

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING AS CORRELATES OF PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC HEALTHCARE ESTABLISHMENTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examined strategic planning and organizational performance in public healthcare establishments in Delta State-Nigeria. Specifically, do strategy formulation, environmental scanning, and strategy selection as dimensions of strategic planning significantly explain performance in healthcare establishments? This is against the backdrop of the demand on public healthcare organizations to deliver quality services and remain competitive in healthcare delivery market amidst private health institutions. To address this empirical question, the paper used a descriptive survey methodology involving 300 healthcare workers as the sample size. The results of the ordinary least square model formulated to capture the statistical link between the explanatory and the explained variables showed a substantial positive correlation and influence of the explanatory variables on organizational performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things, that management of public healthcare establishments should pay close attention to strategic planning as a way to establishing core competences and competitive advantage for optimal performance.

**Keywords:** Environmental scanning, external analysis, internal analysis, strategy formulation, strategy selection.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Strategic planning in any organisational setting is the process of figuring out how an entity will pursue its overarching purpose or target in the future. Therefore, planning helps in moving from where we are to where we want to be (Adeleke, 2001; Hrebiniak, 2005). The fabric of management is inextricably linked with strategic planning. Planning closes the gap between the current state of an entity and its desired state (Thompson & Strickland, 2009). Some studies view strategic planning as an adaptable technique whose adoption and deployment always take into

account the organization's situation, leading to the argument that strategic planning is advantageous. By adjusting the strategic planning process to the context of each business, flexibility can be obtained. The thoroughness of the process, stakeholder involvement, formality and flexibility, use of strategy tools, and role and structure of planning are some characterizations of the strategic planning process (Osazevbaru, 2020).

Planning is cumbersome because it requires conscious determination of a course of action and basing decisions on hope, purpose, and knowledge of estimates. Limited research works exist on the nature and extent of the usage of strategic planning in the public health sector of developing countries (Elbanna, Child, & Dayan, 2013). The public healthcare sector in Nigeria has lately experienced changes associated with ageing facilities, changing technology, changing demography, increasing competition, rising costs and funding cuts. In healthcare institutions, strategic planning does not seem to be all that common. This might be due to internal stakeholders, particularly employees and political board appointees, not grasping the idea of strategic planning. Strategy might not be well-liked in public healthcare establishments (hereafter, PHE) as a result of unwillingness of this group to comply with the process. With numerous challenges in the operating environment, it is essential for organizations to foresee difficulties, pinpoint their strengths to address these difficulties, and seize chances to maximize productivity.

In this connection, the empirical issues concentrated on in this study using Delta State-Nigeria as the study area are: to what extent does strategy formulation influence organization performance in PHE? Does environmental scanning has any significant influence on performance in PHE? Does strategy selection impact on performance of PHE? Clearly, the general objective of this paper is to examine the correlation effect of strategic planning on performance in public healthcare organizations. To permit empirical investigation of the research questions and objectives, the following hypotheses have been raised. (i) Strategy formulation has no significant influence on organization performance in PHE. (ii) Environmental scanning has no significant impact on performance in PHE. (iii) Strategy selection has no significant effect on performance in PHE.

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

### **2.1 Strategic Planning**

The process of developing precise organizational strategies, putting them into practice, and assessing the results is known as strategic planning. It is a concept that seeks to integrate different organizational parts in order to accomplish strategic goal. It is inextricably woven into

the management system as a whole. Between where an organization is and where it wants to go, planning fills the gap (Thompson & Strickland, 2003).

Wijetunge and Pushpakumari (2014) defined strategic planning as a written, long-range plan which includes a corporate mission statement, a statement of objectives, and strategies to accomplish those objectives. Operational planning was distinguished from strategic planning in the way that operational planning involves the setting of short-term objectives for specific functional areas such as finance, marketing, and personnel. According to Wijetunge and Pushpakumari (2014), procedure for strategic planning consists of eight distinct components namely: setting objectives, environmental analysis, doing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, strategy formulation, financial projections, functional budgets, operating performance measures, and control and corrective procedures.

Alina, Cerasela, and Raluca-Andreea (2018) opined that strategic setting up is the method by which the steering affiliates of an organization envisages its potential and build up the required measures and process to accomplish that expectations. Clearly, the method of strategic planning necessitates an advisor whose role vary from being an external specialist to being actively involved with the preparation of outcomes. The aspects that pressure strategy realization are: the strategy formulation, the strategy selection, the organizational formation, effective communication, the strategy's coherence and how different components are linked together.

