# GLOBALIZATION AND PERFORMANCE OF MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN PORT HARCOURT

**Ejiogu Vincent Chibuzo, Prof. B. Chima Onuoha** and **Dr. I.G.N. Nwede**

Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

**ABSTRACT**

Globalization and performance of manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt link was examined. The study employed cross-sectional survey method which is an aspect of quasi-experimental research design. Data was collected via-structured questionnaire and personal interviews. 160 copies of the questionnaire out of the 211 copies distributed were completed and returned. The analysis of data was done with the spearman's rank order correlation coefficient with the assistance of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The outcome of the research is that globalization is positive and it has a perfect relationship with the performance of firms. Conclusively, the performance of manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt is affected by globalization. The study therefore recommended that, careful efficiency of the process of production and capacity utilization should be adopted by firms to sustain competitive advantage over other competing firms; enabling the right skills, knowledge are acquired and committed to quality product and service delivery to satisfy customers. The findings will assist companies to tap into globalization which improves their performances.

**Keywords**: Customer satisfaction, Economic liberalization, Globalization, Firm Performance, Productivity, Technology, Technological Innovation, Quality Management

## INTRODUCTION

Organizations are evaluated to know how well they perform by being compared to other organizations in the global arena because the world is now a small village due to globalization. Organizations are successful and profitable because of the emergence of globalization. Removing the impediments existing in corporate deals and financial speculation, business can have more chances of developing. Also, the introduction of the changes from time to time of this era of technological development and innovation, investors trying to accomplish their business at any environment are spurred up by other firms that show superior opportunities for businesses. In this way organizations performance is vital to spurring up the general business public to come to it and investors must enhance company achievements through new initiatives and methods to follow up current trend in its operations and business in its life cycle. Company's achievements changes are meant to take cognizance of the extent company's funds usage affect business performance.

Daft (2000) said a company's ability to properly use its available funds to attain its set objectives defines the performance of the organization. In addition he said effectiveness and efficiency of firm is determined by its ability to use available resources to accomplish set goals and objectives. Richardo (2001) said the ability to accomplish company's targets shows measures of performance of the company. Firm is a gathering of more than one individual working agreeably towards a common aim and objectives (Snow and Hrebiniak, 1980). Changes in firms' performance expect evaluation to show the extent of how the utilization of companies' assets affects business performance (Sharma and Gadenne, 2002).

Companies have a significant impact in our day by day lives and in this manner, effective companies are a major indicator for underdeveloped countries. Thus, many financial specialists consider firms like an instrument in deciding the progress economically and socio-politically. The performance of a company stands out amongst many factors of research in management (Verboncu and Purcaru, 2009). Firm's progress is essentially clarified by its achievements within a specified time. Analysts have stretched out endeavors to decide dimensions to study the idea as a critical thought. Finding an estimation to determine the success of the firm allows it to compare different periods of the company's achievements. In any case, no particular measurement to gauge each achievement has been proposed up till now (Snow and Hrebiniak, 1980). .Specialists has distinctive convictions about firms' achievement; it is still an issue (Barney, 1997).

As of late, the world has being experiencing the procedure of globalization; the resultant impacts incorporate expanding electronic, monetary, social, and political market, and environmental reliance among countries. The gigantic trade advancement and money related combination went with growing political, socio-social and military reliance and additionally the over the top innovative advancement has driven the expression "globalization" to wind up noticeably one of the most noteworthy subjects of our period. The expression "globalization" is utilized to allude to a straightforward marvel; it is a solitary, brought together process (Ardic, 2009). A catch-all idea to portray an extensive variety of powers (Archibugi and

Lammarino, 2002). Kefela (2011) stated that this procedure has impact on the accompanying: Environment, culture, political frameworks, monetary improvement and thriving, and general prosperity of social orders of the world over. Globalization is characterized as the way toward expanding social and social in connectedness, political link, and monetary, mechanical, budgetary and advertisement mixes (Eden and lenway, 2001; Molle, 2002).

Globalization in this work can be viewed as incorporation of economic and link of countries over the globe, through increment in boundary development of goods and services, innovation, finance and Human Resources, encouraged by monetary progression and data information (Wokoma and Iheriohanma, 2010).

