

Variation in Impact of Political and Social Networking on Organisational Survival of Male and Female-led Branded Eateries in South-West Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined political and social networking variations and its effects on organisational survival of male and female-led branded eateries in south-west Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design. Adoption of survey design was based on the fact that, survey design through the collection of primary data gives researcher an opportunity to describe prevailing circumstances. The sample size was drawn from all the owners, managers and operators of the selected Branded Fast Food Eatery. All the population was used as the sample size. Therefore, 174 copies of questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the selected Branded eateries. Regression analysis was used to measure the effect of business networking on organisational survival. Analysis of Variance ANOVA which measured variations among variables was used with independent t-test to ascertain the degree of significance of the measured variation among women and men-led Branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria. Results expressed that all the explanatory variables, that is, political networking, and social networking, have positive and significant effect on organizational survival of male-led branded eateries. This connotes that a percent increase in political networking and social networking managerial will significantly increase organizational survival of male-led branded eateries in Southwest by 47.5%, and 54.3%, respectively. Therefore, the study concluded that networking practices have positive and significant effect on organsiational survival of male-led branded eateries in southwest Nigeria. Conclusion were drawn based on the findings that political networking through its various practices (networking with the government, agencies or political parties) enhances organisational survival of male and female-led branded eateries in South-West Nigeria. This implies that any organisation that adopts and implements appropriate political networking stands a better chance of improving survival. Such firms possess the ability to continue operating along the fulfillment of its mission and objectives and doing relatively well against all odds. Furthermore, , as findings from the study revealed that social networking significantly and positively affect organisational survival of male and female-led Branded eateries in South-West Nigeria, we can safely conclude that social networking, which is the process of networking with family, friends and social clubs or communities is vital for firms' survival. The study recommended that in this time of intense competition and turbulence in the marketing environment, a single networking strategy might be insufficient to arrest low performance. Therefore, managers should embrace the combinations of different networking strategies to improve performance and organisational survival.

Keywords: organisational durvival, branded eateries, political and social networking

1.1 Introduction

Networking is the building of relationships by firms needed for improved performance, competitive advantage and survival (Huynh and Patton, 2014). Insufficient networking activities by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have typically constrained them by lowering their performance, competitiveness and ultimately, their abilities to survive (Turyakira & Mbidde, 2015). Studies show that the occurrence of business failure is very high in emerging markets. In Africa, SMEs have closed business due to administrative, operating, strategic and exogenous problems (Okpara 2011). In Nigeria, 80% of Branded eateries established in 2014 failed to exist after 5 years (Ukorebi, 2018). Business failure also occurs in developed countries too. In USA, many SMEs fail within 3 – 4 years of operation. An instance is the technological SMEs with many of them located in Silicon Valley (Cantamessa, Gatteschi, Perboli, & Rosano., 2018).

According to recent studies, organisational survival has been mitigated by the Covid-19 pandemic which has downplayed networking activities needed by organisations. In the UK, for instance, around 500,000 firms are at the brink of collapse due to Covid-related reasons (Cook & Barrett, 2020). Other factors such as entrepreneurs' characteristics and firms' internal and external environment have also been linked to a firm's ability to network and subsequently survive (Filhoet *al.*, 2017; Mayret *al.*, 2017). Hence, examining organisational survival of SMEs including Branded eateries, allows for deeper understanding of their networking activities.

The existing literature has identified 5 main types of networking that are related to SMEs' performance and by extension, organisational survival in a competitive market; they include Business Networking, Social Networking, Political Networking, Managerial Networking and Financial Networking (Anwar *et al.*, 2018; Mlotshwa & Msimango-Galawe, 2020; Anwar & Ali Shah, 2018). Previous organisational studies show that networking was predominantly responsible for the performance of organisations which is inclusive of their survival (Lechner and Dowling 2003; Song & Vinig, 2012; Liet *al.*, 2015).

