

Strategic Management Practices and Organizational Effectiveness of Public Agencies in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between strategic management practices and organizational effectiveness of 7 selected public agencies in Rivers State. The main objective was to determine the relationship between dimensions of strategic management practices (strategic planning and implementation) and measures of organizational effectiveness (resource utilization and employee satisfaction). Four research questions and hypotheses were raised for guiding the study. The target population was 7 selected public agencies through census technique which gives 45 respondents as the sample size and was used for the data analysis. The instrument used was validated structured questionnaire with 5 likert scale and analyzed through SPSS. The finding revealed that strategic planning and implementation correlates with resource utilization and employee satisfaction. Therefore the study concluded that successful implementation of a strategic plan is a fundamental driver of organizational effectiveness. Hence the study recommendation that Management of public agencies should adhere to strategic planning and implementation leading to improved organizational effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: Strategic Management Practices, Strategic Planning, Implementation, Organizational Effectiveness, Resource Utilization, Employee Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Organizational effectiveness is a critical aspect of public administration, as it directly impacts the ability of government agencies to achieve their goals and deliver services efficiently to the citizens they serve. In Rivers State, assessing the organizational effectiveness of public agencies is of top importance, given the state's diverse challenges and responsibilities. Olaniyan and Ojo (2008) have highlighted the worth of organizational effectiveness in the public sector, highlighting that it involves optimizing resources, improving service delivery, and enhancing overall performance.

Rivers State, as one of Nigeria's major oil-producing states, faces unique economic and developmental challenges, making it crucial for its public agencies to operate effectively to meet the demands of its citizens and contribute to national development. Furthermore, the effectiveness of public agencies in Rivers State is not only pivotal for its local development but also plays a crucial role in Nigeria's overall governance landscape. Onyishi and Amazue, (2016) argue that an effective public sector in a state like Rivers can

contribute to improved governance, accountability, and transparency, which are essential elements for sustainable development and citizen satisfaction. Richard (2000) posits that public agencies need to carefully design their structures to align with their goals and strategies, emphasizing the importance of finding the right fit between structure and purpose to maximize effectiveness. Therefore, understanding the dynamics of organizational effectiveness in Rivers State's public agencies not only aids in addressing local challenges but also has implications for the wider treatise on public administration, governance and strategic management practices.

Strategic management practices in public agencies play a fundamental role in the effective governance and administration of Rivers States. These practices take on unique significance, given the state's economic prominence and complex socio-political setting. Oviasuyi (2018) shelters light on how these practices are utilized to address the state's challenges, exploit its opportunities, and align the public sector with the state's long-term development goals. As

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Rivers State continues to grow, understanding the strategic management practices in its public agencies becomes increasingly critical to ensure sustainable growth, efficient service delivery, and responsive governance. Moreover, Adeyemo and Arogundade (2019) highlight the importance of strategic planning, performance measurement, and stakeholder engagement in achieving good governance and public value creation. Therefore, this study examines the strategic management practices and organizational effectiveness of public agencies in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Rivers State Public agencies are facing the challenge of balancing their strategic goals with inadequate strategic planning and poor strategy implementation. One fundamental issue identified according to Kaplan and Norton (2000) is the difficulty in translating strategic objectives into measurable and actionable performance metrics. It is easier to develop sound strategic plan than to make it happen. Poor planning and implementation of strategic management practices has been accused on a number of issues with the lack of top management commitment. Another common challenge when it comes to strategic management practices and organizational effectiveness are the lack of resources and funding constraints, which hinder the development and implementation of effective strategic approaches.

Public agencies in Rivers State face similar financial challenges, affecting their ability to invest in stern resources and human training. Even restrict their ability to develop and execute strategic plans effectively. These constraints lead to a lack of investment in human capital development, infrastructure, and technology, all of which are essential for achieving organizational objectives. Ihugba and Achor (2018) argue that without sufficient resources, public agencies struggle to implement strategic initiatives, meet their performance targets, and deliver employee satisfactions to the public. Another weighty challenge is political interference and bureaucratic red tape, which disrupts strategic planning and implementation, politically motivated decisions and constant turnover in leadership leads to inconsistent priorities and strategies. O'Toole and Meier (2004) discussed the impact of political dynamics on public agencies. In Rivers State, the changing political setting pose challenges to the stability and continuity of strategic management efforts within public agencies. Furthermore, empirically, there seemed to be little attention on the study variables hence the investigation on strategic management practices and organizational effectiveness of selected public agencies in Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework

