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MANAGERIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY: A THEORETICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT
This paper investigated the managerial skills development and organizational agility: A theoretical review. The study built its baseline theory on resource base theory and institutional theory. Several relevant literatures were reviewed, and finding revealed among others that, continuous improvement add value to individual, organization and nation's life. As such it then recommended that efforts should be put in place to enable full development of managerial skill in the organization through the provision of improvement friendly environment and support programs that will help in turning innovative ideas into reality.

Keywords: Managerial Skill Development, Organizational Agility, Theory, Management.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations are not the tangible buildings or the pieces of equipment we see. Organizations are indeed the people who interact to accomplish shared goals or objectives. This organization cannot stay at test of time, if there are no good strategies to manage it, in order for the organization to survival the market and also sustain. The survivability and sustainability as a result of the managerial competences, management knowledge and capability of the management. Harry, et al, (2020), opined that the organization that has good resources capability are capable to survival and sustain as well as gain competitive advantage. Barney, (1991), classified the resources as a bundle of assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information and knowledge. Hence, in order to survival and sustain the market, there must a continuous improvement of the managerial skills. Moreover, several organizations' collapse as a result of inadequate corporate strategic implementation such as enhancing managerial capability as well as managerial skill development of certain statutory processes in the organizations, (Harry, et al, 2020). They furthermore, explained this could be as a result of management inefficiency in policies formation and implementation. However, lack of good organizational culture will have no course of achieving technical skill development, human skill development, conceptual skill development, etc. these forms the dimension of the Managerial skill development.

The term managerial skill development is a planned and systematic effort to improve, increase and enhance managerial competences, either in an individual manager or in a group of managers (Yahaya, 2009). In addition to the ever-changing external environment in which organization operates, a significant influence on their performance is given by the managers. The manager decisively influences the performance of the organization through the level of his knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitude. Organization success or growth depends largely on the level of knowledge and experience of the manager, but their managerial skills are just as important. Over time, there have been many concerns about identifying the managerial skills that contribute to the development of successful organizations. These skills include, the technical skill, conceptual skills, human relation skills and informative skill development, (Yahaya, 2009).

On the other hand, organizational agility helps organizations to quickly respond to situations that cannot be predicted through the effective use organizational resources. Hence, organizational agility refers to the organizational ability to quickly respond and maintain compatibility with its environment, (Gabriel, et al, 2020). The ever-changing business environment and signals transmitted by the global organizations have contributed greatly to the dynamism of organizations. Organizations constantly strive to achieve sustainable growth which brings in the realization of the set goals through technological advancement and innovation as factors for organizational performance. The organizational performance is helped by the agility of the human resource personnel through the way they conduct business operations, (Bassellier, 2009). Ciborra, (2011), in his work opined that, this is reason why organization that are willing to survival and sustain, hence gain competitive advantage invest so much on their human resources in order to equip them against difficult time with competent skill and knowledge required. Thus, this continuous striving attributed to the holistic system development in order to obtain contemporary measures of operation that will improve competitive advantage. The lack of this leads to the collapsed as a result of, manager's deficiencies or inability to adopt the current or new developing skill in managing modern organization due to lack of organizations embracing of new technology, budget constrain to fund training, no incentive to knowledgeable managers, inadequate on job

satisfactions, gender inequality and or discrimination etc. that can leads propagated certain ripple effects in the a nation's economy in terms of loss of jobs by workers which in turn increases unemployment rate and criminality in the society. The fundamental target of the study is to inspect the effect of managerial skill development and organizational agility.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The study identifies two (2) variables: Predictor Variable (Managerial Skill Development) with its dimension as follows: technical skill development, human skill development and conceptual skill development. And the Criterion Variable (Organizational Agility) with its measures flexibility organizational speed, proactiveness, product and service quality, innovativeness, profitability and responsiveness. But for the purpose of this study, flexibility and responsiveness were used as measure.

