An Open Access Journal Available Online

Exploring the Presence of Family Culture of Influence, Commitment and Values in Family Businesses: The Gender Factor

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***Abstract*:** This paper provides a review of key literature in the field of family business and identifies the need to examine family culture as a key component of family involvement in a firm. It further considers the role of gender in enhancing family culture in small family businesses. The argument in the literature is that the presence of a strong family culture in a firm would enhance its strategic position and flexibility (Zahra, Hayton, Neubaum, Dibrell, and Craig, 2008). Strategic flexibility, a term that is usually associated with strategic decision making, would position a firm to respond proactively to unpredictable changes in their environmentand this would in turn lead to a competitive advantage for the firm (Chakravarthy, 1986). To this end, we propose that the presence of family culture in family firms may therefore be important for their growth and survivalwhile also having a significant effect on their performance. Drawing on the Resource-Based View theory, this paper seeks to contribute to the literature by examining the presence of family culture of commitment and values in family businesses; and its influence on gender using an under-researched context, Nigeria. Employing the quantitative approach, the study finds that all our sampled 237 family firms showed a high level of family culturein them. However, the more interesting finding is the stronger influence of women in promoting family culture despite the significant difference between the population of men and women owners/managers in the sampled firms.

Keywords: family firms; family culture; gender; competitive advantage

1.0 Introduction

Family businesses are the most popular form of organisations in the economic landscape of major economies of the world (Morck & Yeung, 2004). They are also known to have transcended centuries in large economies such as Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States of America. Historically, 90% of all businesses in existence globally started out as a family firm (Colli, Fernandez-Perez, & Rose, 2003). Therefore, they play a significant role in the world economy today (Astrachan, 2010) by providing the platform to understand the mind of an entrepreneur and what influences new venture creation (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003). More recently, several studies especially in the western literature have established both theoretically and empirically the direct relevance of family businesses to the economies and social lifestyles of the West (Westhead and Cowling, 1998; Zahra, 2003; Aldrich and Cliff, 2003; Zahra, 2005).

The development and scholarly contribution to family business research has however not received the requisite attention in Africa; which is both interesting and surprising despite the traditional roles of the family institution in almost every sector of most countries in the of the continent. More importantly, the harsh and dynamic business landscape of most developing economies in Africa such as Nigeria has now made it of important consequence for businesses to be more strategic and innovative in their approach to decision-making and deployment of firm resources in order to achieve and maintain an advantageous edge over competitors within the global economy. In general, family firms would be more challenged in these locations because of their complex systematic make-up which predisposes them to peculiar internal factors. Such internal factors include: conflict among family members, succession issues, low propensity towards change, favouritism, nepotism, imbalance between personal and professional issue, and many more complexities. Therefore, in order to stay relevant in their various industries and also remain competitive globally, it is highly critical for family firms within developing countries in Africa to discover, develop, and engage strategic resources, especially those that occur naturally to them. Effectively and efficiently allocating these tangible and intangible strategic resources would enable them harness the opportunities within their business environment adequately for their growth and ultimate survival.

1.1 Objectives and Focus

Over two decades of family business research has produced several papers on family involvement in form of ownership, management, governance or control and succession (Chrisman, Chua & Sharma, 2003). Although much still remains to be done on these topics, one key part of family involvement that has not received the requisite attention in family business research is family culture (Denison, Lief, & Ward, 2004). There has been a range of studies depicting the culture of family firms in metaphoric ways but there is still a dearth of literature giving nuances to 'culture of the family behind the firm' and how this differentiates them from non-family firms. Noteworthy is the recurring trend in the literature, where most studies focus on culture at the organizational level, thus investigating organizational culture (Barney, 1986;

Zahra, Hayton & Salvato, 2004; Chadwick, Barnett, & Dwyer, 2008; Chiricoand Nordqvist, 2010). Only very few have examined culture of the family behind the firm and how this impacts on the organisation (Denison et al., 2004; Zahra et al., 2008; Brice, 2013; Craig, Dibrell & Garrett, 2014). The importance of family culture lies in its potential to wield a strong influence on the perception, activities, decisions and actions of individual family members within the family firm (Zahra et al., 2008).

