

The Moderating Effect of Perceived Organisational Support on Learning Organisation and Company Reputation of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Nigeria



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ABSTRACT: This work empirically established the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on learning organisation and company reputation in Nigeria's SMEs. This study employed a quantitative research design with an adopted questionnaire to collect data from the Four Hundred and Seventy-Eight (478) managers or owners of small and medium scales enterprises in Lagos, Nigeria. SmartPLS-SEM 4 was used to analyse the data collected. The results of the structural models showed a significantly positive statistical relationship between learning organisation and company reputation. However, perceived organisational support does not moderate the relationship between learning organisation and company reputation. This study's purview lies in Nigeria's small and medium-scale enterprises. Thus, it limits the generalisation of results to big or blue-chip firms. However, further research could be considered in the big establishments or specific industries to support the findings. The study's conclusions have specific applications for owners, managers, and corporate organisations. Business organisations must be deliberately placed to compete in today's intensely dynamic and competitive business environment; as a result, they must ensure that a learning environment is provided and that employees are constantly learning on the job to foster worthwhile delivery and improve firm's reputation.

KEYWORDS: Perceived organisational support, learning organisation, company reputation, business owners and business managers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) have been a significant pillar and the primary source of growth, success, and sustenance of most nations' economies (Ionescu et al., 2011; Matthews et al., 2017). In a relative term, SMEs, which are the primary determinant of a nation's overall economic quality, also serve as a propeller of socio-economic transformation, which includes industrialisation. In many economies, serving as a crucial channel for enhancing technical, innovation, and entrepreneurial competencies among critical sectors of society while being responsible for the vast majority of advances in new products and processes (Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria and National Bureau of Statistic., 2017). Despite the considerable contribution made by the SMEs, it is posited globally that their performances are still not up to expectation due to some unforeseen circumstances and existing problems that befallen these establishments (PwC, 2020) as several SMEs find it hard to survive the harsh business environment with heavy contention with the various barriers (Matthews et al., 2017). Consequently, this has dampened their reputation (Allianz, 2021).

Empirically, the poor performance of these organisations (SMEs) has been chiefly traced to the unstable, rapidly declining business reputation which could be owing to the absence of learning organisation which could have been a tool to deal with such effects (Kools, Stoll, George, Steijn, Bekkers, & Gouédard, 2020). Also, difficulties in managing business to survive and become a brand and a household name is another problem small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria have to battle (FATE Foundation report, 2020). To this end, the inability to meet the quality standard and volume of production due to deficit infrastructure has created room for the reputation of these firms to be questioned, creating wrong notions and beliefs. According to the FATE Foundation report (2020) on MSME report in Nigeria, 72% of the population studied were experiencing

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difficulty in managing their business. Consequently, this has made it even more difficult for business owners to secure the trust and loyalty of consumers, attract better people, create better value, image, notion, perspective, and compete successfully.

Researchers have attempted to study the effect of the learning organisation on several dimensions of organisational performance (Bhaskar & Mishra, 2017; Boccia & Cseh, 2021; Ikhwan et al., 2021; Lim-Laguraa, 2019). However, based on the extant literature reviewed, most of these studies were conducted in countries other than Nigeria, and company reputation as a dimension of organisational performance has hardly been explored, leaving a notable knowledge gap. Meanwhile, the scholars suggested further studies in other countries alongside other organisational performance variables. Thus the need to find out the effect of learning organisation on the company reputation of small and medium-scale enterprises in Nigeria.

Nigeria's small and medium-scale enterprises face difficulty in creating the desired company reputation for the organisation in the eyes of the consumer as related to other competitors is a problem Nigeria's small and medium-scale enterprises face (Iloh & Nosiri, 2022; Olujide, 2022). Rapidly, consumers are losing trust and refusing to rely on and award credibility to Nigeria SMEs as a result of their constant inability to meet the quality standard, meet up delivery time, and volume of production (Fate Foundation, 2021; Olusayo & Jonny, 2021; Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, 2020) which could have been orchestrated by poor leadership, inability to link business to its environment, teaming up and continuously learning together which are all subjects of the learning organisation. According to the Fate Foundation report (2020) on MSME report in Nigeria, 72% of the population studied were experiencing difficulty managing their business, fulfilling responsibility and meeting up to credibility, thereby frustrating the business's reputation. Also, Gains and Partner (2020) reported that 47% of the SMEs could not meet up the volume of production and delivery time, while 44% are experiencing difficulty in driving the business to a level where goodwill, reliability, and trustworthiness could be ascertained which at the end placed them at the negative edge of reputation.