Every organization's management is urged by the survival-base theory to bear in mind the importance of being strategic if they do not want to see their firms destroyed by rivals (Porter & Kramer, 2006). The goal of strategy is to gain a competitive edge by standing out from the competition in your business (Porter, 2016). In this context, the business now competes for core competency leadership rather than product leadership. Agha and Alrubaieen (2011) further state that defining core competencies when developing strategies is done on purpose to achieve long-term competitive advantage. Thus, strategic planning is a real tool for enhancing the competitiveness, performance level, and structural development of an organization. Branislav (2014) stated that employing strategic planning techniques enable businesses to seize and develop fresh and new chances for the future.

It is challenging to evaluate the strategic model's effectiveness within public healthcare organizations. It is also challenging to assess the worth of financial performance or physical work in planning efforts due to the nature of the environment surrounding public sector organizations (Birnbaum, 2013). However, a number of guidelines that shows the implementation of strategic plans in the public sector articulated by Ghobadian, O'regan, Thomas and Liu (2018) and Wandjiva (2019) include the provision of long-term guidance for ongoing regime, better organization and communication, formulation of priorities, and focus on securing

resources in key areas. All these will end up expanding the strategic planning function in the organization (Jimenez, 2016; Schwarz, 2019).

According to Meier, Toole, Boyne and Walker (2010), strategy formulation is a guide to executives in defining the business their firm is in, the ends it seeks, and the means it will use to accomplish those ends. As a result, organizations start the process of developing their strategy by identifying their mission. The distinctive goal that distinguishes a company from others of its kind and defines the range of operations is known as its mission (Agu, 2018).

The procedure of defining or formulating mission statement of a corporation is a major issue that should be done from the inception of the company. According to Gilbert (1996) strategies are the overall idea of a firm's business in terms of product market, growth-vector strategy, competitive advantage strategy and synergy. Organizations are purposefully established at some point to achieve a specific goal. They adopt appropriate strategies to achieve the goals they have established, which lead to the growth of the organizational structure through which the organization runs as well as the productive activities of the company (Ujunwa & Modebe 2012).

At the implementation level of formulated strategies there could be further environmental changes which could show that there could also be further strategic planning analysis of the new changes. This is done by the organization so that it will not be caught off guard, which could lead to less performance caused by the new changes (Kabeyi, 2019). The new analysis to the changes is called real time response issue or surprise and such of those cases was seen in the health sector during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **2.2 Organizational Performance**

According to Daft (2010), organizational performance is a measure of an organization's capacity to utilize its resources such as knowledge, people, and raw materials to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently. Nnabuife (2009) defines organizational performance as putting or creating a structure or adjusting an existing one to meet the needs of technology and the environment. There are two methods of measuring organizational performance: objective measurement, which is based on financial indicators, and subjective measurement which is based on self-reported indicators (Haber & Reichel, 2005). According to El-Mobayed (2006) measures of financial performance include: growth in revenue (indicated by average sales growth over five years), net income growth (indicated by average net income before taxes for five years), present value growth of firm (indicated by average book value of the firm, patents and goodwill for five years), and CEO cash compensation growth (indicated by average growth in CEO cash compensation for five years)

The idea that an organization is a voluntary association of productive assets, including human, physical, technological, and capital resources, to achieving a common goal has been the foundation for the concept of organizational performance (Barney, 2002). According to Richard, Devinney, Yip and Johnson (2009), financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.), market performance (sales, market share, etc.), and shareholder return are three distinct aspects of organizations' outcomes that make up organizational performance (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.).

The successful performance of healthcare establishment does not only depend on how much profit they make, but also on health improvement/outcomes effectiveness and quality, the patients orientation of services, access and financial/resource management. For instance, while profitability is not the real performance, it is sometimes seen as the ultimate performance metric. The efficacy, efficiency, and environmental responsibility of businesses are measured by standard or regulated metrics such as cycle time, productivity, waste reduction, and regulatory compliance. The organizational goals and the mechanism for management compensation are included in the measurement of a company's success, which aids in the development of its strategy (Abubakar & Hassan, 2017).

In the healthcare establishments, the non-financial performance measurement is different from other profit and non-profit organizations. The World Health Organization (WHO) has highlighted such to include population health (such as years of life expectancy), individual health outcome, clinical quality and appropriateness of care, responsiveness of the healthcare system (such as measurement of patients' satisfaction), equity (health fairness, healthcare access, responsiveness and funding), and productivity (labour productivity, allocative efficiency, and cost effectiveness measures).

