Strategic Leadership and Organizational Performance in Nigeria: An Empirical Investigation

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ABSTRACT

This paper dealt with the activities of strategists in the behavioural implementation of strategy and stated that the future of strategy is leadership. It contended that the activities of the strategists in leadership positions should be rather seen and appreciated from the standpoint of the varied strategic leadership activities at the beck and call of strategic leaders during turbulent times. This study examined the relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance in selected manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Primary and secondary data were sourced for this study. Primary data were collected through administration of questionnaire to employees of 31 purposively selected companies out of 45 quoted manufacturing companies on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting respondents from these companies, using the three levels of management for stratification. The data generated was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study show that strategic leadership have strong significant relationship with the organization performance of some selected manufacturing companies in Nigeria (r = 0.733, p<0.05). Furthermore, the result also indicate a moderate linear relationship established between performance and: 'workforce understanding performance goals' (r=0.386, p = .002); and, 'rewards aligned with goals/creativity' (r = 0.324, p = .002). The study recommends that boards of directors of organization should avoid high CEO turnover to allow for the minimum period of time required for implementation of strategic plans as well as manage new business strategies

Keywords: Strategists, Strategy, Behavioural Implementation, Performance

INTRODUCTION

According to Kazmi (2005), strategists are regarded as individuals or groups of people responsible for the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategy of an organization. Strategy usually concern with setting goals, determining actions and resources to be used to achieve the goals. It could be also assumed that all managers are strategists. Additionally, strategists are individuals in external environment of an organization who are concerned with the various activities of strategic management. Kazmi argues further that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is regarded as the most crucial strategist who is concerned with all tasks of strategic management, from the strategy formulation to the strategy evaluation. CEO being the leader of all the strategists, he plays a crucial role in strategic decision-making in an organization. During periods of turbulence and uncertainties, enterprises usually wonder aloud about the capabilities of their current strategies and, whether they would actually need a new strategy or not empirical evidence has shown that they do need it If they do, the next question is how to come up with what they actually need - a differentiated strategy. This is where the tasks of strategists become inevitable. Hence the Rationale for this paper stems from the need to proactively develop a strategy that will address turbulent times whenever the occasion arises and, this is the stage where the strategists are called upon to intervene. Today, we are living in an environment that is highly competitive, cyber-`motivated, change directed and, philosophically challenged. This environment which is a setter-forth of a set of economic, political and, sociological events in many countries has demonstrated a significant impact on the values and attitudes of any nation's work force and, has largely determined to a certain extent the kind of decisions managers make about the organization's relationship with its strategy.

The weight of empirical evidence leans more on a factual scenario that the future of strategy is leadership. The real test of leadership lies in viewing it as an ongoing process. 1The functions of leadership cannot be performed solely by occupying top positions but by exerting leadership in several areas. For instance, strategists are called upon to make a significant contribution towards developing an appropriate corporate culture, managing corporate politics, exemplifying personal values, and helping the organisation discharge its social responsibilities. All these tasks have to be performed in the context of behavioural implementation of strategy (Kazmi, 2005). The late USS President, Dwight D. Eisenhower deposed in his life time that "Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it" p.357

This paper is divided into six parts: The first part of the paper addresses the future of strategy and argues that the tasks of strategists in leadership positions should be rather seen and appreciated from the standpoint of the varied

strategic leadership tasks at the beck and call of strategic leaders during turbulent times. Concomitantly, the paper discussed six strategic leadership tasks that will take precedence over and above all other strategies in the behavioural implementation of chosen strategies. The second part of this paper deals with the influence of corporate culture on the behavioural aspects of the strategists in effecting the selected strategies of an organization. This is followed by the analysis of corporate politics and use of power. The fourth part of the paper discussed the Personal values and business ethics. While the fifth part of the paper concentrated on Social responsibility. This research work concluded that the most vital strategy for implementing the selected strategies depends on rendering both financial and non-financial motivation to your subordinates by treating them the same manner you desire others people to treat you irrespective the position they occupy in the organizational hierarchy.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

