WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY AND ADAPTABILITY OF HOTELS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA.

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Abstract
In recent times, the volatile, highly unstable economic climate within which SMEs are expected to function is characterized by factors such as increasingly competitive and unpredictable markets, downsizing, critical skills shortages, and restructuring, to mention a few. These factors exert considerable pressure, which compel SMEs and employees to do more with less, with a strong emphasis on ensuring the organizations long term survival. Since previous studies have explicitly stated that the association between workplace spirituality and organizational outcomes; such as adaptability, has been inadequately investigated, this study seeks to examined the relationship between workplace spirituality and adaptability of small and medium scale enterprises in Southern Nigeria. The theoretical framework for this study is spiritual leadership theory (SLT). The study population consisted of 628 hotels with 311 participants drawn from 311 hotels in Southern Nigeria. The data analysis using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient revealed that inculcating the culture of workplace spirituality is positively related to adaptability of hotels in Southern Nigeria. Participants noted that hotels in South-South Nigeria should not just be machines for rendering services but also a form of human community that foster satisfying meaningful life experiences for employees, families, and society as this will enhance their adaptability.

Key Words: Workplace Spirituality, Meaningful Work, Sense of Community, Alignment with Organizational Value, Adaptability.
Introduction
Nigeria currently faces high levels of unemployment and poverty. These two economic problems facing the world have challenged many people to get into one type of business or another. The business that most of these people enter takes the form of small or medium scale enterprise (SMEs). Small businesses are defined as those whose business investments exceed N40million (excluding land but including operating costs) have a workforce size of between 11-35 employees, while medium-sized enterprises are those businesses whose total cost (including operating costs but excluding land costs) is more than N40 million but not more than N150 million, with a staff size of 100).

In Nigeria, SMEs are seen as a key to economic growth. They greatly boost per capita income, savings, and the generation of jobs. They also support local enterprises and industrial growth (Amah & Oyetuunde, 2020; Yahaya et al., 2016). Because of the significant contributions that SMEs make to economic growth, the government and other stakeholders place a high priority on this industry. The government places a high priority on the success of these SMEs due to the enormous number of people they employ as well as the advancement of industry and eradication of poverty.

Unpredictable markets and a dwindling skill set, for example, are new manifestations of the turbulent, unstable economic environment in which SMEs are required to function among themselves (Mafini et al., 2013). In an effort to continue existing, these considerations have compelled SMEs and workers to work harder with the few resources at their disposal. Due to the changing nature of the economic environment in which they operate, continuous political developments, and the growing competitiveness of huge corporations, the majority of SMEs in the South-South area are gradually vanishing. In order to secure their long-term viability in the market, SMEs must consequently develop innovative methods to do things.

Stability is reflected in the proper conduct of the organization. Therefore, a sustainable organization, it has been argued, needs a sustainable human resource base. Zsolnai (2015) however, argued that if organizations pursue self-promotion, self-development, and materialism, it would ultimately lead to a decline in social welfare and serious problems of sustainability. Scholars have suggested that sustainability of an organization requires a shift from materialistic pregnancy to spiritual and moral control (Zsolnai, 2015). To achieve this change among SMEs, this study raises workplace spirituality as a possible solution. Workplace spirituality can enhance organizational stability at three levels: meaningful work (individual level), community feeling (team level), and alignment with organizational values (Milliman et al., 2003). Chalofsky and Krishna (2009) argued that workplace spirituality has a profound effect on people's sustainable behavior by contributing to their higher spiritual needs.

According to Paloutzian et al. (2003), when labour is considered as a vocation, a holy obligation, a privilege of service, or a method to serve God, other gods, or a greater cause, it acquires new meaning and importance. The sustainability of SMEs is improved when employment is seen as a vocation because it becomes more meaningful and employee engagement rises as a result (Reave, 2005). According to extensive study, spiritually developed organizations are probably going to increase sustainability and organizational performance (Liu & Robertson, 2010; Petchsawang & Duchon, 2012). Particularly, SMEs that support workplace spirituality are very successful and lucrative (Karakas, 2010). In order to foster sustainability, SMEs should devise techniques that encourage workplace spirituality and foster a culture wherein both individual and company aspirations are embraced. Although there is evidence of a close connection between workplace spirituality and organizational...
sustainability, this connection has thus far received less systematic attention (Afsar & Badir, 2017), particularly in SMEs. Therefore, the goal of this research is to investigate the connection between workplace spirituality and sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria's south-south region.

