

Strategic Agility: A prospect for sustainable performance of micro-businesses in South-Eastern Nigeria

Monyei Ezieshi Francis^{1*}, Okeke Patrick Anene², Nwosu Kanayo Chike³

Department of Management, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria¹

Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria²

Department of Marketing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria³

francis.monyei.pg82803@unn.edu.ng^{1*}, okekepatricka2017@gmail.com²,

kaykaydpommy@yahoo.com³



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Abstract

Purpose: To investigate the role strategic agility plays in the sustainable performance of micro-businesses, while specifically, it sort to examine the link between micro-businesses decision-making and technology adoption in South-eastern Nigeria

Research methodology: A survey research method was adopted with a population quoted at 210 Micro-business registered owners in South-eastern Nigeria. The sample size of 136 was arrived at using [Krejcie and Morgan's \(1970\)](#) formula. A questionnaire set was designed for data collection and analyzed using the Linear Regression Statistics at a 5% level of significance.

Results: Decision-making and technology adoption have a statistical significant relationship with Micro-businesses in South-eastern Nigeria ($R^2 = .959$; $F = 1180.390$; $p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Limitations: The study did not cover all the five states in the region where the study was conducted.

Contribution: The study excruciates strategic agility's role, its prospect for Micro-businesses, and its link with sustainable performance in a turbulent and dynamic business environment.

Keywords: Strategic Agility, Sustainable performance, Decision-making, Technology adoption, SMEs, Southeast Nigeria

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1. Introduction

Unarguably, the 21st century has witnessed substantial fluctuations and deviations in every facet of business operations. The business environment is associated with enormous changes; what is relevant today becomes moribund and obsolete tomorrow ([Emejulu, Agbasi&Nosike, 2020](#)). Worthy of note are those brought about by technology, competitiveness, globalization, amongst others. These substantial fluctuations and deviations now necessitate the need for firms to review their strategies, configurations and operations ([Sharifi& Zhang, 2001](#)). Since it has become pertinent, the need to be constantly or consciously swift and apt when strategic issues are at play, bringing the concept of Strategic Agility (SA) to bear.

Strategic Agility (SA) has become topical, especially regarding these unprecedented substantial fluctuations and deviations being experienced by firms, requiring them to adopt it as one of the techniques for intervening and responding to these challenges. Indeed, SA is an emerging paradigm for re-engineering the competitiveness and productivity of firms. It is common knowledge that human thought processes are restricted in their capabilities to understand novel changes that occur in the

business environment, making the consequent turbulence around the world even more complicated and extremely dynamic ([Zain, Rose, Abdullah & Masrom, 2005](#)). It has also become pivotal for firms and their personnel to be fortified with intuitive agility, strategic decision-making, and task agility capabilities to efficiently discharge jobs. [Markos and Sridevi \(2010\)](#) claim that this should be done in such a way that they are motivated to work by devoting their energy, emotions, and insight to the firm's goals. In today's unpredictable and competitive business domain, companies must avail themselves of several competitive skills and structures to compete. Otherwise, they become unsustainable and possibly moribund. As such, a crucial feature they must possess to curb and mitigate this business environmental turbulence and volatility is SA. SA offers firms the flexibility of responding aptly and rapidly to business shocks and allows them to perform successfully regardless ([Warr&Inceoglu, 2012](#)). [Yeganegi and Azar \(2012\)](#) consider that the increasing rate of continuous change has become the new normal rather than the exception in today's world. As a result, interest in SA among industry professionals and academics has exponentially increased ([Tallon & Pinsonneault, 2011](#)). Statistics reveal that 86% of scholars and business owners ranked SA to be both critical to sustainable performance and research importance over time ([Sull, 2009](#)). It plays a fundamental part in business affairs because it provides both personnel and firms with these pre-requisites: information symmetry, improved capabilities, business process re-engineering, total quality management, and adaptation of new technology ([Sherehiy, 2008](#)).