### **2.3 Empirical Review**

Njagi, Kamau and Muraguri (2020) investigated adhocracy culture and strategy implementation. A descriptive design based on Cameron Quin's competing values framework and the McKinsey 7S framework were used to achieve the study's objective. One hundred and sixty eight (168) respondents from 28 active professional bodies of the Association of Professional Bodies in East Africa (APSEA) constituted the sample frame. Regression ANOVA was used to determine the link between adhocracy culture and strategy implementation. The findings revealed that the adhocracy culture has a strong favorable impact on strategy implementation.

Makoni (2019) investigated employee engagement tactics employed by some healthcare administrators to improve organizational performance in Queensland, Australia. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 8 healthcare managers. A snowball sampling

strategy was used to choose participants who had successfully implemented employee engagement techniques. Deductive coding was used to create themes from the data, and emergent themes were then reported. Psychological ownership, job resources, leadership, training and development, and incentives and recognition were the five major themes that emerged from the data analysis. The study's recommendations emphasized the necessity for healthcare managers to put employee engagement methods in place that inspire discretionary efforts, leading to enhanced patient care quality and organizational success.

Dankor, Donkor and Kwarteng (2018) submitted that the regular use of strategic planning techniques aids in the improvement of SME performance in Ghana. The study indicated that market dynamism only effects SME success when there is strategic planning. Sulieman and Ahmad (2017) investigated the impact environmental analysis has on strategic planning of Jordanian commercial banks. The general managers and their assistants of ten commercial banks operating in Jordan totaling 93 managers made up the study population. Data generated by means of questionnaire were analyzed using multiple regression technique. The result showed a significant impact of environmental analysis represented by (strength, weakness, threats and opportunity) on strategic planning.

Ikoro and Nwosu (2017) investigated the effects of strategic planning on organizational performance in Nigerian Bottling Company, Enugu. Using data obtained by means of questionnaire from 124 employees, it was reported that strategic planning has influence on organizational performance. Some challenges in putting strategic planning into practice found by the study included lack of accountability, commitment, and understanding of employees' role in the execution process.

Ovbiagele and Ijeh (2015) investigated the variation in organizational performance attributable to strategic planning in some selected manufacturing firms in Delta State, Nigeria. The primary data generate were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance. The results showed a strong and favorable correlation between strategic planning, improved organizational performance, and organizational survival. Similar result had been reported by Cho and Hambrick, (2006).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts the descriptive survey research design with the target population comprising of employees in public healthcare establishments in Delta State, that is, Ministry of Health, State owned hospital and primary health centers. The sample size consists of 300 respondents. Questionnaire was the instrument for data collection structured and designed on five point scale; strongly agree (SA) agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD). The

reliability coefficient determined by Cronbach alpha value was 0.79. This guarantees the instrument's internal consistency. Data collected for the study was analyzed using percentage, mean scores and frequencies and the hypotheses were tested using OLS regression analysis.

### **3.1 Model for the Study**

The empirical models for the study are:

$$OPHE = \alpha_o + \alpha_i SF + ut \quad (1)$$

$$OPHE = \alpha_o + \alpha_i ES + ut \quad (2)$$

$$OPHE = \alpha_o + \alpha_i SS + ut \quad (3)$$

Where:

OPHE = organizational performance of public healthcare establishments

SF = Strategy formulation

ES = Environmental scanning

SS = Strategy selection

$\alpha_o$  and  $\alpha_i$  are parameters to be estimated.

ut = error term

## **4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

### **4.1 Demographic Analysis**

The demographic characteristics of the respondents revealed that there were 44.3% male in the study and 55.7% female in the study. Also, in terms of the ages of the respondents, 27% of the respondents were between the ages of 25-30 years, 46% between 31-40 years, 18.3% between 41-50 years, and 8.7% were between 50 - 65 years. Furthermore, 29.7% of the respondents were single, 55% were married, 9.3% were divorced, while 2.7% were separated and 3.3% were either widow or widower.

In the same vein, the respondents' qualification revealed that 9.7% were having WAEC/NECO certificate, 15.7% Registered Nurse certificate, 37.3% Registered Nurse/Registered Midwife certificates, 30% B.Sc degree, while 3.3% M.Sc and only about 2.7% have Ph.D. Finally, in terms of years of experience, 37% of the respondents have less than 5 years working experience,

while 51.7% have between 6-10years of experience and 11.3% have 11years and above working experience.