The international monetary fund (IMF) recognized four essential parts of globalization; trade transaction, capital investment developments, movement of individuals, and spread of knowledge. Kwanashie (1999) noticed that the expanding and unparalleled influx of globalization have prompted much better product at much lower costs, productivity increase and efficiency and incredible change in world personal satisfaction or welfare. It is said to run with quick industrialization. He distinguishes Economic advancement and technological innovation as a drive of globalization. in their study of open trade, liberal trade and trade economically; trade of underdeveloped nations was discussed in the study of Oyefusi & Udoh (2004) that a nation's capacity to make profit depends on their trade policies, available manpower, government strategic intervention policy, and the ability to harness the socio economic and political factors supporting growth. World development indicators show that a few nations have shown being involved in the world economy as essential means for future development; concerns have been communicated over fairness of opportunities and unequal distribution of wealth.

Globalization is a well-known and widely used term which continues to have effect on firm in all aspect (Clark and Knowles 2003, Eden and Lenway 2001). The link in globalization and performance of manufacturing firms in Rivers state had not gotten scholastic attention. As a result of that fact, globalization's link to firm's performance caught the interest of the researcher, prompting its investigation. This research helped in contributing to fulfill the vacuum. As well as its single dimension, specifically, economic, innovation and social-political.

**Statement of the problem**

This study‘s main problem is that working in the world's market builds increasing risk and the vulnerability experienced by firms in this way influences their outcome. Companies are confronted with expanding challenges in arranging and deciding (Chimerine, 1997). Request has turned difficult to project since developing companies now take part in the world's market, gauging interest and contenders reactions has turned out to be challenging . Besides, innovation changes at a fast pace and data about new items is effectively available to purchasers. This has empowered purchasers to end up noticeably mindful of other options and to move for products, low demand is not surprising and sure (Chimerine, 1997).

Companies are confronted with less evaluating adaptability because of increased rivalry and purchaser's resistance, which have prompted low profit,

Other problems are; inadequate and functional socio-economic infrastructure like power supply, roads, food, water, and inadequate technological development as firm still uses obsolete innovation that affect performance of firms in the present day Globalization. Information technology must be improved and institutionalized. The Information innovation stands as an irreplaceable instrument to effective performance of businesses. This problem makes nations not to reap the gains of global trade and also it made the nation weak in ability to grab the opportunity of globalization. If these facilities are there it will help drive business transitions and improvement in production (Onwuka, 2009).

Globalization enhances firm's performance of manufacturing firms. Nations are not reaping the benefits because of the challenges they are facing which are the lack of primary tools, which is unstable political atmosphere, corruption, and unfriendly trade terms. (Aluko, 2004)

Attention is no longer given to human resources. Emphasis should be placed on the necessity and need for manpower acquisition, retention and development since it is the major factor for efficient production functioning at this period of globalization. The human capital makes use of the functions of management to efficiently utilize other factors of production (Iheriohanma, 2007). According to Baw & Ali (1999), improving human resources to grow interactional in global trade performance is ideally managed with a strategic framework. Most workers are not trained with the required and needed aptitude, knowledge and drive to attain efficiency.

The behaviour toward job and thrive towards commercialization and services excellence do not represent the weberian protestant ethics of time conscious, and working hard. That of the triumph of capitalism conquering Europe is ensured by the utilization of these factors (Iheriohanma, 2010). The human abilities and attitude towards quality must be in line with the accomplishment of valuable production operations. It is crucial for us at this time to look inwards and appraise the effects of global trade and be committed to their job in order to increase performance (Annan, 2007).

**Aim and Objectives of the study**

How globalization relates with the performance of manufacturing companies in Port Harcourt is the aim of investigation for this study; and to specifically examine the objectives below:

i. How economic liberalization relates with productivity
ii. How economic liberalization relates with customer satisfaction
iii. How technology revolution relates with productivity
iv. How technology revolution relates with customer Satisfaction.
v. How quality management moderates globalization and performance of manufacturing firms link.

**Research questions**

The questions that follow serve as guide and basis of this work:

i. What is the link in economic liberalization and productivity?
ii. What is the link in economic liberalization and customer satisfaction?
iii. What is the link in technological revolution and productivity?
iv. What is the link in technological revolution and customer satisfaction?
v. What are the link of quality management on globalization and the performance of manufacturing firms?

