

MODULE TITLE: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

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TASK -1

PPT Slides

SEGMENTED SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGY

Objective: Enhance supply chain performance by applying tailored strategies to different product segments

Drawbacks of Traditional Methods:

- A one-size-fits-all approach, focusing either on operational efficiency or responsiveness.
- Inefficiencies due to long-term forecasts and mismatches between product characteristics and supply chain strategies.

Solution:

- Utilize digitization and analytics to segment products based on sales volatility, volume, and profit margin.
- Implement tailored supply chain strategies for each segment: Efficiency, Responsiveness, or Hybrid.

How the Solution Implemented:

- **High Volatility Products:** Adopt a responsive strategy with centralized distribution to manage high stock-out risks.
- **High Volume & Low Volatility Products:** Use an efficiency strategy, optimizing transportation costs and using regional warehouses.
- **Low Volatility & High-Margin Products:** Implement a balanced strategy, storing products at both centralized locations and regional warehouses.
- **Low Volatility, Low Volume & Low Margin Products:** Apply a hybrid strategy leaning towards efficiency, with predictable demand and minimized transportation costs.

Benefits:

- Improved forecast accuracy and service levels.
- Reduction in stock-outs and transportation costs.
- Enhanced ability to satisfy demand quickly.
- Tailored strategies increase overall supply chain efficiency and responsiveness.

BALANCING SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Objective: Continuously balance supply and demand for efficient and responsive supply chain management.

Drawbacks of Traditional Methods:

- Manual, month-long S&OP process based on consensus forecasting.
- Lacks SKU-level planning, unified demand view, and supply chain segmentation.
- Relies on intuition rather than data, leading to inefficiencies and inaccuracies.

Solution:

- Transition to an automated, analytics-driven S&OP process.
- Incorporate SKU-by-SKU supply planning informed by engineering, finance, sales, and supply chain data.

How the Solution Implemented:

- **Automated Weekly Planning:** Tailors to products with volatile demand and frequently changing marketing strategies.
- **Monitoring and KPIs:** Tracks performance indicators to identify and address deviations in real-time.
- **Predictive Analytics (KPPs):** Uses AI to foresee supply chain disruptions and demand changes, focusing on short-term predictions.

Benefits:

- Reduces time and cost significantly in transforming supply chain operations.
- Improves forecast accuracy, responsiveness to market changes, and supply chain efficiency.
- Frees up executive time for strategic growth opportunities by automating routine tasks.

Precis

"Modernize Your Supply Chain" by David Simchi-Levi and Kris Timmermans, presents an innovative approach to supply chain modernization that is both cost-effective and time-efficient. In contrast to the widely held belief that digitizing a supply chain requires substantial financial investment and multi-year commitment, the authors present a methodology that promises substantial improvements within 12 to 24 months by leveraging existing data, advanced analytics, and strategic automation.

The eight slides of the presentation explain the key aspects of the supply chain modernization process. The initial slides introduce us with the three misconceptions regarding the complexity and cost of digitizing supply chains, creating an opportunity to discuss the implementation and advantages of an alternative, streamlined approach. The approach is based on the foundation of three fundamental initiatives: creating a unified forecast, segmenting the entire supply chain strategy based on the characteristics of the products, and finally creating a dynamic plan to efficiently balance supply and demand.

Firstly, the unified demand forecast process emphasizes the replacement of the traditional consensus forecasting with a more data-driven model which uses a variety of data sources, including internal sales data, consumer demand signals, macroeconomic indicators and external data. This step targets to improve the forecast accuracy, resulting in supply planning and reducing unnecessary inventory costs.

Secondly, we discuss the next process, segmentation of the supply chain strategy. This initiative is based on the fact that different products have different needs, hence, require customized supply chain approaches. By analyzing product characteristics like sales, volatility, volume and profit margins, companies can customize strategies that optimize efficiency for stable-demand products and increase responsiveness for fluctuating demand products.

The third step aims on balancing supply and demand by an improved sales and operations planning (S&OP) process, which is enhanced by AI and analytics. This advanced S&OP process enables more accurate and timely decision-making, helping companies to adapt swiftly to change in demand and supply conditions.