The necessity for SMEs to be competitive and sustainable is one of their biggest concerns today. Employee-related issues including stress-related sickness, burnout, absenteeism, violence, and corruption are a concern for small and medium-sized businesses. Additionally, SMEs must continually modify their tactics in the face of ongoing economic, political, social, and even ecological setbacks that might disrupt organizational operations and ultimately result in company collapse. Even before their full company operations began, the majority of SME's experienced significant failure. Therefore, it is crucial for SMEs to look for or create methods that would guarantee their sustainability.

According to Nasina and Doris (2011), many work-related problems are symptoms in organizations where spirituality does not exist. Therefore, SMEs require their employees to be committed to the job physically, mentally and also spiritually. From a system perspective, individuals are viewed as system that integrates physical, mental, and spiritual well-being (Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). However, although many studies have focused on the physical and psychological balance of individuals in the workplace, the spiritual aspect has not been considered for many years.

Therefore, it has recently been agreed that for the survival of SMEs, it is necessary for managers and employees to use their air resources (Marschke, Preziosi, & Harrington, 2011). Chalofsky and Krishna (2009) argue that the spirituality of the workplace contributes to the moral stability of people by contributing to their higher spiritual needs. Nasina and Doris (2011), further state that if employees bring their spiritual qualities to work, they will be able to be productive, intelligent and satisfied (Nasina & Doris, 2011), and this will improve the sustainability of SMEs.

However, there is still a lack of transparency in research on this subject, which restricts expansion, development, and application of the concept, despite some documentary evidence that there is a relationship between workplace spirituality and organizational stability, which results in improved employee performance (Pawar, 2017). For instance, a few studies have looked at the connection between sustainability and workplace spirituality in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Additionally, past studies have made it abundantly evident that there is no appropriate research on the durability of the link between organizational results and workplace spirituality (Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003). In research by Van der Walt (2014), it was recommended that work ethic be carefully examined to ascertain its impact on outcomes connected to the workplace. This is supported by Petchsawang and Duchon (2009), who also note that further research is necessary to establish a connection between work ethic and outcomes including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and resilience. In order to fill in the aforementioned gaps, this research examined the relationship between workplace spirituality and sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses in southern Nigeria. The study adopted meaningful work, sense of community, and alignment with organization’s values as dimensions of workplace spirituality while adaptability was used as the measure of sustainability.

Research Questions
The study seeks to provide answer to the following research questions:
Research Hypotheses
The following null research hypotheses were formulated and tested:
H0₁: There is no significant relationship between meaningful work and adaptability.
H0₂: There is no significant relationship between sense of community and adaptability.
H0₃: There is no significant relationship between alignment with organization’s values and adaptability.

Literature Review
Concept of Workplace Spirituality
The concept of spirituality in the workplace is examined in this research. Almost all academic explanations agree that spirituality entails a feeling of completeness and connection with labour, even if job-based spirituality is seen as personal and philosophical (Gibbons, 2000). Following one's life objectives and establishing friendly relationships with coworkers are examples of good workplace spirituality (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). The term "spirit" has gained popularity in management manuals, and SMEs are actively assessing if their most precious asset, human capital, has a good (spiritual) attitude (Johnson 2017). Research definitions in the new subject of workplace spirituality have moved away from religious definitions and toward definitions that gauge religious commitment and spiritual significance (Karakas, 2010). Increasing number of scholars have suggested that workplace spirituality is a new field for inquiry in the 21st century in their published works (Miller & Ewest, 2013).

Spirit at work is the idea of interacting with something outside of oneself, according to one definition. It entails engaging in meaningful interactions with people, one's identity, and nature while leading a fulfilling life (Puchalski et al., 2009). "Spiritual concerns entail the realization that people have an inner existence that demands meaningful employment in society," (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Workplace spirituality is described by Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003) as a framework for corporate principles that are shown through a culture that encourages discourse. This promotes a feeling of belonging which results in a sense of satisfaction and delight in a fulfilling profession. Similar to this, Marques et al. (2008) define workplace spirituality as "the collective experience of those participating in the process, realization, reconciliation, and expression of personal justice." This description well captures the essence of workplace spirituality with more motivation and efficacy as a result of the organization's work having a deeper significance. The concept that workplace spirituality entails a feeling of connection to work and deeper, more comprehensive ideals is significant and is included in all interpretations (Rego & Cunha, 2008). In this article, the idea of connecting with something greater than oneself is referred to as spirituality in the workplace.