**Research hypothesis**

Ho1: There is no significant link in economic liberalization and Productivity

Ho2: There is no significant link in economic liberalization and customer satisfaction

Ho3: There is no significant link in technological revolution and productivity

Ho4: There is no significant link in technological revolution and Customer satisfaction

Ho5: Quality management does not significantly moderate the relationship between globalization and the performance of manufacturing firms.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Theoretical Framework**

Theory used as backdrop in investigating globalization and performance relationship is product life cycle theory.

**Product Life Cycle Theory:**

The theory was propounded by Vernon (1966) and Wells (1969). Both postulated that a company will begin by exporting its product and later undertake international business when the product moves through its lifecycle. Thus, products at its introductory stage should remain within a country, at growth stage, it crosses boarder for that concern. The theory views products as passing through four stages–introduction, growth, maturity and decline.

The theories view the distinction in operating expenses of same products in other territorial boundaries. Cost of operation more often than not varies in nations because of country by country residence of workers and specializing in one product. Because of the various atmospheres, resources, geological circumstances and productiveness of workers, a nation can deliver one product at a lower cost in comparison with other nations. By this, every nation works to produce what its cost compare to others is minimal; hence, when a nation goes into business with some different nations, it will send out those products whose relative cost of producing is cheaper and import those products whose productivity costs are high. Globalization outlines the reconciliation of the globe through the exchange of intermediary goods. The concentration of Nigeria should be producing products which it can produce with minimum cost, considering the resources at its disposal, its accessibility and source, and import others that it cannot produce with minimal cost in comparison with another nation.

**Empirical Review**

This research involves the empirical literature on how globalization relates to performance of manufacturing firms. It will focus on the link and analysis of globalization impacts on manufacturing firm's performance.

Aluko, Akinola & Falokun (2004) analyzed the globalization effect on Nigeria's manufacturing industry with specific references to companies producing textile. This work utilized both figurative and theoretical procedures in the gathering of important materials along with the parametric and non-parametric techniques were applied to analyze these materials. This research used 630 workers as sample. Result of the research demonstrates strong inverse effect that globalization has on the production industry. Specifically, the outcome demonstrates that globalization has a strong negative impact on the utilization of available resources of the production industry. The investigation presumes that Nigeria production companies are completely not ready for the difficulties of globalization.

Jonathan, Kehinde, Oladapo & Adedolope (2015) looked into the effect of globalization on the production industry in Nigeria researched. In accordance with the aims, secondary materials were gotten from World Bank development indicators (2001) covering 1980-2013 periods. The level of transparency, international direct business investment, exchange and inflation rate were utilized to show concept and the dangers of globalization easygoing link in Nigerian production industry including the strength, difficulties and weaknesses of the concept and their suggestions for practical improvement in Nigeria. The research utilizes Vector Auto Regress (VAR) to analyze for this reason. Finding demonstrated that it significantly support the hypothetical desire that when a nation collaborates more with others it raises the general output level. This infers a positive link that exists in globalization and the manufacturing industry in Nigeria. The work recommends that Nigerian government ought to guarantee consistent receptiveness of its economy gainfully and set up structures to stir up the security of businesses in the production sector. Additionally, it ought to guarantee that the inflation rates of trade are consistent in a method that moves individuals to involve themselves in the manufacturing industry.

Friday, Ebong (2014) did a work on globalization and the industrial progress of Nigeria, utilizing results from numerous researches within the time of 1960-2010. The study demonstrated that with the problems confronting third world nations if they would allow their economy for globalization procedure or implement a careful policy to deal with the dangers. There exist doubts that globalization would prompt harmful manufacturing and utilization trends, high rate of unemployment and control of home programmer economic cost, and also hinder industrialization. The research was examined utilizing the Engle Granger two-stage along with the Johansen co-integration tests and also the automatic regressions method of vector which was utilized to correct error. Outcome highlighted that globalization significantly affect Nigerian manufacturers' growth. In particular, open trade impacted manufacturing firms. This indicates increasing trade level with the danger of the exportation of our raw material and import fundamental inputs to the modern process. Thus, globalization has influenced the production industry in Nigeria.

