THE ROLE OF TRUST IN THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS: AN EMPIRICAL DIMENSION TO TRUST DEVELOPMENT IN THE STRATEGY MANAGEMENT PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

In previous strategic management research, little attention was paid to the importance of trust in the strategic management process. Specifically, the goal of this study is to examine the role of trust in the strategic management. Prior literature was reviewed in order to deepen the existing understanding of trust in the strategic management process, and then trust in the strategic management process was explored through an in-depth textual evaluation of literature. The research was carried out using an ethnographic approach of qualitative research. The importance of taking into account trust growth in strategy work is emphasized in this study. In the study, trust was a factor in the strategic decisions made by the senior management team. The paper confirmed the existence of a relationship between trust and the implementation of the strategic management procedure, and lead to more efficiency, innovation, and involvement with the strategy in question. Conclusively, the researchers combined these narrower themes into two overarching perspectives, an organizational and a social-psychological response, and we related these to the literature, thus providing "crux of analysis in the study and invoking broader interpretations of the meaning of the case.

Keywords: Trust, strategic management, strategy formulation, strategic choices, strategy implementation

INTRODUCTION

Firms' acquisition of competitive advantage in their chosen markets requires a sound strategic management process and strategy that are consistent with their strategic choices and actions. The implementation such strategic management processes and strategies are however hinged on trust among organizational members engaged in the routine operations of the firm. In order to effectively develop and review business plans and strategies in the face of changing operating conditions, such as challenging competitive circumstances and digitization, more proactive processes must are required.

The city of Port Harcourt is home to more than 50 manufacturing companies, each of which has gained substantial market share over the decades. This makes the industry very competitive. In this investigation of the role of trust as an important component of the strategic management

process, the emphasis is on induction rather than deduction. In collecting data from the participants, it was intended to produce information on the strategy work that was being conducted. Interestingly, the importance of trust in the participatory strategy process, which engaged a diverse range of actors and partners, was highlighted as a high point.

Through an examination of the strategy process and the application of the trust development context, this study demonstrates how trust grows in a close contract-based collaboration. Our study is based on the real-life experiences of a top manager and looks at how trust grows in the strategic management process through participatory social processes. Our research is particularly interested in how trust grows during the three stages of the strategic management process and how this results in a competitive advantage for the organization. In spite of the fact that strategy and its primary processes have been extensively researched in management literature, only a few studies have focused on the importance of trust with the exception of (Malkamäki *et al.,* 2019). The levels of the strategic management process are tied together by trust. Bahrami and Habib (2012) said that other strategy-relevant studies have said that additional studies are needed on embodied strategy practices such as emotions and motives, and on strategy-making technology such as computer-assisted decision-making. The impact and importance of top management and high-ranking executives in the implementation of strategy have also been highlighted in previous studies (Sooducho-Pelc, 2017). Organizations' collective strategy work, on the other hand, necessitates additional investigation. The goal of this study is to contribute to knowledge by showing how trust works and what it does in the strategic management process.

The study focuses on describing the role of trust development in the strategic management process. The researchers describe the phenomenon of the study in relation to business enterprise. The cognition-based and affect-based trust-building parts of interaction and events for practitioners involved in the strategic management process are explored. There are two types of trustworthiness that are important to this study: trustworthiness that is based on cognition and trustworthiness that is based on emotions.

Strategy and Strategic Management
The direction and breadth of an organization's operations over the long term are defined by its strategy. Strategic management according to Johnson *et al.* (2008), may be divided into three phases: recognizing the strategic position of the company; making strategic choices for the future; and putting the strategy into action. The process of developing a strategy comprises planning, in which the emphasis is on diagnosing the strategic position and developing guiding policies. The actions conducted in order to fulfill the goals set forth in the plan are referred to as implementation. However, the parts of strategic management do not happen sequentially. Instead, they are all connected and give each other information (Johnson *et al.,* 2008).

The execution stage is when the majority of the strategic management shortcomings can be found. Even when a plan is successfully developed, the implementation phase of the strategic management process (Sooducho-Pelc, 2017) is a difficult period to navigate. The willingness of diverse organizational members to support a new strategic initiative is a critical factor in determining whether the initiative will be successful. So, strategy is a collection of actions made by members of an organization (Mantere, 2013), which is referred to as collective strategy work. Organizational strategy has generally been regarded as a duty for senior executives, who have a broader perspective on the actions than lower-level employees. When stakeholders are given

more power, they bring different values to the table, which makes things more difficult (Abdallah & Langley, 2014).