Consequently, taking these key points into cognisance, it is important for more studies to explore the discourse of family culture in a firm at the family level, and specific lines of enquiry could be investigating family culture: as a source of competitive advantage for family firms; causal factors linking family culture to firm performance and how family culture influences the strategic orientations of family firms, etc. In a bid to add robustness to the theories of family of the family firm by further highlighting its uniqueness and distinctiveness from non-family firms, this study attempts to explore the phenomenon of family culture within a newer research context. The choice of this research location is hinged on postulation that most businesses in this region are clustered around families thus it provides a richer platform to investigate the cultural concept, the nuances given to it and how it influences the performance of firms that has significant family involvement (FI). Based on the foregoing, this paper therefore seeks answers to the following questions:

i. is family culture inherent in family businesses?
ii. what role does gender play in promoting family culture in a family business?

2.0 Theory and Hypothesis

2.1 Defining Family Business

Family business research 'FBR' is still relatively new, if compared to more established fields such as management, small business research and entrepreneurship. Therefore, theories guiding FBR is still evolving. However, one clear area of convergence in the family business literature is that family involvement in a business is the major distinctive factor that differentiates family businesses from non-family businesses (NFBs). Consequently, defining family business depends largely on identifying, understanding and explaining the key components of family involvement in a business and how this would differentiate firms with such involvement from those with diverse ownership. Consequently, both theoretical and operational approaches are required to effectively do this for there to be a significant contribution to the 'theory of the family firm'. To address this gap, Chua, Chrisman and Sharma (1999:25) in their seminal paper on defining family business, introduced family business as "a business governed and/or managed with the intention to shape and pursue the vision of the business held by a dominant coalition controlled by members of the same family or a small number of families in a manner that is potentially sustainable across generations of the family or families". Although, this definition provides a sound theoretical approach to understanding the distinctiveness of family firms, the field requires more applicable operational components that are measurable across cultures and other contexts. Further developments on the definitional issues of family business was presented by Chrisman, Chua, & Steier, (2005b) in their review of the important trends in family business research by proposing two approaches observed from their extensive review of the literature; they are components-of-involvement and essence. They distinguished between these two approaches by presenting the components-of-involvement approach as a sufficient condition to define family business, while the essence approach was introduced as only a necessary condition in doing this (Chrisman et al., 2005b). The authors identified the following as key elements of the components-of-involvement approach: family ownership, family management; and family control; in defining a family business. While in the essence approach, they presented more restrictive characteristics of what constitutes a family firm: a) family influence on the firm's strategy; b) family's vision, intention to keep control of the firm and subsequently hand this over to the next generation; c) behaviour of the family firm; and d) lastly distinctive familiness (Kraiczy, 2013). This study however follows both the operational and theoretical approaches to defining family business by proposing a more inclusive definition which identifies the components and essence of family involvement by including family culture, which could influence the strategy, vision, and behaviour of family firms, while simultaneously distinguishing them from non-family businesses. The inclusion of family culture (which depicts the culture of the family behind the firm) would serve to measure the particularistic factors that shape families behind businesses across different communities, countries and continents across the world.

2.2 Components of Family Involvement

This section discusses the components of family involvement as identified in the FBR literature and the proposed family involvement (FI) component, family culture.

2.2.1 Ownership

Ownership of a firm by an entity is defined by the controlling shares held by that entity; in other words, a firm is said to be owned by an entity that hold sits controlling shares. The entity could be an individual, group of people, holding company or state (Chakrabarty, 2009). Ownership is one of the key mechanisms required to control a firm internally (Jensen and Meckling, 1976) and externally through manoeuvring of the firm's resources. It has the potential to significantly influence the strategy, behaviour, and performance of that firm. In practise, the economic behaviour of a firm is greatly influenced by the majority shareholder(s). Ownership is therefore represented in this paper either by the number of shares an individual or a family has in a firm; or the percentage of shareholding or voting rights held by a group.

In the context of family ownership of a firm however, there is a lot of debate with regards to scope; for example, would ownership be restricted to the nuclear family only (Westhead and Cowling, 1998), or would there be a consideration for extended families; and/or partnership of families? (Davis, 1983). Chua et al., (1999) suggests a downplay of the ownership component due to the divergent views on the scope of family ownership and also in their attempt to proffer a more universal approach to the definition and measurement of family involvement in a business.