Moreover, corporate reputation was investigated alongside stakeholders' CSR-related and was the dominant influencer; however, negative reputation was posited to yield poor support and buy intent despite high-fit corporate social responsibility (Yeonsoo Kim & Ferguson, 2019). Also, its relationship with human capital efficiency was positive because it proved to be a significant driver of a company's reputation (Ginesti et al., 2018). Furthermore, no meaningful relationship was obtained between celebrity and corporate reputation, although the positive role of CSR is found to preserve the reputational pedigree as users of services and products express resistance to negative information concerning the organisation (Kim et al., 2019). Likewise, its relationship with value congruence was positive, establishing it as a vital sign of credibility for investors, especially the naïve ones (Kaur & Singh, 2019; You & Hon, 2021).

Human capital theory, which J. Mincer formerly postulated by Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker in the 1950s, traceable to the neoclassical school of thought in economics, will be the guiding theory for this work (Fix, 2018; Galiakberova, 2019; Gillies, 2017; Marginson, 2019; Pasban & Nojedeh, 2016; Tan, 2014). A central tenet of the HCT is that human capital stocks are seen to be equivalent to other means of production, with investments in employees' learning capacity, such as training and education to improve and better their skills, thereby yielding future productive output for economies, organisations and individuals (Dobbins et al 2014; Fix, 2018; Gillies, 2017; Marginson, 2019; Tan, 2014). Meanwhile, according to Weatherly, 2003 as cited in Pasban and Nojedeh (2016), human capital is considered a collection of features, life trade, knowledge, creativity, innovation, and energy, which people invest in work. HCT thereby sees training and skill acquisition within the organisation as an investment that increases productivity or the present employment, the earnings of the employees, and future employment (Dobbins et al., 2014; Gillies, 2017; Tan, 2014). Thus the investment into learning organisation by the Nigeria small and medium scale enterprises will produce a better company reputation (organisational performance)

To this end, the study aims to empirically establish the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the learning organisation and the company reputation of small and medium-scale enterprises. The remainder of this work is organised below to achieve the abovementioned goals. Before presenting the study design and establishing any hypotheses, it evaluates relevant literature on learning organisations, firm reputation, and perceived organisational support. This is done to show the relationship between the variables under investigation. The method used to conduct this research is then explained. The outcomes of the data analysis are then presented. Finally, it explores the study's findings and emphasises their consequences.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

To develop hypotheses and offer the study framework that demonstrates the relationship between the variables analysed, this part evaluates relevant literature on the concepts of learning organisations, firm reputation, and perceived organisational support.

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2.1 Learning organisation.

The concept of Learning organisation (LO) has its depth in management, but it is more of a discourse in Human Resource Development, Management and Organizational Behavior, and it is marked by creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge for improvement (Kiani & Gillani, 2014; Yoonjeong Kim & Han, 2015; Malik & Garg, 2017a). It emerged in the early 1990s in the works of Senge titled "The Fifth Discipline", where the art and practice of the learning organisation were explored (Durrah et al., 2018). Since then, the construct has piqued academics' and practitioners' curiosity, which is clear from the constant study efforts in recent years as a tool to gain competitive advantage and outstanding organisational performance (Kiani & Gillani, 2014; Malik & Garg, 2017a). Meanwhile, as observed, learning organisations are of utmost relevance in developing nations since they aid in improving skills, people's knowledge, and decision-making capacity (Bhaskar & Mishra, 2017); hence, it has become a watchword for organizational success and long-term viability (Malik & Garg, 2017a). The notion of the learning organisation is extensively utilised in businesses, particularly those trying to stay afloat in a competitive environment (Hussein et al., 2016). Moreover, the recommendation to the learning organisation provided by Senge are conceived to be abstract and are not practically applicable as a result; in 1996, Watkins and Marsick proposed dimensions of the learning organization questionnaire (DLOQ), which is being widely used (Yoonjeong Kim & Han, 2015; Song, Chai, Kim, & Bae, 2018). Furthermore, learning organisation has improved employees' technical know-how, increased commitment to their objectives, and improved organisational output (Dekoulou & Trivellas, 2015). It connotes that the presence of a learning organisation will create an improved organisation.

Peter Senge. In 1990 as cited and adopted in the works of (Budhiraja et al., 2019; Hussein et al., 2016; Malik & Garg, 2020; Tortorella et al., 2019), Senge defined a learning organisation as one where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. Furthermore, learning organisations, as proposed by Watkins and Marsick, are characterised by seven dimensions and instruments, which are continuous learning, dialogue and inquiry, team learning, embedded system, the system connects, empowerment and strategic leadership (Bhaskar & Mishra, 2017; Boccia & Cseh, 2021; Chawla & Lenka, 2015; Ellinger et al., 2002; Hussein et al., 2016; Yoonjeong Kim & Han, 2015; Kyoung Park, Hoon Song, Won Yoon, & Kim, 2014; Malik & Garg, 2017b; Milić et al., 2017; Pokharel & Ok Choi, 2015; Salehzadeh et al., 2014; Song et al., 2018; Subiyakto, Widyanti, and Basuki, 2020; Xie, 2020; Yin Yin Lau et al., 2020). Thus it has been accepted for this study. Organisations and practitioners have had reasons to refer to learning organisation (LO) as the saviour and solution to organisations' problems (Elkjaer, 2021). Little wonder large organisations are constantly looking for ways to increase their learning capacity and the speed at which knowledge is transformed into new value-added to maintain performance in complex and ever-changing business conditions, particularly in the face of numerous constraints (Rupčić, 2021). In like manner, Marsick and Watkins (2003), cited in Welsh et al. (2021), posited that learning organisations are an organism breathing and use learning to improve and sustain organisational performance which includes their reputation. In this case, Marsick and Watkins see learning organisation as the life of any organisation that wants to improve in any sphere..