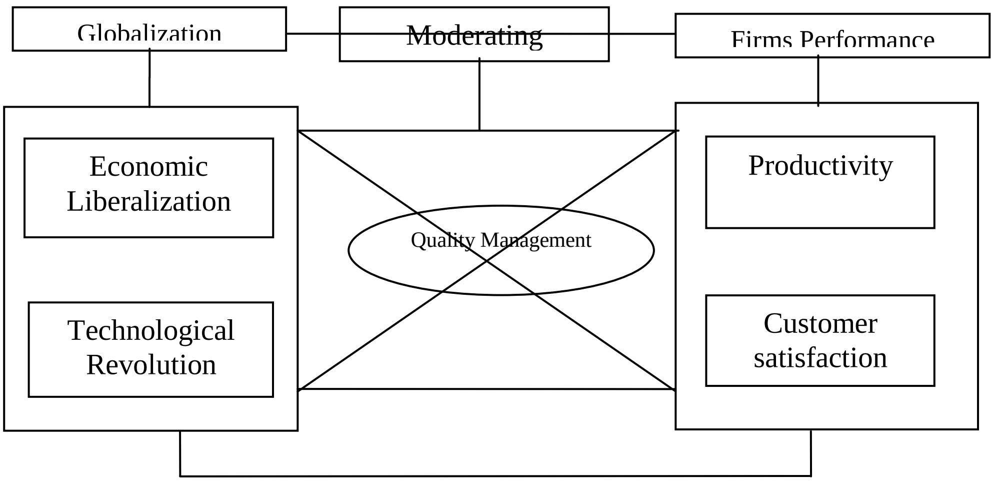
In comparable research, Kareen, Barare & Ologunla (2013) explored the nexus that exist in globalizing and developing economically in Nigeria in 1970-2008. This research used deceptive statistical method, regression and correction strategy to investigate the important outcomes. The outcome of the regression technique, demonstrates that transparency in trading has positive link with economic growth of Nigeria.

Oyefusi & Udoh (2004) investigation of transparency, fairness in trading and economic development in third world nations reveals the liberalization trade as an essential means to development which developing nations must follow in the event that it achieves manageable development and improvement. The research contended that nation profitability on trade liberalization is generally reliant on good domestic strategies, sufficient human resources, the rate of vital government intervention, and appropriately strong economically, socially and politically to the extent that it can boost development. In their conclusion, the absence of positive global effect on Nigeria because of ineffective and inefficient process of manufacturing is derived.

Tamuno & Edoumekumo (2012) analyzed globalization effect on the Nigerian production industry, using data of 1970-2008 annual time series, using the co-integration error test collection system. Co-integration test result presents a long run link of the attributes in the model. Consequently the corrected error for short period changes indicates that borrowings, net starting capital, trade rate and level of transparency have adversely affected the Nigerian production industry; while direct foreign investment has a welcoming impact on production in Nigerian. The research infers that the production industry in Nigeria is weak and unfavorable to compete with other countries.

Advocates of globalization said that economies seriously occupied with globalization process are probably going to encounter higher economic development and more prominence in democratic ruling system, and peaceful environment (Vadlamannati, 2009).

**Operational framework**




Source: Adapted from Dimensions of Globalization (Kwanashie & Usman, 1999) and Measures of company's performance (Cascio, 2006; Kaplan & Norton, 1996)

**Concept of Globalization**

Developing interconnection and link process in the present day world is the idea behind the concept of globalization. It is created by becoming, socio-political economical collaboration, and also on a planetary rate (Symorides, 1998).

Abubakar contends that globalization involves universality whereby the, activities or qualities rises above geo-political limits, entering sovereign country and affecting the introduction and norms of individuals (Abubakar, 2001). Aina said that globalization portrays a change of the link in nation, establishments, and people, the universality of specific practices, characters, structures and maybe more fundamentally, the declaration of rebuilding that has happened of late in the present day industrialist relations (Aina, 1996).

As Harvey and Nouicevic (2002) states, different elements that drive expanding globalization is divided into four general classes:

1. Macro-economic factors
2. Political factors
3. Technological factor and
4. Firm factor.

Macro-economic factors incorporate, for instance, a fast growing innovational trade among nations and fast growth in population in developing economy (Harvey & Novicevic, 2002). Political factors allude to privatization, deregulation and progression of several countries with the expectation of complimentary streams of exchange and investment (Eden and Lenway, 2001; Hatsi, 2002). Technology forces, for example, propelled advancement in communication and transportation advances, which advance development in global business, are likewise main proponents of fast growing globalization (Graham, 1996; and Knight, 2000). Multinational ventures are another real specialist in globalization process (Eden and lenway, 2001; Harvey & Novicevic, 2002). Moving the consideration of globalization towards an outlook that is global is a case of forces of globalization. Subsequently, these strengths have definitely caused shift in international commercial center. Such changes are seen as impacts of globalization, which has affected firms.