Finally we have a case study illustrating the application of all the three strategies at a Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) manufacturer demonstrating the practical benefits of this approach. The company experienced a significant operational improvement, 20% increase in revenue, increased service levels and decreased operating costs, showing the advantages of the process.

Lastly, the concluding slide summarizes the key findings, stressing on the fact that supply chain modernization can be achieved through strategic, analytics-driven initiatives and do not necessarily require heavy investments or protracted timelines. By focusing on a unified view of demand, adopting segmented supply chain strategies and leveraging smart execution, companies can achieve significant operational efficiencies and cost savings.

This presentation distills the essence of Simchi Levi and Timmerman's article into a concise narrative, offering a compelling blueprint for businesses seeking to modernize their supply chains in a practical and financially sustainable way. It challenges traditional methods of supply chain digitization and provides a viable path for companies aiming to increase their competitive edge and operational agility.

Question – B

Identification of what problem &/or issue your chosen paper trying to solve or explain in the field.
Focus on why this research is being done by looking closely for evidence of the agenda or motivation of the research

Introduction:

In the insightful article “A Simpler Way to Modernize Your Supply Chain”, authors David Simchi-Levi, a Professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Kris Timmermans, a Senior Managing Director at Accenture, discuss the common problems and misunderstandings related to supply chain modernization. In the current scenario, all businesses are spending millions to increase the agility and efficiency of their supply chain operations to meet the unprecedented demands, implementing new advanced technologies. On the contrary, the authors question the traditional approach that modernizing the supply chain requires huge monetary investments and time. They argue for a paradigm shift towards a more accessible, data-driven approach to revamping supply chains. By eliminating the notion that substantial financial and time commitments are necessary for successful supply chain digitalization, Simchi-Levi and Timmermans present an innovative perspective on attaining operational excellence. This article not only addresses the need for supply chain modernization in today’s fast-paced business environment but also introduces a compelling case for rethinking how companies approach digital transformation for their supply chain.

Problem Identification:

The main issue explored by David Simchi-Levi and Kris Timmermans in “A Simpler Way to Modernize Your Supply Chain” revolves around the rooted belief in the business world that

digitization and modernization of the supply chain come at a price of exorbitant expenses and extensive durations. This belief acts as a huge challenge to many organizations, hindering them from undertaking critical improvements to their supply chain operations. The traditional approach suggests that transforming a supply chain into a digitized, agile entity requires a colossal outlay of resources, spanning multiple years and tens of millions of dollars, for a complete adoption of the latest technologies and an absolute overhaul of all the existing processes. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this problem in supply chain management. In an era of rapid market changes, technological advancements, and heightened customer expectations, a company's capacity to maintain competitiveness is increasingly dependent on the agility and efficiency of its supply chain. The widespread misunderstandings regarding the prerequisites for supply chain modernization essentially shackle firms, preventing them from adjusting to the dynamics of the market and putting their competitive advantage at risk. This is especially important in sectors where the speed of delivery, the availability of products, and the capacity to quickly respond to the demands of customers are of the utmost importance for achieving success.

Simchi-Levi and Timmermans address this issue challenging the status quo and introducing a more pragmatic pathway towards supply chain modernization that is both accessible and feasible for a broad range of businesses. Their goal is to break the myths that have been plaguing supply chain digitization efforts for a long time and to demonstrate how utilizing current data, deploying advanced analytics, and implementing strategic automation may result in significant gains without the anticipated costs of financial and temporal resources. The authors are strongly convinced of the importance of their research, as they aim to make supply chain modernization accessible to businesses of all sizes, regardless of their financial resources. Not only does this strategy promise to improve the efficiency and responsiveness of the supply chain, but it also highlights the potential for major competitive advantages to be acquired through the implementation of data-driven strategies and individualized supply chain solutions.

Contribution to the Field:

The paper introduces a revolutionary viewpoint in the field of supply chain management. This is primarily accomplished by pushing for a data-driven and analytical approach to modernization.

By challenging the traditional, capital-intensive model of supply chain digitization, the authors propose novel techniques for improving supply chain agility, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. Their approach, which stresses the use of accessible data, advanced analytics, and strategic automation, represents a considerable divergence from standard techniques.