2.2.2 Management

Existing models of organisation provides a clear distinction between ownership and management (Morris, Williams, Allen, &Avila, 1997). A family-managed company refers to a family descent acting as the Chief Executive Officer of a company (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2006). A widely accepted view in the literature is that a family business should be family-owned and family-managed (Villalonga and Amit 2006). Although family-managed firms also represent a significant proportion of definitions given in the literature to what a family business represents (Chua et al., 1999); but most authors disagree that family-managed firms alone is sufficient to represent family business. In general, although, management is one of key components of family involvement in a firm but it is usually combined with family ownership before the firm can be accepted to be a family business (Chua et al., 1999).

2.2.3 Governance

Governance is defined as the organisation of strategic leadership and control of a firm (Klein, 2010). The scope of governance in a firm comprises of four roles: control, strategic, service and resource-dependent (Heuvel, Gils, & Voordeckers,2006). This is distinguished from the role of management which centres on organising, co-ordinating activities of an organisation in accordance with clearly stated policies and well defined objectives (Drucker, 1973). The management team usually works under the direction of the Board of Directors (Heuvel et.al. 2006). Therefore, it is suggested that "governance dimension of family involvement supersedes the management dimension of involvement".

2.2.4 Succession

Succession is sometimes considered to be the most essential component of family involvement in a business (Chua et al., 1999). This is because the continued existence of family firms is hinged on the ability of the founders or owners to transfer the ownership and sometimes management of their business to the next generation (Klein, Astrachan, & Smyrnios, 2005). Hence it is a goal which occupies the top on the list of most family business owners (Sharma, Chrisman & Chua, 2003). Succession is therefore defined as the process through which a firm is transferred from one generation to another (Morris et al., 1997).

2.2.5 Family Culture

Family culture is still an evolving research area with a dearth of literature in the field of family business .Organisational culture, on the other hand, has been the toast of academic enquiry, especially within the field of management because of its link to the survival of firms. In both entrepreneurship and management literatures, organisational culture is posited as an important strategic resource for firms to gain competitive advantage (Zahra et al., 2004; Dyer, 1988). This is backed by empirical researches which produce positive outcomes while investigating the association between organisational culture and superior firm performance (Barney,1996).

Culture was described by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) as the software of the mind. According to these authors, culture is a collective phenomenon which is shared with people within the same social environment (HofstedeandHofstede2005).At the national level, culture is made up of the underlying value systems that are specific to asociety which prompts individuals within that society to behave in certain ways (Hofstede, 1994). Within an organisation, culture is explained as the coherent patterns of beliefs and values that represent acceptable solutions to major organisational problems (Zahraetal., 2004). At the family level, culture refers to a cumulative set of assumptions that a family holds which guide their belief systems (Dyer,1988). In this paper, the focus is on culture at the family level due to the dearth of literature on same.

Family culture sheds light on certain aspects of culture such as values (Koiranen, 2002). Values answer the question of what is important to one; and core values are the deep-seated pervasive standards that influence almost every aspect of one's life (one's moral judgments, responses to others, commitments to personal and organisational goals (Dumas and Blodgett, 1999:210).

The central assumption in this paper is that when a family gets involved with a firm, there is a possibility that the business would be guided by the same principles, and values embedded in the family (Zahra et al., 2004). These conditions that family cultures create in a firm with family involvement would help shape the behaviour of family firms distinctively from those with diverse involvement. Understanding the culture of the family behind a firm and how this shapes the behaviour, decision-making process, performance and growth of a firm would further aid the understanding of the synergy between the firm and the family.

2.2.5.1 Family Culture in Nigerian Small Businesses

Nigeria, this study location, is a country of diverse ethnic groups and cultures (Mbakogu, 2002). The three dominant ethnic groups in Nigeria are Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani, while the other ethnic groups are classified as the minority group. Ethnic groups are defined as a group with a common identity that distinguishes them from others (Ukoha, 2005). Cultural practices differ in each ethnic group in Nigeria. However, these cultural practices are mainly made up of symbols, rituals and heroes as described by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005).Values, the core tenet of culture which captures basic human behaviour, knowledge, commitment (Aronoff and Ward, 1995) may also differs lightly among the different groups in Nigeria. This is due to the huge diversity in traditional beliefs in the three major ethnic groups and other minority groups in the country. However, drawing from the theoretical review of culture by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), this paper would be X-raying culture of Nigerian families based on what is perceived to be the country's national culture. The premise for this is predicated upon the general assumption that there would be similar cultural values and beliefs that collectively shapes the citizens of the country.