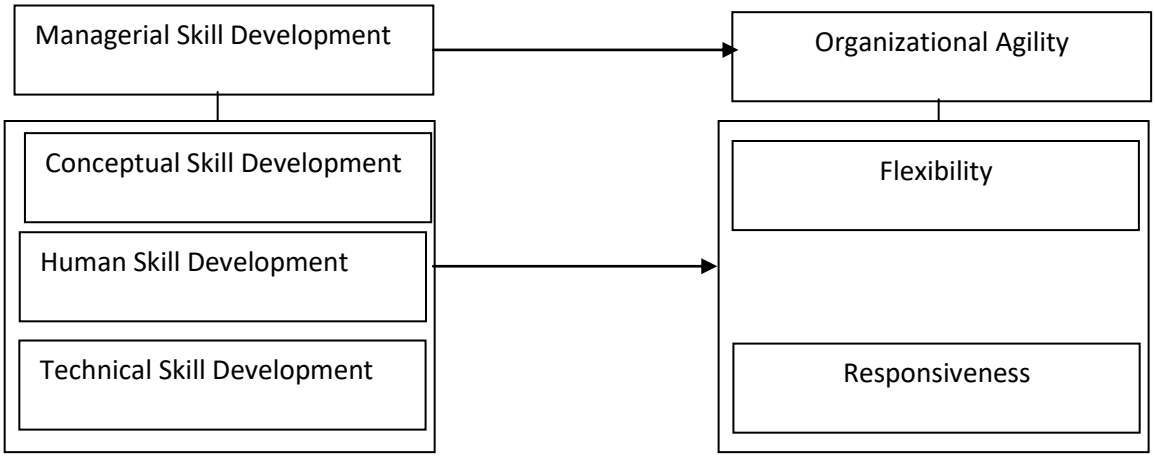


Fig 1.1: Conceptual Framework of Managerial Skill Development and Organizational Agility

Source: Researcher Desk (2022).Adopted from Katz, (1974); Goldman, et al, 1995; Yusuf, et al, 1999; Sharifi et al., 2001).

Review of Related Literature

Baseline Theory

This study is built on the resource based theory and institutional theory. This is considered as adequate in addressing the relationship between managerial skill development and organizational agility in this study. Resources based theory (RBT) developed by Barney (1991). RBT states that any organizations that have quality managers (better resources capability), they would have more competitive advantage, (Acedo et al., 2006). Hence, any organization that has better conceptual skilled, human skill, technical skill and informative skilled managers are capable to earn competitive advantage as well as agility. On the other hand, institutional theory developed by sociologists Meyer, et al (1977). The theory states that organizations respond to institutional and contextual pressures within their environment (Zucker 1987). And this can be adequately done through quality managerial skill

Concept of Managerial Skill Development

In recent years the activities of manager has changed considerably because the economic and technological context in which organization is conducted has changed beyond recognition.

Managerial skill development is made up of three word; first managerial which derived from the management or manager; it is the process of designing and maintaining an enabling work-place in which people (workers) working together, efficiency to accomplish the targeted objectives of the organization, (Koontz, et al, 2006). It was further expanded that the manager's aim is to create surplus (productivity) effectiveness and efficiency through people. Secondly skill; is the ability needed to carry out the managerial processes necessary to obtain efficient results in the organization, (Manaila, 2014). Finally, development; referred to the process of improving.

Managerial skill then refers to the ability to plan, control, organize and direct the operations of an organization for the purpose of achieving the targeted objective set by the organization, (Okoye, 2007). Furthermore, managerial skill means the capabilities needed for effective and efficient planning, staffing, organizing, coordinating, controlling and decision-making, (Fullan, 2005) .

Hence, it is the ability needed accomplish managerial tasks. Therefore managerial skill development is the continuous improvement of manager's knowledge in order to carry out the managerial functions effectively and efficiency. These managerial functions include; planning, organizing, directing and controlling.