2.2 Company Reputation (CR)

Corporate reputation is a multidirectional term with several elements that, in practice, are difficult to quantify (Ginesti et al., 2018). One of the sources of differentiation and distinctiveness of any organisation from the rest of its peers is the reputation taken to be a reliable indicator of cooperative performance (Caviggioli et al., 2020; Yeonsoo Kim & Ferguson, 2019). Company reputation is an individual or consumer's belief and perceived feelings about an organisation based on their assessment (Zakari et al., 2019). Also, CR is typically a reflective representation in the populace's mind concerning a firm's previous actions and characteristics, reflected in the quality of their services, products, and relationship to their environment (Yeonsoo Kim & Ferguson, 2019). Walsh et al., 2009, as cited in (Zakari et al., 2019), said that a Company's reputation is the mental associations about an organisation held by others outside the corporation. From this view, a company's reputation is an intangible asset in nature but has what it takes to produce tangibility but may not be limited to the outside of the organisation alone. Corroborating this, (Chen et al., 2016; Engizek & Yasin, 2017) declared that a company's reputation is an asset or feature that can not be imitated, bought or substituted but can be used to obtain a long-term competitive market advantage while shaping the opinions and perceptions of shareholders and stakeholders. However, Fombrun et al. (2000), as cited in Yeonsoo Kim and Ferguson (2019), contended that CR has to do with the collective assessment of a company's ability to provide valued outcomes to a representative group of stakeholders. In light of this meaning, one could deduce that every consumer or none of the organisations' products and services, one way or the other assesses the firm to form an opinion (respect or disrespect) that may not be easily changed. Elucidating this view, Dowling (2016), cited in Caviggioli et al. (2020), opined that CR is the admiration and

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respect a person holds for an organisation at a point in time. Considering the time introduced by Dowling, an individual's reputation or reference for a firm is time-bound; it may be good today based on the perception of such personality; otherwise, tomorrow, if what was conceived before could no longer be felt. Reputation, therefore, should not be seen as a static statute that cannot be broken. However, this study will rely on the meaning given by Forbrun (1996), as cited in Ginesti et al. (2018), that CR is a perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future orientation that identifies the firm's overall appeal when compared with other main rivals.

Lange et al. (2011), as cited in Caviggioli et al. (2020), proposed three dimensions of Company reputation: company visibility, specific outcome, and generalised favourability. The first dimension (visibility) deals with the collective perception of the organisation known by the populace, which could mean the awareness of its existence. The second dimension focuses on the perception of the specific firm outcome that waters the interest of the beholder. The third is the judgement and attributes of those who observed the organisation. Moreover, Where a company's reputation is in good standing, there tends to be the word of mouth and consumer loyalty (Zakari et al., 2019). Likewise, it could yield a high recommendation, increase financial performance, positive consumer attitude, more significant commitment, support from stakeholders, attract the best employees boost investment and a well-placed competitive advantage coupled with the reduction of barriers to competition, the opening of a new market, supply chain and business partners and protect the business in the time of crisis (O'Connor, 2001; Otoo, 2019; Rothman, 2016; Tortorella et al., 2019). Meanwhile, it can only be possible if CR is found positive and otherwise if found reversed (O'Connor, 2001; Otoo, 2019; Rothman, 2016; Tortorella et al., 2019). Moreover, several factors can be employed as strategic tools to boost an organisation's reputation, such as a celebrity's personality, appeal and endorsement, market strategy and employment policies and rest (Caviggioli et al., 2020; Zakari et al., 2019).

2.3 Learning Organisation and Company Reputation

Company Reputation (CR) is one of the non-financial variables of organisational performance (Menon & Mohanty, 2012). Moreover, while positing learning organisation as a medium to solve an organisational performance problem, it has not been proven explicitly against the company's reputation. However, Patro (2021) found a positive statistical relationship between learning organisation and organisational performance in educational institutions. Also, in Zamboanga City Universities, LO was established as a predictor of OP (Lim-Laguraa, 2019). The case is different in Saudi Universities, where the institutions implementing learning organisations yielded improved and better Organisational performance (Meshari, Othayman, Bin, Boy, Doneddu, & others., 2021).

