

## Group Cohesion and Organizational Performance in Imo State University, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This study explored the relationship between group cohesion and organizational performance in Imo State University, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration, as well as the relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria. Stratified sampling technique was used. The population of the study is 23,968 and sample size of 377 was gotten from Krejcie and Morgan table. Hypotheses were tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 27). Findings indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria. The findings further revealed that social integration positively correlates with enhanced creativity at Imo State University, Nigeria. The research concluded that a statistically significant positive correlation exists between group cohesion and organisational performance at Imo State University, Nigeria. The study, therefore, recommended that Imo State University, Nigeria should prioritise team-building programs that cultivate interpersonal relationships to improve collaboration among staff and students. The administration of Imo State University should promote social integration via multicultural events, workshops, and joint initiatives.*

**Keywords:** *Interpersonal Attraction, Improved Collaboration, Social Integration, Enhanced Creativity.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Early 20th century social psychology first developed the concept of group cohesion, thanks in large part to pioneers like Lewin and Festinger who clearly explained group dynamics. Building on this foundation, academics have relentlessly looked at the nuances of group cohesiveness (Chinecherem, 2024.). Group cohesiveness denotes the dynamic process of social interaction and connection formation among members of a group. It is founded on interpersonal attraction, wherein individuals cultivate robust connections and reciprocal respect, in addition to societal integration. This integration is defined by efficient communication, engaged involvement, and collaborative decision-making. Group members cultivate a sense of belonging and significance. Cohesive groups demonstrate a range of perspectives and ideas, accompanied by differing degrees of creativity and invention. The robustness of social connections within a group is a vital component of group cohesion (Shedow & George, 2021).

Organisational performance is a crucial notion that includes multiple facets of an organization's efficacy and efficiency. Indicators such as better teamwork, enhanced creativity, productivity, quality of service, employee satisfaction, and financial stability are frequently utilised for measurement (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). High-performance companies show a clear goal,

strategic leadership, and an innovative culture encouraging continuous improvement. Good companies create a workplace that supports employee development, creativity, and engagement, thereby raising job satisfaction and lowering turnover (Al-Aina & Atan, 2020). Internal elements including leadership styles, communication patterns, and human resource management strategies as well as outside events such market competitiveness, economic conditions, and technology developments influence organisational success (Olubela & Ajiboye, 2024). In the field of higher education, institutional performance is critical since companies have increasing need to offer quality education, participate in creative research, and promote society development. Attaining superior organisational performance necessitates a comprehensive comprehension of the intricate interactions among diverse elements, such as group dynamics, leadership, and strategic management (Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2020).

Imo State University, Nigeria, as a distinguished institution of higher education, encounters distinct challenges in its quest for academic excellence and organisational efficacy. The institution necessitates a unified and high-performing workforce to fulfil its objective, given its varied student body and faculty. Observations indicate that group cohesion and organisational effectiveness may be undermined by several variables, such as insufficient communication, restricted collaboration, and diminished employee morale. The university's development and expansion have brought additional complexity that calls for a deeper awareness of the relationship between organisational effectiveness and group cohesiveness. Examining the functions of interpersonal attraction, social integration, improved teamwork, and more creativity in supporting group cohesiveness and, hence, influencing organisational performance is absolutely vital. This research seeks to examine the correlation between group cohesion and organisational success at Imo State University, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Observations at Imo State University, Nigeria, have identified specific issues that necessitate a thorough analysis of the correlation between group cohesion and organisational success. Notwithstanding initiatives to foster teamwork and collaboration, a mismatch seems to exist between staff and students, potentially obstructing the university's capacity to attain its objectives. Interpersonal attraction, an essential component of organisational cohesion, appears deficient, as shown by restricted social interactions and communication between departments. Moreover, social interaction, crucial for cultivating a sense of belonging and cohesion, is allegedly insufficient, resulting in fragmentation and isolation. Enhanced collaboration, an essential element of organisational cohesion, is frequently obstructed by bureaucratic obstacles and hierarchical frameworks. Enhanced creativity, which flourishes in cohesive environments, seems constrained, as novel ideas are hardly communicated or executed. The university's development and expansion have created complexity, complicating the maintenance of open communication channels, dispute resolution, and the alignment of individual ambitions with organisational aims. The necessity to examine these dynamics has become urgent, as the university seeks to improve its performance and reputation. This study seeks to examine the complex connections between interpersonal attraction and enhanced collaboration, alongside social integration and increased creativity, elucidating the factors that affect group cohesiveness at Imo State University. This research aims to enhance the understanding of the difficulties and opportunities confronting the institution by analysing these variables, thereby guiding evidence-based plans for change.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to explore the relationship between group cohesion and organizational performance in Imo State University, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria?