[Monyei \(2021\)](#) asserts that the intensity of competition in a business environment determines the productivity of such a business, and in the long run, productivity determines its survivability. For firms to successfully compete in this environment, they need to continually improve their performance by cutting costs, being inventive in processes, outcomes, and speed to market. Also, to decide whether a firm is sustainable or otherwise, some indicators of performance must be evaluated, such as repeat purchase of customers, new technology adoption, and profitability, amongst others. Technology plays an important role in providing sustainable performance for firms. Investigations into SA are emerging, especially in connection with information technology ([Nwaise, 2017](#); [Izza, Imache, Vincent & Lounis, 2008](#)), due to the overarching reliance of firms on it in contemporary times. Firms' ability to succeed by detecting and reacting to industry changes has become disparagingly vital in recent times about the competitiveness and turbulence in the business environment. As a result, it is seen as a critical aspect in business and a requirement for a firm's competitiveness ([Mathiassen & Pries-Heje, 2006](#)). In light of this, the purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between SA as measured by decision-making capabilities and sustainable performance as measured by technology adoption of Microbusinesses in South-eastern Nigeria.

2. Review of related literature

A review of related studies is pivotal to critically excruciate the study and explore the literature on the construct variables. As such, the theoretical perspective begins the analysis as it directs the foregoing sections of this research.

Theoretical underpinning

The Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT) was chosen for this study due to its standpoints, which is linked to the study's propositions as well as the variables under inquiry. The DCT is a firm's ability to adapt its resource base tenaciously. [Teece, Pisano, and Shuen \(1997\)](#) defined dynamic capabilities theory as a company's ability to assimilate, construct, and reorganize internal and external competencies to respond to quickly changing circumstances. It also looks at how organizations deal with change in a volatile business environment by reorganizing their firm-specific competencies into new ones ([Teece, 2007](#)). The DCT helps researchers comprehend the principles of long-term performance while also assisting managers in defining relevant strategic thoughts and priorities to improve firm performance and avoid the zero profit tendency associated with operating in global marketplaces ([Teece, 2007](#)). The idea combines strategy and innovation literature to emphasize the most critical talents that management must possess to achieve superior long-term business results. [Esbach \(2009\)](#) viewed DC as the aptitude of a firm to decisively create, replicate and expand its resource base to achieve a competitive edge and ensure overall firm performance.

Conceptual clarifications

Strategic Agility (SA)

Strategic Agility (SA) is the ability of a firm to respond swiftly to changing environmental conditions ([Emejulu, Agbasi&Nosike, 2020](#)). Strategic agility is a well-established management concept ([Yusuf, Sarhadi&Gunasekaran, 1999](#)). Early in the 1990s, the word arose as a new strategy for managing the dynamism and changeable business environment. Strategic agility is the ability to thrive in a competitive business environment marked by constant and turbulent change by adapting quickly and effectively to shifting market needs, fueled by customer-defined products and services ([Dove, 2001](#)). It is envisioned as a production system with capabilities ranging from hard and soft technologies to human capital, knowledgeable administrators, and verifiable data to meet the market's rapidly changing demands as expressed by proximity, flexibility, clienteles, rivals, merchants, infrastructures, and responsiveness. It is the positive application of competitiveness, such as promptness, flexibility, creativity, and quality, to develop customer-driven commodities in a fast-changing business environment through the integration of limited resources and best practices in a knowledge-based environment.

According to strategic agility, the main characteristics of a responsive firm are speed and flexibility ([Gunasekaran, 1999](#)). Another important feature of SA is its genuine reaction to change and uncertainty. In a tumultuous scenario, it is the use of these shifts as crucial opportunities. That is, the ability to persevere and grow in the face of adversity ([Sharifi& Zhang, 2001](#)). Workplace flexibility refers to a company's ability to adjust its internal structures and processes in response to changing business conditions. Flexibility refers to a company's ability to adapt its operations to its surroundings while also emphasizing its willingness to make the most use of its resources. Due to its origins in the manufacturing industry, the SA concept encompasses flexibility and adaptation, particularly flexible manufacturing structures ([Christopher & Towill, 2001](#)). [Sherehiy \(2008\)](#) proposes SA as a new concept in management theory. He defines it as the process of dexterity in terms of the skills needed to move gracefully within an organization. It has been defined as the ability to adjust quickly to unpredictably changing circumstances while being profitable. It refers to a company's capacity to respond quickly to a rapidly changing environment ([Erande & Verma, 2008](#)). The notion of SA is based on the characteristics of a responsive firm's performance and is embodied in two related perceptions: "firm adaptability" and "firm flexibility." They both emphasize the importance of an organization's form, structure, and formalization level on its capacity to quickly adapt to its business environment ([Monyei, 2021](#); [Sherehiy, Karwowski& Layer, 2007](#)). As a result, SA is the process of preparing and closing business units and marketplaces to refocus on key core capabilities ([Hill & Jones, 2009](#)). [Sherehiy \(2008\)](#) posits that SA has several distinguishing characteristics. For example:

