

Corporate Planning and the Performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State

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DOI: 10.56201/ijefm.v9.no7.2024.pg46.56

Abstract

The management of an organization is the action of several people in designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals work together in groups to accomplish selected missions and objectives. This study examined the influence of corporate planning on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State. The study adopted the descriptive research design on a population of 200 staff of Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State. The stratified proportionate and simple random sampling were employed in drawing a sample size of 133. The simple regression analysis was used for data analysis. Result shows that strategy evaluation, implementation and control have significant positive influence on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc, Akwa Ibom State. The researcher recommends among others that the organization should ensure periodic measurement of actual performance against goals to correct deviations. It was concluded that corporate planning has significant positive influence on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc which provides the organization a viable tool for enhancing organizational performance.

Keywords: Corporate, Planning, Strategy, Implementation, Evaluation, Control.

Introduction

The management of an organization is the action of several people in designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals work together in groups to accomplish selected missions and objectives. Planning is a primary task of management which concerns the future and relies upon information from both external and internal sources to the organization for it to be successful. Planning is futuristic in nature and implies a process of conscious and deliberate act to fulfil certain predetermined objectives. Corporate planning is a comprehensive business planning that covers long range plan into the future. It is therefore the concern of the entire organization, beginning from top management to the lowest management. Hence, it is important in understanding the process of developing objectives for the corporation which involves developing and evaluating alternative courses of action. Organizations however, engage in corporate planning in order to improve the likelihood that they will achieve their desired objectives.(Aguoru et al, 2018).

The performance of an organization can be determined by the corporate planning embarked upon in any given management activity at a particular time. For management of such organization to achieve its aims and objectives, some planning strategies need to be laid down and followed in order to enhance the smooth running and overall success of the business organization in question. Today's organization have come to the consciousness that the capacity to react to changes in a timely and suitable way in the face of uncertain and quickly changing market forces is essential to organizational success. Planning plays a vital role in organization's results and helps identify the path an organization intends to move along and how it will get there. Thus, the performance of any organization also depends on its strategic plans and how the organization is implementing the strategies efficiently (Ratnawati, 2020).

Corporate planning according to Levinson (2018) cited in Enweazu et al, (2023) is the creation of strategy for meeting business goals and improving business operations. It is a road which provides the enterprise with necessary actions required to be operational. Writing down the specific and generic plans of enterprises is necessary without which predetermined goals cannot be reached and unity of purpose on the part of employees cannot be achieved thereby making the enterprise activities to be undefined and haphazard. For managers and owners of businesses who imbibe the doctrine of corporate planning, business activities tend to yield more result than those who do not (Levinson, 2018 in Enweazu et al, 2023).

Corporate planning is a process that is used by businesses to map out a course of action to grow, increase profits, gain exposure, or strengthen brand identity. It is also a tool that successful business use to leverage their competitors. Corporate planning processes are neither scientific nor complex, but consists of a set underlying processes that are intended to create a more favorable outcome for a company (Obialor, 2020). This is quite different from traditional tactical planning that is more defensive and depends on the move of competition to drive the company's move (Akinyele and Fasogbon, 2010). In business, corporate planning provides overall direction for specific units such as financial focuses, projects, human resources, and marketing. Planning for the entire enterprise is a complete plan system that deals with determining the whole enterprise specific and general objectives, preparation of strategies in ways that support the attainment of predetermined objectives (the process having passed through the standard of SWOT analysis), translating objectives to tactical goals, implementing the operational plans and reviewing the progress made of different levels of the firm on the scale of corporate plan (Malik, 2011 in in Enweazu et al, 2023).

According to Obialor (2020), in planning for the entire enterprise, uppermost management is saddled with the responsibility of charting the organization-wide future direction that provides the compass for longer term plans with far-reaching effects returns on investment, marketing, finance, types of product, employment of human and material resources and process of manufacturing. It is understood that the sustainability of any firm is directly attributable to the effectiveness of its corporate plans, hence, this study is put forward to examine the influence of corporate planning on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State.

The focus on performance over the years has been overwhelming. Being subjective in views, there are numerous critical considerations on what organizational performance is, and, the instruments

to measure it. Performance is explained from the outcome of a business activity which evidently shows whether the effort of implementing the organization's corporate plan or strategy was good enough as to result in the attainment of predetermined objectives of a business organization with specific reference to Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State. The responsibility of thorough evaluation of critical factors affecting performance such as low market penetration, unhealthy competition, bad industry image, customers' dissatisfaction among others, is no doubt the responsibility of corporate planners. In addition, the lack of requisite planning skills, poor commitment and implementation may have combined to question the efficiency of corporate planning in advancing organizational success (Ratnawati, 2020). Hence, the argument that failure of managers to become holistic and strategic in formulating and implementing corporate plans has hindered most organizations from moving beyond their current status and achieving sustainable edge in the highly competitive market may prove difficult, hence the need for this present study.