### **Research Hypotheses**

1. H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria.
2. H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is essential for multiple stakeholders, including employees, management, government, and students. Employees will gain from comprehending the elements that affect group cohesion to cultivate a supportive workplace, improve job satisfaction, and boost productivity. Management will get critical insights to guide strategic decisions about team development, leadership, and human resource management. Policymakers will be apprised of education, human resource development, and institutional transformation. By developing critical skills in cooperation, communication, and teamwork, students will equip themselves for future jobs and thereby increase their academic and professional development. The results of the study can help the public sector become more efficient, academic results get better, and organisational performance improves, so benefiting all the stakeholders connected to Imo State University, Nigeria.

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Group Cohesion**

Group cohesiveness is the dynamic and ongoing process that ties members together, therefore fostering a strong feeling of unity, group purpose, and shared identity. This complex phenomenon consists of several social, psychological, and emotional components that together create an environment in which people view themselves as connected, dependent on one another, and committed to a common goal. Strong sense of belonging, mutual trust, and cooperation among members of a group are fostered by group cohesiveness, therefore supporting harmonic and efficient group operation (Chinecherem, 2024). Group cohesiveness is the whole force, effect, and interaction that influences members thereby affecting their tendency to stay in the group, participate actively, and help the group to flourish. These forces could cover emotional ties, social norms, shared ideals, and apparent benefits that all affect the group's attractiveness and ability to retain its members. Understanding these relationships can help companies to build loyalty among employees, dedication, and involvement (Forsyth, 2021).

Group cohesion denotes the appeal of the group to its members, signifying the intensity of the emotional, social, and psychological connections that unite them. The appeal is based on several

elements, including the group's objectives, ideals, leadership, communication dynamics, and interpersonal ties. High group cohesion fosters a robust sense of affiliation, identification, and pride among members, so augmenting their motivation, work satisfaction, and general well-being. In contrast, insufficient coherence may result in disengagement, conflict, and employee turnover (Adeleke, Lawal, Lanre-Babalola & Akinpelu, 2023). Group cohesiveness is the intricate network of links, interactions, and interdependencies that connects people together and promotes a dynamic, strong, and flexible community. Elements of trust, communication, cooperation, and mutual aid build this network from which a communal feeling of identity, purpose, and belonging results. Group members' relationships deepen as they interact, share experiences, and pursue common goals, therefore producing a coherent, effective, and productive entity capable of much more than any one member could do on their own (Ofuoku, 2020).

### **Interpersonal Attraction**

Interpersonal attraction is the complex energy that unites individuals, promoting a desire for social contact, relationship development, and emotional connection. This attraction includes multiple dimensions—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—that affect individuals' perceptions, evaluations, and responses to each other (Ibekwe, Ejem, Fredfish & Ukonu, 2020). Interpersonal attraction is essential in influencing relationships, ranging from transient interactions to enduring commitments. Interpersonal attraction is the compelling force that motivates individuals to form, sustain, and enhance social connections, driven by common interests, aligned values, and compatible personalities. This attraction is based on human needs, including affection, intimacy, and validation, and is shaped by elements such as physical appearance, communication techniques, and social status. Interpersonal attraction influences individuals' decisions, actions, and emotional commitments as they traverse their social environment (Uchenna & Nkechi, 2020).