Globalization is a multiple-directional process that incorporates differently clarified in terminologies and contextual in terms of economically, politically, socially and culturally defined factors. Economic, liberalization and technological revolution forms the three fundamental strengths that push the present day globalization (Usman, 1999; Kwanashie, 1999).

1. **Economic Liberalization**

The primary purpose of recent globalization process in the world today is economic liberalization, which is welcomed everywhere by all nations and firms in the world. It is basically the process toward accomplishing unhindered economic activities. It tries to eliminate all hindrances to business, manufacturing and investment, with emphasis on free trading and capitalism, and separation of the economy from the state (Onyekpe, 2001). At the world stage, economic liberalization tries to open up economies completely for international businesses. It is the procedure whereby international economies allow for privatization and deregulation of their economies for increased profit and more cooperation among private firms. It encourages government to withdraw from participating directly in business activities, and engaging business regulators to control and partner with investors by providing a level playing ground for firms to flourish.

Economic liberalization activities are difficult to deal with compared to technology. Economic liberalization efforts worldwide are grouped into different categories. One is the developed nations that work with international monetary fund, world bank and world trade institutions, and concentrate on goal-oriented plans to improve world private business ownership, on the grounds of free business and money flows of privatization, budget, freed up trade etc. (Usman, 1999).

The other categories include the Asian–Tigers that by liberalization activities, has gotten uncommon development in their poor economic progress. These nations, try to extend their investment abroad and accomplish higher growth economically. With the incorporation of a solid production base, making possible fresh investment locations; and outlining and executing sound full scale economic strategies. They have made a friendly environment to draw in foreign investors. These measures have upgraded the increased FDI in the nations, and drove positive development. Different countries in East Europe and in addition some American nations and the African states whom have experienced colossally extraordinary poverty and clueless policies have gained tremendous heights because of these liberation activities, In this way, it is clear that it is currently a typical issue among countries. It can be inferred that no nation can truly be an island that it has energetic resources available to its disposal. The basis of globalization is current global markets integration, third world countries have minimal decision rather than to key into the idea regardless of their weak stance to the whole scenario.

With the freedom of trade in international boundaries and the restriction free societies, companies are relied upon to increase their productivity by getting important economic movement of money, innovations technology and human capital. Knowing that if economic activities increase it empowers firms to raise supply of profitable capital. Onwuka & Eguavoen (2007) said that intangible resources of trans-national companies are exchanged in countries because of freedom and market; it is an impetus for business investment and competiveness. He additionally states that with liberation, most governments' policies reduced restrictions to control trade and capital and services transfer which allows the forces of market to play out.

Capital flow that is unhindered is a necessary objective for economic liberalization. It's a free capital flow amongst nations and productive allotment of resources and competitive advantage. This is done by removing protectionist strategies, like custom duties, trade laws and other international trade barriers. One primary impacts of this increased capital flow into nations is that it makes it less expensive for firms to get to capital from investors. Low capital cost enables firms to attempt productive businesses that they might not have engaged in considering the high cost of capital involved, prompting higher development growth (Joseph, 2017).

## 2. Technological Revolution

The world is presently experiencing extraordinary innovative and technological circles changes. The rising change is as a result of technological inflows, particularly computer innovation, low effort with huge benefits, information constituting real changes that will basically dominate and shape development, especially the economy (Usman, 1999). Computers determination prompted the progression of innovational communication that thusly has improved the level of data dissemination and transactions of business. Without a doubt, since the last part of the twentieth century computer technologies have realized gigantic growth in features of all human attempts. Today, computers usages have progressively turned out to be very ordinary in unadulterated logical research, sociology and particularly decisions making in managerial levels. Financial frameworks have been the importance of the solidity of this technology. Economies have faced real challenges since the advent of Globalization and information technology, particularly the financial framework had reduced the world to a small common town, and also by giving huge information through an extensive variety of interconnectivity. The computers linkages have offered increase to the growth of internet, being the biggest system supply of data (Usman, 1999).