Literature also supports that business networking is typically geared towards achieving marketing objectives and benefits (Suriyapperuma *et al.*, 2016); social networking on sales performance and strategy such as innovation (Nu'man *et al.*, 2020); political networking on securing competitive advantage (Anwaret *al.*, 2018); managerial networking on entrepreneurial orientation (Panda, 2016) and financial networking on competitive advantage (Anwar *et al.*, 2018). SMEs including Branded eateries depend on networking to meet these goals for their survival. Many empirical studies have been carried out on networking and firm survival include (Sungur, 2015; Lofsten, 2016; Shah *et al.*, 2019); Firm Performance (Watson, 2011; Omwengaet *al.*, 2013; Mlotshwa & Msimango-Galawe, 2020); Social Cohesion (Hassanet *al.*, 2018; Priyanka and Sekar, 2020); Business Sustainability (Mohamad & Chin, 2019; Shokriet *al.*, 2014); Innovation (Wang & Chung, 2020; Li *et al.*, 2013; Konsti-Laakso *et al.*, 2012); Export Propensity (Nguyen & Le, 2018; Ali *et al.*, 2020) and Business Model Innovation (Anwar & Ali Shah, 2018; Breuer & Ludeke-Freund, 2017). In spite of these studies, there is paucity of research on organisational survival. Research on networking behaviours by both men and women have also been done in SMEs. Studies on women's networking behaviour in SMEs includes (Sharafizad, 2011; Sharafizad & Coetzer, 2016; Greguletz *et al.*, 2017; Gungaphul& Kassean, 2012; Bogren, von Friedrichs, *et al.*, 2013). Studies on the comparison between networking behaviours by men and women on sales performance includes (Macintosh & Krush, 2017) and

social networks and bootstrapping (Jayawarna *et al.*, 2015). However, there is not enough literature on comparative analysis of male and female entrepreneurs' networking activities, especially in the Branded eateries' market, hence the need for this study. In order to carry out this study, two hypotheses were drawn to answers questions based on the variation of political and social networking on organisational survival.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theories most relevant to this study is the "Social Network Theory" and "Entrepreneurship Theory" as postulated by Stanley Milgram in 1967 and Schumpeter in 1912. The Social Network Theory takes care of the independent variable while the Entrepreneurship Theory is the most suitable for the dependent variable under consideration.

The Social Network Theory is considered most appropriate for the independent variable "Networking" because it entails the organisation leveraging its strong and weak ties while coming together with different and independent individuals and/or organisations alongside their interactions to access resources, which are otherwise outside their control but necessary to achieve the objectives of their organisations.

The Entrepreneurship Theory is also considered suitable for the dependent variable "Organisational Survival" because it is based upon the concepts of adaptability, innovation and flexibility of organisations. When organisations adopt adaptability, innovation and flexibility, they can better achieve the objectives of the organisation.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

As this study intends to look into networking and organisational survival in Branded eateries in South West, Nigeria, survey research design was adopted. Adoption of survey design was based on the fact that, survey design through the collection of primary data gives researcher an opportunity to describe prevailing circumstances. This study was undertaken in namely: Chicken Republic, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), Tantalizer, Country Kitchen, Byte More, Foodco, Aroma, West Grill, Foodmataz and Captain Cook in Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti States. These eateries were chosen because they have branches in more than one of the six states chosen, where they are presently operating.

3.2 Population and sample techniques and sample size

The sample size was drawn from all the owners, managers and operators of the selected Branded Fast Food Eatery. All the population was used as the sample size. Therefore, 174 copies of questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the selected Branded eateries.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The manner and source of obtaining data is important to prevent problems of improperly collected data. Considering the small size of the population, it was entirely used as sample for the study. As a result, census sampling technique (collection of data from a whole population) was employed in this study.

4.4 Method of Data Analysis

Regression analysis was used to measure the effect of political and social networking on organisational survival. Analysis of Variance ANOVA which measured variations among variables was used with independent t-test to ascertain the degree of significance of the measured

variation among women and men-led Branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria since an independent t-test measures the difference between two independent, unrelated groups. The mean scores of women and men-led Branded eateries were compared by means of an independent t-test.

4.0 Results

Table 1.1: Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Demographic Variable

S/N	Demographic variable	Grouping	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	72	46.8
		Female	82	53.2
2.	Leadership position	Owners	33	21.4
		Operating manager	72	46.8
		Marketing manager	49	31.8
3.	Educational Qualification	School leaving cert	29	18.8
		HND/BSC/Ed/B.Eng	65	42.2
		M.A/MSc/MBA	41	26.6
		OTHERS	19	12.3
4.	Age of branded eatery	Less than 2 years	32	20.8
		2-5 years	58	37.7
		6-9 years	58	37.7
		10 year and above	6	3.9

Source: Field Survey Report

4.1 Presentation of Core Issues of Investigation

Table 1.1 shows mean response of the respondents on each of the statement in the research tool. All the mean responses were higher than 3.0 which led to the decision in the last column of the table. The analysis in table 1.1 indicated that the respondents gave an overwhelming affirmation on business networking engagement and organizational survival in eateries in Southwest Nigeria. Members agreed that workshop and conferences; cultivating connection with buyers; connections with other relevant business associates; connections with competitors; maintaining connections with buyers etc contributed greatly to their organizational survival in their respective eateries in order to increase organisational performance. The respondents further agreed that they kept maintaining good relationships with ex-colleagues, especially, those that are very vast in the business, as this is imperative in order to stay long in business arena as well as increasing organizational space across regions.