The Future of Strategy and the Tasks of Strategists in Leadership Positions

In its ordinary everyday use, strategy can be defined as the means and how for accomplishing long term objectives. Strategy can be regarded as a unified and coordinated set actions meant to unravel core competencies in order to achieve a competitive advantage in the competitive environment. It is a corporate blue print for action. The above definitions demonstrate on the one hand that strategy is future-oriented, that is, anticipatory and consistent with long term trends and, on the other hand, it reflects a single strategic thrust with its different aspects having a common focus that are consistent with each other.

The military definition of a strategy is the art of applying logically all the aids, weapons and fighting forces that a country has at its disposal in time of war. Similarly, a health strategy can be defined as a course of action, specifying a selected mix of medical and/or health techniques, manpower, facilities, supplies and equipment for the achievement of major objectives. In this context therefore, the goal and the strategy constitute the whole strategic planning. Apparently, that is where the future of the organization lies and, that is where leadership is of critical importance. All managers at one time or the other make decisions in the organization but the aspect of making crucial and/or critical decision is the sole responsibility of leaders (strategists). Furthermore, the quality of leadership throughout an organization clearly influences the overall health and vigour of such organization. Moreover, the placement of a group of persons and the tasks they symbolize under the same leader provides a unified direction of such individuals and their tasks. Finally, since strategy intuitively appears to represent opposite extremes in a spectrum of possible leadership styles, it therefore concludes that the future of strategy is leadership. Concomitantly, this paper argues that the tasks of strategists in leadership position *should* be rather seen and appreciated from the stand point of the varied strategic leadership tasks at the beck and call of strategic leaders during turbulent times. In consonance with this the paper discusses six strategic leadership tasks that will take precedence over and above all other strategies in the behavioural implementation of chosen strategies. These are:

a)   Identification of the current enterprise position and deciding on a direction. The essence of this lies in the fact that the organization's internal capabilities and external circumstances constitute the bases of strategies formulated and implemented by organizations. Furthermore, since organizations are perpetually in contest with varied external circumstances as well as many internal strengths and weakness, it is therefore exigent that the current enterprise position must be identified in order to facilitate decision on a more possible and useful direction.

b)   A review of the enterprise changing external world and internal company resources. This is most desirable because of the iterative nature of the environment and the need to investigate and determine how well the present strategy is working, what strategic issues the company faces and, how strong is the company's competitive position.

c)   Differentiated strategies of vision and mission. The organization's vision is a pictorial representation, vis-a-vis a challenging portrait of the organizations' desired future; a picture of a future when the organizations goals are achieved and its mission accomplished. On the other hand, the organization's mission gives us at a glance why the organization exists in the first instance, its purpose and why, we do plans. Differentiation is based on quality and price and, its combination makes it nearly impossible for its competitors to take away its market share.

What we do in the organization calls for establishing distinctiveness in product or service offering and would likely be attempted by concentration action. A thorough understanding and knowledge of the integration of

vision and mission will lead to a better understanding of the reasons we are committed to the quality of life around us, as individuals and as a company and, the reason behind one's dedication to instructional dignity and our sense of responsibility to seek out better ways to serve.

d)   Policies-: are general guidelines, rules and procedure. Their nature is crucial in the life of the organization and they are of critical importance in guiding one's decisions collectively to reach one's stated goals and/or objectives.

e)   Leadership purpose and enterprise resources. The essence of this is to give credence and definition to the fit between the organization and its environment. Since no organization has unlimited resources, it therefore becomes appropriate to commit the organization to particular markets, products, technologies as well as resources for a certain period of time. Since strategies are meant for long-term competitive advantages, therefore, the leadership purpose and enterprise resources must be appropriately defined so as to facilitate the implementation of formulated (chosen) strategies.

f)   Industry leadership position. This particular leadership strategy may be appropriate for an entity and is cost-effective. Gaining a leadership position will require one or more of the following:

- Aggressive price competition to purchase market share.