Statement of the Problem

As the needs of man increases its responsibility, managers responsibilities continues to increase and hence planning became more important. Corporate planning is perceived as a process that is used by businesses to map out a course of action to grow, increase profits, gain exposure, or strengthen brand identity. It is also seen as a tool that successful business use to leverage their competitors. The concept of corporate planning has been studied by many, however there seems to be a discrepancy in empirical findings. For instance, the studies of Aguoru et al (2018) found a significant positive relationship between corporate planning and customer satisfaction while Ajao and Olubisi (2012) and Kornelius et al (2021) in their findings revealed that strategic planning positively does not affects a firm's business performance. It is based on the above gaps in literature that this study examined the influence of corporate planning on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC Akwa Ibom State in order to improve our knowledge and understanding of the role of this important strategic tool successful businesses use to leverage their competitors.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to examine the influence of corporate planning on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives are to:

1. assess the influence of strategy implementation on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC.
2. determine the effect of strategy evaluation on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC .
3. ascertain the influence of strategy control on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC.

Research Questions

1. What is the influence of strategy implementation on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC?
2. What is the effect of strategy evaluation on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC?
3. To what extent does strategy control influence organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC?

Hypotheses

1. Strategy implementation has no significant influence of organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC.
2. Strategy evaluation planning has no significant effect on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC.
3. Strategy control has no significant influence on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria PLC.

Review of Related Literature

Concept Of Corporation Planning

Planning is a management function that deals with establishing objectives and goals and ascertaining actionable road-maps that will support the attainment of the predetermined objectives and goals (Alaka et al, 2011). According to Aturu-Aghedo (2010) the strategic function of planning concerns developing objectives as well as mission statement and objectives while crafting vision statement with a compass that provides for how they can be achieved. Effective planning for organizations anticipates threats and minimizes its attendant consequences by employing historical data to understand trends and use information gathered to forecast the future (Ajao and Olabisi, 2012).

According to Obialor (2020) Corporate planning has been viewed as strategic planning, a concerted effort geared towards producing fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what organization is, what it does, and why it is done with a focus on the future. Kornelius et al (2021) provided the key elements that underline the interpretation and accomplishment of a strategic planning process. The process of corporate planning is strategic because it involves preparing the best way to respond to the circumstances of the organization environment, whether or not its circumstances are known in advance, every organization is expected to respond to dynamic and even hostile environments (Obialor, 2020).

Phases of corporate planning include Operational planning, project planning, and strategic planning. Operational planning is also called tactical planning which refers to plans that specify the details of how the overall goals are to be achieved. It decides when, where and how to actually operate the business, particularly in the areas of marketing, logistics, finance, among others (Malik, 2011 in Enwezuru et al, 2023). Similarly, project planning specifically is concerned with planning

at project level. It is the generation and appraisal of, the commitment to, and the working out of the detailed execution of an action outside the scope of present operations which is capable of separate analysis and control. Strategic planning is also the process of identifying organizational objectives and the actions needed to achieve those objectives. The purpose of strategic planning is to build and strengthen the company's long term competitive position in the market place (Ajao et al, 2012). A company's vision, objectives, strategy, and approach to implementation are never final; evaluating performance, monitoring changes in the surrounding environment, and making adjustments are normal and necessary parts of the strategic management process (Akinyele and Fasogbon, 2010).

Strategy Implementation

This is the process of putting the strategy into action that involves the formulation of policies, tactics, programs, deployment of resource and exercising of leadership in ensuring that formulated strategies are executed efficiently and effectively. The management task of implementing and executing the chosen strategy entails assessing what it will take to make the strategy work and to reach the targeted performance on schedule (Ratnawati, 2020). Managing the process of implementing and executing strategy is primarily a hands-on, close-to-the-scene administrative task that includes the following principal aspects: building an organization capable of carrying out the strategy successfully, developing budgets that are steer resources into those internal activities critical to strategic success, establishing strategy-support policies and operating procedures, motivating people in ways that induce them to pursue the target objectives energetically and, if need be, modifying their duties and job behavior to better fit the requirements of successful strategy execution, installing information, communication, and operating systems that enable company personnel to carry out their strategic roles effectively day in and day out, instituting best practices and programs for continuous improvement, and exerting the internal leadership needed to drive implementation forward and to keep improving on how the strategy is being executed (Alaka et al, 2011 in Enweazu et al, 2023).