Table 1.2 Members Perception of the Relevance of Political Networking on Organisational survival (n=154)

S/N	Statement on proxies of Political Networking	Mean	S.D	Remark
	Political Networking			
1	Spent much effort on cultivating connections with officials of governments and their agencies	3.69	0.670	Agree
2	Maintained good relationships with officials of governments and their agencies	4.45	0.455	Agree

3	Devoted substantial resources to maintain good relationships with officials of governments and their agencies	3.68	0.624	Agree
4	Ensure that politicians occupy top management positions in your organization	4.76	0.597	Agree
5	Lobby such that owner(s) of your organization are given political appointments	5.40	0.331	Agree
6	Gives Government Agencies and political leaders timely business sector information	4.75	0.392	Agree
7	Gives support for a political party through campaign financing or other means	3.55	0.576	Agree
8	Persuade or compel people to vote for a political party or show solidarity for the Government.	5.07	0.121	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.785	0.470	Agree

Source: Researcher's computation using SPSS

Table 1.2 shows mean response of the respondents on each of the statement in the research tool. Responses from the last four among the six statements agreed, showing that the mean responses were higher than 3.0 while the first two statement disagreed, showing that the mean responses were less than 3.0 which led to the decision in the last column of the table. The analysis indicated that the respondents gave an overwhelming affirmation on social networking and organizational survival in eateries in Southwest Nigeria. Members of the eateries agreed that they maintain connections/contacts with social communities such as clubs with the objective of increasing business patronage which has the tendency of enhancing organizational patronage and survival. The respondent also agreed that they maintain informal connections/contacts with customers to retain them as an aid to organizational survival. This function of social networking gave the grand mean of 3.458.

Table 1.3 Members Perception of the Relevance of Social Networking on Organisational survival (n=154)

S/N	Statement on proxies of Social Networking	Mean	S.D	Remark
	Social Networking			
1	Spent much effort on cultivating personal connections/contacts and encouraging your staff to do same with the objective of increasing business patronage.	1.73	0.338	Disagree
2	Maintained good relationships with personal connections/contacts and encouraging your staff to do same with the objective of increasing business patronage.	2.70	0.091	Disagree
3	Devoted substantial resources to maintain good relationships with personal connections/contacts and encouraging your staff to do same with the objective of increasing business patronage.	3.03	0.228	Agree
4	Spent much effort and/or money on cultivating connections/contacts with social communities such as clubs with the objective of increasing business patronage	4.25	0.514	Agree

5	Spent much effort and/or money on maintaining connections/contacts with social communities such as clubs with the objective of increasing business patronage	4.62	0.621	Agree
6	Spent much effort and/or money on maintaining informal connections/contacts with customers to retain them.	4.42	0.101	Agree
	Grand Mean	3.458	0.315	Agree

Source: Researcher's computation using SPSS

Analysis of table 1.3 indicates the responses of the respondents on the research tool. The table showed that the respondent solely agreed to maintaining and cultivate connections with directors of government organisations, cultivating and maintaining connections with managers of other organisations, maintaining and cultivating connections with “Communities of Managers”, as such, they gave their mean greater than 3.0 on managerial networking as reflected in their respective mean of 5.55, 4.93, 4.81, 3.72 and 3.66 to grand mean of 4.48. Thus, it can be established that managerial networking contributes to the determinant of organizational survival in eateries in Southwest, Nigeria.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Political networking does not vary significantly as it impacts on organisational survival of male and female-led Branded eateries in South-West Nigeria.

Table 1.4 showed that t-value 9.806 is greater than critical t-value 1.960 at 5% level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected which implies that there is a significant difference between the political networking among male and female-led branded eateries in Southwest. The table also showed that the mean score of male-led branded eateries is greater than the mean score of female-led branded eateries, so it is concluded that male-led branded eateries exhibit more political networking as compare to the female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 1.4: t-test on difference between political networking and male and female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria.

Branded eateries	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df = (n1+n2) -2	t-cal	t-table
Male	72	3.69	1.670	152	9.806	1.960
Female	82	3.64	1.579			

Source: Field Survey Report

P<0.05

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis 2: Social networking does not vary significantly as it impacts on organisational survival of male and female-led Branded eateries in South-West Nigeria.