- (1) Adaptability and speed,
- (2) Responding to changes in the operational environment,
- (3) Products of exceptional quality,
- (4) Accurate information-based products and services,
- (5) Interacting with social and environmental concerns,
- (6) Various technologies for data collection,
- (7) Internal integration takes place both within and between institutions.

In recent times, the SA concept has been averred as the ability of business executives to rapidly and swiftly think, understand and create firm-wide clarity of the business environment. In line with the diverse definitions of the term, [Mehrabi, Siyadat and Allameh \(2013\)](#) suggest that the concept can also be used to infer the concepts of group labor and a common aim. SA is thus an entity's quick and accurate response to changes caused by circumstances within and around its functional environment that can influence its aims ([Yeganegi&Azar, 2012](#)). It is a firm's skill to adapt swiftly and efficiently to unexpected possibilities and provide resources in advance to fulfill potential needs. Strategic agility, rendering from [Doz and Kosonen \(2008\)](#), is a way through which organizations alter, reinvent themselves, adapt, and ultimately survive. They define strategic agility as a company's ability to constantly modify and adapt its strategic direction in a core business to generate value. Strategic agility is asserted by [Sampath \(2015\)](#) as the capacity of a company to efficiently and effectively

redeploy and redirect its resources to value creation, while [Teece, Peteraf, and Leih \(2016\)](#) averred it as a workplace's desire to optimally harness and utilize its assets, resources, and structures to create value. To create this value, a firm must possess apt decision making capabilities, since responding to business changes requires immediate execution of the action. It, therefore, puts strategic agility in motion for effectiveness and efficiency. This current study portends technology adoption as a veritable tool for strategic agility; as a firm's knack to employ premeditated insight, coordinated in-house and external response, and human capital capacity are consequent upon the firm's technological competence in achieving them. SA is an organization's ability to complete responsibilities in a timely and consistent manner, as well as in a disconnected global market-space, by producing high-quality products and providing effective service ([Tsourveloudis&Valavanis, 2002](#)).[Sambamurthy, Bharadwaj, and Grover \(2003\)](#) aver that SA is made up of numerous characteristics that can be considered as the firm's performance in terms of flexibility and adaptability as a result of specific operations. From a process-based perspective, SA is a set of decisions taken or procedures embarked that enables a company to detect and respond to deviations in a timely and cost-effective manner. The ability of a company to perceive, recognize and derive business opportunities is referred to as SA. In light of the aforementioned disposition, the researchers define SA as an organization's ability to achieve clear objectives by improving its product, better understanding of its human resources, influencing its developmental plans, and reducing effort in a rapidly changing business environment ([Oosterhout, Waarts& Van Hillegersberg, 2006](#)).

Decision-Making

Decision-making is one of the most important drivers of strategic agility and remains a function of individuals (Human Capital) in organizations. That is why it is said that Human Capital (HC) is one of the most important resources for firm performance. One of the core factors in the contemporary economy at both macro and micro levels is HC([Borodako, Berbeka, Rudnicki, Łapczyński& Mariusz, 2019](#)). Strategic agility may not yield the desired result if the management (HC) of a firm does not make calculated decisions to respond swiftly to changes in the business environment. That is, for organizations that decide to be strategically agile, they must have taken a conscious step and decision to do so. Being flexible and fast in response to changing customer tastes and demand or government regulations takes an informed decision to come to fruition, and that is when decision making comes into play. [Yeganegi and Azar \(2012\)](#); [Sherehiy \(2008\)](#) proffer that the ability to gather, reorganize, and evaluate significant information in a variety of ways to explain the business's consequences as quickly as possible and to recognize opportunities and threats based on the analysis of events, as well as the development of action plans that direct resource restructuring and the creation of new competitive me The decision-making task entails a series of interconnected tasks that explain a series of events and identify possibilities and risks in the workplace. Decision-making jobs can entail gathering data from a variety of sources to understand the repercussions of their actions. The objective of decision-making is to maximize possibilities while minimizing the impact of risks on the firm's mode of operation ([Houghton, El Sawy, Gray, Donegan& Joshi, 2004](#)).