The strategy implementer's aim must be to create strong "fits" between the way things are done internally to try to execute the strategy and what it will take for the strategy to succeed. The stronger the methods of implementation fit the strategy's requirements, the better the execution and the better the odds that performance targets will be achieved. Fitting the ways the organization does things internally to what is needed for strategic success helps unite the organization behind the accomplishment of strategy. The strategy-implementing task is easily the most complicated and time-consuming part of strategic management. It cuts across virtually all facets of managing and must be initiated from many points inside the organization (Kornelius et al, 2021). The strategy-implementer's agenda for action emerges from careful assessment of what the organization must do differently and better to carry out the strategic plan proficiently. Each manager has to think through the answer to "what has to be done in my area to carry out my piece of the strategic plan, and how can I best get it done?" how much internal change is needed to put the strategy into place depends on the degree of strategic change, how far internal practices and competencies deviate from what the strategy requires, and how well strategy and organizational

culture already match. As needed changes and actions are identified, management must see that all the details of implementation are attended to and apply enough pressure on the organization to convert objectives into results (Aguoru et al, 2018).

Strategy Evaluation and Control

This is undertaken to determine the extent to which objectives were realized through the adopted strategies. Based on the feedback, appropriate decisions and actions are taken to either reinforce or change some aspects or the entire strategy process. It is always incumbent on management to evaluate the organization's performance and progress. It is management's duty to stay on top of the company's situation, deciding whether things are going well internally, and monitoring outside developing outside developments closely (Malik, 2011 in Enwezuru et al, 2023). Subpar performance or too little progress, as well as important new external circumstances, call for corrective actions and adjustments. Long-term direction may need to be altered, the business redefined, and management's vision of the organization's future course narrowed or broadened or radically revised. Performance targets may need raising or lowering in light of past experience and future prospects. Strategy may need to be modified because of shifts in long-term direction, because new objectives have been set, because some elements are not working well, or because of shifting market conditions and customer preferences (Aturu-Aghedo, 2010).

Likewise, one or more aspects of implementation and execution may not be going as well as intended. Budget revisions, policy changes, reorganization, personnel changes, revamped activities and work processes, culture-changing efforts, and revised compensation practices are typical managerial actions that may have to be taken to hasten implementation or improve strategy execution (Ratnawati, 2020).

Theoretical Review

The Stakeholders' Theory

The stakeholders' Theory- centers on how connections impact how the organization's operations are performed. Strategy implementation involves information gathering and efficient issue handling. The key concept behind the stakeholder's theory is that organizations that efficiently manage their interactions with stakeholders will survive better and fare better than the ones which do not. Also, by creating certain stakeholder capacities, organizational leadership should tackle moral and ethical principles in the leadership of a company or other organization.

Resource Based Theory

The resource-based theory was advanced by Barney(1991) to explain how organizations can take advantage of the unique resources at their disposal in creating competitive advantage. In strategic management, this school of thought was used to explain the importance of the resource perspective in gaining competitive advantage among organizations. Resource-based view provides clarity on how organization has the same resources and capabilities in contending for competitive advantage since not all capabilities and resources could be sold or bought. These capabilities are advanced from internal resources and external networks that supports the firm's sustainability in the industry.

This theory is relevant for this study because it explains how organizations can use the resources they control to gain competitive advantage which may not be easily replicated by other firms in the industry.

Knowledge-Based Theory (KBT)

Knowledge-Based Theory (KBT) which was put forward by Grant (1996) in Enweazu et al, (2023) views knowledge as the enterprise resource that possesses common features. It is directed by the attributes and unique characteristics of knowledge which are not well expressed in RBV. According to the theory, there are two unique characters of KBT that could not be explained easily by RBV theory and they are staff expertise and innovativeness. As employees continue to gain more knowledge in the discharge of their duties overtime, they develop the ability to understand the organization's dynamics hence are able to predict the future and adequately prepare to meet the demands that are brought about by environmental changes and changes in customers' expectations.

KBT could be more strategic in orientation than RBV since its look-out is on the overall performance and well-being of the firm through innovation that satisfies customers' expectation in a profitable manner. It was developed following the shortcomings discovered in the RBV theory as advocated by Barney (1991), where it focused entirely on how knowledge possessed by an organization can be used competitively.

In addition, Grant(1996) in Enweazu et al, (2023) theorized that the feature of the KBT is founded on tacitness used by organization in gaining unequalled sustainable advantage because its transferability is difficult. The argument here is that knowledge is presumed to an asset which can be explored effectively for the success of the enterprise. It suffices to understand that the ability of the top management of any enterprise to knit and implement effective strategies is fundamental to derive the maximum benefits from the employees.

Methodology

The research employed a descriptive survey research design on a population of 60 management staff of Airtel Nigeria Plc. Akwa Ibom State. A pilot testing was conducted using few populations in determining the efficiency of the questionnaires also as a way of determining the accuracy and validity of the gathered data. Self-completion questionnaires were employed using open and closed ended question and used the simple regression method for data analysis.