The implementation of a unified view demand represents a critical contribution, pivoting away from traditional consensus forecasting towards a more accurate, efficient forecasting model. Integrating diverse data streams—from sales history and promotional activities to broader economic indicators and social trends- this approach offers a holistic and nuanced perspective of market demand. Additionally, the implementation of segmented supply chain strategies allows businesses to create customized operational plans for specific characteristics and requirements of different product segments, optimizing resource allocation and operational efficiency. And finally developing a comprehensive plan to balance the supply and demand of the market.

These strategies have the potential to profoundly impact future supply chain practices. Businesses adopting these innovations will transform supply chains into ones that are more responsive to the market needs and agile, but also significantly more cost-effective fast on implementation. Global business environments are increasingly characterized by rapid changes in consumer demand, market conditions, and technological advancements. By emphasizing data analytics and dynamic balancing of supply and demand, the authors set a new standard for operational excellence in the field of supply chain management.

Conclusion:

This paper has analyzed the important ideas presented in David Simchi-Levi and Kris Timmermans' article, "A Simpler Way to Modernize Your Supply Chain," emphasizing its substantial impact on reshaping the strategy for supply chain modernization. The authors argue for a more accessible and data-driven approach to supply chain digitalization, dispelling the assumption that it requires significant time and financial commitments. This strategy makes use of technologically enhanced analytics, segmented strategies, and dynamic supply-demand balancing to improve the responsiveness and efficiency of the supply chain at a fraction of the cost that was previously assumed.

The research results have significant ramifications for organizations and supply chain experts, prompting a reassessment of deeply held ideas regarding the modernization of supply chains. In an era in which agility and efficiency are of the utmost importance, the insights provided by the authors present a viable route for businesses to attain operational excellence with their operations. Maintaining a competitive advantage and satisfying the ever-changing requirements of the global market may require adopting these new tactics, which are becoming increasingly important as the field of supply chain management continues to undergo a period of rapid evolution.

Task -2

Introduction

It has been observed that the effective landscape of business has been reshaped through the rise of “Information and communication strategy” (ICT). In this context, one of the appropriate outcomes is the emergence of Virtual Organisations (VOs). Virtual organisations have been characterized by their reliance on different kinds of innovative digital technologies to coordinate as well as integrate activities across geographically dispersed locations. It has become prevalent in this changed global economy. Here, in this study, the overall understanding of Virtual organisation with its critical emergence has been discussed. Additionally, the focus is also distributed in between discussions of strategic management issues which have been related to planning, designing and leading such kinds of organisations.

Understanding of Virtual Organisations

Virtual organisations also become known as network organisations and all of these kinds of organisations have been entitled as boundaryless organisations. These virtual organisations have been operated primarily through different kind of digital platforms that enables remote collaboration between employees, partners and several stakeholders (Asatiani et al., 2020). It has also been observed that VOs transcend geographical boundaries as well as physical constraints, unliking traditional brick-and-mortar organisations. On the other hand, this kind of organisation leverages technology to build up technology for creating flexible structures which may facilitate innovation, agility as well as efficiency (Redlbacher and Hattke, 2022). In this context, the concept of virtual organisation emerged in the early century of the 1990s and it has been driven through several kinds of factors.

Technological advancements: Advancements in the technological field of communication such as video conferencing, project management platforms as well as cloud computing provide seamless collaboration across distances (Frost and Duan, 2020). **Globalisation:** It has been observed that global competition has increased a lot as well as market opportunities maximised in the context of the need for accessing talent and resources across the borders. **Cost reduction:** Virtual organisations offer the effectiveness and potential towards lower operational costs by eliminating the essentiality of physical office space as well as infrastructure (Baptista et al., 2020). **Flexibility:** On the other hand VO providers allowance for greater flexibility in terms of locations, and work

schedules that attract a wider renege of the talent pool (Rabenu, 2021). All of these effective factors have contributed towards the proliferation of virtual organisations across different kinds of industries from the software development base to consulting to marketing as well as design.