Sustainable Performance (SP)

Concerning the concept of sustainable performance, [Monyei \(2021\)](#) claims that there is still some level of ambiguity and dearth in clarity as to the methodological and procedural contexts of the term. Studies have proffered growth, profitability, technological advancement, and skilled workforce, among others, as indicators in measuring it ([Whitney, 2010; Ambrosini, 2003](#)). SP is also averred to connote effectiveness or a firm's capacity to accomplish specifically detailed goals in the long run; through growth, renovation, and survival. In terms of SP, technological advancement, monetary performance, functional productivity, proficiency, and profitability are all factors to consider. Total Quality Management and re-engineering business processes are a myopic way of viewing sustainable performance, which does not quantify accomplishment in the long term, particularly in light of industry and market competitiveness. [Hill and Jones \(2009\)](#) inferred that SP in the long term hinges on the firm's ability to execute tasks better than its competitors using technological competencies. This is gained by having distinctive and rare competencies that cannot be imitated. SP refers to an organization's capacity to meet long-term goals and strike a balance between the organization's goals

and those of its people. SP refers to a company's ability to coordinate activities by tying all of its components around a shared goal ([Whitney, 2010](#)). Most business setups' central goal is profitability; hence the concept of sustainable performance is essential to them ([Olanipekun, Abioro, Akanni, Arulogun&Rabiu, 2015](#)). Sustainable performance is claimed by [Syafarudin \(2016\)](#), as the result or achievement influenced by a company's operations in utilizing technological assets. It is also posited by [Jahanshahi, Rezaie, Nawaser, Ranjbar, and Pitamber \(2012\)](#) as the actual outcome fashioned by a business measured and compared to the predicted results. While also depicted as the improvement of a company's result over time, its shared ideals ([Syafarudin, 2016](#)).

In any business, there are two methods to SP. The first method to SP is the economic gateway, which is built on a competitive advantage derived from the industry's rarity and uniqueness. This first method to firm performance sustainability is linked to the business environment's external environmental structure. It encompasses competitiveness, innovation, and situation analysis, which is defined by a vision of future opportunities and challenges and predicting competitive advantages ([Ambrosini, 2003; Hill & Jones, 2009](#)). A second approach to SP is the resources approach, which examines the idea of perceiving the organization as a collection of resources that enable it to gain viability and competitive advantage ([Ambrosini, 2003](#)). This strategy is primarily based on the organization's unique competencies, and because it is a collection of resources, their effectiveness is dependent on their ability to put them to use. This involves a careful adoption of specific technological apparatus that creates values, acts as a method for analyzing strategic abilities that can be translated into critical competencies, which in the long-term, enables the analysis of a company's competitive edge([Ambrosini, 2003; Hill & Jones, 2009](#)).

Adoption of technology

One of the best thriving industries in the world is microbusinesses industries; they are crucial for the economic development of many nations. Microbusinesses are vital towards the contribution to the economies of the world ([Lim & Teoh, 2021](#)). One of the business sector models currently thriving is a startup of which SMEs are a huge part ([Ariyanto & Kustini, 2021](#)). For these types of firms to succeed over a long period, they need technology. Adopting technology and its major component Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is essential for sustainable performance. The world is increasingly becoming more technologically aware; hence, its adoption by firms is a major impetus to the survival of firms ([Arachie, Nzewi, Gerald & Ezinne, 2020](#)). Technology is being hailed as a critical tool for facilitating sales and a measure for sustainable performance of firms in the long run([Serrano-Cinca& Gutiérrez-Nieto, 2014; Kauffman & Riggins, 2012](#)).