Three dimensions of workplace spirituality as highlighted by Ashmos and Duchon (2000) are: alignment with corporate principles (organizational level), feeling of community at the group level, and meaningful work at the individual level.

 Meaningful Work
This dimension of workplace spirituality simply refers to having a strong feeling of purpose and usefulness. The way workers engage with their everyday job at all levels is represented by this workplace function. Every individual has their own inner motivations and realities, as well as a desire to engage in activities that have greater significance for their life and the
wellbeing of others. Spiritual manifestation in the workplace requires taking this into account (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Finding meaning in your job is not a novel idea. But according to the spiritual perspective, work should also be done for things like searching out greater meaning, fulfilling one's life goals and inner desires via meaningful employment, and helping others (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Meaningful work is defined by Steger et al. (2012), as "important and excellent work in valence (meaningful)". As a result, employees who feel their work has meaning for them are happier (Steger et al., 2012), they perceive their work as significant (Arnold et al., 2007), and highly valued (Harpaz & Fu, 2002), all of which contribute to the stability of the company.

Stable SMEs of today have the flexibility to adapt to new situations. This point of view is supported by the claim that the struggling SMEs of today are still emotionally and spiritually lifeless, devoid of profound purpose and spirit. Organizations during the industrial era prioritize accumulating material riches, prioritizing economic and social aims above social and economic ones (Walsh et al., 2003). Sales, inflows and outflows, market share, and other financial measures have taken the place of social and spiritual activities and organizational health objectives in contemporary cultures, and profit growth has become the key strategic purpose (Gull & Doh, 2004; Post et al., 2002; Walsh et al., 2003).

Sense of Community

Deep ties or relationships with others are part of the second dimension, which has been referred to as a social notion. This means the merging of common beliefs, reciprocal duty, and commitment that ties individuals together as humans are spiritual creatures that exist in connection to one another (Duchon & Plowman, 2005). This facet of workplace culture influences coworker-to-coworker contact at the personal behavioral group level and involves a strong feeling of interpersonal communication and real care (Milliman et al., 2003). This point of view stresses how businesses not only generate products but also foster social networks that provide individuals, families, and communities with gratifying and valuable information (Gull & Doh, 2004).

Deep interpersonal interactions or communication are necessary for public sentiment (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Employees in groups or groups in companies may communicate on an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual level (Neal & Bennett, 2000). Social context is a strong feeling of interpersonal contact that involves encouragement, freedom of speech, and sincere concern (Milliman et al., 2003). Employees are urged to be realistic and permit personal connection rather than contemplate impersonal communication about their jobs; and a genuine sense of harmonious living (Garrett et al., 2014).

Alignment with Organization’s Values

When individuals see a strong link between their values, their job, and the goals of their business, this is a third part of workplace spirituality. Employees collaborate for the organization's greater good as part of the workplace's spiritual component (McGhee & Grant, 2017). The idea that a person's purpose is larger than their own and should help others or society is connected to this dimension of spirituality. The belief that managers and staff members in an organization are moral, sincere, and concerned with the welfare of their workers and the community is another sign of coordination (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

The fusion of an employee's personal beliefs and the organization's purpose and goal is referred to as congruence with organizational values (Milliman et al., 2003). Alignment with organizational values is therefore based on the idea that employees want to work for a
company that is a good corporate citizen with high standards for ethics and integrity; and contributes significantly to the general workforce, customers and neighborhood (Milliman et al., 2003). Employees also think their managers and coworkers are morally upright, managers have good conscience, they treat staff welfare and that of their host community with utmost priority (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

The Concept of Adaptability
Adaptability which was adopted as the measure of sustainability has its roots in biology. In management, adaptability is an organization’s ability to adjust its processes and procedures due to environmental changes (Denison et al., 2003). It involves taking immediate and / or calculated steps to meet the needs of participants. The business environment is complex and characterized by uncertainty; and organizations should always develop strategies that will reshape them.