Managers often encounter diverse challenges in realization of its objectives, this challenges ranging from inadequate knowledge in basic science and technology, inadequate credit facilities, inadequate data, inadequate support programs, high rate of corruption, poor infrastructural facilities, insecurity, lack or limitations to technology and other numerous impediments. This challenge gets manager out of their way for continue improvement of their skill. Although managers needed several individual skills as well as managerial skills that is essential to successfully management, in order to accomplish the organizational objectives. For the purpose of this study, we will adopt the Katz, (1974) categories of the managerial skill, these are;

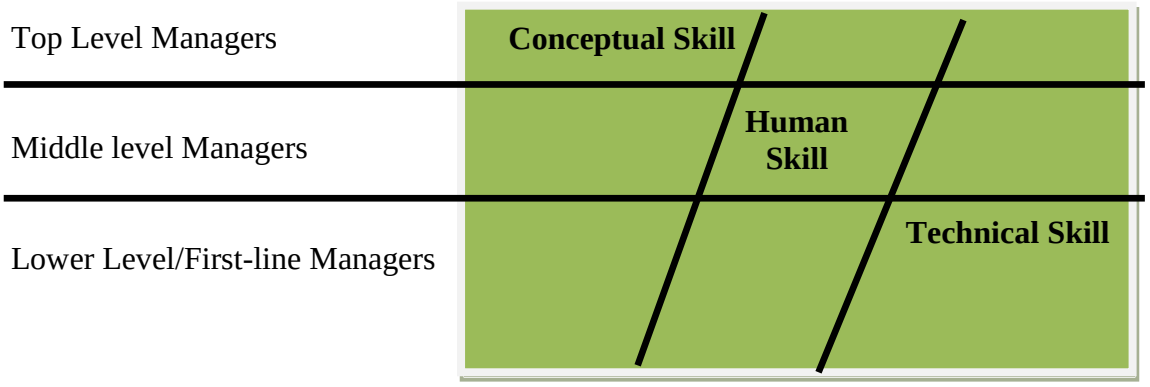


Fig. 2: Managerial Skill and Levels of Management

Conceptual Skill Development

The conceptual skill also known as the decision skill. The Katz, (1974), model indicates that, this skill is concerned with the top management or the strategic managers. It is the ability to analyze and diagnose a situation and to distinguish between cause and effect, (Tamunomiebi, 2005). He further explained that managers needed the mental capability to gull on how the organization fit together and make policies towards them. Hence, managers on this level

possess the capacity to be creative, innovative, idea generation, think analytically and interpret and apply abstract theories. Conceptual skills depend on the managers' ability of abstracting, they allow them to analyze the organization as a whole, understand the cause effect relationships in the organization, and think strategically, (Simionescu, et al, 2002). On the other hands, this skill enables managers to break down the problem into several smaller components, identify the connection among the parts, and to be recognizing the implications of any one problem for another. This skill can initially acquire through formal education, then continuous improvement through further training, retraining and job experience. This level of management enables an organization to have the need advantage over its rival organizations or competitors.

Human Skill Development

The human skill also known as the interpersonal skill. This refer to the managers abilities to create a room for good contacts and maintain through the upward (superiors), downward (subordinates), lateral (other managers) communication system, even with people outside the organization, (Katz, 1974). Modern organizational work-place is made up of different cultural background, age, religion, level of education, gender, and so on and so forth. Human skill can also been seen as the ability in which the manager to get along with diverse types of people at the workplace, and to be able to exchange information with them. Tamunomiebi, (2005), opined that, human skill could be referring to as the ability to understand, communicate, coordinate, motivate, and control the behaviour of other people and the team. He further states that's human skill can be learnt in education, but training, retraining and practical experience on the job it can be developed. This is to say that, human skill is the ability to manage conflict, motivating people, support communication, influencing people at the workplace, gaining power and influence.

Munirat et al, (2018), study "the organization conflict and industrial harmony: a synthesis of literature." The study concluded that for industrial harmony to be achieved, organizations need to consider some conflict strategy as a tool, this enhance productivity.