Table 1.5 revealed that t-value 4.120 is greater than critical t-value 1.960 at 5% level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected which implies that social networking approach by male-led branded eateries is different from social networking approach and practices by female-led branded eateries. The table further revealed that the mean score of social networking employed by male-led branded eateries is greater than the mean score of social networking practices employed by female-led branded eateries, so it is concluded that social networking

approaches and practices in male-led branded eateries is greater than what is being practiced by female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 1.5: t-test on difference between social networking and male and female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria.

Branded eateries	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df = (n1+n2) -2	t-cal	t-table
Male	72	4.25	1.514	152	4.120	1.960
Female	82	1.73	1.338			

Source: Field Survey Report

P<0.05

Table 1.6: t-test on difference between financial networking and male and female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria.

Branded eateries	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df = (n1+n2) -2	t-cal	t-table
Male	72	5.69	1.783	152	4.412	1.960
Female	82	3.53	1.672			

Source: Field Survey Report

P<0.05

ANOVA Regression Test

ANOVA regression test was employed to test the extent to which networking parameters significantly affect organizational survival among male and female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria.

Table 1.7 indicated that the model had a correlation value of 0.914, which manifests a good and strong linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The table further showed that the goodness of fit (R^2) is 0.810 which depicted that 81% of the change in dependent variable (organizational survival) is accounted for by the independent variables (business networking, political networking, social networking, managerial networking and financial networking). More so, the adjusted R square is 79.3% which explained the importance and contributions of the explanatory variables on the dependent, that is the explanatory variables of business networking, political networking, social networking, managerial networking and financial networking affect organizational survival of male-led branded eateries by 79.3% leaving the remaining 20.7% accounted for stochastic error term (other variables outside the regression model). Furthermore, ANOVA result which indicated the strength of the model reported the F-value of 30.814 and F-(probability) value of 0.00 to be statistically significant. This showed that the model is reliable, error free and do not suffer from specification bias, as such, the study established that the regression model is too good to be rejected, hence the model is significant.

Individually, the result expressed that all the explanatory variables, that is, political networking, and social networking, have positive and significant effect on organizational survival of male-led branded eateries. This connotes that a percent increase in political networking and social networking managerial will significantly increase organizational survival of male-led branded eateries in Southwest by 47.5%, and 54.3%, respectively. Therefore, the study concluded that networking practices have positive and significant effect on organizational survival of male-led branded eateries in southwest Nigeria.

Table 1.7: Networking and Organisational Survival of Male-led Branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.914 ^a	.810	.793	1.191	
a. Predictors: (Constant), political network and social networking						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	218.393	5	43.679	30.814	.000 ^b
	Residual	209.789	66	1.417		
	Total	428.182	71			
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational survival						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Business network, political network, social network, managerial network, financial network						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.425	.500		4.847	.000
	Political networking	.475	.087	.413	5.434	.000
	Social Networking	.543	.157	.354	3.469	.001
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational survival						

Source: Field Survey Report

Report from table 1.8 expressed a correlation value of 0.749, which manifests a good linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables, the goodness of fit (R^2) was also expressed as 0.62.1 which depicted that 62.1% of the change in dependent variable (organizational survival) is accounted for by the independent variables (political networking, and social networking). More so, the adjusted R square is 60.1% which explained the importance and contributions of the explanatory variables on the dependent, that is the explanatory variables of political networking and social networking affect organizational survival of female-led branded eateries by 60.1% leaving the remaining 39.9% accounted for stochastic error term (other variables outside the regression model). Furthermore, ANOVA result which indicated the strength of the model reported the F-value of 29.491 and F-(probability) value of 0.00 to be statistically significant. This showed that the model is reliable, error free and do not suffer from specification bias, as such, the study established that the regression model is too good to be rejected, hence the model is significant.

Individually, the result expressed that all the explanatory variables, that is, political networking and social networking have positive and significant effect on organizational survival of female-led branded eateries with the exception of managerial networking which failed significant test at 5%, that is, managerial networking has a positive and an insignificant effect on organizational survival of female-led branded eateries. Still, it dictates that 1% increase in business networking, political networking, social networking and financial networking will significantly increase organizational survival of female-led branded eateries in Southwest by 42.5% and 20.7% respectively.