The Nature and Dynamics of Trust Relationship
There has been a steady increase in interest among scholars in the function of trust in organizational management (Malkamäki, 2017; Ikonen, 2013; Jones & George, 2013). It is widely acknowledged in organizational studies literatures that trust within and across organizations is both a delicate subject and a challenging phenomenon to analyze (Möllering, 2012). Scholars define trust and trustworthiness as a state of mind rather than a physical attribute (Ikonen, 2013). According to Jagd and Fuglsang (2016), research into trust as a process and practice leads to the development of an alternative paradigm in which trust is regarded as being tied to people's presence and participation in practice. The term "trust" is defined by Ikonen (2013) as "the degree to which a person is confident in, and prepared to act on the basis of, another's words, actions, and decisions." Ikonen (2013) defines two aspects of trustworthiness as cognition-based trustworthiness and affect-based trustworthiness. Based on these aspects, the strategic management process looks at the role of trust in strategy formulation, strategic choices, and strategy implementation.

There are many different aspects of trust and trustworthiness to consider. In the opinion of Hampton *et al*. (2011), three components are considered to be important determinants of trust. Hampton et al. (1995) say that a person or organization is considered trustworthy based on how they function in terms of skill, generosity, and integrity. A management skill is a certain attribute or ability that an executive should possess in order to fulfill specific tasks in an organization. They include the capacity to perform executive duties while avoiding crisis situations and promptly solving problems when they occur. Through learning and experience, management skills can be developed. The skills enable the manager to relate to coworkers and deal effectively with subordinates, allowing for smooth flow of activities in the organization (Ikonen, 2013).

When we think of generosity in organization, our thoughts automatically drift to gifts of money or charity. In the context of leadership, there are other gifts that do not have a monetary value but whose value is beyond price. These include giving someone a chance; giving someone the benefit of the doubt; and giving others a reason to want to work for or under you. It entails giving others latitude, permission to make mistakes, and all the information they need to do the job. It is giving them the authority that goes with responsibility, it is giving them due credit for their ideas. In a nutshell, all of these translate to generosity of spirit, a quality we admire in trusted leaders.

It is hard to quantify exactly how important trust is for a business. For business owners, a lack of trust is an expense. It may take years for an executive to earn the trust of their employees, but only moments to lose. Without trust, transactions cannot occur, influence is destroyed, leaders lose teams and salespeople lose sales. The list goes on. Trust and relationships in strategic management, are more than money, and are the currency of business.

According to Gillespie and Dietz (2009), organizational trustworthiness is associated with benevolence, which refers to perceived organizational action that stakeholders interpret as reflecting genuine care and concern for the organization's well-being. When it comes to organizational procedures, integrity encompasses characteristics such as fairness, justice, and

consistency that stakeholders consider acceptable (Hampton *et al*., 2011). The model developed by Hampton *et al*. (2011) is based on the need to understand how parties process information about the trustworthiness of others in order to choose how much risk to take with them. As a result, this model is a way to think about reliability (Bayo & Kayii, 2020).

Scholars distinguish between cognitive and affective elements of trust (Ikonen (2013), and between distinct trust bases (Jones & George, 2013). Trust built on relationships has an emotional foundation, while trust built on character has a cognitive foundation (Bayo & Kayii, 2020). Cognitive-based trust refers to logical knowledge-based expectations about the partner's past performance, behavior, and goals on the basis of which predictions of future performance can be made (Bayo & Kayii, 2020). Affect-based trust is a reflection of the feelings that people have for others. It encompasses an individual's perception of competence, emotions of safety and caring, a sense of autonomy and empowerment, consistency and justice in social relationships, and the alignment of an individual's values with the organization's values (Savolainen, 2014).

McEvily and Tortoriello (2011) stressed that trust should not be categorized as either cognitive trust or affective, but rather in a hybrid form in which both types grow in tandem as part of a continuous process. The multidimensional nature of trust, as well as the factors that influence motivation and cognitive processes and conditions, is supported by scholars (Sloan & Oliver, 2013). Sloan and Oliver (2013) found that important emotional events can act as turning points in the process of building trust in a relationship, and that this can turn bad feelings into good ones.