Interpersonal attraction is the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes supporting the development of human relationships. It involves the evaluation of people's traits, values, and behaviour, therefore generating feelings of love, respect, or affection. Individual traits, cultural standards, and social settings all affect interpersonal attraction, which finally shapes relationship pleasure, commitment, and length of time (Montoya & Horton, 2020). Driven by a strong need for belonging, attachment, and social connection, interpersonal attraction is the fundamental human instinct used in interaction with others. Continuous encounters, shared experiences, and emotional reciprocity help to sustain this attraction in several forms—including platonic friendships and passionate love. Personal development, well-being, and life satisfaction depend on interpersonal attraction since major interactions improve our life and help us to find meaning in it (Romaniuk, 2021).

### **Improved Collaboration**

Improved collaboration denotes the augmented capacity of individuals or teams to cooperate efficiently, exchanging knowledge, resources, and experience to attain shared objectives. This entails cultivating a milieu of trust, transparent communication, and reciprocal respect, wherein varied viewpoints are esteemed and incorporated. Enhanced cooperation facilitates effortless information sharing, effective conflict resolution, and joint problem-solving, resulting in new solutions and superior results (Nguyen, 2022). Enhanced cooperation is the methodical alignment of individual and organisational goals, fostering a unified vision, and utilising complimentary abilities to achieve collective achievement. This involves defining distinct roles, duties, and expectations, alongside the establishment of efficient communication channels and decision-making procedures. Enhancing collaboration through streamlined workflows and the removal of silos increases productivity, efficiency, and job satisfaction (Castaner & Oliveira, 2020).

Enhanced collaboration refers to the interactive relationship among individuals, teams, and organisations that promotes innovative problem-solving, flexibility, and ongoing learning. This collaborative setting promotes active listening, empathy, and constructive feedback, enabling participants to question assumptions and enhance one another's ideas. Enhanced cooperation fosters a culture of transparency, responsibility, and collective ownership, facilitating breakthroughs and sustainable progress (Sattler & Schroter, 2022). Enhanced cooperation refers to the purposeful amalgamation of individuals, processes, and technology to attain synergistic results that surpass the aggregate of individual efforts. This entails leveraging varied expertise, experiences, and viewpoints to address intricate difficulties, foster innovation, and effectuate change. Enhanced collaboration fosters a culture of cooperation, reciprocity, and social capital, wherein relationships are cultivated and collective intelligence is utilised to attain exceptional outcomes (Marathe, Chung & Hill, 2022).

### **Organizational Performance**

Organisational performance, assessed by means of efficiency, effectiveness, and impact, is the whole fulfilment of the strategic goals of an organisation. This covers several areas, including operational effectiveness, customer satisfaction, financial performance, and employee engagement. Elements include leadership, culture, innovation, and adaptability define organisational performance and finally determine the competitiveness, sustainability, and reputation of the company (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). Organisational performance is the methodical evaluation of an organization's capacity to fulfil its purpose, vision, and strategic objectives. This entails assessing key performance indicators (KPIs) like revenue growth, market share, quality metrics, and timeframes. Organisational performance is influenced by the alignment of resources, processes, and personnel, facilitating efficient execution and ongoing enhancement (Olubela & Ajiboye, 2024).

Organisational performance delineates the dynamic interaction of internal processes, external relationships, and stakeholder expectations. This entails reconciling conflicting needs, mitigating risk, and capitalising on chances to generate profit. Organisational performance is enhanced by strategic leadership, a collaborative culture, and employee empowerment, allowing the organisation to adapt, develop, and prosper in a fast-evolving environment (Al-Aina & Atan, 2020). Including the triple bottom line of financial, social, and environmental outcomes, organisational performance shows how an entity influences society and stakeholders. Together with traditional financial measures, this all-encompassing approach assesses long-term viability, ethical behaviour, and community effect. Leaders that stress integrated thinking, stakeholder involvement, and responsible decision-making improve organisational success (Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2020).

### **Social Integration**

Social integration is the process of fostering a feeling of belonging, unity, and collective identity by means of coherent links among people and groups from many backgrounds. This is harmonising social, cultural, and financial differences, thereby promoting mutual understanding, respect, and teamwork. Social integration increases collective welfare, social capital, and community involvement (Gidron & Hall, 2020). Social integration is the evolving process of assimilating individuals or groups into established social structures, organisations, and networks. This entails enabling access to resources, services, and opportunities, guaranteeing equitable participation and complete membership in society. Social integration fosters inclusiveness, mitigates inequality, and improves general quality of life (Kawashima, 2024).