Consequently, based on the conceptual review of culture by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) and a review of other literature on the national culture of Nigeria, the country's dominant cultural practices may be described as follows:

i. Large Power Distance: In large-power distance societies, power is based on tradition or family, charisma and the ability to use force.
ii. Collectivism: In collectivist societies, opinions are predetermined by group membership, and collectivist

interests prevail over individual interests. Harmony and consensus in the society are considered to be paramount. The extended family system which is peculiar to African societies depicts their collectivist nature. The extended family is a combination of two or more nuclear families in which their relationship is biological, social and economical (Nafziger, 1969).Resources are usually pulled together for the benefit of all (and not for the benefit of one).

iii. Masculinity: Nigeria was ranked as being in between these two cultural traits (masculinity and femininity) but more towards masculinity. In masculine societies, challenge, earnings, recognition and advancement are important. Men are expected to be ambitious, assertive and tough while women are supposed to be tender and take care of responsibilities. Gender inequality is high in such societies. Recent statistical figures and empirical evidences from Nigeria suggest that the country is still plagued with a high level of gender inequality across all levels, from family to national (British Council Nigeria,2012).

iv. Short-term Orientation: The findings recorded in the book by Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) rank Nigeria as a country with short-term orientation. In their book, short term orientation is defined as the fostering of virtues related to the past, present and with particular, respect for tradition, preservation of face and fulfilling of social obligations.

Based on the above, it can be argued that the diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria would draw their major cultural practices from the country's national culture and this in turn would have an effect on families and individuals within the country. Nigerians are generally known for the values they place on family (both nuclear and extended). The country's cultural values and traditional beliefs place a high regard on the patriarch of the family and what 'he' stands for. Values such as trust, loyalty, togetherness, respect, preserving one's family heritage and maintaining a good name through honesty and high integrity; are fundamental tenets taught to children in families and primary schools.

Therefore, the proposed scale chosen to measure family culture among Nigerian family businesses was adapted based on the wordings of the items. These capture some of the basic tenets surrounding the country's predominant cultural practices. Furthermore, the F-PEC scale originally developed by Astrachan, Klein and Smyrnios (2002), has been validated and re-validated in the family business literature (Klein, Astrachan, & Smyrnios, 2005; Holt,Rutherford, &Kuratko, 2010). The multi-dimensionality of the scale was also confirmed by Zahra, Hayton, Neubaum, Dibrell, and Craig (2008) and Cliff and Jennings (2005). Consequently, the culture sub-scale of the FPEC scale is considered to be an appropriate well-tested reliable scale to measure family culture in small family businesses in terms of family influence, commitment, values, loyalty, and trust. Therefore, it is assumed that:

Hypothesis 1: The mean scores collected from the sampled family businesses for all the items on the culture scale will be higher than average mean score of 3.5; which depicts a high level of family culture in these firms

2.3 Women in Family Businesses

Although, there is an increasing interest on female entrepreneurs in the entrepreneurship literature, researches into the activities of women in family businesses are still scare. The general assumption is that the activities of women are more related to the family than the business owned and/or managed by that family (Ward & Sorenson, 1989). Despite this significant gap, very few mainstreams FBR has paid the requisite attention to the activities of women in the business side of the family. The close synergy between 'the family' and 'the businesses could lead to the invisibility of women and their activities in growing these businesses. Women play diverse roles within the family such as wives, mothers, daughters, mothers-in-law, and grandmother. Therefore, their participation indirectly in business decision-making, planning, mediators, nurturers and other important functions might go unnoticed and unacknowledged; hence the need to increase formal investigations reviewing the activities of women in family business growth. Therefore, this paper proposes:

Hypothesis 2: Family businesses owned and managed by women would display a higher level of family culture than those managed by men

3.0 Methodology

We collected data from 237 family businesses operating in Lagos. These respondents were selected through a simple random sampling procedure from the data acquired from the Lagos office of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN).The focus on Lagos was predicated upon the fact that it is the commercial centre of Nigeria, hence, it houses businesses owned and managed by families that have emigrated from around the nation.

