richer, more trusting relationships with subordinates, thus promoting a more inclusive and cohesive organizational environment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study has investigated the relationship between leader-awareness and organizational health within oil and gas companies in Rivers State. The findings highlight the critical role of leader-awareness in enhancing

key aspects of organizational health, including goal focus, cohesiveness, and resource distribution. The significant correlations observed in this research underscore the importance of leader-awareness in fostering an environment where organizations can effectively pursue their objectives, maintain cohesive team dynamics, and manage resources efficiently. In conclusion, leader-awareness is a pivotal factor in achieving and sustaining organizational health in the oil and gas sector. The ability of leaders to understand and navigate the complex cultural and operational dynamics within their organizations significantly contributes to their effectiveness in achieving strategic goals, enhancing team cohesiveness, and optimizing resource allocation. These insights offer valuable implications for management practices, suggesting that enhancing leader-awareness could be a strategic approach to improving organizational performance and adaptability in the challenging environment of the oil and gas industry.

Given the significant impact of leader-awareness on goal focus, cohesiveness, and resource distribution, the study therefore recommends that organizations should invest in comprehensive leadership development programs. These programs should focus on enhancing leaders' cultural awareness, emotional intelligence, and understanding of organizational dynamics. By improving these skills, leaders will be better equipped to foster a cohesive and effective work environment.

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