Furthermore, adopting a learning organisation culture is positively related to organisational performance in Malaysia Higher Education (Hussein et al., 2016), while the exact positive correlation of LO and OP relationship in the higher institution was posited by Ponnuswamy & Manohar (2016). In another industry, i.e. commercial banks, it was established that dimensions of LO had a significant effect on the organisation's performance (Mbutia, 2018). Also, in National bank branches in Zabol, it was opined that LO significantly affects organisational performance (Srgolzaei et al., 2018). The Ecology establishment contended that LO has a notable and significant effect on organisational performance (Chen et al., 2018). To this end, it is presumed that learning organisation will positively affect a company's reputation; hence we propose the following hypothesis

H₀₁: Learning organisation significantly and positively affects the company reputation of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Nigeria.

2.4. Perceived Organisational Support (POS)

Perceived Organisational Support (POS) is seen as a critical factor in creating a supportive environment or providing adequate and necessary resources for attaining organisational set goals (Le & Lei, 2019), while it also serves as a barometer of a management's positive motives (Cheng & O-Yang, 2018). Referring to POS as a valuable resource, Wen, Huang, Sam, & Hou, (2019); and Cheng & O-Yang (2018) argued that employees could produce a series of positive feelings predicated on understanding and support from peers and managers and acknowledging their expertise alongside its ability to bolster employee optimism and confidence in coping with role demands. Meanwhile, POS, as a resource that enables work and goal attainment, comes in the form of but is not limited to socioemotional, funding, equipment, ideas, technology, and physical assistance (Cheng & O-Yang, 2018).

POS has therefore been seen as a significant promoter of organisation and employee creativity (Suifan et al., 2018). Likewise, Kyoung Park et al. (2014) posited that a support system is required to initiate and develop employee innovative behaviour and capacity. Also, it has been observed to be a factor that advances employee emotional power and stability, thereby yielding an encouraging firm outcome. In like manner, Suifan et al. (2018) said that where POS prevails, employees tend to have a sense of obligation, duty of care and welfare towards the organisation, thereby helping it fulfil the set goals and objectives of the firm.

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2.5 Learning organisation, Company reputation and the moderating role of Perceived organisational support

Several variables have been used as a moderator of either organisational performance with other variables or learning organisation with other variables, and different outcomes were obtained. For example, the relationship between competitive strategy and organisational performance was proven to be moderated by organisational characteristics (et al., 2016), while the relationship between the soft factor of ISO 9000 and the organisational performance witnessed an obstacle from corporate culture (Saad & Asaad, 2015). Moreover, decision-making styles were seen as a moderator that influences the coming together of organisational performance and competitive strategies (Saad & Asaad, 2015), while organisational learning moderate significantly the organisational performance and TQM (Chienwattanasook & Jermsittiparsen, 2019) alongside market condition influencing advertising productivity and performance (Rahman et al., 2021). On the other hand, in the relationship between learning organisation and product innovation performance, public innovation support was found not to moderate the link (Hannachi, 2016); meanwhile, organisational size significantly moderates the managers' risk-taking capability and continuous learning relationship (Budhiraja et al., 2019). Also, team-oriented culture successfully moderated learning organisation and organisational citizenship behaviour (Yin Yin Lau, et al., 2020)

However, the relationship between learning organisation and organisational performance (reputation) was moderated by some significant variables, such as power distance, as posited by Ju et al. (2021). Also, export intensity was established to influence the relationship between learning organisation and performance through moderation (Hannachi, 2016). Furthermore, Strategically Oriented Human Resource Management (SOHRM) and Perceived Organisational Support (POS) were also proven to have influenced the interaction of both LO and OP (Siddique, 2018). In the same vein, leadership strategy and cost leadership played a significant role in moderating the effect of learning organisation on organizational performance, while differentiation strategy and focus strategy did not (Habtoor et al., 2017).

Although several studies on learning organisation and organizational performance were found chiefly to use variables to mediate the relationship, only a few moderated the association. Consequently, this work chose to find out, especially in small and medium-scale enterprises, the moderating effect of perceived organizational support on learning organisations and company reputation as a variable organizational performance. Hence the hypothesis is proposed thus;

H₀₂: Perceived Organisational Support significantly modifies the relationship between Learning Organisation and Company reputation of Small and Medium Scale in Nigeria.

3. METHODS

The techniques used for data collecting and analysis are covered in this section. It also describes how the operationalization of the constructs explored in this study.