In addition, trust is understood to be both a relational and an institutional phenomenon. Over time, through interactions between a trustor and a trustee, relational trust develops. In order to communicate, face-to-face contact must be maintained on a consistent basis, which is not always feasible in the business world (Bachmann, 2011). Trust in a non-personalized institutional setting is critical in today's information technology-driven business environment (Bachmann, 2011). According to Bachmann (2011), institutional trust in individuals is represented by their confidence in the success of the organization as well as their confidence in the positions and functions of organizational actors and teams. As a result, the sense of role-based trust in practitioners grows (Amachule, 2012).

Strategy Formulation
Strategic plans in the manufacturing sector are currently being processed using a new operational model, and there are currently a greater number of individuals than ever before working on the strategy. In contrast to earlier iterations of the planning process, the current one involves the participation of hundreds of participants, the principal players in the manufacturing organization, and the managers and CEOs as active strategy makers. The top management emphasized that this has been a "big change" because the involvement of people in the strategy planning phase has contributed to making strategies more tangible.

In actuality, different business units and chains in organizations have their own unique strategies that they develop and implement. Manufacturing firms' corporate strategy provides foundation for industry-specific strategies, while chain-specific plans are still in the process of being

established within individual industries. Concurrently, the strategies have undergone an evolution toward more sophistication. The CEOs explain what happened in the following way:

These days, we involve a larger number of people in the planning and work of the strategy. To begin with, we settled on a management level that is more general and expansive. Next, we make field-level strategies for different industries. We come up with plans for every chain when we are inside the fields. We make plans for the most important aspects of these functions. The number of people participating in the strategy planning and activities has greatly expanded, and there are now several hundred, or perhaps indirectly, some thousand, people involved. In any event, we have several hundred people actively contributing to our approach to strategy formulation. This is a significant departure from past stages, as it has helped to make the strategies more tangible as a result of its contribution. In addition to this, the fact that this is a process makes people more committed to the cause. People enjoy thinking about how their strategies will work. It takes a lot of training and certain tools to be able to assist people through the process of how they may participate in the strategy development process. Involving people in the planning of the strategy involves both of these things.

Work on the strategy was performed at each of the many levels of the company by a large number of individuals, including members of the manufacturing management team and professionals from other levels of the business. In order to participate in the debate of the strategy, organizational actors were solicited for their participation on the basis of their job description and the expertise they bring to the table. According to the interview, they experienced a sense of inclusivity in the job, and they committed to putting the strategy into action. Because of this, the approach simultaneously becomes more concrete and intelligible from the point of view of the work that needs to be done. To get individuals involved in the creation of the strategy required a significant amount of training, and we needed specialized tools to help guide people as they participated in the planning process. As a result of training, they knew more about what strategy meant in their daily work, and they had more faith and trust in the management of the manufacturing firms to run the organization well.

The act of collectively formulating a strategy opens the door to novel and risky options in the construction of that plan. The development of trust between partners brings about a shift in mentality, which in turn brings about a tradition of taking in information and paying attention. Therefore, the most important topics are concentrated on without fear, and new paths can be established through the discussion of strategic decisions and the subsequent implementation of those choices. It is not necessary to hold fake-friendly get-togethers if there is a trusting environment, as this will increase the efficiency with which problems may be solved. As a result, employees were encouraged to ask questions and became much braver when thinking about strategic issues from many different points of view. This could be seen as a sign that the organization is developing knowledge-based trust.

We are free to ignore fear and concentrate on the most important aspects. There is a correlation between trust and strategic decision-making. You previously would not have dared to think deeply about topics like these, but now you are free to do so. It has an effect on both the choices and the implementation. "Trust is like a foundation." When people do not trust each other, they talk about things that do not mean anything, and meetings do not accomplish anything.

Strategic Choices

The initial step in the work on the strategy results in the development of trust in the strategic choices made. Top management makes strategic decisions, but the conversations and data gained during the process of strategy creation guide both their decisions and the viewpoints from which they view the world. Strategy is now widely seen as an important part of running a business because it helps with day-to-day decisions.