In this context, certain kinds of examples of virtual organisations in the UK are Depop, Mindspace, FanDuel UK and many more. Depop is one of the popular online marketplaces for entitling second-hand clothing and operates completely virtually. Depop utilises an effective as well as robust online platform for increasing and operating all the transactions and communications along with sellers and purchasers across the world (Depop, 2021). On the other hand, Mindspace leads in the way to a co-working space provider and encourages a virtual model for its all over membership base (Mindspace, 2023). Entrepreneurs as well as remote workers can be able to access co-working advantages such as networking events and community forums virtually. FanDuel UK is one of the popular fantasy sports platforms that thrives as a kind of virtual organisation that employs data analysts, software developers as well as customer support staff all working remotely (Fanduel, 2023). The organisation's virtual structure allows it to access a variety of global talent pools as well as offers flexible work arrangements.

Strategic Management Issues in Virtual Organisations

Virtual Organisations can be able to offer a lot of effective advantages but they also have to face certain kinds of challenges regarding strategic planning, designing and leading in the market. A critical analysis of strategic management issues has been elaborated and evaluated here.

Planning

Resource allocation: Virtual organisations sometimes are not able to allocate resources effectively which leads in the way to face difficulties. Here resources can be categorised as financial, technological and human. Across the geographically dispersed teams, VOs need to allocate all the resources (Smith and Ruiz, 2020). This requires a lot of careful planning as well as consideration of time zone differences, varying skill sets and cultural nuances. **Goal alignment:** A critical obstacle lies in the context of ensuring all of the geographically dispersed members understand as well as align with the organisation's overall goals and different kinds of objectives (Bagga, Gera and Haque, 2022). In this context, it needs to be stated that transparently defined communication

strategies as well as performance metrics are essential and significant for fostering the shared vision. **Dependency on communication channels:** Another important issue is the development of effective communication channels (Abarca, Palos-Sanchez and Rus-Arias, 2020). Virtual organisations develop their dependency on digital communication tools for enhancement of collaboration, decision-making as well as information sharing. On the other hand miscommunication as well as information overload can be able to happen with the absence of face-to-face interaction (Lal, Dwivedi and Haag, 2021). In this context, all virtual organisation needs to implement communication protocols and different kinds of tools which may promote clarity, transparency and mostly inclusivity in organisational culture.