Similarly, [Nwaise \(2017\)](#) posits that technology adoption reduces labor-related operating expenses as an essential practice. Technology adoption practice is desirable for managing numerous clientele and enables the firm to reduce operational costs and improve efficiency. [Diniz, Jayo, Pozzebon, Lavoie, and Foguel \(2014\)](#), as well as [Kauffman and Riggins \(2012\)](#), have found that the utilization of technology is one of the commanding tools for sustained performance of SMEs. [Rozzani and Abdul Rahman \(2013\)](#) posit that technology aids procedures in firms. Findings of these studies indicated that most firms are rejecting the adoption of technology due to its expensive installation cost and lack of client involvement affecting their market demand and supply. [Monyei \(2021\)](#), in concurring with [Nwaise \(2017\)](#) affirms that businesses adopting new technology would introduce extra costs as well as require certain capabilities, which will affect the monetary performance adversely. It is true; however, that resourceful, innovative financial technologies such as management information software, credit scoring technology, the internet, and smart card operations can help reduce administrative costs, increase workforce productivity, and improve financial statement reliability and consistency. By doing so, technology will have an impact on both short- and long-term performance, as well as on the long-term viability of businesses ([Nwaise, 2017; Abraham & Balogun, 2012](#)).

Strategic Agility and sustainable performance: The nexus

Strategic agility is debated as a concept consisting of basically two (2) aspects; knowledge and dexterity. This debate excruciates strategic agility as; first, the capacity of a business set up to identify, detect and understand the novel or familiar industry changes through forecasting and to analyze the potentialities of opportunities and threats inherent in the business environment; and secondly, the promptness, swiftness and tenacity to respond appropriately to these industrial changes through the mishmash of resources, capabilities and strategies ([Tabe-Khoshnood&Nematizadeh, 2017](#)). On the other hand, the debate on sustainable performance measures a business's outcomes, either monetary and/or structural, that connotes its growth in sales turnover, operation facilities, staff strength or its profitability entailing in business as accomplishing premeditated growth rate, financial security, and achieving a firm's set objectives ([Matchaba-Hove & Goliath, 2007](#)). It is imperative to analyze a firm's performance from this holistic perspective in a bid to placate the yearnings of every stakeholder aligned with the business. As such, in this study, a firm's sustainable performance is asserted as consisting of structural asset, technology, market share, product quality, competitive edge, innovativeness, and customer satisfaction ([Monyei, 2021](#); [Nwaise, 2017](#)).

The link between strategic agility and sustainable performance creates a business' ability to constantly modify and adapt appropriately in time with its strategic route in attaining overall productivity with optimum cost ([Weber & Tarba, 2014](#)). In contemporary times the business environment is embracing strategic agility as it enhances uninterrupted performance and an adequate modification of the firm in turbulent times and doing so dynamically ([Ofoegbu&Akanbi, 2012](#)). The sustainable performance of a company, particularly Microbusiness, depends on its strategic agility measured with regards to its contenders, clientele, merchants, associates and even the type of governmental policies ([Amniattalab& Ansari, 2016](#)). [Rohrbeck and Kum \(2018\)](#) posit that strategic agility is a potent predictor that guides against undesirable outcomes in any business environmental alterations and an impending preparedness to outdo competitors by gaining greater profitability. Empirically, the interplay has been revealed between strategic agility and its sustainable performance of an array of businesses by augmenting operations, functions, commodities, quality and quantity of service offerings, and speed to market of products ([Somuyiwa, Adebayo & Akanbi, 2011](#); [Oyedijo, 2012](#); [Appelbaum, Calla, Desautels&Hasan, 2017](#); [Al-Romeedy, 2019](#)). Available literature focuses on the link between strategic agility and performance of firms in diverse industries but little or none have drawn a clear nexus of strategic agility with sustainable performance as a strategy for Microbusinesses and geared towards significantly ensuing longer-termed survival or viability. Thus, an extensive evaluation of the nexus between strategic agility and sustainable performance of Microbusinesses will indicate that an agile firm is holistically more viable in any intense competitive locale through its capacity to responsiveness, technical know-how, and liveness strengthen its leadership position, market shares, and an edge competitively in the industry and overall productivity ([Ganguly, Nilchiani & Farr, 2009](#); [Oyedijo, 2012](#)).

Empirical insight

[Nwaise \(2017\)](#) explored the issues of empowering nurses through knowledge and technology in a bid to decrease fall rates in Atlanta, U.S.A. A pre-test, post-test, and course evaluation adopted the descriptive method, and a pre-test and post-test were composed of 30 nurses for data analysis. Findings revealed that nurses had an average score of 43% in the collective assessment of their knowledge on fall prevention strategies. The study then recommended that adequate and periodic staff training on fall prevention strategies should be inculcated as it prevents falls and lowers patient morbidity and mortality rates.