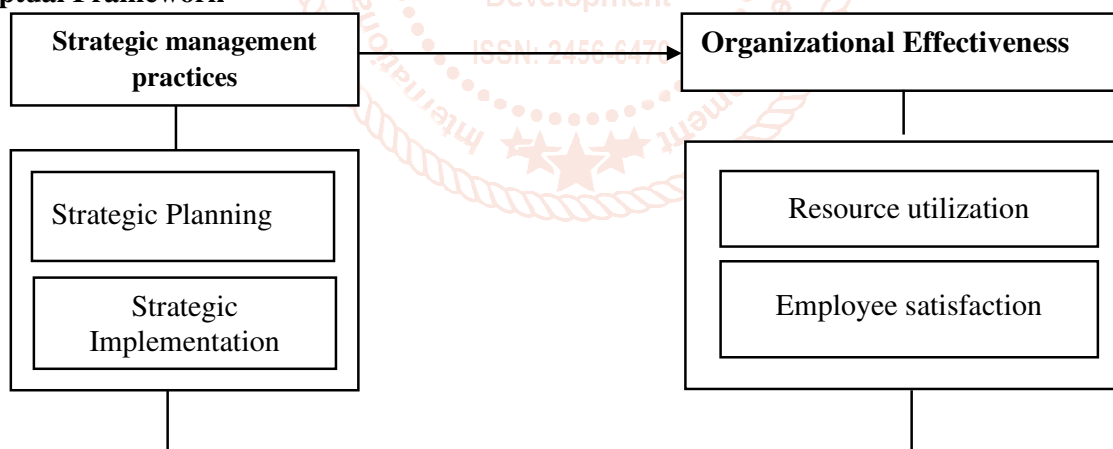


Figure 1.1: Conceptualization on strategic management practices and organizational effectiveness.

Source: Researcher’s Conceptualization from Review of Related Literature (2023).

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between strategic management practices and organizational effectiveness of public agencies. However, below are the specific objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between strategic planning and resource utilization of public agencies in Rivers State.
2. To examine the relationship between strategic planning and employee satisfaction of public agencies in Rivers State.
3. To examine the relationship between strategy implementation and resource utilization of public agencies in Rivers State.

4. To examine the relationship between strategy implementation and employee satisfaction of public agencies in Rivers State.

Research Questions

Based on the specific objectives, our research questions are hereby stated:

1. What is the relationship between strategic planning and resource utilization of public agencies in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between strategic planning and employee satisfaction of public agencies in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between strategy implementation and resource utilization of public agencies in Rivers State?
4. What is the relationship between strategy implementation and employee satisfaction of public agencies in Rivers State?

Research Hypothesis

The study proposed the following null hypotheses that guided the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between strategic planning and resource utilization of public agencies in Rivers State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between strategic planning and employee satisfaction of public agencies in Rivers State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between strategic implementation and resource utilization of public agencies in Rivers State.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between strategic implementation and timely of public agencies in Rivers State.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Strategic Management Practices

Hitt, Ireland, Hoskisson, and Harrison (2017), Strategic management is the set of decisions and actions that determine the long-run performance of an organization. It includes environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and evaluation and control. Wheelen and Hunger (2008), Strategic management is an ongoing process that assesses and controls an organization's resources and actions in the pursuit of its goals and objectives. It encompasses the formulation and execution of strategies to achieve competitive advantage. Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel (2009), Strategic management is a pattern in a stream of decisions, a pattern that emerges in an organization as intended or realized strategies. It is a mix of intended and emergent strategies that collectively shape an organization's direction. Thompson and Strickland (2019), Strategic management is a process of developing and executing a set of competitive moves and business approaches that enable an organization to achieve its business objectives and enhance its market position.

Dimensions of Strategic Management Practices

Strategic Planning

According to John (2018), strategic planning as a well-organized effort to produce major decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. Richard (2011) define strategic planning as the identification of an organization's purpose and objectives, the development and implementation of policies and plans to accomplish the objective and the allocation of resources to implement the plans. Aaker (2013) defines strategic planning as "the process of developing and maintaining a possible fit between the organization's objectives, skills, and resources and its changing marketing opportunities.

Strategy Implementation

Mintzberg et al. (2003), Strategy implementation is "the process of carrying out strategies that are necessary to fulfill the company's mission. Kaplan and Norton (2000), Strategy implementation refers to the systematic process of executing and monitoring strategic initiatives, including the alignment of resources, measurement of performance, and adaptation to changing conditions. Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2007), Strategy implementation is the process of executing a chosen strategy through the allocation of resources, design of organizational structures, and management of human and financial capital. Hrebiniak (2006), Strategy

implementation involves translating strategic plans into concrete actions and results by aligning organizational systems, processes, and people with the strategic objectives.