Moreover, information technology specifically has consolidated advancement in electronics, communications and realized an exceptionally unique procedure for storage. Transmitting and presenting data. This has prompted expanded capacity of new and effective reaction to outdated issues. For example, proficient production systems are possible and nations with important abilities are welcoming them to keep up a focused competitive advantage in the changing global market (Kwanashie, 1999). Information technology similarly has brought about an overwhelming opportunity to tap on mass production, giving way for massive progress and presenting relative advantage for those who have taken advantage of it. Advancing profitability and market internationally is essential for globalization activities (Kwanashie, 1999).

Technological advancements have basically played a major part in forming trans-world social spaces (Adei, 2004). Technology advancement, information and communications technology are the foundation of globalization. It enhances transportation and introduced containerization in land and sea based transporting which reduce requirement for handling and travelling reasonably (Onwuka and Equavoen, 2007).

The developing interest to support innovative processes of business, particularly technological development is planned to keep up or improve the competitiveness. Additionally, it is an aftereffect of familiarity with the consequences for utilization and natural effect. This came about because of international trades which require development of new samples of products and utilization. As per Oslo manual OCDE (2005), Innovation is characterized as advancement and fundamentally new product performance which are merchandise and ventures, process, firms external relations, new advertising techniques, new association business practice and working environment association. Technological development involves new or fundamentally changed ideas and procedures, where technological oddity rises. Franscati manual OECD (2002) rightly said that the innovation of aero planes, phones, computer, mobiles, satellites, internet, and other better technology made the international transfer and receiving of possible technology, thoughts, and alteration of knowledge at an uncommon way and escalate making the world smaller which make a buzz all over the world globalization (Roy, 2010).

Company cannot be a major actor without the use of communication technology. Information and technology assumes a major part for modern companies. They are relied upon to drive firms to perform better. As indicated by Adei (2004), usually it is thought that every development takes place in the western world. The Know-how comes into underdeveloped nations because of globalization. Without it, new discoveries and drugs would remain in the nations that had that innovation and nobody else would profit. The spread can likewise be extended to incorporate information economically and politically, which too has reached everywhere.

**Concept of Firm Performance**

There is no general principle for clarification of firm performance. Scholars have diverse views about firm performance. It has setbacks in getting a generally accepted definition, as well as a conceptual problem (Hefferma and Flood, 2000). Although the idea of firm performance is extremely basic in the academic research; in the 1950s, firm performance was described as the degree by which firms see a social system to achieve their targets

(Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum, 1957). Performance assessment at that time centered on work, people and firm structure.

Later in the 1960s and 70s firms have started adopting better approaches to assess their performance. So performance was described as a company's capacity to abuse its condition for getting to and utilizing the restricted resource (Yuchtman and Seashore, 1967).

The realization and recognition of firm objective is more complex than initially considered in the 80s & 90s. Supervisors started comprehending that successful organizations who can utilize available minimum resources to achieve set aims and objectives. Thus, the idea of a firm that achieves its performance objectives in spite of the constraints faced due to scarce resources in their disposal are supported by theorists of firm theory (Lushaus & Adrien, 1998). Performance according to Lebans and Euske (2006) is a financial and non-financial pointer that tells the extent of achievement of results.

Of Late, firms have tried to use the balance scorecard method to track and measure performance of shareholders return, customer service social responsibility (e.g. corporate citizenship, community outreach) and employee stewardship to manage firm performance (Upadhaya, Munir and Blount, 2014).

## 1. Productivity

The concept of productivity generally defined as the relation in or measure of input used in producing output which had existed for over two centuries and applied in many different circumstances on various stages of aggregation in the economic system. It is argued that it is the underlining principle guiding the production process and the vital factors affecting a manufacturing company’s competitiveness. It is closely related to use and accessibility of factors of production (Singh, Motwani. & Kumar, 2000). Productivity is the maximization of resources at lower cost of production. It compares output and input in production. It helps business in profit maximization. A company needs growth in production since it generates more income which means company attain and surpass its set goals in satisfying customers, suppliers, workers, shareholders, and pay taxes and still compete and even gain more grounds in the competitive market (Saari, 2006; OECD, 2008). Performance was occasionally mistaken to productivity. Ricardo (2000) confirmed that performance and productivity are different. He opined that productivity is a ratio indicating the task performed in a period. While performance is broader pointer of productivity, Productivity of the firm is known through the Performance of a firm, for certain issues and problems. Productivity is a major evaluation and monitoring tool for performance. Meaning, productivity measures the effective utilization of resources. Managers concern themselves with how productivity is transformed into improvements in their firms. Efficiency in productivity measures gives managers the signal on how they can improve productivity. Productivity is realized when production methods are improved, investing in machines and technology, improvement in the quality of performance, techniques and philosophies in respect to just-in-time, total quality management, lean production etc. (Coelli, Timothy, Prasada, O'Donnell, battese, 2005).