[Monyei \(2021\)](#) investigated organizational paranoia and sustainable performance of banks in Lagos State, Nigeria. The research instruments were a questionnaire and an oral interview. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Simple Linear Regression statistical methods were used to test the research hypotheses. The outcomes revealed organizational paranoia as having a positive impact on the sustainable performance of banks in Lagos State, Nigeria.

[Gerald, Obianuju and Chukwunonso \(2020\)](#) analyzed the impact of strategic foresight (SF) on SMEs' competitive advantage (CA) in Anambra State. The study included survey research with a sample size of 306 business owners and a population of 1500 people. Data was collected using a standardized questionnaire and analyzed using the regression technique. The findings revealed a link between SF and CA.

[Akintokunbo and Agi \(2020\)](#) examined the relationship between strategic agility and organizational success in Rivers State's Deposit Money Banks. The study used a cross-sectional survey as the primary source of data gathering. The study's participants were 60 managers from various banks in the study area. Hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics, while generated data were analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings revealed that strategic agility and organizational performance of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State have a substantial link.

[Nafei \(2016\)](#) analyzed in Egypt, the key to organizational success is organizational agility. The study's data was gathered from personnel at Egypt's Menoufia University Hospitals. Two hundred eighty-five valid questionnaires were returned out of the 338 issued to employees, resulting in an 84% response rate. The study hypotheses were confirmed using Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA). The study participants agreed that OA had a direct impact on the dimensions of OS of personnel at Menoufia University Hospitals in Egypt.

[Alhadid \(2016\)](#) studied in Jordan the impact of organizational agility on corporate performance. The questionnaire was created and delivered to personnel in higher and middle management. To evaluate the influence of organizational agility on business performance, the researcher used simple regression analysis. The findings revealed that there was a favourable relationship between organizational agility and corporate performance.

3. Materials and methods

The study adopted a survey research method. Based on the research structure, which intended to gather data from sampled respondents through the questionnaire, justifies the choice as the most suited for the investigation. The population of the study consist of 210 owners/managers of registered Microbusinesses with less than five employees in South-eastern Nigeria, selected randomly from a sample size of 136 owners/managers of the Microbusinesses and calculated using [Krejcie and Morgan \(1970\)](#) formula. The instrument for data gathering was a structured questionnaire that was validated by experts from academia and the industry. The questionnaire was also subjected to a reliability test based on the split-half technique, giving a 0.8912 coefficient which signifies a high reliability level. The authors distributed the questionnaire set with help from four (4) research assistants who are Doctoral candidates of the Department of Management, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and possessing a knack for effectiveness and efficiency. A total of 105 copies of the questionnaire were returned positive and, therefore, analyzed, representing 77% of the sample size. The data collected were tested using the Linear Regression Analysis at a 5% level of significance.

Data presentation and analysis

Table 1. Responses of Respondents

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Decision
	Decision Making							Reject
1	In making decisions, my company constantly considers the future.	40	30	-	20	15	3.57	Reject
2	Alterations in the business environment force us to react swiftly.	12	57	9	17	10	3.42	Accept
3	We have to wait for competitors to take action before we can follow suit.	19	42	-	35	9	3.26	Reject
4	Before situations become critical, decisions are made timely.	22	39	-	17	27	3.11	Accept

Technology Adoption								Accept
5	We are excited to incorporate technology into our operations.	19	20	1	26	40	2.55	Accept
6	Technology adoption in operations is hindered by its capital-intensive nature.	38	34	2	18	13	3.63	Reject
7	My company is continuously debating how to use technology to improve our performance.	12	24	2	27	40	2.44	Reject
8	To remain viable, technology is the best strategy to adopt.	59	34	7	15	-	4.21	Reject