In the end, it is always the role of the senior management to make choices, specifically ones regarding the company's strategy. Still, the process as a whole guides the choices, the gathering of data, and the thoughts about the choices. It is a process that covers a wide range of topics. On the other hand, the opposite is also true. After determining the choices that are necessary for the strategy, the next step is to put the plan into action by putting it into practice and considering the implications of this for the operations in your unit. What does it mean for the work that you do? Therefore, the implementation of the strategy needs to start at the top and work its way down.

Making retrospective sense of earlier experiences of manufacturing firms requires top management to evaluate and coordinate the performance as well as the comments that employees and lower-level managers had been expressing some doubts about the background of the strategic choices made by top management. Top management also needs to make sense of earlier experiences of manufacturing firms. Because they were involved in the strategy work, they got a better understanding of the strategies that affected their day-to-day work. This led to a better sense of team spirit, which is seen as trust based on feelings.

If the retailers do not understand the methodology behind the formulation of the strategic choices, it will be difficult for them to have faith that the strategic choices are accurate and authentic. Speculation and inefficiency are the direct results of this. It is possible for the situation to get so dire that people may begin to question whether or not the strategic options are really valid. They are suspicious that there is another reason behind the strategic decisions. When something like this occurs, both the company and the people who work there suffer. On the other hand, if there is confidence, the top management and the members of the company will be on the same side of the table, and you will be able to skip several steps. When this occurs, efficacy shifts to a new level.

When manufacturing companies and other participants in the industry are active in the strategy development phase of the process, the significance of strategic choices becomes readily apparent to them at the many organizational levels at which they operate. Also, being involved in evaluating and planning the strategy gives people a sense of ownership. The decisions made are "our" decisions, and the level of efficiency in many areas goes up when people in the organization feel like their goals are the same as those of the management.

When we communicate with the stakeholders of the organization about the new strategic alignments that will significantly impact our operations and bring us a number of advantages, we will notice a shift in the strategic choices that are available to us. In the past, discussing these kinds of things was nothing more than a complete waste of time. They could not pass through the gap in the defense. There is no question that trust is a potent motivator.

Strategy Implementation

The phase of strategy implementation requires communication between the representatives of top management and the lower-level management in order to form a common understanding of how to translate the strategy into daily practice for all personnel. This is necessary in order to successfully implement the strategy. The organization's personnel are able to behave in accordance with the strategy guidelines if the operations are consistent, which generates confidence and inspires passion from those employees. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that both the words and deeds be consistent. When people are consistent in both what they say and what they do, they build a knowledge-based trust that makes people more committed to putting the strategy into action.

When we finally settle on a course of action, we stick to it no matter what. All of the things that we have listed are investments that we have made. Putting our ideas and conversations into action has such an empowering effect, and it's something we should strive to do more often. It gives them a boost of energy. As stakeholders and entrepreneurs, business operators can potentially obtain a competitive advantage over their primary rivals by structuring their manufacturing organizations in a particular way. They are given more power and responsibility, so in addition to implementing the elements of the chain's concept, they must define a trade-specific business idea and strategy that is in accordance with the newly implemented strategic choices that the organizations that engage in manufacturing in Port Harcourt have made in accordance with organizational implemented new choices. They are given this definition in order to help them separate themselves from competitors operating in the same market as them.

The new business idea and strategy that were conceived by management should make it possible for them to take advantage of opportunities to obtain a competitive edge. The lower-level managers and staff are the ones responsible for the business idea of its operations as well as the implementation of this idea, as the present strategy dictates. A company can add value as a competitive factor by knowing how applying policies and strategies to its operations could help it grow. In this application, what this new strategy implies for us is that we have consciously chosen to delegate more authority to those managers and employees who work in environments that are physically closest to the end users of our products. However, along with tremendous power comes a significant amount of responsibility. Members of the organization and lower-level managers are given the freedom and are expected to make individual decisions regarding potential business ideas and how the firm might expand its operations. However, we also anticipate that the common components of the strategy will be carried out in their entirety. The business concepts that were offered as contributions are an addition to the plan that is anticipated to be developed by them. This would comprise the components that provide them with the ability to differentiate the manufacturing sector from other sectors in the market. As a result, the alignment is now different.