## 2. Customer Satisfaction

Quality service is what customers expect from a product, and the level of satisfaction is determined by their overall experience with the product. The customer satisfaction after consumption lies with how customer's need is met compared to what the customer is expecting to satisfy with that product or service. Customers are satisfied when the service or product achieves the customers need expectation (Looy, Gemmel, Dierdonck, 2003). It is the customer's rating if the product or service meets his needs or expectation. When needs are not met it leads to dissatisfaction and poor feelings of the product (Zeithaml, Bitner, Gremler, 2006). If a firm's customers are satisfied with the product, they become loyal to the firm and retained. The firm then is positive in that they maximize higher profits and large customer base.

A customer that is satisfied is retained for long, satisfaction of customers improves performance of a firm, and firms' success is necessitated by satisfying customers. According to Kumar & Reinartz (2006), satisfaction of customer mediates for higher profit of a firm. Nevertheless, due to environmental factors, the links are not strong all the time, although it depends on the industry, these factors could be the rate of aggressiveness of competition, rate of cost switching, and the rate to which risks are perceived (Kumar & Reinartz, 2006). Hoffman & Keller (2006) in their contribution said customer satisfaction is a firm's task that is possible with the improvements of such activities as quality, pricing, etc. if these factors are improved it can close the gaps that exist in customers' expectations and perception. The existence of these gaps is because of customers expectation is more than what they received. So therefore customer satisfaction relates to elimination of differences between what customer expects and receives (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Products and services initiatives are stimulated by the modification and improvement of its characteristics. Changing the products content is aimed at increasing positive thinking of customer and takes advantage in their competition because of their uniqueness. New features can be formulated to innovate company image and market segments loyalty that value these features (Keller & Kotler, 2006)

Many researchers have written about how important a customer is to a firm. Zairi (2000) states that they are the reason for doing what we are doing; instead of depending on us, we will be depending on them. Hansemark & Albinson (2004) also said that satisfaction is the overall customer behavior towards a provider of service, or a reaction that is emotional in considering what customers expect and what they receive, regarding satisfaction of some need, goal or desire. Much attention in decades past has been gained by customer satisfaction in an increasingly competitive and dynamic environment, greater attention is continually given in order to satisfy customers. Organizations' products must have an advantage over other competitors in all firms together with rapid technological change. To achieve this, they try to see customers satisfied. Globalization dramatically changes the competition faced by different economies. Domestic and global firms of recent compete against each other (Nolan & Zhang, 2003; Scully & Fawcett, 1994). Because of global competition, quality improvement is a visible effect, customer is the king's approach or production has led to improved product quality. Local companies have to face foreign competitors; they are forced to raise their standards in order to survive (Onwuka & Equavoen, 2007).

In this period of globalization, industries experience a competitive business. Attention of customers is sought by offered number of products for consumers to gain positive consumer perception. Management of companies initiates strategies to satisfy consumer perspective. Company would need to mirror competitor weakness and take advantage to survive competition. Customer satisfaction measures feedback from customer regarding product they offer to them.

Because of increasing globalization process of services, service industries and corporations worldwide have increased need to acquire greater competitive position for long-term customer links (Thoumrungroj & Tansuhaj, 2007). Moreover, as needs of customer and expectations increase and as different service from each other only marginally, firms must concentrate their efforts on finding innovative solutions which enhance and retain the loyalty of customers (Chandrashekaran, 2007; Yieh, Chiao & Chiu, 2007).

