

ALIGNMENT AND RESILIENCE OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between alignment and organizational resilience of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria. Organizational resilience refers to the ability of an organization to withstand and adapt to changes, crises, and disruptions in the business environment. Strategic innovation can be defined as a systematic implementation of new ideas, processes, products, or business models that significantly enhance an organization's competitive position. The measures of organizational resilience includes; robustness, agility and integrity. The study adopted the quantitative research approach and correlational research designs as well as the cross-sectional design. Population of the study comprised of 22 commercial banks in South-South Nigeria. Therefore, the number of respondents for the study was one hundred and ten (110) senior level managers. The structured questionnaire was the primary source of data collection while cronbach alpha test and content validity instrument were adopted respectively. Hence, the study made use of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation co-efficient aided with Statistical Package for Social Science to determine the relationship between the study variables. Findings revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between alignment and organizational resilience of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria. Conclusion, the study clearly establish that alignment correlate or relates with organizational resilience in an organization. Recommendations, Management of Commercial Banks in South-south Nigeria, should develop methods or ways of responding to uncertainty and the leaders should champion this course. However, managers should also understand that it is a continuous challenge as long as the organization remains in business.

Keywords: Alignment, organizational resilience, robustness, agility, and integrity

INTRODUCTION

In business environment today, financial firms found themselves to become so complicated, uncertain as well as more volatile than before, as such today's strategy that yield enhanced performance might become obsolete as well as miss the set target overnight. More so, the 21st century organizations including the commercial banks are faced with increased vulnerability

because they are subject to more and unforeseeable risks due to globalization and rapid changes from the business environment that might hinder their ability to be successful (Oga & Evwierhurma, 2020).

Organizational resilience refers to the ability of an organization to withstand and adapt to changes, crises, and disruptions in the business environment. In recent years, there has been increasing attention to the role of organizational resilience in promoting invention and improving firm performance (Asare-Kyire et al., 2023). The capacity of resilient organizations to establish and uphold solid connections with important stakeholders, including customers, suppliers, and employees, is another factor.

On the other hand, management must create tomorrow through strategic management to maintain the organization as a “going concern” and for continuous improvements in the operations of the organization and its relevance in the marketplace. From the above notion, the researcher of this study pointed out that for successful implementation of strategic management it needs a holistic approach of an organization; especially, the roles of management bodies are prominent in such a way that they would be able to create an integrated approach and systematic evaluation of strategic management process that drive them to proactively take appropriate measure before failures come after (Girma, 2022).

With the unstable business environmental changes and intense business competition that we are facing, (exist) organizations today are required to reach certain standards by improving their performance to align with such great demands; otherwise, a lot of problems will emerge or surface, including running the risk (which ultimately could lead to shorting) down the firm or business (Umoh & Amah, 2013; Gabriel, 2015). Therefore, compliance to these changes relates to the firm or individual level which sees the human resource becoming the most determining factor to achieve the organizations goal/objectives. Achievement and sustaining competitive advantage in the marketplace through uninterrupted innovation and client patronage is an ever-abiding face up to many business organizations in Nigeria. Although there have been several studies examining the predictor; strategic innovation, however there is still a conceptual and contextual gap in that there is little empirical evidence that have explored or examined strategic innovation and organizational resilience of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was therefore to examine the relationship between alignment and organizational resilience of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

- i. Examine the relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the relationship between alignment and agility of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria.
- iii. Examine the relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

It is a pictorial representation of the assumed relationship among the study variables (Ahiauzu & Asawo, 2016). It reflects the researcher’s perceived understanding of the relationship of the interacting variables. A conceptual framework is a structure for supporting or enclosing something else, especially a skeletal support used as the basis for something being constructed. It is a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality.