Organizational Effectiveness

According to David (2009), Organizational effectiveness is the extent to which an organization, by utilizing its resources, is able to achieve its objectives or goals and sustain itself over time. Gary (2006) defines organizational effectiveness as "the extent to which an organization achieves a diverse range of objectives, including financial performance, innovation, resource utilization, and employee well-being. Robert and Michael (2004) describe organizational effectiveness as "the ability of an organization to achieve its intended outcomes, while also enhancing the well-being of its employees and contributing to the broader social good. Scott and George (2016), Organizational effectiveness is defined as "the ability of an organization to achieve its strategic goals by utilizing its resources efficiently and effectively, while also adapting to changes in the external environment.

Measures of Organizational Effectiveness

Resource Utilization

Ezra and John (2000), discuss resource allocation as the process of decision-making within organizations to distribute resources among various activities or projects. Bird (2003), examines resource allocation at the subnational level, particularly in developing countries, and how it relates to economic growth and development. Duncan (2004), defines resource allocation as the process of assigning and scheduling resources (such as personnel, time, and budget) to various tasks and activities within a project. Tietenberg and Lewis (2009), discuss resource allocation in the context of environmental economics, focusing on how society allocates natural resources while considering environmental sustainability. Alan, Brown, and Smith (2014), discuss resource allocation in finance and investment, emphasizing the allocation of financial assets in portfolios to achieve specific financial goals.

Employee Satisfaction

Judge and Latham (2002) defined employee satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Employee satisfaction represents the cognitive and affective evaluation of an employee's work experience, including perceptions of job autonomy, recognition, opportunities for growth, and the overall work environment (Colbert (2004). Employee satisfaction is a multi-dimensional construct encompassing employees' perceptions of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and their overall assessment of the employer-employee relationship, ultimately influencing their engagement and performance (Jessica & David, 2015). David, Williams, Smith (2005), Employee satisfaction is a measure of how content employees are with their jobs and the extent to which they feel their needs, expectations, and desires are met by their employer.

Strategic Planning and Organizational Effectiveness

Strategic planning can have a positive impact on organizational effectiveness by providing a clear direction, aligning resources, and fostering a proactive approach to change (Richard, 2000). Further highlights the importance of strategic planning as a tool for improving an organization's overall performance and effectiveness. It stresses the need for organizations to carefully plan and execute their strategies to remain competitive and successful. Strategic planning, when implemented through the Balanced Scorecard structure, helps organizations align their objectives, measure performance, and achieve better results. This approach provides a clear link between strategic goals and daily operations, leading to increased organizational effectiveness and improved overall performance (Robert & David, 2000).

Strategy Implementation and Organizational Effectiveness

Draft (2000) argues that successful strategy implementation is a crucial determinant of an organization's overall performance and effectiveness. Besides organizations must not only develop strategic plans but also effectively execute those plans to achieve their desired outcomes. Also, a well-implemented strategy can lead to improved performance, increased competitiveness, and enhanced organizational effectiveness. Organizations that effectively implemented strategies related to corporate social performance, among other factors, were more likely to achieve positive financial and environmental outcomes (Donald & Margaret, 2000).

In holistic, Barney and Hesterly (2010) and Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2013) emphasizes the significant impact of strategic management practices on organizational effectiveness, making it a critical area of study for businesses striving to excel in today's dynamic and competitive setting. David and Christopher (2016) conducted a study and it revealed that organizations with well-defined strategic plans tended to outperform their peers in

terms of profitability and market share. Michael and Duane (2014) highlighted in their study conducted how a clear strategic vision and effective implementation of strategies positively impacted organizational effectiveness. These studies collectively underscore the empirical importance of strategic management practices in achieving enhanced organizational effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted cross sectional survey research design. The targeted population was 7 selected public agencies (Rivers State Waste Management agency, Microfinance agency, Housing & Property dev. Authority, greater Port Harcourt City dev. Authority, Senior Secondary School board, Tourisms dev. agency and Internal Revenue Service) in Rivers State. With census technique which give the total of **49** taken as respondents-Director 4 and Heads 3 from each agency. The instrument used was structured validated questionnaire with 5 Likert scale strongly agree to strongly disagree through the use of SPSS.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 1

Category Respondents	No. taken from each agency	Total No. of Respondents	Percentage %
Directors	3	21	43
Head of Departments	4	28	57
Total	7	49	100

Table 1 above shows that Directors are 3(21) representing (43%) taken from each agency. While Heads of Departments are 4(28) representing (57%), from each agency.

Table 2

Category Respondents	No. of Administered Questionnaire	Total No. Retrieved	Percentage %
Directors	21	20	44
Head of Departments	28	25	56
Total	49	45	100

From table 2 above shows that total questionnaire retrieved was 45 representing 20 for directors and 25 for head of departments.

Analyses of the hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no statistical significant relationship between strategic planning and measures of organizational effectiveness.