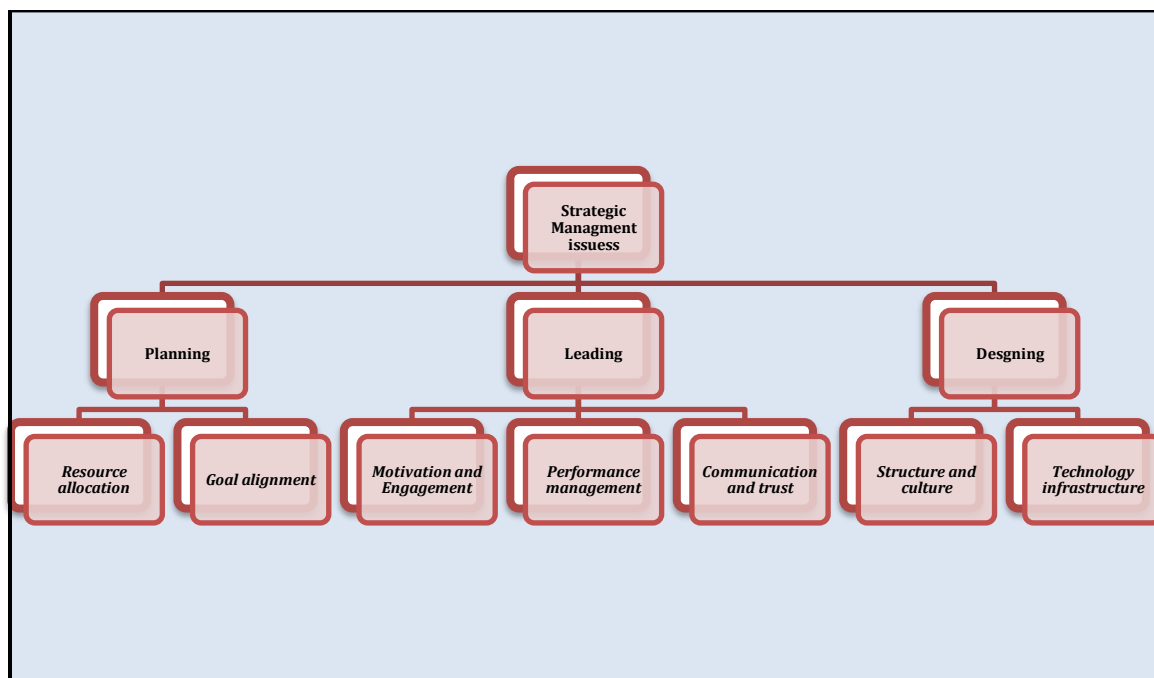


Figure 1: Strategic management issues in Virtual Organisations

(Source: Self-developed)

Designing

Structure and culture: In the context of fostering innovation and collaboration in organisational culture designing of organisational structure of a Virtual organisation is one of the critical assessments. It has been observed that in the case of organisational structure, flat hierarchies, cross-functional teams and a strong emphasis on communication are extremely crucial and effective

(Dühring and Zerfass, 2021). Moreover, the establishment of a virtual culture which promotes trust and inclusivity as well as respect is one of the essential elements for mitigating this kind of issue.

Technology infrastructure: Sometimes virtual organisations fail to identify appropriate tools for communication, knowledge sharing and project management. It has been measured that robust and secure technological infrastructure is the backbone of a virtual organisation (Pal et al., 2021). On the other hand, integration of technologies into the existing system can be challenging and critical specifically in the time of dealing with legacy infrastructure and compatibility issues. In this context, it needs to be stated that virtual leaders must carefully evaluate and assess their technologies and their related needs as well as invest in scalable, user-friendly solutions which may support the organisation's strategic objectives (Jacob et al., 2024).

Leading

Communication and trust: In a virtual organisation all the virtual leaders need to face difficulties in the context of developing trust and fostering effective communication across geographical, and cultural divides. In this context, it is important to create a connected and engaged workforce and this can be possible only with regular virtual meetings, open communication channels, and active listening (Leonardelli, 2022). **Performance management:** In a virtual environment, it is extremely important and difficult to evaluate as well as reward the performance of each of the members. On the other hand, to mitigate this kind of challenge, it is important to set clear performance expectations, establishment of transparent processes and utilisation of online performance management tools. **Motivation and Engagement:** As employees have no opportunity to interact with each other face-to-face, this enables them to become demotivated towards the work effectively (Gernandizo, 2022). It also decreases employee engagement in the organisation which leads to a decrease in productivity and employee job satisfaction. To avoid this kind of difficulty, leaders need to create a sense of community through virtual team-building activities, fostering a positive, supportive online environment and identification of programs.

Another important issue that virtual organisations face while managing their culture and operation is problems in cybersecurity and data privacy. It has been observed that most of virtual organisations face challenges in the context of the leakage of sensitive information in the digital platforms. Virtual organisations have become vulnerable towards cyber security threats such as data breaches, malware and phishing attacks (Khan, Brohi and Zaman, 2020). Such kinds of threats

lead to a lack of endgame for employees and customers as they feel a lack of confidence in data privacy in the organisation. In this context as suggestive measures, the team leaders need to focus on cybersecurity measures such as multi-factor authentication, encryption, and employee training to mitigate risks as well as protect sensitive data.

Theoretical understanding

In the context of the emergence of virtual organisations and focusing on strategic management issues, some of the effective theories can be evaluated and analysed.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

Through the implication of the RBV theory in a virtual organisation, the strategic importance of resources as well as capabilities in the context of achieving competitive advantage can be emphasised (Gerhart and Feng, 2021). Additionally, in the context of VOs, RBV suggests one of the critical resources can be understood as leverage of digital technologies by the organisation's abilities. Moreover, virtual organisations need to develop as well as deploy technological infrastructure digital platforms as well as knowledge management systems which can enable seamless coordination as well as collaboration across dispersed locations.