Nonetheless, the study concluded that networking practices have positive and significant effect on organisational survival of female-led branded eateries in southwest Nigeria. Table 1.8: Networking and Organisational Survival of Female-led Branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria

Model Summary						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.749 ^a	.621	.601	1.191	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Business network, political network, social network, managerial network, financial network						
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	127.093	5	25.419	21.491	.000 ^b
	Residual	175.044	76	1.183		
	Total	302.136	81			
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational survival						
b. Predictors: (Constant), political network and social network						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.556	.481		7.398	.000
	Political networking	.425	.063	.505	6.752	.000
	Social Networking	.207	.091	.198	2.285	.024
a. Dependent Variable: Organisational survival						

Source: Field survey Report

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis two disclosed that political networking varies significantly on organizational survival as it affects male and female-led branded eateries in southwest Nigeria. This result also showed that political networking has positive and significant effect on organizational survival of male and female-led branded eateries respectively. This connotes that what is applicable in male-led branded eateries is also applicable in their female counterpart to an extent, however, the mean score of male is greater than the female mean which indicates that male-led branded eateries employ more political networking than the female counterpart. Chung *et al* (2015) opined that political networking is a relationship developed by managers with organisational stakeholders who are not directly involved in the business activities of the focal firm. Such organisational stakeholders include government representatives. Kotabe *et al* (2014) highlight one of the reasons for the initiation of such relationships with government representatives to be the need to attenuate their competitive disadvantages in order to aid their global competitiveness. It also would avail organisations access to resources that are within government's control and are scarce. In a country like Nigeria where politics dominates, it is imperative for management of organizations to join hands with politicians by providing them timely and valid information which can aid their business and organizational survival before strict policies and procedures are meted out by government

officials against their business operations. Shen et al (2021) reiterated that networking levels of government and its associations helps organisations with accessing insider government information, contracts and negotiations, among others; provides limitless opportunities for organisations to influence and gain from government policies, regulations and institutions and get prestige benefits. Hence, the more connections organization made with governments, the more information they get and longer they stay in market arena. This result corroborates the empirical finding of Macintosh and Krush (2017) that different types of networking contribute to sales performance but the impact of these networking activities differ from men to women, with men profiting more from customer networking and women profiting more from professional networking. The study negates the finding of Su, Xie and Wang (2013) effect of political networking on new venture performance is negative, whereas, it validates the empirical discovery of Sheng, Zhou and Li (2011) that political networking ties with governments are helpful to enhance organisational survival but most especially when institutional support is weak and the technological environment is not dynamic.

On the third hypothesis, it was discovered that social networking approach by male-led branded eateries is different from social networking approach and practices by female-led branded eateries. The result also showed that social networking has positive and significant effect on organizational survival of male and female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria. Yet, the mean score of male-led branded eateries is greater than the mean score of female-led branded eateries in Southwest Nigeria. The result is not surprising as a business first and probably loyal customers are within the circle of the owners or stakeholders family and friends. Clearly, Heirati and Ngo (2013) made it known that firms employ social networking even within circles of business, governance or academics for the purpose of accessing critical resources using informal and interpersonal exchange mechanisms. Seaman, McQuaid & Pearson (2017) identified three types of social networks that a firm may employ, such as, business networks, friendship networks and family networks. These networks also exhibit social identities, memberships and privileges to scarce resources. By employing social networking, a firm is strategically positioned for brand building and effective human resource management which can enable it to survive. It is, therefore, imperative for management of organisations to employ social networking as it may reduce costs and strategically locate them in the market place by building their brands. The study validates the finding of Adele (2015) that social networking allowed NGOs to move past resource constraints, broaden their operations and improve on their innovations. Also, the study corroborates the finding of Hassan, Abdullah, Noor, Din, Abdullah and Ismail (2018) that social networking enhances the thriving of business communities.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion were drawn based on the findings that political networking through its various practices (networking with the government, agencies or political parties) enhances organisational survival of male and female-led branded eateries in South-West Nigeria. This implies that any organisation that adopts and implements appropriate political networking stands a better chance of improving survival. Such firms possess the ability to continue operating along the fulfillment of its mission and objectives and doing relatively well against all odds. Furthermore, , as findings from the study revealed that social networking significantly and positively affect organisational survival of male and female-led Branded eateries in South-West Nigeria, we can safely conclude that social networking, which is the process of networking with family, friends and social clubs or communities is vital for firms' survival. The study recommended that in this time of intense

competition and turbulence in the marketing environment, a single networking strategy might be insufficient to arrest low performance. Therefore, managers should embrace the combinations of different networking strategies to improve performance and organisational survival.

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