Strategic decisions made by manufacturing companies inspire excitement and innovation, which in turn help those companies gain a competitive advantage and achieve success. To put it another way, an increase in sales is the outward manifestation of a competitive advantage that is created when upper management is given the opportunity to exert influence over issues that fall within the purview of their individual roles and areas of responsibility within the organization.

Building manufacturing knowledge that is more customer-focused and inspiring is the strategic option that should be made in order to provide products and services that are relevant. Members of the organization are able to believe in the plan the organization has chosen to either embrace or adapt in order to put into action. As individuals become partners in the organization's decision-making process, they have the opportunity to be motivated and to continue generating excellent ideas. In point of fact, their notion may have progressed to the point where it is possible for the performance of the company to be entirely distinct from that of its competitors in the industry.

When members of an organization, managers, and employees from various organizational levels and units are able to trust and rely on each other, their attitude toward failure is that while it is impossible to always be successful, failures can teach one something new in each process of operations. When there is an atmosphere of mistrust, people are more likely to speculate about what went wrong, which does nothing to improve the situation or build confidence between the individuals involved. The researchers evidently show that things do not always go the way strategist plan them to go a lot of the time. On the other hand, if we maintain an environment of trust, we can all accept the results of our actions and grow as a result of them together. Failures are only seen as an indication that anything is wrong when there is a lack of trust, which only serves to foster further mistrust.

It is important to have sufficient faith in the manufacturing company so that the plan developed may inspire the employees' dedication to carry it out. As a result, manufacturing companies can successfully gain a competitive advantage, as shown by the growth in the process of implementing and operating strategies in sales and the success in the patronage of their goods and services. This is evidenced by the growth in the process of implementation and operation of strategies in sales. All of these successes, though, are the result of the hard work that the management teams of manufacturing companies put in when they were coming up with their strategies. The participation of members of the organization in the process of formulating the strategy led to an increase in their level of comprehension regarding the strategy as it related to their day-to-day work and led to an improvement in the feeling of team spirit, which is observed as affectively-based trust. As a result of the strategic management process, top management will be better able to carry out their plans because they will have a better understanding of the strategy and more trust in their skills.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative method, especially the ethnographic approach, which is a systematic process of observing, detailing, describing, documenting, and evaluating the lifeways or particular patterns of a culture (or subculture) in order to grasp the lifeways or patterns of the people in their environment (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015). Data was collected through multiple sources; such as interviews, observations, and documents. To do a study well, the researchers must have a lot of knowledge about the subject and be able to talk to important people in the chosen study. Data collected from multiple sources were analysis occur simultaneously.

Researchers have argued that, research would be presented at a general level in combination with strategy work in order to ensure ethical norms were followed and confidence between interviewers and interviewees was maintained between them. This study goes into great detail

about the research topic and related topics, but it doesn't reveal any trade secrets or other information that could hurt the organization's reputation.

In addition to the interview, information gathered from the firms' websites was utilized as secondary data to better understand the industry's current strategy. The data set includes information from other sources; with a special focus on qualitative content analysis in the strategic management process and the way structures and practices that help build trust were shown. Inductive content analysis was used. The manufacturing organizations are involved in transforming goods, that is, mainly manufacturing industries in their own right, but they also concern the repair and installation of industrial equipment and subcontracting operations for third parties, production, and mining industries as well as the fabrication of technical and electrical parts. Manufacturers' strategies were produced at four levels, starting with a broad and more generic concern-level strategy and working their way down. Following that, field-level strategies for different units of the organizations were developed. Various strategies were used for each unit and for the most important parts of each field.

Profitable expansion in all transactions is the strategic objective of manufacturing companies. According to Kirsti *et al*. (2021), plan execution has made significant strides, with increases in customer numbers, sales, and market share all showing favorable advances. The Manufacturing initiative's goals include making manufacturing organizations the most customer-oriented and inspiring industry through the development and modernization of technological networks; providing a seamless omni-channel customer experience; developing technological entrepreneurship as a competitive advantage; and expanding the business (Kesko, 2018) as cited in Kirsti *et al.* (2021). The manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt work practically through the following phases of strategy: strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation and control.