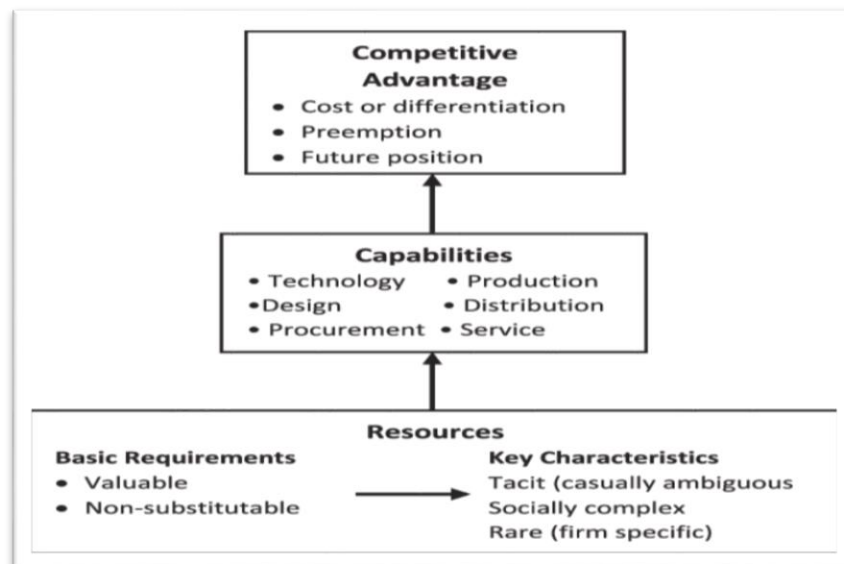


Figure 2: Model of RBV theory

(Source: Bamgbade et al., 2019)

From the above-mentioned image it has been observed that through effective resources and capabilities, an organisation has become capable of gaining competitive advantages effectively in the market. On the other hand, the RBV focuses on the significance of human capital and it also enlightens that virtual leaders in an organisation must cultivate different kinds of skills such as adaptability, digital literacy, and virtual team management to drive effective and best organisational performance (Burt and Soda, 2021).

Transaction Cost Economics (TCE)

The Transaction Cost Economics theory (TCE) sheds light on the decision-making process associated with the selection between major transactions as well as hierarchical coordination. In the context of virtual organisations, TCE suggests a critical concept and that is the adoption of digital platforms, virtual work arrangements can be able to provide help for decreasing transaction costs that have been associated with geographical distance (Nagle, Seamans and Tadelis, 2020).

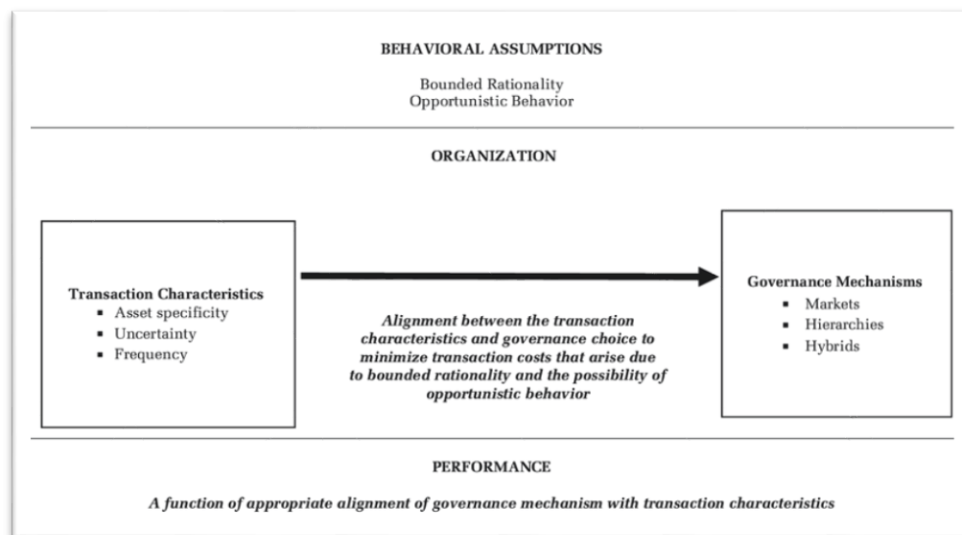


Figure 3: Transaction cost Economics theory

(Source: Cuypers et al., 2020)

The attached image shows that it is important to develop a balance between transaction characteristics and governance mechanisms so that an organisation can be able to reduce its

transaction costs. It has also enabled the organisation to become more enable to become efficient in resource allocation as well as coordination (Santana and Albareda, 2022). On the other hand, TCE also provides a view of the significance of governance mechanisms as well as contractual arrangements in the concept of mitigating risks which also ensures trust among virtual partners and stakeholders.