- Aggressive marketing to increase market share.

- Demonstrating to competitors a strong commitment to remain in the industry.

This research work stated further that strategic leadership being a human element which builds a group of people together and motivates them towards achieving organizational goals and objectives. Managers plan, organize and control the organizational activities. However, all these managerial functions will come to nothing if managers lack the ability to lead people and to understand the human factor issues in leadership, at least to the extent of producing desired results, The managerial function of leading according to Tannenbaum and Schmidt [1991] is regarded as the means of influencing individuals so that they will contribute their quota to organization as well as group goals. It is natural to find different organizations parading different objectives at different times. In the same vein, people working in the organizations also demonstrate different objectives at one time or the other. Organizations need people to attain organizational objectives and, similarly, people need organizations to attain their much desired individual objectives. It is in this capacity that effective leaders help these individuals to satisfy their aspirations and be able to function beyond the limits of their capabilities to contribute to organizational goals. The traditional management approach to leadership, which is consistent with Donald McGregor's Theory X denigrated and degraded the organizational people as if .they are synonymous with factors of production. But gone are the days when that obnoxious approach held sway. Today, human dignity is highly upheld in almost every organization, for the undisputed fact that every organizational person has one thing or the other   to   contribute   towards   organizational   goals   and   objectives.

The paper contends that strategic leadership should be thoughtfully and systematically be regarded when taking actions in managing and directing employees. Leadership directs the activities and performance of an organisation. This is in line with both Alberto (2016) that saw leadership as " the process of interactive influence that occurs when, in a given context, some people accept someone as their leader to achieve common goals" p.3; and Kellerman (2014) that also saw leadership as an equilateral triangle comprising three sides of the leader, the follower, and the context. This recognizes the importance of the leader, the followers, and the context as important parts of leading process. These assertions justify leadership to be a critical factor of organizational performance.

The paper argues further that besides leadership, there are other areas of strategy implementation that have an effect on the attitudes and behaviour of strategists in implementing the selected strategies which are: corporate culture, corporate politics and use of power, personal values and business ethics as well as Social responsibility.

This research work concluded that the most vital strategy for implementing the selected strategies depends on rendering both financial and non-financial motivation to your subordinates by treating them the same manner you desire others people to treat you irrespective the position they occupy in the organizational hierarchy.

Corporate Culture

Guiso, Sapienza and Zingales (2015) opined that corporate culture is the norms and values shared and embraced in an organization. Zaidi, Zawani, Nordin and Ahnuar (2018) believed that corporate culture is human which affects organizational performance. Also, organizational (corporate) culture may be regarded as the personality of the organization. Just as every organization has a culture, every organisation is *ipso facto* identified by a particular leadership style. It is the distinctive leadership style that provides the leverage and the *locus standi* by which the organizational culture and subcultures affect the behaviour of strategists in implementing the selected strategies in an organization. In the words of Newstrom and Davis (1997), "the total pattern of explicit and implicit leaders' action as seen by employees is called leadership style." It signifies a coherent combination of attitudes, traits, skills as well as philosophy that are manifested in an individual's behaviour. Every style also indicates, explicitly and implicitly, a manager's conception regarding a subordinate's capabilities [Theory X or Theory Y]. Leadership styles vary from one organization to the other depending on the past experiences, qualities, personal convictions, inherited characteristics and environmental conditions. The concept of culture is very crucial when individuals or group tries to effect a change in organization. Practitioners and Strategists are acknowledging the fact that, in spite of the best-laid plans, organizational change must comprise not only changing processes and structures, but also changing the corporate culture also. The cultural orientation of the people reflects the social interaction of a group of people in the society and, this is manifested in the psychographic lifestyle which the people bring along with them when they enter organizations.