Reeves and Deimler (2012) claim that business problems brought on by globalization and technology advancements have compelled firms to keep creating their own strategies. The competitive profitability of the top US corporations was studied by Reeves and Deimler (2012), and the results of their research revealed a 2% reduction in the top three companies in each sector in 1960. This percentage has increased to 14% by 2008. The survey also showed that at the time, market share was not led by for-profit leaders. Since 1950, 34% of market owners in the same sector have been profit leaders, although that number declined by 7% in 2007. Today's business leaders are unable to name their rivals.

Organizational sustainability will need the capacity to detect environmental changes via environment scanning, process adjustments, and business model redesign in the current unpredictable business climate (Reeves & Deimler, 2012). Corporate adaptation strategies, according to Reeves and Deimler (2012), should include ongoing yearly planning.

Organizations can now identify and evaluate uncertainty through environmental scans, as well as make adjustments that will encourage sustainability. Organizations adapt to their surroundings, internal customers, and process streamlining (Denison et al., 2003). According to Denison et al. (2003), organizational learning and transformation structure are examples of adaptive features. The authors Lank and Lank (1995) and Lee (1999) point out that continuous learning is a technique for adaptation.

A concerted effort to address new problems or circumstances that emerge as a result of shifting circumstances is known as adaptability (Valentin et al., 2012). More benefits come from adaptability than from jobless opponents. Organizations must change with the times. Adaptability was defined by Díez-Martín et al. (2013), as the growth of intellectual capital to increase organizational stability. Flexibility may be a symbolic or behavioral transformation, according to Kataria et al. (2013), Behavioral flexibility implies that solutions are quickly and broadly accepted.

Methodology
In Southern Nigeria states of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Delta, Edo, and Rivers, there are 628 hotels registered with Hotels Proprietors Association which forms the sample frame for the study. Using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula, a sample size of 289 hotels was determined. The researchers however adjusted the sample size by adding 30% to the calculated figure. Thus, an adjusted sample size of 311 hotels was used for the study. Bowley’s 1964 formula was applied to appropriate the adjusted sample of 311 to obtain sample size for each state.
The data collected through questionnaire was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 21). Demographic information about respondents was summarized using descriptive statistics, and the relationship between the dependent variable (sustainability) and the independent variable (workplace spirituality) was examined using a non-parametric test called the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient.

**Hypothesis 1 (H₀₁): There is no significant relationship between meaningful work and adaptability.**

Using meaningful work as the independent variable and adaptability as the dependent variable, a correlation analysis was done in regard to hypothesis 1. According to the findings, \( t_{cal} = 0.087 \) and \( t_{tab} \) at 5% = 0.05. Since \( t_{cal} > t_{tab} \), we reject the null hypothesis that the meaningful work parameter is not statistically significant for adaptability at the 5% significance level. According to table 1, the researcher rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between meaningful work and adaptability in South-South hotels since the p-value of 0.087 is greater than the critical value at the significance level of 5%, which is equal to 0.05. A 90% correlation coefficient means there is a significant positive association between the two variables.

**Hypothesis 2 (H₀₂): There is no significant relationship between sense of community and adaptability.**

In connection with hypothesis 2, a correlational analysis was conducted using adaptability as the dependent variable and sense of community as the independent variable. According to the findings, \( t_{cal} = 0.060 \) and \( t_{tab} \) at 5% = 0.01. We reject the null hypothesis that the sense of community parameter is not statistically significant for adaptability at the 1% level of significance because \( t_{cal} > t_{tab} \). According to table 2, the study rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between sense of community and adaptability of hotels in south-south Nigeria because the p-value of 0.060 is less than the critical value at the significance level of 1%, which is equal to 0.01. A 100% correlation coefficient indicates a significant positive relationship between the variables.

**Hypothesis 3 (H₀₃): There is no significant relationship between alignment with organization’s values and adaptability.**

In hypothesis 3, a correlation analysis was carried out using adaptability as the dependent variable and alignment with organization’s values as the independent variable. According to the findings, \( t_{cal} = 0.188 \) and \( t_{tab} \) at 5% = 0.05. The null hypothesis that alignment with organization’s values parameter is statistically significant for adaptability at the 5% significance level is rejected because \( t_{cal} > t_{tab} \). The study rejects the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between alignment with organization’s values and adaptability of hotels in southern Nigeria because the p-value of 0.188 is higher than the critical value at the significance level of 5% = 0.05. This is based on table 3, where the p-value is greater than the critical value. A 70% correlation value indicates that the variables are strongly positively related.