Family culture is the main independent variable in this research. Due to the multidimensionality of the F-PEC Scale (Cliff and Jennings, 2005; Chrisman, Chua, & Kellermanns, 2009), the culture subscale of the F-PEC scale was extracted and adapted to measure family culture in this paper (Astrachan et al., 2002). F-PEC scale is a well-tested and used construct in family business literature for assessing family influence on a firm in a continuous scale (Kleinetal.,2005;Rutherford et al., 2008; Zahra et al., 2008; Holt et al., 2010); hence, the choice of the culture subscale as the appropriate measuring scale to empirically assess family's influence with regards to culture within a new research context.

4.0 Results

4.1 Demographics

The study sample consists of 237 family business owners and/or managers ofwhich70%weremaleand30%female.

Table 1 below reports some basic demographics on the sampled businesses.

This statistics of the male and female respondents recorded in this study is similar with the findings of some studies conducted in major cities in Nigeria (Lagos inclusive). Okpara (2011) reports 60% male and 40% female respondents; and Woldie, Leighton, & Adesua (2008) reports 74.8% male and 25.2% female respondents in their respective studies on small businesses or SMEs within this research context. The above trend indicates a wide disparity in the ratio of male and female participation in entrepreneurial activities as business founders, owners and/or managers. The study sample also shows a good mix of businesses types. It is however noteworthy to mention that there is no high-technology based business in the mix. This maybe because of precedence as explained in the literature that most family businesses engage in more traditional businesses such as farming, small-scale manufacturing and other related businesses in developing countries (Jorissen, Laveren, Martens, & Reheul, 2005). The paper also adopts the recent criteria specified by the National Bureau of Statistics' (NBS) and Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) in differentiating between micro, small and medium scale enterprises (NBS and SMEDAN, 2010). Micro-enterprises are defined as those enterprises with a work force of less than 10; small enterprises are those enterprises with a total work force of between 10 and 49 employees; while medium enterprises are those enterprises with a total workforce of between5 0 and 199 employees (NBS and SMEDAN, 2010).

As Table 4.2 shows, majority (89.5%) of the sampled firms are businesses with a work force of between 10 and 49 employees and are therefore small businesses. The remaining 10.5% are businesses with a work force of between 50 and 199 employees and are therefore medium-scale businesses (NBS and SMEDAN 2010). This finding is similar to that reported by Woldieetal., (2008) on small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria. Woldieetal.'s finding also showed a significant gap between small-sized (77.2%) and medium-sized firms (22.8%) in their study sample; thus supporting that the finding of this paper is not unusual within the research context

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

N = 237		FREQUENCIES			
Variable		Male		Female	
		N	%		
Sex		166	70%	71	30%
Age	≤25years	4	1.7%	2	0.8%
	26 – 35years	35	14.8	9	3.8%
	36 – 45years	56	23.6	37	15.6%
	46 – 55years	54	22.8	19	8.0%
	56 – 65years	11	4.6%	4	1.7%
	>65years	6	2.5%	0	0.0%
Ethnic Group	Yoruba	49	20.7	39	16.5%
	Igbo	34	14.3	3	1.3%
	Hausa	51	21.5	18	7.6%
	Others	32	13.5	11	4.6%
Educational Qualification	Did no go to school	21	8.9%	3	1.3%
	First School Leaving *Cert.	7	3.0%	3	1.3%
	Junior Secondary School *Cert.	3	1.3%	1	0.4%
	Senior Secondary School *Cert.	18	7.6%	2	0.8%
	Ordinary Diploma or Technical *	20	8.4%	4	1.7%
	University Degree or HND	55	23.2	35	14.8%
	Masters' Degree or MBA	42	17.7	23	9.7%
Position in the Business	Owner	58	24.5	21	8.9%
	Manager	33	13.9	12	5.1%