Empirical Underpinning
Previous research on strategy has paid just passing attention to the function that trust plays in the development and execution of strategies. Our research contributes to the importance of trust in the strategic management process, a topic that has not received a great deal of attention in the existing body of research. Even though, the theory of strategic action plan has placed an emphasis on the participatory nature of the strategy process, during which the same actors serve as both strategy planners and implementers, Lau and Rowlinson (2011) point out that, in reality, planners are typically a separate group of people from the implementers, even if trusting relationships are created through collective effort during the strategy process. This is the case even though; theory of strategic action planning has placed an emphasis on the fact that our research provides evidence that the development of trustworthy strategies requires the participation of a large number of individuals holding a variety of positions within the manufacturing industry. The participation of a variety of organizational members and levels, as well as stakeholders, in the process of formulating a strategy, as well as the delegation of authority and responsibility for carrying out that strategy, can result in a number of beneficial outcomes. Because of this, there was an increase in the level of trust that lower-level management, employees, and other staff had in the organization as well as the strategic decisions made by senior management.

Despite the fact that the relationship between strategy and structure was not the primary focus of this investigation, it is essential to highlight the ways in which structure influences the

implementation of strategy by both expanding available options and constricting available choices. These manufacturing companies have a leg up and a competitive advantage thanks to their one-of-a-kind organizational structures. In order for manufacturing companies to be successful, they need to create new strategies that are built upon their existing structures. Additionally, they need to be aware that their structures include strategic capabilities, and they need to understand that it is important to think about how to deploy and make use of these resources. The formation of trust is an ongoing process that takes place over a course of time and is based on experiences of working together within the context of a strategic management process. This process is made up of the structure, the rules about how to work together, and the ways to talk to each other.

On the basis of the findings, it has been hypothesized that mutual trust between the parties is built up and continues to develop throughout the course of the following three stages of the process of strategic management: (a) strategy formulation, (b) strategic choices, and (c) strategy implementation. Our research demonstrates how, throughout the period of strategy development, cognitive and affective forms of trust are formed between actors participating in strategy workshops. This occurred as a direct result of dialogue that took place between players operating at varying levels of the organization. Therefore, both trust aspects evolved through a process of working with dynamic strategies (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). Members of the organization took part in the activities that comprised the participatory practices that comprised the strategy creation phase. During the phase of strategy implementation, collective strategy formulation strengthened commitment to the newly evolving strategy while also enhancing common grasp of what the strategy entails in terms of what it implies in practice for each unit, chain, and production.

Table 1: Trust-building Elements and Manifestation of Cognitive and Affective Trust in the Strategic Management Phases

	Participating Actors	Trust-building Elements	Cognitive-based Trust	Affective-based Trust	Outcomes
Strategy formulation	Actors from different units and organizational Levels	Interaction dialogue between actors	Increasing common understanding on the significance of strategy	Sense of opportunity to influence improved feelings of team spirit and empowerment	Making strategy understanding more tangible Increased commitment the strategy process
Strategic	Top management	Participation in the strategy formulation process increased common understanding about the significance of strategic choices	Organizational actors: Strengthened confidence in the strategic choices made by top management	Top management: Feelings of empowerment and safety to make new and brave strategic choices	Improved commitment new strategic choices Understanding of the strategic alignments innovativeness
Strategy implementati	Actors from different units and organizational Levels	A common understanding of the importance of strategy in Practice	Consistency between the strategic choices and actions for implementation in practice	Sense of energy Feelings of caring and safety in front of the failure	effectiveness Differentiation competitive advantage

Source: Adapted from Kirsti, *et al* (2021).

Kirsti *et al*. (2021) found that involving actors from various levels of the organization led to the development of trust that was based on affective connections. This study demonstrates how cultivating a sense of inclusion can result in enhanced processes of shared sense-making, emotions of empowerment, and the willingness to share perspectives and understandings, all of which contribute to increased team spirit. During the time when the strategy was being made, the development of both cognitive and affective trust helped people understand each other better and made people at all levels of the organization more committed to the strategy process.