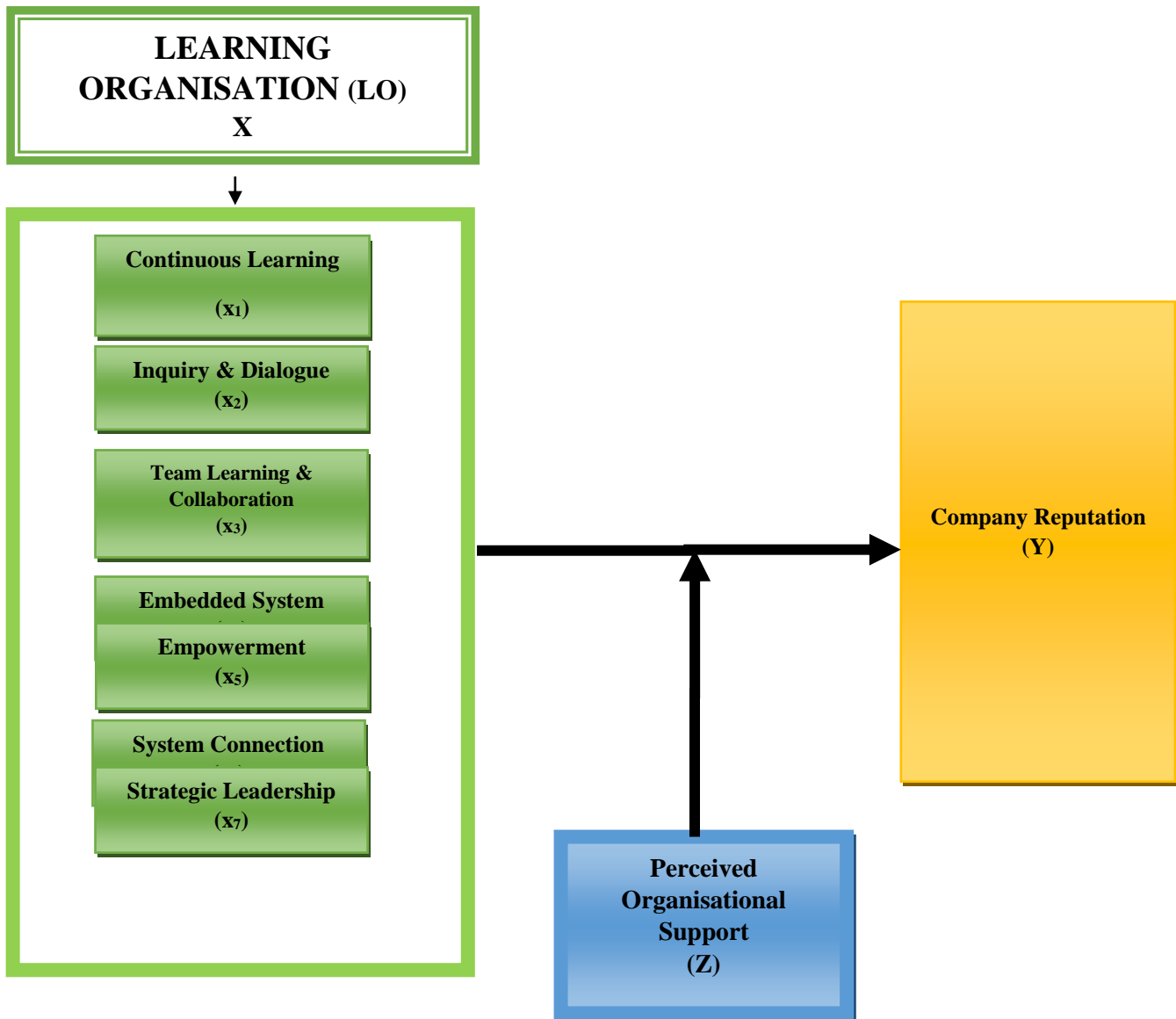
3.1 Data collection, analysis and operational construct.

This study chose the path of survey research design (descriptive). A cross-sectional survey approach was settled for because it is usually and typically conducted more quickly, straightforwardly, and at a lower cost (Setia, 2016). The population of the study, however, was drawn from 8,395 Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Lagos State, Nigeria, because it allowed an opportunity to combine several industries. The sample unit for the study was the business owners or their managers because they better understood the organisation's state and performance than the other levels of employees.

Furthermore, using the Raosoft online sample size calculator, the study sample size was four hundred and seventy-eight (478) respondents as the minimum target, including a 30% attrition rate as proposed by (Zikmund et al. 2000). Meanwhile, simple random sampling was adopted as the sampling technique to get the primary data to acquire first-hand information using a structured questionnaire (close-ended) to collect the data. Meanwhile, The questionnaire, which was Six-point Likert, was adopted from the extant pieces of literature; for example, the learning organisation questionnaire was adopted from the studies conducted by the following researchers Beneke et al. (2016); Budhiraja et al. (2019); Cegarra-Navarro et al. (2020); Hannachi (2016); Hatane (2015); Jyoti and Dev (2015); and Pokharel and Ok Choi (2015) while that company reputation from the work of Menon & Mohanty (2012). The main variables have their Likert as 6 –Very high 5 – Moderately High 4 – High 3 – Low 2– Moderately Low 1–Very low, and moderating variable as 6 -Very true 5 -True 4 –Somewhat True 3 – Somewhat Untrue 2 – Untrue 1 – Very Untrue.