Corporate Politics and Use of Power

Jarrett (2017) stated that organizational politics as a set of tasks to improve individual or firm's well-being. In addition, Jarrett asserted that people with political skills perform better in gaining individual power, job requirements, and managing stress, than their politically inexperienced colleagues. Lucas & Baxter (2012) defined power as "the ability to impose one's will even against resistance from others" p.49. Since organizations are epitome of the society in which they exist in the world, it is therefore necessary to understand the dynamics between corporate politics and the use of power. Sharplin (1985) explicitly stated that Power is the capability to influence others in the society and organizational politics are carrying out of tasks not specified by policies for the aim of influencing the sharing of gains within the organization. To exercise power, a person must have access to the decision-making caucus, and the amount of influence will depend on the opportunity to give advice, and the degree of joint decision-making which occurs The concept of "power is central to understanding organizational life, because people devote much of their energies at work to trying to accomplish tasks either for themselves or on behalf of other people (Newstrom & Davis, 1997). Newstrom and Davis deposed further that Politics' is seen as a way to manage situations where the various organization members bring different values to their work and consequently do not share meanings with each other. Whilst accepting that 'political' behavior is inevitable, it can be argued that there are some forms of political behavior, which are unethical, and other forms which are acceptable.

Personal Values and Business Ethics

Organisations have a duty to perform and, while directing all efforts towards the attainment of organizational objectives, strategists should not in any way sacrifice values and ethics at the altar of organizational goals. In consonance with this, organizations, in addition to all the strategies available for such exercises also make use of politics and power. Along this line, there is a tendency for strategists to over-shoot. In other words, the strategists might be tempted to use politics and power morally or amorally. This is where individual values as well as business ethics come into play, occupying important area in management. Ethics involve all the individuals in any organization, but ethical behaviour is necessary for all leaders/managers in an organization (Emeru, 2016). An effective manager is an individual who acquaint his/ her subordinates or counterparts what ethics mean and how vital it is and their relevant in every business tasks of an organization (Bulog & Grancic, 2018). With the enlarging restiveness and cognizant(watchful) of the international organizations like the World Bank and IMF about ethical practices in business the issues of individual values as well as business ethics have become the concern of strategists in every well-managed organization in terms of implementing the chosen strategies.

Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has generated numerous debates among researchers for more than 50 years but there is no consensus on acceptable definition (Garski, Faciu & Croitor, 2014). However, Schermerhorn and Chappell (2000) defined corporate social responsibility as "an obligation of the organization to act in ways that serve both its own interests and the interests of its many external stakeholders." p.71 it is also

known as responsibility business, corporate responsibility, corporate social opportunity and corporate citizenship. This concept is when a firm or an organization takes the interest of the society it does its business by considering the effect of their business activities on the stakeholders such as the shareholders, suppliers, customers, employees, communities and especially the environment where the business is situated. Corporate social responsiveness deals with the conduct of relationship between business organization and its stakeholders with the existing societal values as well as prevailing global practices or ethical norms.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted through cross sectional survey and correlation design. The researcher used this approach in order to describe and to investigate the relationship between strategic leadership and performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria using information gained from the questionnaire. A cross sectional survey was suited for this kind of study because data would be collected from a cross section of organisations at one point in time. The correlation design used to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variable through quantifiable results.

