

External Environmental Factors and Organizational Productivity in Selected Oil Service Firms in Port Harcourt

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ABSTRACT

External environment is a firm's aggregate of factors, exogenous to the organization that may have potential to affect organizational performance. The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity in oil service firms in Port Harcourt, River State. Resource dependency theory was employed as the theoretical framework for the study. The study adopted survey research design. The population of the work constituted 1875 employees from 20 randomly selected oil service firms. The sample size for the study was 330 arrived at using Taro Yamane formula. The data generated through questionnaire were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that technological factors have significant effect on organizational productivity and that political factors have significant effect on organizational productivity. The study further indicated that economic factors have significant effect on organizational productivity and that socio-cultural factors have significant effect on organizational productivity. It was therefore concluded that external environmental factors have significant effect on organizational productivity in oil servicing firms in Port Harcourt. The study recommended among other things that oil service firms should be proactive in dealing with the changes and trends in external environmental environment.

KEYWORDS: *External Environmental Factors, Organizational Productivity, Technological Factors, Political Factors, Economic Factors and Socio-cultural Factors*

INTRODUCTION

Business organizations do not operate in a vacuum but in a business environment. Business environment is the summation of all exterior and interior conditions and influences that affects the presence, development and advancement of businesses. Business environment in which organization operates exerts pressure on them which provoke different responses as organizations seek legitimacy in order to survive and prosper in the environment. Oginni and Adesanya (2013) note that business environment can be divided into internal and external environmental factors. But this study focuses on external environmental factors.

The external environment is a firm's aggregate of factors, exogenous to the organization that may have potential to impact organizational performance (Murgor, 2014). It is a set of factors that are exogenous in relation to the organization (Njoroge, Ongeti, Kinuu & Kasomi, 2016). Regardless of the industry in which organizations compete, the external environment affects firms, as they seek to ensure strategic competitiveness (Hitt, Ireland, Sirmo & Trahms, 2011). The external environment of organizations is an integrated, dynamically developing characteristic, which include a complex of social, technological, economic, political and legal factors that are beyond the control of business and impose their limitations on the activities of the organization. Also, the environmental conditions such as uncertainty,

dynamism, hostility, the number of relevant components in the environment and the interpersonal relationship between these components, all increase perceived complexity in managing organizations (Lehner, 2004). The survival and success of an organization depends on the skillful interaction of the company's management with the external environment and timely responses to changes in this environment, analyzing and accounting for its impact on the organization and business in general (Kuznetsova and Alekseeva, 2016).

Adeoye (2013) posits that productivity in contemporary Nigerian business environment is predicated on factors such as low sales, high cost of production, low capital utilization, lack of foreign exchange to source needed input and materials, poor power supply, and low quality of goods and services among others. These environmental forces have been impeding activities in the economy. The Nigerian business environment has witnessed a lot changes from the period of the oil boom, recession, austerity measures in the early 1980s, the Structured Adjustment Programme (SAP) in the late 1980s, company act of 1960s allied matter decree in the 1990s, etc has undoubtedly brought the opportunities to be exploited by some firms or the problems that inhibit the survival of so many business (Ogundele, 2013). Therefore, relationship between business and its environment is one of

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mutuality, that is, the environment exerts pressure on the business while the business, in turn influences some aspects of its environment.

Based on the foregoing, Oluremi and Gbenga (2011) assert that business organizations that want to succeed must develop a clear understanding of the trends of external business environment and forces that shape competition. The understanding in question will enable the organization to choose the appropriate strategy or strategies that fit the trends in the business environment arrived at through environmental scanning analysis with focus on the variables such as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat (SWOT). The dynamic and rapidly changing external environment in which most organizations compete had made business environment to have significant impact on organizational survival and productivity. Ogundele and Opeifa (2004) submit that external business environment and their factors helps visualize the analysis of business survival and growth in an attempt to enhance understanding of how environmental factors work together with the variables of business survival and growth to determine the future of business organizations.

Organizations without exception are environment serving and environment dependent. The contemporary Nigerian external business environment is characterized by high cost of production, low capital utilization, lack of foreign exchange to source needed inputs, poor power supply, low-sales, and low quality of goods and services, among others. These issues have led to lack of proper integration and coordination of various corporate subsystems in Nigerian organizations, resulting in the failure to achieve the stated goals and improve organizational productivity. Thus, the vagaries and the extremities of the environment affect the fortunes of organizations.