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Conceptual Model



Furthermore, convergent and discriminant validity were the two components used as scientific measures of construct validity were adopted. The former (convergent validity) explains the variance in its indicator as it is described by Average variance Extracted (AVE) (Fornell& Larcker, 1981) with a value exceeding 0.5 for it to be significant and established. Likewise, the reliability of a test relates to how regularly or dependably it evaluates a feature that is the instrument's consistency (Jyoti & Dev, 2015). However, Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability were employed to assess this internal consistency and scale reliability. Moreover, the constructed value of both tools must range from 0.7 and above to be used in the model (Sahoo & Vijayvargy, 2021; Tripathi et al., 2020). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) path analysis was used to examine the relationships between the variables under investigation using SmartPLS-SEM 4.

Moreover, this method of analysis occurs because multiple connections or relationships can be analysed simultaneously using SEM path analysis, and more crucially, indirect relationships can be estimated (Otache, 2019). Also, the data were screened (cleaning and polishing) through the assumptions of regression: Homoscedacity, Linearity, Normality, and Multicollinearity. Two models were also examined to meet the study's goals. The direct effect of a learning organisation on a company's reputation was tested for the first model. On the relationship between learning organisations and reputation, the second model was evaluated for the moderating effect of perceived organisational support.

4. RESULTS

The outcomes of the data analysis are shown in this section. The section explicitly presents the measurement and structural model results.

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4.1 Results of the measurement models

The outcomes of the measurement models, as displayed in Table 1, showed that all of the evaluation requirements for measurement models were met. The constructions' composite reliability and Cronbach alpha of all the variables show ratings were higher than the advised level of 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Sahoo & Vijayvargy, 2021; Tripathi et al., 2020), which is a good sign of solid internal consistency of the items measuring each of the constructs.

Table 1. Result of the measurement model

Construct	Indicators	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	Discriminant validity?
Company Reputation	CR1	0.812	0.851	0.851	0.893	0.626	YES
	CR2	0.79					
	CR3	0.77					
	CR4	0.81					
	CR5	0.774					
Learning Org.	CTL	0.902	0.806	0.945	0.887	0.604	YES
	ES	0.892					
	EP	0.9					
	ID	0.91					
	SL	0.872					
	SC	0.88					
	TLC	0.913					
Perceived Org. Support	POS1	0.79	0.843	0.847	0.888	0.614	YES
	POS2	0.811					
	POS3	0.79					
	POS4	0.794					
	POS5	0.731					

Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) values of the constructs surpass the threshold of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Learning organisation possess an average variance extracted of 0.604, Company Reputation, 0.626 and Perceived Organisational Support of 0.614, which indicate that the constructs excel in the criteria test of convergent validity. In the same vein, the outer loading of the items measuring the constructs was also observed to surpass the recommended limit (Hair Jr et al., 2021), which is a good indication.

4.2 Discriminant validity and the square root of average variance extracted

The degree to which one construct differs from the other is known as discriminant validity (Hair Jr et al., 2021). Moreover, discriminant validity is used to determine if the diagonal element in the table is greater than the off-diagonal construct. Meanwhile, a proper Average Variance Extracted (AVE) allows any study to form discriminant validity (DV) by square rooting the AVE value to obtain the (DV), which is expected to be greater than the correlation of the specific construction or any of the other constructs in the model, which should be at least 0.5. (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 2: Discriminant validity and square roots of AVE

Table 2.

Construct	Company Reputation	Learning Org.	Perceived Org. Support
Company Reputation	0.791		
Learning Org.	0.787	0.777	
Perceived Org. Support	0.693	0.763	0.783

Note: Numbers shown diagonally, Bolden and italics are square roots of AVE while the rest are values depicting correlations between the constructs

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Company Reputation (0.791), Learning Organization (0.777), and Perceived Organizational Support (0.783) all had square root of AVE values that were higher than the correlations that the constructs had with other components, indicating that all of the constructs passed the discriminant validity test. As a result, this study fits such requirements, as seen in Table 2.

4.3 Results of the structural models and hypotheses testing

The bootstrapping results of the structural relationship between the constructs are shown in Table 3 and Figure 2. Moreover, the structural model analysis indicates a positive and statistically significant effect of learning organisation on company reputation, i.e. $\beta = 0.878$, $t = 32.183$, $p < 0.001$ (0.000) without the moderating variable of perceived organizational support.