Feeling a connection to something greater than ourselves has been described as spirituality in the workplace. It entails living with meaning and purpose and fostering relationships with others, oneself, and nature (Puchalski et al., 2009). "Spirituality implies the realization that workers have an inner existence that demands meaningful work that takes place in a communal environment," (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). Workplace spirituality is a set of organizational ideals that is shown by a culture that encourages the interconnection of work processes, according to Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2003). This action promotes interpersonal connection, which results in emotions of completion and delight from fulfilling job. When
they write that "workplace spirituality is an experience of connectivity among people participating in the work process, prompted by authenticity, reciprocity, and personal kindness," (Marques et al., 2007), express the core of workplace spirituality. Increased motivation and organizational excellence are the results of the profound purpose that underpins the organization's activity. Based on this, the goal of this study was to investigate the connection between workplace spirituality and adaptability of small and medium-sized businesses in Nigeria's South-South region.

The first hypothesis aimed to investigate the connection between meaningful work and adaptability. Using the Spearman's rank coefficient, hypothesis was tested. According to analysis of the data gathered, there is a positive relationship between meaningful work and adaptability. Employees establish high standards for their job and enable the business to foresee issues because they see their work as meaningful and important thus, they provide appropriate and timely responses that improve organization's adaptive capacity.

The relationship between the sense of community and adaptability was the focus of the second hypothesis. The Spearman rank order coefficient was used to analyze the hypothesis. Sense of community and adaptability had a good association, according to analysis of the data gathered. This means that when employees have meaningful relationships with others, have psychological, emotional, and spiritual communication with other employees in groups or groups within organizations, and have support, freedom of speech, and genuine care, they perform at their highest level at work and enhance organizational adaptive ability.

The third hypothesis looked at the connection between alignment with organization’s values and adaptability. With the use of Spearman's rank-order coefficient, this hypothesis was tested. The evaluation of the data revealed a favourable correlation between alignment with organization’s values and adaptability. Employees tend to increase their levels of engagement and productivity, which always enhances sustainability, when they perceive their organization as one with a strong sense of ethics or integrity and one that contributes more to the well-being of employees, customers, and the community than the general society.

**Conclusion**

The results of this research showed a link between adaptability of hotels in southern Nigeria and workplace spirituality. The adaptive capacity of hotels in south-south Nigeria is positively impacted by all three dimensions of workplace spirituality; which has been defined as a culture of work ethics with moral values, deep values, and strong working relationships with coworkers and others involved in the workplace, as well as cohesion (or coordination) between individuals. The resilience of hotels in southern Nigeria is closely related to organizational beliefs and values.

These results confirm the contention made by Kossek et al. (2014), that altering employee behaviour and thinking is necessary for organizational adaptive ability. This is crucial since a stable work environment may have an impact on both the wellbeing of workers and the firm as a whole (Samul, 2019). According to Stead and Stead (2014), presenting the workplace spiritually is one strategy to establish a sustainable work environment. They draw attention to the link between adaptability and spirituality.

**Recommendations**

On the basis of the study's results, the following recommendations were made:
• Hotels in Southern Nigeria should develop work practices, processes, and policies that connect work life and employee wellbeing, provide workers the ability to flourish in their personal and family lives, and help them perform effectively.

• Hotels in southern Nigeria should make an effort to establish an atmosphere where people may have a say in the choices and actions that have an impact on their jobs.

• In southern Nigeria, hotel management should get greater attention than financial gains. They must provide a fulfilling existence for both their staff and the neighborhood.

• Hotel management in the southern part of Nigeria should incorporate spiritual activities into the workplace in an effort to give staff members a deeper sense of purpose and help them fulfill their duties. This is crucial for the success and sustainability of businesses, as research has shown that doing so increases productivity, and profitability.

References


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### Table 1. Results of Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient for items of meaningful work and adaptability.

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*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### Table 2. Results of Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient for items of sense of community and adaptability

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

### Table 3. Results of Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient for items of alignment with organization’s values and adaptability.

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