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1 illustrates respondents' responses to questions about Micro businesses' decision-making and technology adoption in South-eastern Nigeria. The analysis is based on the mean of the individual questionnaire items, with a 3-point acceptance criterion, which means that any questionnaire item with a mean of 3, should be accepted, while those with a mean of less than 3 should be rejected. On questions used in measuring decision making, the respondents accepted that in making decisions, their company constantly considers the future with a mean of 3.57. Also, they agreed that alterations in the business environment force them to react swiftly, with a mean of 3.42. They also agreed that they have to wait for competitors to take action before they can follow suit, as shown with a mean of 3.26. A mean of 3.11 signifies that the respondents agreed that before situations become critical, timely decisions are made. One question used to capture technology adoption; the respondents disagreed that they are excited to incorporate technology into their operations, as shown with a mean of 2.55, which is lesser than 3. On the contrary, they agreed that technology adoption in operations is hindered by its capital-intensive nature with a mean of 3.63. A mean of 2.44 shows that the respondents do not agree that their company is continuously debating how to use technology to improve their performance. They, however, agreed that to remain viable, technology is the best strategy to adopt 4.21.

Test of hypothesis

H₀₁: Decision-making and technology adoption does not have a significant relation in Microbusinesses in South-eastern Nigeria.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.959 ^a	.920	.919	1.479

a. Predictors: (Constant), DM

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 2 is a model summary for the regression analysis on decision-making and technology adoption in Microbusinesses in South-eastern Nigeria. With an R² of .959, changes in decision-making cause a 96% change in technology adoption. That is, the adoption of technology by SMEs to a great extent hinges on the conscious decision of management and or owners to do so. A correlation coefficient of .920 also indicates that a positive relationship exists between the variables.

Table 3. ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2581.642	1	2581.642	1180.390	.000 ^b
	Residual	225.272	103	2.187		
	Total	2806.914	104			

- a. Dependent Variable: TA
 - b. Predictors: (Constant), DM
- Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 3 shows the ANOVA results for the hypothesis regression analysis. The F here is 1180.390, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance (p-value 0.05). As a result, the alternate hypothesis is adopted, and it is stated that decision-making and technology adoption in Microbusinesses in South-eastern Nigeria have a statistically significant relationship.

4. Discussions of findings

Before testing the hypothesis, it is stated that decision-making and technology adoption do not significantly correlate with Microbusinesses. However, after conducting an empirical examination and data analytics through the Linear Regression statistical tool, decision-making and technology adoption have a statistically significant relationship with Microbusinesses in South-eastern Nigeria, leading to the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis. This finding implies that adopting technology by Microbusinesses cannot take place except the owners or managers make a conscious effort to take strategic decisions in doing so. The more these owners or managers make strategically agile decisions, the more technology will be adopted in the operations of the Microbusinesses in the region. This finding is consistent with [Alhadid \(2016\)](#), who investigated the impact of organizational agility on company performance in Jordan and discovered a link between organizational agility and firm performance, as assessed by the extent of technology adoption in their operations. This was also consistent with the findings of [Akintokunbo and Agi \(2020\)](#), who examined the relationship between strategic agility and organizational performance and found that there is a significant link between strategic agility and organizational performance of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State, Nigeria. Furthermore, [Gerald, Obianuju, and Chukwunonso \(2020\)](#), who also explored the impact of strategic foresight (SF) on the competitive advantage (CA) of SMEs in Anambra State, Nigeria, discovered that SF and CA are connected, with CA being established through technology adoption.

5. Conclusion

Microbusinesses are the bedrock of most developing countries around the world. Despite the meager subventions from the government with regards to financial credit facilities or standard business infrastructures. They are usually left to fend for themselves, notwithstanding the intense competitiveness in their operational locale and oftentimes globally, which makes most Microbusinesses outwitted or extinct, at the slightest loss of awareness, focus, and alertness this market scenario. Therefore, this study concludes that decision-making and technology adoption in Microbusinesses in South-eastern Nigeria have a statistically significant relationship. For Microbusinesses to be competitively agile either through functional flexibility or promptness in responding to business changes, conscious decision making necessitated by the need to adapt or improve on technology utilization in their operations remains a crucial strategy and component to guaranty their chances of long-termed survival.

Recommendations

In line with the research outcomes, the following recommendations are proffered:

- a) Business executives, stakeholders and personnel of Microbusinesses should ensure that a conscious effort is made to incorporate technology in their operations as it is a pivotal tool in driving productivity.
- b) Management of Microbusinesses must be flexible, insightful and constantly keeping abreast with the dynamic nature of the business environment as it avails them the pre-requisite knowledge and potential to curb business insurgencies that permeate or pervade operations, productivity and profitability.

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