Social integration refers to the harmonious cohabitation of heterogeneous individuals, groups, and communities, marked by tolerance, empathy, and mutual interactions. This entails fostering common beliefs, norms, and behaviours that honour and appreciate diversity. Social integration

promotes a culture of transparency, flexibility, and collaboration (Lambert, 2020). Social integration involves the complex process of linking individuals, communities, and organisations to foster collective development, social equity, and human welfare. This entails confronting systemic obstacles, fostering social mobility, and guaranteeing equitable opportunities for everyone. Social integration fosters resilient, inclusive, and dynamic communities (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2020).

### **Enhanced Creativity**

Enhanced creativity is the augmented capacity to produce unique ideas, solutions, and products via an interconnected and iterative process. This entails developing a mindset that values curiosity, experimentation, and risk-taking, so creating an environment where imagination is limitless. Augmented creativity stimulates artistic expression, scientific exploration, and entrepreneurial innovation (Gu, Tang & Jiang, 2024). Enhanced creativity is the methodical cultivation of innovative and valuable ideas, utilising varied viewpoints, experiences, and knowledge. This entails the creation of cognitive processes, instruments, and methodologies that promote ideation, prototyping, and evaluation. Augmented creativity propels business expansion, societal influence, and individual satisfaction (Chen, Zada, Khan & Saba, 2022).

Enhanced creativity is the dynamic interplay of cognitive talents, emotional intelligence, and social relationships that ignites innovative thought. This entails fostering a culture of transparency, creativity, and constructive criticism, wherein individuals feel encouraged to question assumptions and investigate unconventional methods. Augmented creativity liberates human potential (Juliana, Hui, Clement, Solomon & Elvis, 2021). Enhanced creativity is the transforming process of re-envisioning possibilities, expanding limits, and redefining realities. This entails embracing complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty, utilising technology, and cooperating across disciplines. Augmented creativity expedites advancement, propels cultural development, and enhances human experience (Samson & Umar, 2020).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on Cohesion Theory of Groups by Leon Festinger (1957) which was updated by Michael Drexler and Allan Drexler in 2016. Cohesion Theory of Groups proposes that group cohesion arises from the attractiveness of the group to its members. Festinger argues that group cohesion is influenced by three main factors:

1. Group Goals: The clarity, specificity, and attainability of group objectives.
2. Member Interaction: The quality and frequency of interactions among group members.
3. External Threats: The presence of external challenges or threats that unite group members.

### **Key Components**

1. Attractiveness: The degree to which group members find the group appealing and satisfying.
2. Membership: The sense of belonging and identification with the group.
3. Cooperation: The willingness to work together towards common goals.

### **Assumptions:**

1. Group members are motivated to maintain a positive self-image.
2. Group membership satisfies psychological needs, such as social identity and belonging.
3. Group cohesion is dynamic and influenced by changing circumstances.

### **Relevance of this Theory to the Present Study**

This theory is highly pertinent to this study as it offers a fundamental framework for comprehending the dynamics of group cohesion and its influence on organisational performance. The emphasis of the theory on attractiveness, membership, and cooperation can help to direct the analysis of how university administrative and academic departments function as coherent units, therefore influencing general organisational effectiveness. Using the cohesiveness theory of groups would provide important new perspectives on the intricate interaction between group cohesion and organisational performance at Imo State University, Nigeria.

### **Empirical Review**

Chinecherem (2024) examined group cohesion and workforce diversity in specific industrial firms within Enugu metropolitan, Nigeria. The research employed a descriptive survey methodology. The research population comprises the personnel of two chosen manufacturing firms in Enugu State: Innoson Group and Nigerian Breweries Plc. The sample comprises two hundred eighty-seven (287) respondents. A simple random sampling technique was used as the sampling technique for the reason that the method ensures an equal chance of selection among the respondents. The study's data was gathered utilising a meticulously crafted questionnaire employing a 5-point Likert scale. Multiple regression analysis was employed. The study's principal findings indicated that age variety, ethnic diversity, and gender diversity greatly enhance group cohesion in certain industrial firms within Enugu city.