**4.2 Analysis of Responses**

**Table 1: Strategic Planning and Organizational Performance**

S/N	Influence of Strategic Planning on Organizational Performance	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	Strategy formulation helps to define the organization mission which can lead to better organizational performance.	4.20	0.872	Agree
2	Strategy formulation creates core values of the organization for better organizational performance.	4.02	0.866	Agree
3	Strategy formulation provides consideration of opportunities trending in the sector for better organizational performance.	3.80	0.858	Agree
4	Strategy formulation provides consideration of case studies for improving organizational performance.	4.0	0.866	Agree
5	Strategy formulation engenders effective communication for organizational goals and better organizational performance.	3.87	0.861	Agree
6	Strategy formulation plays a significant role in all ongoing organizational process for organizational performance.	3.88	0.861	Agree
	Grand total	3.96		Agree

Note:  $\bar{x}$  = Mean response, SD = Standard deviation and the mean criterion is 3.0

Source: Authors' Computation

From Table 1, mean ranges from 3.80 to 4.20 which are higher than the criterion mean of 3.0, indicating that the respondents agreed to all the items. With a grand mean of 3.96, it implies that the respondents, to a large extent, are of the opinion that strategy formulation plays a significant role in influencing organizational performance in PHE.

**Table 2: Environmental Scanning and Organizational Performance**

S/N	Influence of Environmental Scanning on Organizational Performance	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
7	Environmental scanning helps in identifying key competitors and resources for better organizational	3.86	0.860	Agree



	performance.			
8	Environmental scanning assists in identifying changes for better performance.	4.0	0.866	Agree
9	Environmental scanning helps in identifying technological advances for better organizational performance.	3.88	0.861	Agree
10	Environmental scanning is identifying political/legal opportunities for better organizational performance.	3.86	0.860	Agree
11	Environmental scanning helps in recognizing resources required for present and future plans	3.95	0.864	Agree
12	Environmental scanning brings to fore loopholes in the organization which can be address for better organizational performance	3.86	0.860	Agree
13	Through environmental scanning, competitive advantage for better organizational performance is identified.	3.85	0.860	Agree
	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>3.89</b>		<b>Agree</b>

Note:  $\bar{x}$  = Mean response, SD = Standard deviation and the mean criterion is 3.0.

Source: Authors' Computation

Table 2 shows that mean value ranges from 3.85 to 4.0 which are higher than the mean criterion of 3.0, indicating that the respondents agreed to all the items. With a grand mean of 3.89, it therefore shows that there is a relationship between firms environmental scanning and organizational performance

**Table 3: Strategy Selection and Organizational Performance**

S/N	Influence Strategy Selection on Performance.	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
22	Strategy selection can be understood better by analyzing organizational performance as firms respond to changing circumstances.	3.83	0.859	Agree
23	Employee engagement encourages them to execute selected strategy.	3.78	0.857	Agree
24	Strategy selection is a priority as it focuses on securing resources in key areas.	3.91	0.863	Agree
25	Strategy selection does not influence organization performance.	2.88	0.807	Disagree
26	Strategy selection is a tool for finding the best future for an organization and best path to reach that destination	3.81	0.858	Agree
27	Strategy selection greatly helps clarify the organization's plans and ensure that key leaders are	3.88	0.861	Agree

	on the same script			
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3.84</b>		Agree

Note:  $\bar{x}$  = Mean response, SD = Standard deviation and the mean criterion is 3.0.

Source: Authors' Computation

From Table 3, the mean value is between 3.78 and 3.91 which are higher than the mean criterion of 3.0, indicating on the average that the respondents agreed to all the items. With a grand mean of 3.84, strategic selection as a dimension of strategic planning does influence organizational performance.

### 4.3 Testing of the Hypotheses

#### Test of Hypothesis 1 using Model 1

The result is shown in Table 4

**Table 4: Summary of OLS Result of Strategy Formulation on Performance.**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
SF	0.372848	0.079088	4.714366	0.0000**
C	12.28283	3.065143	4.007261	0.0102
R-squared	0.761303	Mean dependent var		9.306155
Adjusted R-squared	0.706437	S.D. dependent var		1.121862
F-statistic	30.61627	Durbin-Watson stat		2.225781
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

\*\* denotes significance at 1%

Source: Authors' Computation

From Table 4, the estimate of the independent variable (SF) is 0.37 and is positive. This shows that SF has positive influence on the dependent variable (performance). To ascertain whether this estimate is significant, we need to interpret the t-statistics. The t-value for SF is 4.71 and its prob. value is 0.0000 which is less than 0.05 significance level. This suggests that the estimate is statistically significant. The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) shows that 76% of the variation in performance is explained by strategy formulation. The model fitness measured by the F-value

shows that it well fitted judging by its probability value that is less than 0.05. The Durbin Watson statistics used to detect autocorrelation is within the acceptable range of 1.50- 2.50 indicating absence of autocorrelation in the sample. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant influence is rejected. Hereby, strategy formulation has significant influence on performance.