Table 3: Analysis of the effect of strategic planning on resource utilization

Correlations				
			strategic planning	Resource utilization
Spearman's rho	Strategic planning	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.402**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	45	45
	Resource utilization	Correlation Coefficient	.402**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	45	45

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 reveals that the Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient is 0.402 which reflect a strong positive linear relationship between strategic planning and resource utilization. And the Correlation test is highly significance at ($p < 0.001$). Positive relationship means that as strategic planning increases satisfaction of the customers. Following this finding, the study concludes that there is a relationship between strategic planning and resource utilization. Therefore null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no statistical significant relationship between strategic planning and second measures of organizational effectiveness.

Table 4: Analysis of the effect of strategic planning on employee satisfaction

Correlations				
		Strategic planning		Employee satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Strategic planning	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.479**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	45	45
	Employee satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.479**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	45	45
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 4 reveals that the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient is 0.479 strong positive linear relationship between strategic planning and employee satisfaction. And the Correlation test is highly significance at ($p < 0.001$). Positive relationship means that as strategic planning helps outlines the steps required to achieve your goals. Following this finding, the study concludes that there is a relationship between strategic planning and employee satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: *There is no statistical significant relationship between strategic implementation and resource utilization.*

Table 5: Analysis of the effect of strategic implementation on resource utilization

Correlations				
		Strategic implementation		Resource utilization
Spearman's rho	Strategic implementation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.571**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	45	45
	Resource utilization	Correlation Coefficient	.571**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	45	45
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 5 reveals that the Spearman Correlation coefficient is 0.571 which reflect a strong positive linear relationship between strategic implementation and *resource utilization*. And the Correlation test is highly significance at ($p < 0.001$). Positive relationship means that as strategic implementation increases resource utilization. Following this finding, the study concludes that there is a relationship between strategic implementation and resource utilization. Therefore null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Four

H₀₄: *There is no statistical significant relationship between strategic implementation and employee satisfaction.*

Table 6: Analysis of the effect of strategic implementation on employee satisfaction.

Correlations				
		Strategic implementation		Employee satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Strategic implementation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.598**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	45	45
	Employee satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.598**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	45	45
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 6 reveals that the Spearman Correlation coefficient is 0.598 which reflect a strong positive linear relationship between strategic implementation on employee satisfaction. And the Correlation test is highly significance at ($p < 0.001$). Positive relationship means that as strategic implementation increases employee satisfaction of the firm. Following this finding, the study concludes that there is a relationship between strategic implementation and employee satisfaction. Therefore null hypothesis was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings in H₀₁ to H₀₂ analysis; Strategic planning with strong relationship on measures of organizational effectiveness (resource utilization and employee satisfaction); Given the fact that, Strategic planning helps an organization align its resources, including financial, human, and technological, with its long-term goals and objectives. By clearly defining priorities and allocating resources accordingly, organizations can maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilization. Involving employees in the strategic planning process fosters a sense of ownership and engagement. When employees feel that their input is valued and their voices heard, their satisfaction and commitment to the organization often increase. These findings agreed with Richard (2011) and David and Nigel (2003).

The findings in H₀₃ to H₀₄ analysis; Strategy implementation with strong relationship on measures of organizational effectiveness (resource utilization and employee satisfaction); Effective strategy implementation should ideally lead to improved resource utilization. When a strategy is well-executed, it ensures that resources such as finances, manpower, technology, and time are used efficiently to achieve organizational goals. Inefficient implementation can result in resource wastage. Successful strategy implementation aligns resources with the organization's strategic objectives. It helps in prioritizing resource allocation to initiatives that contribute the most to achieving the strategy, rather than spreading resources too thin across various projects. Strategy implementation can have a significant impact on employee satisfaction and engagement. When employees understand the organization's strategic goals and see how their work contributes to those goals, it can enhance their sense of purpose and job satisfaction. These findings agreed with Robert and David (2004), and Donald (2007).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of strategic planning and organizational effectiveness is that a well-defined and effectively executed strategic plan is essential for achieving organizational success and long-term sustainability. When organizations engage in strategic planning and align their goals, resources, and actions with a clear strategic direction, they can enhance their overall effectiveness and competitiveness in the marketplace. Also, successful implementation of a strategic plan is a fundamental driver of organizational effectiveness. It transforms a well-conceived strategy into tangible results, fostering adaptability, improved decision-making, and overall success for the organization.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are hereby put forth:

1. The public agencies should develop and communicate a clear and inspiring mission and vision for your organization. Also, public agencies should regularly conduct a comprehensive SWOT analysis and environmental scanning.
2. Management of public agencies should develop key performance indicators to measure progress and success. Also, management of public agencies should implement a robust performance measurement system to evaluate the effectiveness of your strategic initiatives.

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