Research Population, Sample Size, Sampling Procedure, Research Instrument and Data Analysis

The target population for this study comprises of all the listed manufacturing companies on the Nigerian Stock Exchange listed as at December 2015.There are 45 manufacturing companies quoted on the Nigerian Stock Exchange as at this period. The target population include the CEOs/MDs, head of human resources, marketing, operations or finance. Since strategic leadership is about managing through others, the researcher feels that these managers are best suited to give unbiased information on strategic leadership and performance. This study used a stratified sampling technique which categorized all the listed manufacturing companies into firms producing industrial goods and those producing consumer goods. There are 45 manufacturing companies quoted on the Nigerian Stock Exchange which is made up of (26) twenty-six firms producing consumer goods, and (19) nineteen firms producing industrial goods (13) thirteen companies producing industrial goods and (18) companies producing consumer goods were selected making total of (31) thirty-one manufacturing firms selected as sample for this study. The researcher then used proportional sampling technique to target some respondents the researcher believes that they have relevant information. The consumables and industrial industry were selected for this study. The researchers deduced that information collected from the sample would adequately be representative and would be useful in making appropriate conclusions. The study was use questionnaire as main tool for collecting data. The selection of this tool has been guided by the nature of data to be collected, the time available as well as by objectives of study. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Inferential statistic was carried out using Pearson's correlation analysis to determine the relationship between strategic leadership and organization's performance with the use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the study presents the background information of the researchers' respondents those who participated in the study.

Gender of the respondents

The study sought the gender of the participants in the survey. According to table 1, the majority of the respondents of this study 25 (80.6%) were male, while the remaining 6 (19.4%) were female. Therefore, this indicates that male are dominant to the female in terms of work place.

Length of time in operation

The length of time that the manufacturing firms had been in operation was sought. Table 1 shows that 12.9% of the manufacturing firms had operated for 21 – 30 years, 25.8% had been in operation for more than 30 years, 41.9% had operated for 11 – 20 years while 16.1% had operated for at most 10 years. This depicts that majority (58%) of the firms had operated for more than 21 years pointing at the firms experience in the manufacturing sector.

Ownership of the firms

The respondents were requested to present the type of ownership of their manufacturing firms in terms of geographical biases. Table 1 shows that 19.4% of the manufacturing firms were locally owned, 64.5% were foreign owned while 16.1% were both local and foreign owned. This illustrates that most of the manufacturing firms in Nigeria were foreign owned followed by local ownership.

Table 1: General Information of the Participants

S/N	Demographic Profile	Frequencies	Percentage
1.	**Gender:**		
	Male	25	80.6%
	Female	06	19.4%
	Total	**31**	**100%**
2.	**Length of time in operation**		
	10 years or less	4	12.9%
	11 - 20 years	8	25.8%
	21 - 30 years	13	41.9%
	More than 30 years	5	16.1%
	Total	**31**	**100%**
3.	**Ownership of the firms**		
	Local	6	19.4%
	Foreign	20	64.5%
	Both	5	16.1%
	Total	**31**	**100%**
4.	**Company's annual sales turnover:**		
	Below 20 Million	4	12.9%
	21 - 250 Million	19	61%
	Above 250 Million	8	25.8%
	Total	**31**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Company's annual sales turnover

The study further sought to estimate the manufacturing firms' annual sales turnover to determine their size. The findings presented in Table 1 shows that 61% of the manufacturing firms had annual sales turnover between N21 – 250 million, 25.8% more than N250 million while 22.2% had annual sales turnover of below N20 million. This suggests that majority of manufacturing firms in Nigeria (86.8%) are medium and large scale manufacturers.

Descriptive and Correlation Analysis

In order to establish the strength and direction of that relationship, the strategic leadership index was correlated with performance index using Pearson's correlation at 0.05% level of significance. The strategic leadership index was the summation of items that measured performance index. Correlation result for strategic leadership index on performance of manufacturing firms were obtained and displayed in Table 6.