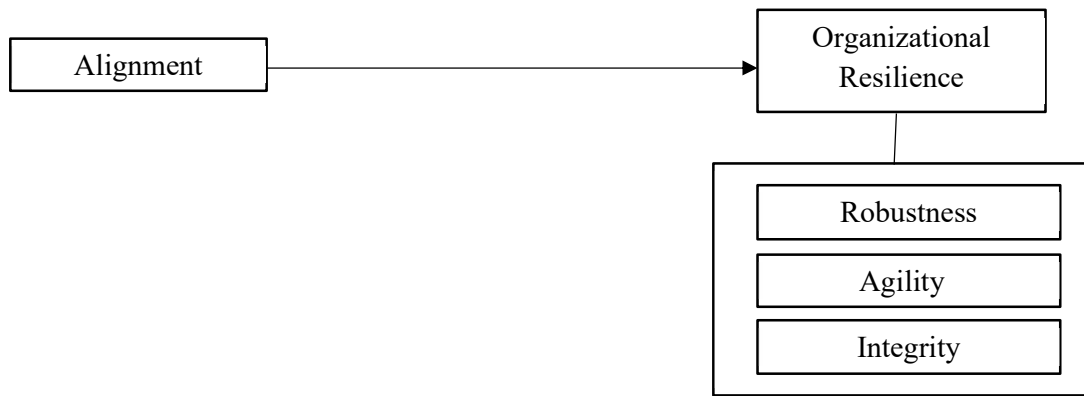


Figure 1: The relationship between Innovation and Organizational Resilience

Source: Desk Research (2025) – Predictor variable sourced from Palmar and Kaplan (2020); Criterion Variable measures sourced from Kantar and Say (2015)

Research Questions

In view of the objectives stated above, the following questions were used to guide the study.

- i. What is the relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between alignment and agility of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses for the study were stated in null form as follows.

- Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria.
- Ho2:** There is no significant relationship alignment and agility of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria.
- Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between s alignment and integrity of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resource Based Theory

The underpinning baseline theory for this study is the Resource Based Theory. The resource-based theory recognizes knowledge as a strategic resource of any firm (Grant, 1996; Hunt & Morgan, 1996; Teece, 1998). The capacity to create and utilize knowledge will enable small and medium enterprise to develop a sustainable competitive advantage since knowledge possesses the characteristics of heterogeneity, uniqueness, and immobility. In 1959, Penrose in his work espoused the theory and was subsequently published by Werner felt in 1984. The theory holds that resources available or acquired by an establishment or enterprise are the basic drivers of its performance or growth outcome. Therefore, it is the organization’s resources that give it competitive power and advantage (Prime & Butler, 2001; Hunt, 1991; Rowland, 2022).

According to Sandamaria (2018) ever since Penrose (1959) pioneering work firm growth has been one of the central themes in the strategic management research. Prior research has extensively explored different growth strategies companies can pursue as well as their relative advantages. Hence, the resource-based view of the firm starts from the concept that an organization's performance is determined by the resources it has at its disposal. The way these resources are used and configured enable the firm to perform and can provide a distinct competitive advantage in turbulent times. Hence, based on the fact that knowledge creates awareness or familiarity in different situations the theory is relevant to the study variables.

Conceptual Review

Alignment

Alignment is part of strategic innovation. The concept of strategic alignment is rooted in the contingency theory in management. Its basic premise is that the balance between the organization's strategy and its environmental context has significant impacts on performance. strategic alignment can be defined as the extent of knowledge of major decision-makers regarding the priorities and investment of information technology outsourcing and the ability to activate this awareness by making successful outsourcing decisions. Strategic alignment is viewed as a mixture of characteristics of the organizational strategy adopted by companies which indicates to test the strategic directions nature and strategies of information technology used in a company (Tawaha, 2015; Haraisa, 2022). Strategic alignment refers to the harmonization of an organization's objectives, processes, and resources with its strategic goals.

Measures of Organizational Resilience

Robustness

Robustness of a system as its ability to remain working on a stable and high performance level despite the given risks experienced while working (Adiele & Eketu, 2023). Robustness can be defined as the ability of a scheme towards recovering quickly from uncertainty or changes that affected the environment of business. In other words, it is the ability of a scheme or organization towards recovering quickly from environmental changes is what is referred or known as its robustness (Woods, 2015). A scheme's anti-fragility, as described by Taleb (2012), is its ability towards become stronger within the face of adversity. The robustness concept has been adopted in system biology, control theory, engineering, computer science, statistics, supply chain management, and many other scientific disciplines. Robustness examines how systems can remain stable in the face of uncertainties. In the management literature, robustness is predominantly examined in the fields of risk management and business continuity management (Durach et al., 2015).