Olubela and Ajiboye (2024) examined the social effects of motivation and group cohesiveness on the performance of university employees in Southwest Nigeria. This study utilised an ex-post facto research design. The purposive sampling strategy was employed to choose the Distance Learning centres in Southwest Nigeria that participated in this study. The analysis of responses from 353 participants using simple linear regression revealed a combined effect of the independent variables, motivation and group cohesiveness, on social loafing among staff at distance learning centres in selected Nigerian universities ( $R = 0.457$ ,  $P = 0.05$ ). The independent variables explained 22.6% of the overall variance in the social loafing of DLC staff, with an adjusted R value of 0.226.

Shedow and George (2021) investigated the perspective of transformational leadership, team cohesion, and team performance in a case study of Guarantee Trust Bank, Nigeria. The study employed quantitative research utilising a cross-sectional survey method, targeting a population of 360 banks. From this, 186 questionnaires were distributed to the staff of Guarantee Trust Bank, of which 179 were completed and returned. The methodology included multiple regressions and utilised SPSS and Amos software, using structural equation modelling for analysis. The primary conclusion of this study is that team cohesion mediates the relationship between the dimensions of transformational leadership and team performance.

Abubakar and Abubakar (2020) examined the influence of group cohesion on the entrepreneurial success of women entrepreneurs in the Kaduna metropolitan of Nigeria. Data were gathered from 100 participants via self-administered questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha was employed to assess the reliability of the constructs, while data analysis was conducted using multiple regression statistics. The findings indicated that group cohesiveness positively influenced the business success of women entrepreneurs in Kaduna metropolis.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted descriptive survey research design because of its aid in getting first hand data from respondents through a structured questionnaire. The study employed stratified sampling technique and the population of this study are 8,322 employees and 15,646 students of Imo State

University, Nigeria making up 23,968 so as to allow for an in-depth examination of group cohesion and organizational performance, providing valuable insights for the institution. Krejcie and Morgan table was used to get a sample size of 377. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS version 27) at 5% level of significance.

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis One

Ho: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria.**

		Interpersonal Attraction	Improved Collaboration
Interpersonal Attraction	Pearson correlation	1	.882**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	377	377
Improved Collaboration	Pearson correlation	.882**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	377	377

Source: SPSS version 27 Outputs.

### Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria, with  $r = 0.882$   $n = 377$  and  $p$  value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the study accepted the alternate hypothesis and concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between interpersonal attraction and improved collaboration in Imo State University, Nigeria. This finding suggests that fostering interpersonal relationships among staff and students at Imo State University, Nigeria, can enhance collaborative efforts, leading to more effective teamwork and organizational performance.

#### Hypothesis Two

Ho: There is no significant relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria.

Ha: There is a significant relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria.**

		Social Integration	Enhanced Creativity
Social Integration	Pearson correlation	1	.801**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	377	377
Enhanced Creativity	Pearson correlation	.801**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	377	377

Source: SPSS version 27 Outputs.



## Discussion of Findings

Table 2 shows that there is a positive significant relationship between social integration and enhanced creativity in Imo State University, Nigeria, with  $r = 0.801$ ,  $n = 377$  and  $p$  value of  $0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). Consequently, the study embraced the other theory and found at Imo State University, Nigeria, a positive significant link between social integration and increased creativity. This result suggests that encouraging staff and student social integration at Imo State University, Nigeria, will help to create a more inventive and creative workspace.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between group cohesion and organizational performance in Imo State University, Nigeria. The implication is that Imo State University, Nigeria, can expect improved organizational performance and effectiveness by fostering a more cohesive and unified environment.

## Recommendations

The study recommends that:

1. Imo State University, Nigeria needs to prioritize team-building initiatives that foster interpersonal relationships to enhance collaboration among staff and students. This can be achieved through regular social events, cross-departmental meetings, mentorship programs, and team-building activities.
2. The management of Imo State University needs to foster social integration through multicultural events, workshops, and collaborative projects.

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