	Owner/Manager	75	31.6	38	16.0%
Number of Employees	10 – 49 (Small Businesses)	147	62.0	65	27.5%
	50 – 199 (Medium-Sized	19	8.0%	8	2.5%
Business Legal Status	Sole Proprietorship	93		39.2%	
	Partnership	7		3.0%	
	Limited Liability Company	102		43.0%	
	Unregistered	35		14.8%	
Industry Analysis	Manufacturing	46		19.4%	
	Trading	72		30.4%	
	Services	119		50.2%	

4.2 Family Culture

Table 2 below shows the descriptive statistics of the family culture scale based on the responses from the 237 respondents.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics - Family Culture MeasurementScale

FamilyCulture N=237	Mean	Rank descendingorder)	Min	Max	SD
Your family has influence on thisbusiness	6.3	3	4	7	1.03
Your family members share similarvalues	5.9	7	3	7	1.10
Your family and business share similarvalues	5.8	8	3	7	1.15
Your family members are willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that is normally expected in other to help the family business to besuccessful	6.4	2	4	7	0.87
You and your family support the family business in discussions with friends, employees and other familymembers.	6.2	4	4	7	0.93
You and your family feel loyalty towards thebusiness	6.5	1	4	7	0.78
You and your family find that your values are compatible with those of thebusiness	6.0	6	3	7	0.99
You and your family members are proud to tell others that you are part of the familybusiness	6.5	1	4	7	0.81
There is so much to be gained by participating with the family business on a long termbasis	6.2	4	4	7	0.94
You and your family members agree with the family business'goals, plans andpolicies	6.1	5	4	7	0.97
You and your family members really care about the fate of thefamily business	6.5	9	3	7	0.76
Deciding to be involved with the family business has a positive influence on yourlife	6.3	3	3	7	0.90
Youunderstandandsupportyourfamily'sdecisionsregardingthefuture of the familybusiness	6.4	2	4	7	0.81

Family culture is argued as one of the most important defining elements of family influence on a business. In actual terms, family culture is considered to be an essential factor that determines organisational behaviour; and the alignment of family goals to the organisation's goals (Holtet al., 2010; Lumpkin,, Martin, Vaughn., 2008; Rutherford, Kuratko, Holt, 2008; Bertrand and Schoar, 2006; Zahra etal., 2004; Klein et al., 2005; Astrachan et al., 2002). Nevertheless, the question is how strong is the presence of family culture in a family owned and/or managed business? This is one of the questions that this paper is set to address. The well-defined and tested culture sub-scale of the FPEC Scale developed by Astrachan, Kleinand Smyrnois (2002) and further validated, first by Klein, Astrachan and Smyrnois (2005) and second by Holt, Rutherford and Kuratko (2010) is used to measure family culture in this paper.

However, the initial 5-point Likert scale used by Astrachanetal. (2002) is replaced with a 7- point Likert-scale for more variability in the responses solicited from the respondents. Furthermore, a few early researchers have suggested that the 7-point scale may be more reliable than the 5-point scale for this present study (Coleman, Nabekura, & Lichtman, 1997) because the latter has been found to generate stronger correlations with t-test results (Lewis, 1993). Generally, in the wider literature, the seven-point scale enjoys more empirical support on its reliability although; the five-point scale is more popular (Preston & Colman, 2000). More important and relevant to this study is wider usage of the 7-point scale in family business research (Zellweger, Kellermanns, Chrisman, & Chua, 2012; Stewart and Hitt, 2012; Hienerth and Kessler, 2006; Fletcher, 2002). The anchors on the 7-point likert scale used are: ' 1 for strongly disagree; and 7 for strongly agree'. The remaining numbers between '1 and 7', though not indicated on the questionnaires were explained as follows: '2 and 3' means disagree; 4 stands for neutral; 5 and 6 for agree. Table 1 below shows the culture scale and the relevant descriptive statistics. The statistics presented below shows that none of the 13 culture items has a mean value below 5.5. This suggests that family culture is an important measure of family involvement in a family business.

The two most important items with the highest mean value of 6.5 are: 'you and your family feel loyalty towards the business; and 'you and your family members are proud to tell others that you are part of the family business. 'These two items suggest the presence of strong loyalty of family members towards the firm that they are involved in. The next two items that rank 'second highest' on the list of importance are: 'putting in a great of effort to ensure the success of the family business'; and 'understanding and supporting the family's decision regarding the future of the family business. These two items are described by Lumpkin etal. (2008) as part of a strong family tradition and loyalty in their family orientation scale. It is also important to note that the high mean score of item 1 (6.3)- 'your family has influence on this business'; placed significant emphasis on the importance of family influence in shaping the behaviour of the firm and it is the main argument of this paper. Based on the findings shown and discussed above, we accept the hypothesis that family culture is present in Nigerian family businesses.