Similarly, organizations face turbulent and rapid changing environments that are translated into complex, multifaceted and interlinked streams of initiatives. This turbulence affects work, organizational designs and resource allocation thus leading to variations in organizational productivity. Delays in availability of resources, political interference and variations on the economic situations especially the extreme cases of recession have been attributed to poor organizational productivity even with a perfectly formulated strategy.

The existing empirical findings reveal mixed results which indicated that the relationship between external environmental factors and organizational productivity is mixed. For instance, Akpoviro and Owotutu (2018), Ontorael and Mawardi (2017), Njoroge, Ongeti, Kinuu and Kasomi (2016) and Wetende (2014) found that external environmental factors have impact on organizational productivity. On the contrary, Nnamani and Ajagu (2014) found that environmental factors have no significant effect on organizational productivity. Also no recent studies have covered oil service firms in Port Harcourt. Hence, this work examined the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity in selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity. The specific objectives of the study include:

1. To ascertain the degree to which technological factors affect organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.
2. To determine the extent to which political factors affect organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.
3. To examine the degree to which economic factors affect organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.
4. To investigate the extent to which socio-cultural factors affect organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

External Environmental Factors

Environment is expressed as the sum total of the external forces that influences individuals, businesses and communities (Oginni & Faseyiku, 2012). In the views of Adebayo et al (2005), environment is summarized as the surrounding of a phenomenon which from time to time dictate and shape the direction of businesses. Business organization does not operate in a vacuum; they operate within the environment where the production and distribution of goods and services are carried out. Environment has been seen as the totality of the factors that affect, influence, or determine the operations or performance of a business (Oginni & Faseyiku, 2012). Azhar (2008) opines that environment is the combination of many factors both tangible and non-tangible elements that provides lifeblood support for the organizational success through provision of market for its products and services and also by serving as a source of resources to others. The environment of a business is the aggregation of the pattern of all the external and internal conditions and influences that affect the existence, growth and development of the business.

Business environment of an enterprises consist of the internal and external environmental factors affecting the performance of business enterprises. The external business environment is made up extraneous variables or factors which are outside the control of the organisational management and cannot be manipulated such as technology, politics, and government legislation. Pearson, Robinson and Mital (2008) view the firm's external environment as factors beyond the control of the firm that influences its choice of direction and action, organizational structure and internal processes. These factors which constitute the external environment can be divided into three interrelated subcategories: factors in the remote environment, factors in the industry environment, and factors in the operating environment. In addition are economic, socio-cultural and physical factors (Oginni & Faseyiku, 2012). The external environment consists of two further divisions: factors close to the organisation (micro-environment), and those factors common to society as a whole (macro-environment) (Ekpunobi, 2008). Micro-environmental factors might include such things as the customer base, the location of the company's warehouses, or the existence of a local pressure group that is unsympathetic to the business. The macro-environment might include such factors as government legislation, foreign competition, exchange rate fluctuations or even climatic changes. The external environment is often not susceptible to direct control; the best that organizations can do is to influence some elements of it, and to react in the

most appropriate ways to avoid the threats and exploit the opportunities it presents (Jayaraj, 2011).

Organizational Productivity

Greiling (2007) defines organizational productivity as a measure of the efficiency of production within organization. Productivity is a ratio of production output to what is required to produce it (inputs). The measure of productivity is defined as a total output per one unit of a total input. Onah (2010) defines organizational productivity as the relationship between output of goods and services and input of resources, human and non-human, used in the production process. In other words, productivity is the ratio of output to input. The higher the numerical value of this ratio, the greater the productivity. Thus, productivity can be applied at any level, whether for individuals, for work unit, for the organization. Robert and Tybout (2007) opines that organizational productivity can be seen as the measure of the relationship between the quantity and quality of goods and services produced and the quantity of resources needed to produce them (that is, factors inputs as labour, capital and technology).

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on Resource Dependency Theory formulated by Pfeffer and Salancik in 1978. According to the theory, the environment is seen as a source of resources upon which the organization is dependent. Resource dependence is affected by munificence, or the abundance of resources; concentration, the extent to which power and authority in the environment is dispersed; and interconnectedness, the number and pattern of linkages among organizations in the environment. The degree of dependence would be great when resources are scarce, and when entities in the environment are highly concentrated or interconnected. An organization can manage increasing dependence by adapting to or avoiding external demands; changing the patterns of interdependence through growth, merger, and diversification; establishing collective structures to form a negotiated environment; and using legal, political or social action to form a 'created environment'.