Table 3. Results of the structural models and hypotheses testing (Path Coefficient)

Structural Relationship	Path Coefficients	Sample mean (M)	Standard errors	T-value	p- values
Learning Org -> Company Reputation**	0.878	0.879	0.027	32.183	0.000*
Learning Org -> Company Reputation***	0.672	0.671	0.101	6.656	0.000*
Perceived Org. Sup. -> Company Reputation	0.257	0.261	0.114	2.259	0.024*
Perceived Org. Sup. x Learning Org -> Company Reputation	0.013	0.019	0.026	0.49	0.624

Notes: *Significant at < 0.05 (two-tailed); **without moderator variable; ***with moderator variable

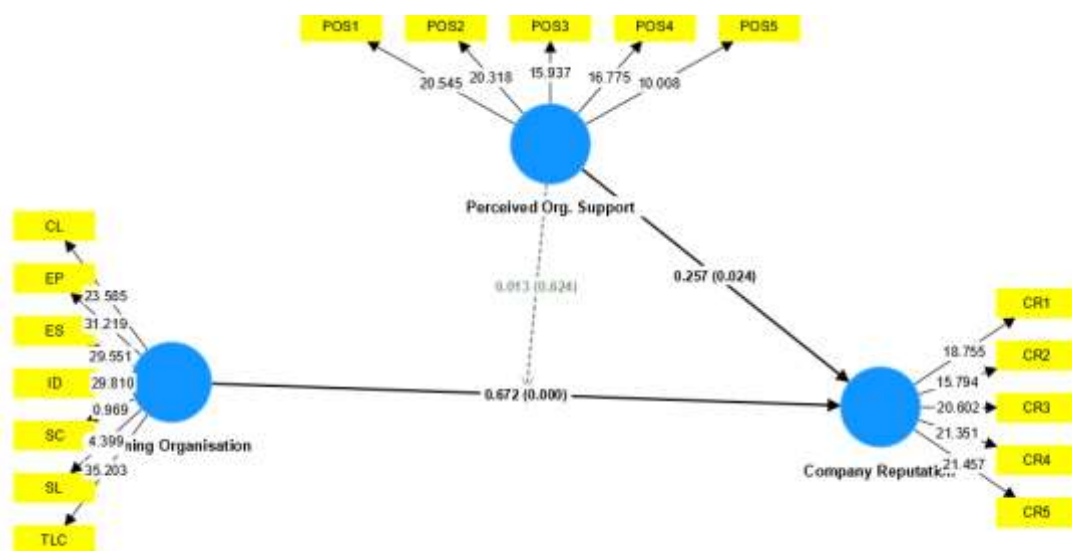


Figure 2. Bootstrapping results of the structural model

Likewise, the addition of moderating variable of POS to the relationship between the learning organisation and organisational performance still indicates that the connection remains significant $\beta = 0.672$, $t = 6.656$, $p < 0.001$. The outcome, therefore, is consistent with previous findings (Chen et al., 2018; Mbutia, 2018; Srgolzaei et al., 2018). However, perceived organisational support does not moderate the relationship between learning organisation and company reputation showing the value surpassing the specified threshold, $\beta = 0.013$, $t = 0.49$, $p > 0.05$ (0.624)

Table 4. Overview of R-squared and adjusted R-squared

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Company Reputation	0.636	0.629

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Results, (2023)

According to academic research focusing on social sciences, R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 for endogenous latent variables can be classified as considerable, moderate, or weak (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2013). R^2 values of 0.24 are deemed poor in PLS-

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SEM. However, because R^2 frequently overestimates their corresponding population values, particularly with small samples, the Adjusted R^2 will be employed to adjust for such bias (Mertler et al., 2021).

Table 4 shows the adjusted R^2 which depicted that learning organisation dimensions in Lagos, South-West Nigeria, accounted for 62.9% of the variations in the company reputation of small and medium-sized businesses. It showed that when all the structures are considered, the company reputation of SMEs in Nigeria tends to change by 62.9%. Meanwhile, the rest of 37.1% should be accounted for by other factors that aid the company reputation of small and medium-scale enterprises in Nigeria. Furthermore, learning organisation has effect size (F-Square) of 0.055 on company reputation. The effect size could therefore be seen to have small effect. Based on the criteria of Stone-Gleisser Q-Squared (Q^2), the independent variable (learning organisation) is a significant (0.604) predictor of the dependent variable (company reputation).

DISCUSSION

Learning organisation dimensions strongly impacted the company reputation of SMEs in Nigeria, according to the findings of structural equation modelling for the relationship between learning organisation dimensions and the business reputation of small and medium-sized firms in Nigeria (Adj. R^2 = 0.629; SRMR = 0.066, d_{ULS} = 4.956, d_G = 1.392, Chi-square = 2670.583, and NFI = 0.751). This result implies that implementing the learning organisation in small and medium-scale enterprises in Nigeria will promote the company's reputation. Thus we accept hypothesis one. Importantly, it demonstrates how prior studies on learning organisations have demonstrated a direct relationship with company reputation (Bandiyono & Augustine, 2019; Hannachi, 2021; Muriithi & Kiiru, 2021).