Technical Skill Development

This is third and the last level of the skill on the managerial skill figure. It is concerned with the lower level or first line managers. It is the capability to perform a specialized task based on certain, procedures, methods, techniques or process. Technical skill is the skill necessary to accomplish specialized activities such as engineering, physician and an accountant etc. based on knowledge and techniques required to perform at the organizational accepted level, (Tamunomiebi, 2005). It can learn in school, but training and retraining as well as practical experience enables the individual to development/improves.

Concept of Organizational Agility

Organizations in recent time have been after the methods or strategies to compete with their competitors as well as gaining competitive advantages over its rivals. The agility strategy is one of the effective and efficient strategy that organization uses in this modern ever-changing business environment. The concept of agility is a complex and multidimensional. Several researchers have tried in attempt to unify its definition and concept, but this had become a challenge for these researchers. Some perceived it as agility to be enablers and capabilities that help organization as to achieve agility, (Yusuf et al., 1999; Sharifi, et al., 2001; Jackson, et al, 2003; Lin et al., 2006; Ren et al., 2009; Eshlaghy et al., 2010; Cai, 2013). Meanwhile, some perceived agility as a practice for organizational daily operations, (Goldman et al, 1995; Sherehiy et al, 2007; Gehani, 2010; Charbonnier-Voirin, 2011). Furthermore, some

researchers perceived organizational agility as on how an organization been able to interact with its dynamic and ever-changing business environment, (Wright, et al, 1998; Dyer, et al, 2003; Dove, 2005; Holsapple, et al, 2008; Nijssen, et al, 2012; Singh, et al, 2013).

The early researchers defined agility as the ability to respond to uncertainty time in the market, (Goldman, et al, 1995; Yusuf, et al, 1999; and Sharifi, et al, 2001). An organization is said to be agile when it combine the strategies such as flexibility, speed and compatibility in order to gain competitive advantage. In buttressing, Yusuf et al. (1999) argued that organizational agility level is influenced ranging from the organizational speed, proactiveness, flexibility, product and service quality, innovativeness and profitability in order to have niche over competitors. Organizational agility is the organizational ability to deal with unpredicted changes in the business environment through speed and innovative responses that will enable the organization with the inch over rival. As speed and innovativeness are the key characteristics of organizational agility, (Lu, et al, 2011). Organizational agility is the ability of organizations to quickly respond and maintain compatibility with its business environment. The characteristics of the definition entail speed, competence, flexibility and responsiveness.

Responsiveness

Organizational responsiveness refers to the tendency of the organization to act upon based on the information generated from the market, (Hult, et al. 2005). This information is interpreted by the organizational management, in accordance with the current happenings in ever-changing business environment. Thomas, et al, (1993), regards information utilization in a view that organization's action is shaped on the awareness and quick action of managers to their environments and translate those views into strategic choice. Hence, the managerial interpretations of information and decision making is influenced by the awareness and action of the manager on the basis of the current happening of the environment or what is perceived of around the business environment, (Kaplan 2008).

Table 1.1: Tamunomiebi, et al, (2020), suggested that organizational responsiveness is of two-stage information utilization process. These are as follows; conceptual responsiveness and instrumental responsiveness.

S/N	Conceptual Responsiveness	Instrumental Responsiveness
1	Shapes managers‘ orientation	Focus in the market orientation
2	Market information is mainly used indirectly to challenge traditional assumptions and long-held representations of the market, in order, to envision new approaches to the market, (Cillo, et al., 2010),	Direct application of market information to match the evolving needs (Moorman, 1995). In also, Firm quickly responds to market information in the design and implementation of marketing strategies, (Kohli, 1993).