Table 2: Activities/Principles that make CEOs outstanding

Activity/Principle	Frequency of firms	
	Yes	**No**
Ability to initiate change	24(77.4%)	7(22.6%)
Listen and understand staff	20(64.5%)	11(35.5%)
Ability to implement strategies	22(70.9%)	9(29.1%)

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 3: Contribution of Strategic Actions to Performance of Firms

Leadership Action	Not at all	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Large Extent	Very Large Extent	Mean	STD. Dev.
Determining a strategic direction for the organisation	0	11	12	13	9	3.37	0.987
Establishing balanced organisational Controls	0	10	15	16	13	3.59	1.046
Sustaining an effective organisational Culture	0	7	17	21	9	3.59	0.913
Emphasizing ethical practices	2	13	23	10	6	3.09	1.005
Exploiting and maintaining core Competencies	0	0	13	23	18	4.09	0.752
Developing human capital*	0	0	17	20	17	4.00	0.793
Developing social capital*	0	0	20	19	15	3.91	0.800

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 4: Application of Leadership Factors in the Manufacturing Firms

Leadership factor	Not at all	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Large Extent	Very Large Extent	Mean	STD. Dev.
The workforce understand the organization's performance goals	0	5	21	23	5	3.52	0.787
The employees understand their contribution to the objectives of the organisation	0	6	17	26	5	3.56	0.809
Employees are motivated to work together as team	0	10	22	19	3	3.28	0.826
Employees are encouraged to achieve Goals	0	0	16	25	13	3.94	0.731
Core competencies are aligned with organisational objectives	0	3	13	27	11	3.85	0.803
Rewards/incentives for employees are aligned with goals and/or creativity	0	9	26	16	3	3.24	0.792
Amenities to attract highly skilled labour are in place	3	19	19	12	1	2.80	0.910
Putting pressure and adopting a culture that fosters positive performance	0	5	11	27	11	3.81	0.862
Reputation of quality products	0	0	27	18	9	3.67	0.745
Check on customer complaints and suggestions and work on them	0	0	13	28	13	4.00	0.694
Reviewing and making corrective adjustments as needed	0	0	14	27	13	3.98	0.707
Frequent and detailed control reports	0	0	25	19	10	3.72	0.756
Ability to manage new business Strategies	0	12	21	16	5	3.26	0.906
Regular results management meetings	0	2	23	19	10	3.69	0.812

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 5: Staff Commitment and Adherence to Organizational Practices

Values	Not at all	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Large Extent	Very Large Extent	Mean	STD. Dev.
Customer focus	0	1	15	23	15	3.96	0.793
Quality checks	0	0	17	24	13	3.93	0.742
Efficiency and effectiveness	0	4	16	25	9	3.72	0.826
Integrity and Ethics	0	6	18	21	9	3.61	0.891
Organisational politics	0	4	10	25	15	3.94	0.870
Discipline	0	10	11	23	10	3.61	0.989

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 6: Extent of Use of Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators	Not at all	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Large Extent	Very Large Extent	Mean	STD. Dev.
Meeting financial targets	0	2	19	23	10	3.76	0.792
Reduction of employee turnover	0	8	22	18	6	3.41	0.872
Customers are retained	0	2	16	20	16	3.93	0.857
Returned defective goods	6	11	17	17	3	3.00	1.089

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 7: Results of Correlation Analysis for the Relationship between Strategic Leadership Factors and Performance

Leadership Factors	Proportion of Achieved Targets	
Workforce understand performance goal	Pearson correlation	0.386**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002
Employees motivated to act as team	Pearson correlation	0.690**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Core competencies aligned to firms objectives	Pearson correlation	0.719**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Employees encouraged to achieve goals	Pearson correlation	0.428**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Rewards aligned with goals/creativity	Pearson correlation	0.324*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012
Attraction of highly skilled labour	Pearson correlation	0.428**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Reviewing and making corrective adjustments	Pearson correlation	0.641**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Culture fostering positive performance	Pearson correlation	0.695**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Frequent and detailed control reports	Pearson correlation	0.702**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Managing new business strategies	Pearson correlation	0.691**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Extent of strategic leadership	Pearson correlation	0.733**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

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

The above table indicates the correlation analysis of the variables, the relationship between strategic leadership and performance. To achieve this, scores on various indicators of strategic leadership were correlated with manufacturing firms' performance as indicated by achievement of the planned sales turnover.