Data Analysis Results

Table 1: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.824 ^a	.679	.659	.876	.679	33.783	3	48	.000

Source: research Data (2024)

The result in Table 1 shows that 0.659(65.9%) as the value of adjusted R Square showing the extent to which organizational performance at Airtel Nigeria Plc. Akwa Ibom State is influenced by strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, and strategy control. Therefore, the remaining percentage (34.1%) should be studied to determine how other factors influence the organizational performance at Airtel Nigeria Plc. Akwa Ibom State.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	77.818	3	25.939	33.783	.000 ^a
	Residual	36.856	48	.768		
	Total	114.673	51			

Source: Research Data (2024)

The value 0.000^a shows the significance level is less than 0.05, indicating a statistical significance of the model on how the independent variables studied influenced organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc. Akwa Ibom State. The results in Table. 2 also show that F calculated value is greater than the value of F tabulated ($33.783 > 25.939$) at 5% significance level confirming the significance of the model.

Table 3: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.524	1.075		1.790	.000
Strategy Implementation	0.643	.268	5.275	2.395	.001
Strategy Evaluation	0.855	.087	3.882	9.772	.004
Strategy Control	0.525	.344	1.367	2.981	.002

Source: Research Data (2024)

The findings in Table 3 revealed that holding the independent variables constant (strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, and strategy control) to a constant zero, the application of organizational performance at Airtel Nigeria Plc. Akwa Ibom State would be at 0.524 factor, a unit increase in strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, and strategy control would lead to a unit increase in organizational performance at Airtel Nigeria Plc. Akwa Ibom State by a factor of 0.643, 0.855, and 0.525 respectively. The established regression equation was as follows; $Y = 0.524 + 0.643X_1 + 0.855X_2 + 0.525X_3$; Where Y = Organizational Performance, X_1 = Strategy Implementation, X_2 = Strategy Evaluation, X_3 = Strategy Control.

The result in Table 3 further indicate that strategy evaluation had the highest effect on organizational performance at Airtel Nigeria Plc as shown by a factor of 0.855 followed by strategy implementation with a factor of 0.643 and strategy control with a factor of 0.525. The relationships ($p < 0.05$) was all significant with strategy evaluation ($t = 9.772$, $p < 0.05$). Strategy evaluation have a greater correlation with organizational performance as it has a direct involvement in the performance of any organization and also depend on its strategic plans and how the organization is implementing the strategies efficiently as stated by Aremu and Adeyemi, (2011). Kornelius et al (2021) is of the opinion that strategic planning is one of the critical business tools in an organization which when properly implemented leads to successful organizational performance.

Discussion of Findings

From the responses, the respondents are of the firm belief that the organization utilizes corporate strategies to enhance performance in their organization. Table.3 reveals that strategy implementation has a positive and significant ($B=0.624$, $P_{0.004} < 0.005$) influence on organizational performance. The result shows that, as strategy implementation is being improved, organizational performance will increase by 62.4%. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative by concluding that, strategy implementation has positive and significant implementation on organizational performance. The study's findings are supported by that of

Aguoru et al (2018) that found a significant positive of corporate planning on customer satisfaction of MTN Telecommunication company. However, the findings are contrary to the findings of Ajao and Olubisi (2012) whose findings indicated that strategic planning does not have a substantial impact on firm performance.

Corporate planning provides organizations a viable tool for enhancing organizational performance. The influence of strategy evaluation and strategy control on organizational performance is revealed in the regression model of Table 3. The result indicated a positive and significant ($B=0.855$, and 0.525 $P_{0.003}<0.005$) influence of strategy evaluation and strategy control on organizational performance. Implying that an influence by organization on strategy evaluation and control will increase by 85.5% and 52.5 % respectively. The study's findings are supported by that of Ratnawati (2020) that found a positive relationship between financial inclusion and performance of financial intermediaries. However, the findings indicated that strategic planning does have a substantial impact on firm performance.

Conclusion

Corporate planning provides organizations a viable tool for enhancing organizational performance. This is borne of the fact that it forces the organization to define its direction and let appropriate objectives enhance performance. Strategy implementation was found to have a significant positive influence on organizational performance of Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State. Signifying that the studied firm possesses corporate strategies and thus have used such strategies to significantly enhance organizational performance. Also, strategy evaluation was equally found to have a positive and significant effect on organizational performance. The above implies that strategy evaluation in Airtel Nigeria Plc Akwa Ibom State improved performance and was undertaken to determine the extent to which objectives were realized through the adopted strategy evaluation. Furthermore, strategy control have a significant positive influence on organizational performance in Airtel Nigeria Plc, Akwa Ibom State. However, corporate remains the creation of strategy for meeting business goals and improving business operations.

Recommendations

1. Managers should be conscious of implementing plans that allows deviation and changes to be made to adapt to environmental changes.
2. The organization should ensure periodic evaluation and measurements of actual performance against goals to correct deviations.
3. Managers should ensure that appropriate decisions and actions are taken to control the implementation of organization's corporate strategy.

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