Agility

Organizational agility represents a collective pattern of behavior, which has to be developed and regularly updated by the actors in the organization. Liang et al. (2017) stated that agility has different variety of sense and capabilities to respond when around clients, competitors, and economic uplift. More so, agility can also been viewed as a positioning, tactics, and organize fresh company methods to acquire early opportunities in shifting circumstances. Agility refers to the ability of thrive and advance in the variable and an environment that is mostly unpredictable.

Integrity

Integrity can be seen as the quality of acting in accordance or harmony with relevant moral values, norms, and rules, a choice based partly on some of the arguments already put forward.

A concrete illustration, however, might help to clarify the choice. More so, integrity is geared towards leadership and it is usually associated as the leader which would cultivate some values of integrity in themselves to effectively perform their duties which are aligned to deontological ethics (Zahari et al., 2021).

Empirical Review

A study conducted by Nwabuatu (2024) titled: Strategic alignment and organizational resilience in manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted cross sectional research design. The target population of the study comprised of all manufacturing firms in Rivers State (Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN, 2023). Due to challenge in reaching all firms, the accessible population of ten (10) manufacturing firms were investigated which were functional at the time of this study. Thus, the population of this study consists of ten (10) manufacturing firms in Rivers State. In terms of unit of analysis, the study employed two hundred and sixty-six (266) respondents that made up managers, supervisors, and employees in the ten (10) manufacturing firms. A sample size of 164 was determined from the population using Taro Yamane's formula. 164 copies of questionnaire were distributed out of which 152 copies were used for data analysis. The Spearman's Rank Order correlation Coefficient was adopted in data analysis. The result indicated that strategic alignment relate with organisational resilience of manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between strategic alignment and organisational resilience of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Areri et al. (2020) conducted a study titled: Strategic Innovation and growth of public universities in Kenya. The design that was adopted for this study was cross-sectional survey design. The study was based on descriptive research design. Census survey was used to select all public universities and a purposive sampling was used to select the Finance officer and Registrar Administration, of all public universities in Kenya. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study adopted market orientation and product innovation as the dimensions of strategic innovation. Study findings reveal that Marketing Innovation ($\beta = 0.627$, $p < 0.05$), and product innovation ($\beta = 0.334$, $p < 0.05$) had significant effect on growth of public universities. It was established and concluded that there existed a positive relationship between strategic innovation and growth of public universities in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

The study was a correlational study as it focused on assessing the relationship between alignment and organizational resilience and also establishes its operations in South-South, Nigeria. Therefore, the population of the study comprised of twenty-two (22) commercial banks in South-South Nigeria as at February, 2025, using the consensus sampling method. However, five (5) senior managers relevant to the proposed study in each of the commercial banks represented as respondents. This includes the following: Head of Strategy/Chief, Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Risk Officer, Head of Human Capital, Head of Administration and Head of IT/E-Business. The study utilized a well-structured questionnaire, designed in Likert five-point scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree as the instrument used in collecting primary data from the respondent, its reliability would be ascertained through Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient with a threshold of 0.70. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the dimensions of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variables as well as to test the hypotheses which was stated in the null form with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Bivariate Data Analysis

The secondary data analysis employed the use of bivariate inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation tool which was used at a 95% confidence level. Specifically, the tests covered hypotheses H₀₁ to H₀₃ which were bivariate at all, stated in the null manner. The study relied on the Pearson Product Moment Correlation tool to carry out the analysis thus the probability criterion of 0.05 significance level was adopted for accepting the null hypotheses at (P> 0.05) or rejecting the hypotheses at (P<0.05).

Alignment and Organizational Resilience

Table 1 shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for alignment and measures of organizational resilience. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes us able to answer our research question and generalize our findings to the study population.