This theory is relevant to the study in that external environment is extremely dynamic, globalisation and incredible technological advances have created new chapter that has reshaped the organizations external environment. Organizations without exception are environment serving and environment dependent. A business is influenced by the environment in which it operates and the success of any business is dependent on its ability to adapt to its environment. The environment is seen as a source of resources to the organization which the organizations have no control over.

Empirical Review

Akpoviro and Owotutu (2018) investigated the impact of external business environment on organizational performance of frozen fish companies in Nigeria. Multiple regression analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The data generated were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The study found that that the external business environment political, economic, and technological and socio cultural etc have impact on organizational performance.

Ontoraël and Mawardi (2017) carried out an analysis of the influence of external and internal environmental factors on

business performance of micro small and medium enterprises (MSMES) of food and beverage. Partial least square analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The findings indicated that external environmental factors had a positive and significant influence on internal environmental factors. Similarly, external and internal environmental factors also had a positive and significant influence on business performance.

Njoroge, Ongeti, Kinuu and Kasomi (2016) examined the influence of external environment on organizational performance in Kenyan State Corporations. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis was employed in analyzing the data. It was established that external environment had a positive significant influence on all the indicators of performance. Dynamism had a positive effect on three indicators of organizational performance namely financial, customer focus and internal business processes. Munificence, on the other hand, had a positive effect on the social performance of an organization. Finally, complexity had a positive impact on the environmental integrity indicator of organizational performance. It was evident from the findings that the effect of external environment on organizational performance.

Gichara, Mutuka and Ogoti (2016) studied the impact of external business environment on training in nurses at a referral hospital in Kenya. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple stepwise linear regression analysis were employed in analyzing the data. The study found that technological environment has a significant impact on training of nurses while political and socio-cultural environment has no significant impact on training of nurses.

Mohammed and Abdalla (2017) investigated the impact of internal environment on performance excellence in Jordanian public universities. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis was employed in analyzing the data. A statistically significant and positive correlation was found between overall internal organizational environment and its individual variables (organizational structure, organizational culture, resources) and overall performance and its individual variables (quality of teaching, quality of academic programs, research and development).

Rubina, Mukhtar and Rosli (2016) examined the moderating effect of external environment on the relationship between market orientation and business performance in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Punjab, Pakistan. Multiple regression analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The findings indicated that market orientation has a significant relationship with business performance while external environment plays a moderating role between market orientation and business performance.

Mwangi and Wekesa (2017) examined the influence of economic factors on organizational performance of airlines in Kenya Airways Ltd. Content analysis, descriptive analysis and multiple regression analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The study established that economic factors (taxation and interest rate) influence the organizational performance (proxied by efficiency and growth) of Kenya Airways Limited.

Adu (2016) investigated the impact of external business environment factors on performance of small and medium sized enterprises in the pharmaceutical industry in Kumasi metropolis. Regression analysis was employed in analyzing the data. The study found a positive relationship between macro-environment factors (technological, political, economic and legal factors) and performance. The results further showed a positive relationship between industry forces (power of suppliers, threat of substitutes, threat of entry, power of buyers, and competitive rivalry) and performance. Finally, the results show that there is a moderate relationship between competitive and market environment factors (market segment, strategic customers and strategic group) and performance of SMEs.

Summary and Gap in Literature

The literature reviewed covered conceptual review, theoretical framework, and empirical review. The conceptual review covers the concept of external environmental factors, political factors, economic factors, socio-cultural factors, technological factors and organizational productivity. This work is anchored on resource dependency theory. This theory is relevant to the study in that external environment is extremely dynamic as a result of globalization and incredible technological advances and these has reshaped the organizations external environment. From the empirical literatures reviewed above, it is obvious that the relationship between external environmental factors and organizational productivity has not been resolved as a result of conflicting empirical findings. Majority of the studies on external environmental factors were foreign and also, no similar study has been done in the study area. Therefore, there is need to ascertain the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity in selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

The Results of the Regression Analyses

Multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The essence is to ascertain the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity. The results are presented in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Summary of Regression Result

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.174 ^a	.530	.617	3.197	2.745
a. Predictors: (Constant), Technological Factors, Political Factors, Economic Factors, Socio-Cultural Factors					
b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Productivity					

Source: SPSS Ver. 21

Table 1 above indicates that R² which measures the strength of the effect of independent variable on the dependent variable have the value of 0.530. This implies that 53.0% of the variation in organizational productivity is explained by variations in external environmental factors (technological factors, political factors, economic factors and socio-cultural factors). This was supported by adjusted R² of 61.7%. The Durbin-Watson statistics was employed to check for auto correlation in the model. Durbin-Watson statistics of 2.742 show that the variables in the model are not auto-correlated and are therefore, reliable for predications.