According to above table, the study found all the eleven strategic leadership factors are significantly correlated with their respective proportion of achieved performance targets (correlation coefficient (r) ranging from 0.324 to 0.719, p<0.05). The overall extent of strategic leadership was also highly correlated with the proportion of achieved targets (r=0.733, p<0.001). Therefore, the study found that Strategic leadership have strong significant relationship with the Organization Performance of some selected manufacturing companies in Nigeria.

Major Findings

This section discovers the research results and findings derived from the distributed questionnaire. The main purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between strategic leadership and organizational performance of some selected manufacturing companies in Nigeria. The findings revealed very strong linear relationships between organizational performance of selected manufacturing firms in Nigeria and: 'Core competencies aligned to firms objectives' (r = 0.719, p < .001); 'frequent and detailed control reports' (r = 0.702, p < .001) 'culture that foster positive performance' (r = 0.695, p<0.001); 'employees' motivation to act as team' (r = 0.690, p<.001); 'managing new business strategies' (r = 0.691, p<.001); and, 'reviewing and making corrective adjustments' (r = 0.641, p < .001). Also, strong linear relationship was established between performance as indicated by the targeted sales turnover achieved and: 'employees being encouraged to achieve goals' (r = 0.428, p = .001); and, 'attraction and fostering of highly skilled labour' (r = 0.428, p = .001). Moderate linear relationship was established between performance and: 'workforce understanding performance goals' (r=0.386, p = .002); and, 'rewards aligned with goals/creativity' (r = 0.324, p = .002). This shows that developing human capital through executive training contributes to establishing strategic direction which, in turn, fosters an effective organisational culture, a means to exploit core competencies, the use of effective organisational control systems and the establishment of ethical practices. Based on these findings, it is evident that respondents largely agree that strategic leadership positively contributes to overall performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. These findings were similar to those of Nthini (2011) who found that strategic leadership have a positive impact on the performance of state corporations. The respondents concurred with the fact that their institutions recorded a high net profit margin/return on sales due to strategic management practices. Nganga (2013) established a high linear relationship between performance of manufacturing firm and strategic leadership. He found out that firms which had leveraged on strategic leadership were able to withstand the economic challenges affecting the industry and align themselves to attain competitive advantage

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATONS

In this paper the researchers have presented and discussed many ideas that related to literature to the strategic leadership and organizational performance in Nigeria. Strategic leadership as a component of strategic management process is regarded as a key driver to organizational success. The primary responsibility for effective strategic leadership rests at the top of the organization, in particular with the CEO. Other recognized strategic leaders responsible for influence on organizational effectiveness and performance include; the board of directors, top management team and divisional general managers. The strategic leadership actions of these managers were found to specifically contribute positively to superior performance of manufacturing firms. Strategic leadership and corporate success are highly interdependent. Strategic leadership affects performance. Performance in turn demands effective leadership over time for sustainability. Effective strategic leadership therefore demands ownership of, and commitment to, the process and factors central to improved performance. Therefore, to survive in the highly competitive business environment coupled with rapid technological changes there is need for manufacturing firms to enhance strategic leadership actions by aligning rewards and incentives to performance goals, innovation or creativity. The strong correlation between these two suggests that there would be increase in performance if they are enhanced. It is also recommended that boards of directors avoid high CEO turnover to allow for the minimum period of time required for implementation of strategic plans as well as manage new business strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The respondents who participated in this research are representative from a specific sector of the Nigerian economy. It is recommended that future research focus on strategic leadership and performance of firms in all major sectors of the economy. Alternatively, a comparative study of various sectors could be undertaken. It is also recommended that future research focus on the role of strategic leadership efforts in the performance of

public organizations. This could be particularly important for the success of governmental departments in order to achieve national economic growth targets, other targets relating to Vision2020 and other projects of national strategic importance.

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