The results of this study conceptually concur with several academics' opinions. According to a group of academics, learning organisations' adoption in corporate and business settings will earn such establishments a jaw-breaking reputation (Baruah & Panda, 2020; Erugo, 2004; Stewart et al., 2017). Meanwhile, every corporation has a reputation, and each company's or corporation's reputation is proportional to the number of people who look at it, and from the angle, they look at it hence the need for learning organisation as a booster (Suaidah et al., 2021). Company or corporate reputation, which is the affection and regard an individual or group has for an organisation based on past behaviour, characteristics, public relation, and quality of goods and services, becomes unattainable without deliberate investment into the learning and development of employees (Caviggioli et al., 2020; Yeonsoo Kim & Ferguson, 2019). Also, several factors can be employed as strategic tools to boost an organisation's reputation, such as a celebrity's personality, appeal and endorsement, market strategy and employment policies and learning organisation (Caviggioli et al., 2020; Zakari et al., 2019). Likewise, it was opined that human capital efficiency (learning organisation) is a positive and significant force that could drive a company's reputation (Ginesti et al., 2018).

The study's findings also lend support to several empirical studies on learning organisations and company reputation (Bandiyono & Augustine, 2019; Bhaskar & Mishra, 2017; Hannachi, 2021; Harrim, 2010; Kleefstra et al., 2020; Muriithi & Kiiru, 2021; Salleh & Huang, 2011; Siddique, 2018). Specifically, Muriithi and Kiiru (2021) observed in their study carried out in one of the government institutions in Kenya that learning organisation is a considerable predictor of company reputation. Also, Bandiyono and Augustine (2019), in their work titled organisational performance as a mediation on the effect of levers of control, also established an exact outcome of a learning organisation's positive and significant effect on a company's reputation and learning organisation on tax compliance. Furthermore, with the usage of Partial Least Square (PLS) software and adoption of the Learning Organisation model presented by Marsick and Watkins, it was established in biotechnology firms in France that the implementation of learning organisation would generate a superior level of organisational performance, i.e. company reputation (Hannachi, 2021). Hence, the researchers advocate adopting and implementing learning organisations for business establishments to boost and better their reputation.

Theoretically, the outcomes of this study also support the premises of the Human Capital Theory, which makes clear the connection between a learning organisation and firm size as a gauge of organisational performance. The underlying premise of the human capital theory is that investments in workers' learning capacity, such as training and education to improve and better their skills, are seen as equivalent to other means of production, leading to future productive output for economies, organizations, and individuals (Dobbins et al., 2014; Fix, 2018; Gillies, 2017; Marginson, 2019; Tan, 2014). According to the HCT assumption, education and training improve human capital, which improves organizational outcomes (Adom & Asare-Yebo, 2016; Dobbins et al., 2014; Tan, 2014). The relationship between learning organisation and company reputation is used in this study to establish the assumptions of the human capital theory. Spending on employee learning and development will strengthen the organisational structure. The results of the present study thus offer conceptual, empirical, and theoretical

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support for the idea that learning organisation features significantly impact the company reputation of small and medium-sized businesses in Lagos, South-West Nigeria.

On the other hand, the second hypothesis is rejected because the result of the structural model analysis shows no significant effect; hence it was rejected. It practically means that the perceived organisational support does affect the direction or strengthens the relationship between the learning organisation and the company's reputation; thus, it plays no vital role in the relationship.

Businesses in Nigeria must systematically and strategically implement learning organisations to achieve higher and more stable performance. In the meantime, the study's conclusions have potential applications for business organisations and managers. The business organisation should always be ready to foster employee continuous learning and access to knowledge, thereby adapting to the transforming environment. Likewise, readiness to provide strategic leadership and encouraging collaboration will enhance the desired performance. Furthermore, business managers or owners should always ensure that environment that aids continuous learning and freedom for employees to question some issues is well established while empowering them to own their role and creating access to team learning and knowledge sharing will yield the delivery of organisational objectives. On the other hand, the finding also contributes to the existing knowledge on learning organisation and company reputation by providing empirical evidence of the moderating effect of perceived organisational support on the relationship between learning organisation and company reputation.

Furthermore, the findings confirmed the applicability of human capital theories across different settings. However, this study does not come without limitations. Firstly, the survey design favours closed-ended questions over open-ended ones, collecting primary data using a questionnaire, thereby limiting respondents from fully expressing their views when compared to adopting open-ended questions coupled with the inability to interact most time with the subject. Also, the study focuses on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in Nigeria; thus, the applicability of the findings to unsearched industries or SME sectors in other nations is constrained. Future researchers could expand the study to specific industries like manufacturing, finance, or multinationals and use qualitative methods further to support the findings in light of the abovementioned constraints.

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