Table 2: ANOVA Result

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	112.562	5	22.512	72.203	.004 ^a
	Residual	3587.511	315	10.221		
	Total	3700.073	318			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Technological Factors, Political Factors, Economic Factors, Socio-Cultural Factors						
b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Productivity						

Source: SPSS Ver. 21

Tanle 2 above is the ANOVA result of the regression analysis. The F-test is applied to check the overall significance of the model. The F-statistic is instrumental in verifying the overall significance of an estimated model. The F-statistics value of 72.203 in

table 2 above with probability value of 0.004 shows that the independent variables has significant effect on dependent variable. This shows that technological factors, political factors, economic factors and socio-cultural factors can collectively explain the variations in organizational productivity. This shows that external environmental factors have a significant positive effect on organizational productivity.

Test of Hypotheses

Here, the four hypotheses formulated earlier in this study were tested using the t-statistics and probability from the coefficient result of the multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in the table 3 below.

Table 3 Coefficients of the Regression Result

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	22.159	1.757		12.612	.000
	Technological Factors	1.040	.040	.054	2.003	.007
	Political Factors	.056	.042	.071	2.340	.001
	Economic Factors	1.108	.042	.140	3.580	.000
	Socio-Cultural Factors	.028	.041	.037	2.693	.009

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Productivity

Source: SPSS Version 21.0

Test of Hypothesis One

Hi₁: Technological factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Table 3 above indicates that technological factors recorded a t-statistics value of 2.340 with a probability value of 0.001 which is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that technological factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Hi₂: Political factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Political factors recorded a t-statistics value of 2.003 with an alpha value of 0.007. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that political factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Test of Hypothesis Three

Hi₃: Economic factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Economic factors recorded a t-statistics value of 3.580 with a probability value of 0.000 which is statistically significant at 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is therefore concluded that economic factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Test of Hypothesis Four

Hi: Socio-cultural factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Socio-cultural factors have a t-statistics value of 2.693 with a probability value of 0.009 which is statistically significant at 5% level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the

alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is therefore concluded socio-cultural factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt.

Discussion of Findings

This work examined the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity in oil servicing firms in Port Harcourt. Data were sourced from the employees of twenty oil servicing firms. The data generated were analyzed and the following became evident:

The study found that technological factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt. This agrees with the findings of Akpoviroro and Owotutu (2018), Ontorael and Mawardi (2017) and Rubina, Mukhtar and Rosli (2016) that technological factors have significant effect on organizational performance.

The result also revealed that political factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt. This tally with the findings of Akpoviroro and Owotutu (2018), Adeoye and Elegunde (2012), Oginni and Adesanya (2013) and Adu (2016) that political factors has significant effect on organizational performance.

The study further found that economic factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt. This is in line with the findings of Akpoviroro and Owotutu (2018), Adeoye and Elegunde (2012), Dragnic (2014) that economic factors have significant impact on organizational performance.

Finally the study found that socio-cultural factors have significant effect on organizational productivity of selected oil service firms in Port Harcourt. The finding agrees with that of Akpoviroro and Owotutu (2018), Adu (2016), Ontorael and Mawardi (2017) that socio-cultural factor have significant impact on organizational performance.

Conclusion

The pepper investigated the effect of external environmental factors on organizational productivity in oil servicing firms

in Port Harcourt. Data were sourced from the employees of twenty oil servicing firms. The study found that technological factors have significant effect on organizational productivity. The study also found that political factors have significant effect on organizational productivity. The study further found that economic factors have significant effect on organizational productivity. The study further revealed that socio-cultural factors have significant effect on organizational productivity. Based on the foregoing, the study concludes that external environmental factors have significant effect on organizational productivity in oil servicing firms in Port Harcourt.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Oil service firms should note that the technological factor in their operating environment has profound influence on their production and services. Therefore oil service firms should proactive in dealing with the pace and trend of invention and advancement in technology in order keep up with competition.
2. Nigerian government should avoid frequent changes in government policies and programmes, and ensure stability of democratic institutions and political integration. These are necessary to make the political terrain stable and out of violence for business growth and development.
3. Government should consistently assess the economic factors that affect productivity of oil servicing firms. Proper assessment of economic factors will help to cushion negative effect of economic factors on oil service firms.
4. Similarly, oil service firms should be conversant with the socio-cultural environment in which they operates. This will help them to understand the social and cultural factors that can influence their operations.

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