4.3 Inferential Statistics - Independent Sample t-Tests

Nigeria, being a predominantly patriarchal society in terms of traditional beliefs and practices, the role of women in formal businesses are seldom acknowledged or noticed. Therefore, investigating the level of family culture in family firms based on the gender of whom the founder, owner and/.or manager is, would further broaden the current insights on the role of women in businesses with family involvement. In most communities in

Nigeria, transferring business ownership or control to women is not widely acceptable. Most founders or business owners would normally follow the norm of transferring their business interests, ownership or control to the oldest male child (Makama,2013).

In this regard, in order to compare the level of family culture in businesses owned and/or managed by men with that of women in the same position, an independent-sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the level of family culture present in the family firms based on the gender of the founder, owner and/or manager. The question asked at this point is 'do the level of family culture in a firm differs in terms male and female ownership or management of that firm?' The importance of this investigation is premised on the established importance of family culture in fostering the strategic flexibility of family businesses (Zahra et al., 2008); and firm performance (Brice, 2013). Therefore, examining the factors that promote family culture in family firms is considered to be an important line of research investigation. Independent t-test was considered to be the most appropriate tool for this analysis because it enables you compares the average values of two different groups based on the assumption that any observed difference is unlikely to have occurred due to a random chance in sample selection.

The initial descriptive analysis produces the following figures for means and standard deviation of the two groups: Male (mean=6.1717, SD=0.6374, n=166); and Female(mean=6.3357,SD=0.5371,n=71) .According to the analysis of means, the female-led family-involved businesses with a mean of 6.3 have a slightly higher level of family culture than the male-led group (the mean for this group is 6.2).

The assumption of normality was evaluated using skewness statistics and the values generated for both groups (male=-1.0 and female=-1.1) were within the acceptable +1 and -1range, suggesting no outliers in either group. Thus, the assumption of normality is met and found tenable for both gender groups. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and is found tenable using Levene's test, F (1, 235) =1.523, t=-1.898, p=0.218). The t-test is significant at both 90% and 95% confidence interval with a p value of 0.05. These results suggest that the level of family culture differs according to the gender of who is leading a family business. Specifically, the outcome of this analysis suggests when women are leading a family business; the level of family culture in that business might be higher despite the huge disparity between the numbers of male owned and/or managed family businesses (70%) and those owned and/.or managed by women (30%).

5.0 Discussion/Conclusion

Family culture is an important valuable resource that shares a similar influence on a family firm like the already established components of family involvement in the family business literature namely: ownership, management, succession and governance. Furthermore, it is the exegesis of this paper that family culture might indeed be an idiosyncratic organisational process that propels distinct behavioural phenomenon in family businesses. Family cultural traits such as trust, loyalty, harmony, identifying family members with the family business, defending the family business, creating contacts for the business and being committed to the family's goals for the business, which are deeply rooted in the Nigerian culture are shown to be important resources for family businesses to possess in order to survive in the Nigerian economic environment.

The outcome of this study shows a significant presence of family culture in family owned enterprises, with the least mean figure of the items measuring family culture as '5.8', on a seven-point scale. Furthermore, the findings showing a significant higher level of family culture occurring in firms owned and/or managed by women when compared with those owned and/or managed by men, is another important investigation in this study. Traditionally, in patriarchal societies like Nigeria, the role of women remains invisible in formal business enterprises; therefore, outcomes such as these would help shed more light on the importance of women beyond their traditional activities within the family. Furthermore, despite, the huge disparity in the sample size composition of male and female owners and managers, the significance and positive finding is an indication that women should be given more visible and defined leadership roles with family firms. This is also more important because, almost all families are headed by men in this region and this role is oftentimes transferred in to their various business concerns thus making women and their activities almost invisible (Lyman, Salganicoff, & Hollander, (1985). Hence, it is necessary for FBR scholars and practitioners to start considering reversing the order that places women in background roles.

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