**Testing Hypothesis 2 using Model 2**

The result is presented in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Summary of OLS Result of Environmental Scanning on Performance.**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
ES	0.586356	1.600070	3.664567	0.0021**
C	10.46064	3.297661	3.172137	0.0248
R-squared	0.724387	Mean dependent var		9.306155
Adjusted R-squared	0.710736	S.D. dependent var		1.121862
F-statistic	22.12498	Durbin-Watson stat		2.136733
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

\*\* denotes sign. at 1%

Source: Authors' Computation

From Table 5, the coefficient of the explanatory variable (ES) is 0.59. This positive value shows that ES has positive influence on performance. The statistical significance of this value determined by the t-statistics shows t-computed of 3.66 with probability value of 0.0021. As this value is less than 0.05, it shows that this estimate is statistically significant. R<sup>2</sup> is 72% and model fitness determined by F-statistics shows that the model is well fitted with probability value of 0.0000. Accordingly, the hypothesis is rejected and the conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between firm's environmental scanning and performance in PHE.

**Testing Hypothesis 3 using Model 3**

**Table 6: Summary of OLS Result of Strategy Selection on Performance**

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
SS	0.473543	0.106703	4.437954	0.0001**
C	12.24628	6.251875	1.958817	0.1075
R-squared	0.8426	Mean dependent var		9.3062
Adjusted R-squared	0.8089	S.D. dependent var		1.1219
F-statistic	34.2234	Durbin-Watson stat		2.0372
Prob(F-statistic)	0.0000			

\*\* denotes sign. at 1%

Source: Authors' Computation

Table 6 shows the coefficient of SS to be 0.47. This positive value implies that strategy selection has positive impact on performance. The measure of the statistical significance of this impact determined by the t-value shows significance (t = 4.438, Prob = 0.0001). This indicates rejection of the formulated hypothesis. Again, SS explains approximately 84% of the changes in performance ( $R^2 = 0.8426$ ). The Durbin Watson stat (2.0372) indicates absence of autocorrelation and the F-stat (34.2234, Prob = 0.0000) shows that the model is well fitted. The submission therefore is that there is a significant relationship between strategy selection and performance.

#### 4.4 Discussion of Findings

The results of data analysis reveals that the creation of fundamental values for the organization and assessment of opportunities trending in the industry are all aspects of strategy that can help improve organizational performance. Additionally, it was shown that developing a strategy facilitates the effective communication of organizational goals and plays a vital role in all ongoing organizational processes for improved organizational performance. Strategy formulation has a big impact on performance of PHE. This finding is in line with Cho and Hambrick, (2006).

Results also indicate that environmental scanning assists in detecting major rivals and resources, changes in an organization's economic situation, and technology advancements. Similar to this, firms' environmental scanning aids in locating political and legal opportunities, locating the resources needed for their present and future ambitions, and locating organizational weakness consistent with Monye and Ibegbulem (2018) . The investigation also showed that organizations

can uncover competitive advantage for improved organizational performance by scanning their environment. In PHE, environmental scanning and organizational success are related.

Strategy selection was reported as a tool for finding the best future for your organization and best path to reach that destination and its influences organization performance as it relates to organizations culture. Strategy selection greatly helps in clarifying the organization's plans and ensures that key leaders are on the same script. Consistent with Karadag (2015), Sulieman and Ahmad (2017), this study found a positive and statistically significant effect on performance of PHE.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Strategic planning is a factor that can determine the level of the performance of an organization. The results showed that sound strategic planning has the ability to enhance organizational performance in Delta State PHE. The performance of healthcare establishments was found to be improved by a coordinated improvement in environmental scanning and strategy selection. It was discovered that a better strategy selection was crucial to advance organizational performance of public healthcare institutions. In the light of the findings, the following recommendations have been made. (i) Regular application of innovative strategic planning needed to achieve organizational performance in healthcare establishments. (ii) Management should constantly communicate organizational policies and selected strategies to employees through effective communication to get their commitment.

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