Table 1: Correlations for Alignment and Measures of Organizational Resilience

		Alignment	Robustness	Agility	Integrity
Alignment	Pearson Correlation	1	.805**	.827**	.698**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	103	103	103	103
Robustness	Pearson Correlation	.805**	1	.945**	.871**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	103	103	103	103
Agility	Pearson Correlation	.827**	.945**	1	.799**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	103	103	103	103
Integrity	Pearson Correlation	.698**	.871**	.799**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	103	103	103	103

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

Research Questions 1-3: What is the relationship between alignment and organizational resilience of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria?

Table 1 showed the correlation coefficient between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria using Pearson Product Moment correlation (r) techniques. From the analysis the result showed the correlation coefficient of $r = 0.805$ which show the direction and strength of this relationship. This value implies a strong relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria. The direction of the relationship indicates that the relationship is positive, implying that an increase in robustness of the organisation was as a result of the presence of strategic alignment implementation of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria. Therefore, there is a very strong and positive relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Secondly, Table 1 also showed the correlation coefficient between alignment and agility of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria using Pearson Product Moment correlation (r) techniques. From the analysis the result showed the correlation coefficient of $r = 0.827$ which show the direction and strength of this relationship. This value implies a very strong relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

The direction of the relationship indicates that the relationship is positive, implying that an increase in agility of the organisation was as a result of the presence of strategic alignment implementation of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria. Therefore, there is a very strong and positive relationship between alignment and agility of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Finally, table 1 revealed also the correlation coefficient between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria using Pearson Product Moment correlation (r) techniques. From the analysis the result showed the correlation coefficient of $r = 0.698$ which show the direction and strength of this relationship. This value implies a strong relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria. The direction of the relationship indicates that the relationship is positive, implying that an increase in integrity of the organisation was as a result of the presence of strategic alignment implementation of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria. Therefore, there is a very strong and positive relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Therefore to enable us accept or reject hypotheses **HO₁**, **HO₂** and **HO₃** as well as generalize our findings to the study population the p- value was used as shown in table 1

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Similarly displayed in the table 1 is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtain from table 1.1, the tests of significance shows that the relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria is significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between alignment and robustness of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between alignment and agility of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Similarly displayed in the table 1 is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtain from table 1.1, the tests of significance shows that the relationship between alignment and agility of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria is significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship alignment and agility of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Similarly displayed in the table 1 is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtain from table 1.1, the tests of significance shows that the relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria is significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between alignment and integrity of commercial banks in south-south, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from first, second and third hypotheses sought to examine the relationship Alignment and Organizational Resilience. Hence it was hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between Alignment and Organizational Resilience. However, these hypotheses were tested using the Pearson's product moment correlation technique. Data analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between alignment and the measures of organizational resilience. However, this study is in agreement with the study conducted by Nwabuatu (2024) titled: Strategic alignment and organizational resilience in manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study made use of the Spearman's Rank Order correlation Coefficient was adopted in data analysis. The result indicated that strategic alignment relate with organisational resilience of manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between strategic alignment and organisational resilience of manufacturing firms in Rivers State.

Secondly, the outcome of this study is also in line with the study conducted by Areri et al. (2020) Strategic Innovation and growth of public universities in Kenya. The design that was adopted for this study was cross-sectional survey design. The study was based on descriptive research design. Census survey was used to select all public universities and a purposive sampling was used to select the Finance officer and Registrar Administration, of all public universities in Kenya.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that strategic innovation significantly influences organizational resilience of commercial banks in South-South, Nigeria. With respect to alignment, it is often used with focus on people or people management and leadership, it also demonstrate whether or not the people are involved in either production or services, involved in the strategic planning and decision-making of the organization. However, the improvement of business performance is a strategic alignment between the direction of the organization, the executive sector and operations.

Based on the findings regarding alignment as part of strategic innovation, the following recommendations are proposed; (1) Management of Commercial Banks in South-South Nigeria, should adopt alignment and people management holistically, since, it addresses issues to explore the role and interaction between organizational structures, socio-ideological control and confirms the essential role of people management in assurance of strategic alignment. (2) Management of Commercial Banks in South-south, Nigeria, should develop methods or ways of responding to uncertainty and the leaders should champion this course. However, managers should also understand that it is a continuous challenge as long as the organization remains in business.

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