The highest levels of management in manufacturing companies are the ones who are tasked with making strategic decisions for the company. These decisions are to be made in accordance with the strategy formulation phase. Our research demonstrates how, from the perspective of the organizational actors, participation in the process of strategy formulation enhances cognitive-based trust emergence by increasing understanding of the background of strategic choices made by management. This was achieved by increasing understanding of the context in which management made their decisions. Cognitive-based trust was reinforced among the organizational actors towards top management as a trustworthy decision-maker, and increased faith in the strategic choices to create competitive advantage was also increased. According to the findings of the study, employees viewed the strategic decisions made by upper management as "our choices." Therefore, a hybrid type of trust based on both cognitive and affective factors developed simultaneously at the same time (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). The research also showed how the participation of organizational actors in the strategy formulation phase generated affective-based trust among the top management. This manifested itself as a sense of safety and empowerment to make innovative and risky strategic decisions. Acceptance of strategic goals and dedication to the new strategy led to an increase in cognitive trust among organizational actors, which in turn leads to an improvement in operational effectiveness (Brewer & Strahorn, 2012).

During the phase in which the strategy is being put into action, a consensus regarding how the strategic guidelines should be put into effect was reached. At this crucial point in the process of formulating a strategy, both cognitive and affective-based trust become apparent. According to the findings of the study, cognitive-based trust among the organizational actors was increased as a result of the consistency between the strategic choices and their implementation. As a result, the organizational actors experienced a sense of energy and empowerment during the process of implementing the new strategies. However, organizational strategies are frequently not put into action. According to Sooducho-Pelc (2017), when organizational actors and partners are involved in the process of developing a strategy, they take on the responsibility of seeing that strategy through to completion. In addition, the findings of this study indicate the importance of cognitive and affective trust between parties as a critical factor in determining the level of effectiveness achieved at each step of the strategy work. From the point of view of the relationship between trust and strategy, our case gave a detailed explanation of how a successful strategy and its effective implementation are built on goals and rules that everyone agrees on.

CONCLUSION

This research was carried out with the intention of providing a better knowledge of the trust related to strategy work in the industrial enterprises that are currently operating in Port Harcourt. As a result, the existing understanding of the strategic management process within an

organizational setting was improved because of the incorporation of the idea of trust into this case study, which brought together the strategic management process. This study presented a multi-faceted picture of the significance of trust in the process of strategy development. Trust, both cognitive and emotional, grows as a result of working on collaborative strategies. This happens not just because people are willing and motivated to make the plan on their own, but also because they work together to put the plan into action. Conclusively, the researchers combined these narrower themes into two overarching perspectives, an organizational and a social-psychological response, and we related these to the literature, thus providing "crux of analysis in the study and invoking broader interpretations of the meaning of the case.

According to the findings of our research, a shared understanding of strategy is more likely to emerge from interaction and communication among actors than it is to result from sporadic conversations between individuals. Therefore, there is a demand for moderated discussion and collaboration spaces. Learning the significance of a strategy may also entail receiving appropriate training. It's not okay for people to take part in random ways across different discussion platforms. Instead, their participation must be planned and relevant.

The ramifications for management are pointed out by these studies. The importance of trust plays a key role in the manufacturing business when it comes to dealing with hard and sensitive situations and finding new viewpoints in the process of strategy creation. These are both aspects that require close, contract-based partnerships. To begin, our findings indicate that a strong belief in a common objective is a necessary component in the development of team spirit between parties. Second, participation in the formulation of organizational strategy by actors operating at varying levels within the organization fosters sentiments of competence and respect. Third, having an appreciation for the significance of strategy as an instrument in day-to-day work and an awareness of the roles that play a part in the execution of strategy generates dedication and activity toward the overall objective. It is necessary to involve people in the task of developing a strategy in order to share a shared knowledge of both the strategy itself and the roles that all partners will play in putting it into action. As a result, we stress how important it is to have feelings about the genuineness of all parties involved in the collaboration as well as their level of expertise. These things lead to commitment, originality, and important contributions, all of which help reach the common goal and, in the end, lead to success.

This research was conducted through interviews and the collection of materials with the goal of determining how trust is developed between organizational members working in the manufacturing business during the process of strategic management. Even though interviews could be considered a limitation, they did, on the other hand, make it possible for us to investigate the topic and describe it in depth and with specific detail. The development of trust should be a primary focus of future research as it relates to the strategic management process across a variety of industries and settings. Additionally, additional research is required to investigate the benefits and challenges presented by trust in the context of participatory and collaborative strategy work. Also, it is very important to look into the possibilities that structural elements offer for the work of strategy and the development of trust as an intangible resource in partnership.

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