Flexibility

The modern business environment openness and paradigms swift reaction to the current changes underpin practically all modern concepts of management. Of which flexibility is one of it. Flexibility indicates the firm capability to quickly respond to a turbulence environment through innovation, services and operations, based on a culture of learning and renewal (Lundvall, 1992). Koste, et al., (1999), suggest that, organization should always consider the financial area, production, market, information and strategic management. According to Golden, et al., (2000), flexibility should be examined in four dimensions.

i. Scope: - Refers to the level of adaptation of particular elements of the organization to change in the environment.
ii. Time: - Refers to time the organization needs to response to occurring changes.
iii. Purposefulness: - Refers to the pertinent choice of responding to current changes.
iv. Impact Area: – Refers to the selection of affected of the organization with respect to interior or attempting to have an impact on the external environment.

Relationship between Managerial Skill Development and Organizational Agility

Organizational agility is the as firm's capacity to identify the sudden changes in the business environment and reconfigure accordingly. The capacity to identify the sudden changes in the business environment refers to the know-how, experience, and knowledge of the organization and its decision makers. Research conducted by Rasca (cited by Roseti in 2018) in 2006 and 2016, based on questionnaires and interviews, applied to representative samples of entrepreneurs with one or more businesses, which had over five years of seniority. The studies reveals that managerial skills helped them with; i) the ability to identify and exploit the right opportunities, ii) develop their businesses, iii) overcome uncertain situation time, iv) the capacity to be visionary and to influence the others, v) to develop mutual trust based on relationship, vi) and to gain a competitive advantage.

Hilal, et al., (2021), investigates the effect of exercise and managerial skills on principal performance. The study reveals that the more intense the principal attends training and has a deep understanding of training material, the higher the principal organizational skills are. The higher the principal managerial skills are, the higher the quality of the principal performance is, which in turn increases the rate of the school. Thus, Whetten, (2011), opined that the transformation of theoretical competences in managerial skills is fundamental related to behavioural practice and conceptual learning. Behavioural practice without the necessary conceptual learning ignores the requirement for flexibility and responsiveness to different situations.

Rangchian et al. (2015) investigated the effect of managerial skills on pharmacy performance, and their results reveals that managerial skills can significantly influence a organizational performance via three measures: client satisfaction, employee satisfaction and financial outcome.

FINDINGS

This study discovers the following findings

i. Technical skill development enhances organizational agility, as it is the skill necessary to accomplish specialized activities.
ii. Human skill development improves organizational agility. It is the ability to manage conflict.
iii. Conceptual skill development enables organizational agility. It helps an individual's to be creative, innovative, idea generation, think analytically and interpret and apply abstract theories. Hence, Managers create new product and services to meet the organizational goal.
iv. Managerial skill development positively interacts with organizational agility. It enables effective communication that can be of help to organization's growth, the development of an organization depends on the efficacy and robustness of its managerial activities.

Conclusion

The study addressed by this paper centered on the role managerial skill development in the organizational agility. The study herein show support for the need for managerial skill development in the functionality and operations of the organization as a way of enhancing its conceptual and instrumental organizational agility and its measures such as responsiveness and flexibility. As such concludes that the collective managerial skills development such as conceptual skills development , human skills development, and technical skills development applied in the organizational daily activities go a long way in ensuring the agility of an organization, and as well gives the organization a competitive edge. Additionally, the continuous improvement adds value to individual and nation's life. Organizations that are empathetic and responsive tend to create individualized service to meet the peculiar desire of customers they serve and it makes the customer feels valued and appreciated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

i. Organization management should give room and the required facilities to managers in order to develop their managerial skills. This will enable managers acquire technical skills, human skill and the conceptual skill, and returns bring about peaceful work environment, identify and exploit business opportunities.
ii. Organizational managers should strive to develop their managerial skill in order to add value to them as well as to the organization.
iii. Quality should be the hall marks of every social enterprise.
iv. The infrastructure needed to enhance the speedy growth and development of managers should be provided. This will improve, managerial skills development, generate employment opportunities, poverty reduction and economic empowerment to the organization and the nation at large.
v. Efforts should be put in place to enable full development of managerial skill in the organization through the provision of improvement friendly environment and support programs that will help in turning innovative ideas into reality.
vi. Managers should be encouraged and sponsored to undertake research on managerial skills as an individual or as a team in order to enhance managerial capability.

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