Social Identity Theory (SI)

The Social Identity theory provides an overview regarding the concept that individuals derive a sense of identity as well as belonging from their critical affiliation with social groups. In this context in virtual organisations, there is a lack has been arisen regarding face-to-face conversation. SI theory suggests that leaders need to actively work to foster a sense of community as well as belonging among all the remote team members (Steffens et al., 2020).

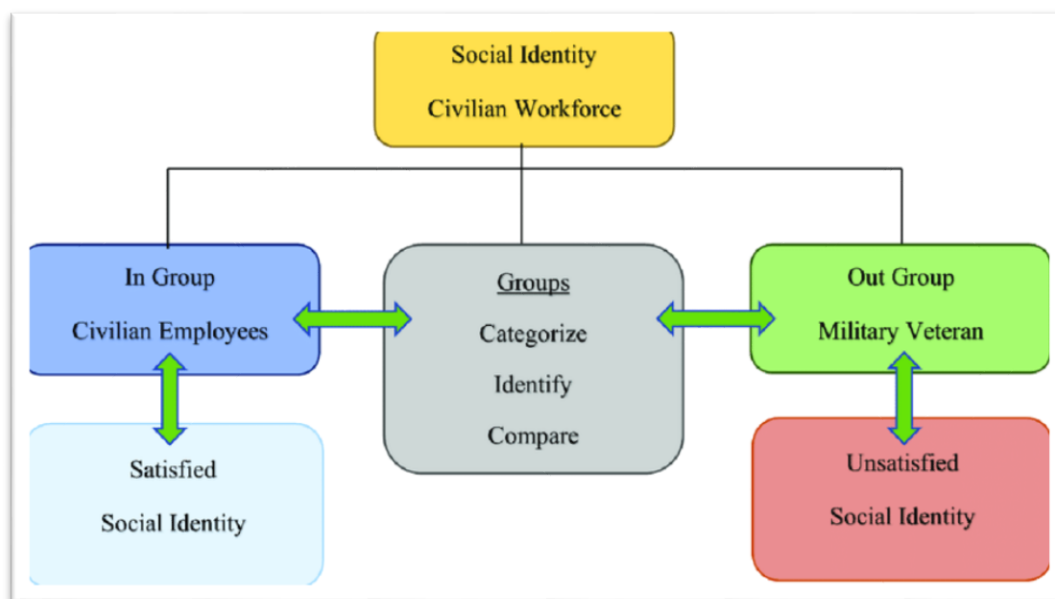


Figure 4: Social Identity Theory

(Source: Lepage and Patty, 2020)

It has been acknowledged from the above-mentioned image that social identity can be divided into some segments and those are ion group of employees, out-group and others. The satisfaction of these groups matters for the organisation. Additionally, this kind of success can be achieved by

virtual team-building activities, shared goals as well as values, and opportunities for developed social interaction in digital platforms (KANTAR and İlhan Yalçın, 2023). Through strengthening social bonds and promotion of shared identity all the virtual organisations can be able to enhance employee engagement, performance and commitment.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Virtual Organisation

Advantages

- Accessing the global talent pool
- Reduction of transaction cost and operational cost
- Increase of flexibility
- Improvement in speed and agility

Disadvantages

- Challenges regarding communication
- Trust and relationship-building obstacles
- Difficulties in the context of maintaining the company's culture
- Management complexities

Conclusion

Based on the overall analysis it can be concluded that future of the virtual organisations is bright as technology continuously develops which can be able to mitigate all the challenges. Additionally, virtual organisations represent a significant and transparent shift in the context of the way to operate a business. Moreover, strategic management issues in the context of planning, designing and leading virtual organisations have been established here for the identification of strategies through which all the challenges can be mitigated appropriately. Through addressing all these challenges VOs can be able to leverage advantages and achieve effective success in the rapidly dynamic business environments.

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