**Quality Management**

Globally, the emphasis on quality has come to stay with globalization. One famous attempt has been to achieve quality through total quality management (TQM). TQM is a systematic quality improvement approach for firm's wide management which is meant to improve quality, productivity, customer satisfactions and profitability performance (Jones et.al, 1989). This attempt gives more focus from the management processes of firm activities to actual production processes. One crucial aspect of production process managements is to ascertain quality of outputs. Quality control is very relevant to ensuring that process outputs meet desired standards; quality control has technological implications. In today's production systems, quality control is highly automated.

The human abilities and attitude towards quality must be properly aligned to achieve production operations quality. It is crucial for us at this time to work inwards and do an assessment of the globalization effects on the performance of Nigeria's manufacturing firms (Annan, 2007).

Because of the significance of product image, there are deliberate attempts to monitor and control the products of company's production operations. Mac'odo (2001) argued that quality permeates almost all the production management system. The quality of the products of a company has a linear link with the company's image and stance in the economy.

Before managers can revolutionize the production process, they must first revolutionize their thinking pattern towards quality. The necessity for a new philosophy is paramount. The old philosophy of adequacy- maintaining the status quo for as long as a product turns a profit– is no longer acceptable. Now the aim of firms should be nothing short of excellence to attain excellence, however, managers must be willing to put the demands of their customers first. They must never forget that customers are indispensable; these are the reason for which the company exists (Welhrick, Cannice & Koontz, 2010).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The method used was the cross-sectional survey method, an aspect of quasi-experimental design to generate the data within the specified time with the distributed questionnaire.

### Population of the Study

A total population of 465 staff from the HRM/administrative departments of eight (8) registered companies gotten from the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) in Port Harcourt was selected for this research.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

The participants were selected using the probability simple random sampling technique.

### Sample size determination

The Taro Yamane formula was used to mathematically calculate the sample size of 211.

### Data Collection Method

Primary source through structured questionnaires distributed and retrieved from respondents of the targeted manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State was used to collect data.

### Operational Measures of Variables

Globalization, the predictor and explanatory variable operationally measured two dimensions, namely: Economic liberalization and Technological Revolution adapted from the work of Kwanashie & Usman, (1999); firm performance, the criterion and effect variable used two measures, namely: Productivity and Customer satisfaction adapted from Cascio (2006), Kaplan & Norton (1996).

### Data Analysis Technique

The research question was analyzed with frequency distribution tables and percentage while the hypotheses were tested with spearman rank order correlation coefficient with the assistance of statistical package for social science (SPSS).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analyzed questionnaire and null hypotheses were tested to generate findings; 160 copies of the questionnaire out of the 211 distributed were returned and used. The Spearman Rank order correlation was used to test the hypotheses at a 95% confidence level. In testing the moderating role of quality management on the link in globalization and firm performance, the pearson partial correlation was used, at confidence level of 95%. The decision rule is to accept the null hypothesis where $p > 0.05$ significant level and reject where $p < 0.05$.

**Table 1: Hypotheses Testing Results**

| | Hypotheses | Sig | Decision | Rho | Extent of Relationship |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $Ho_1$ | There is no significant relationship between economic liberalization and Productivity | .000 | Reject null hypothesis | .717 | Strong positive relationship |
| $Ho_2$ | There is no significant relationship between economic liberalization and customer satisfaction | .000 | Reject null hypothesis | .466 | Moderate positive relationship |
| $Ho_3$ | There is no significant relationship between technological revolution and Productivity | .000 | Reject null hypothesis | .804 | Strong positive relationship |
| $Ho_4$ | There is no significant relationship between technological revolution and Customer satisfaction | .000 | Reject null hypothesis | .511 | Moderate positive relationship |
| $Ho_5$ | Quality management does not significantly moderate the relationship between globalization and the performance of manufacturing firms. | .000 | Reject null hypothesis | .806 | Strong positive relationship |

*Source: SPSS Data, 2017*

### Discussion of Findings

The study examined the link in globalization and firm performance. Five hypotheses stated in their null form were formulated to obtain the empirical measure. The spearman's rank order correlation coefficient statistical tool was used with the aid of SPSS software package 21.0 to ascertain the existence of any significant link in hypotheses one to four, while the partial correlation was used in the analysis the fifth hypothesis.

**Hypothesis One–Economic Liberalization and Productivity**

Economic liberalization and productivity correlate at .717, when the p-value is 0.000<0.05. At the world stage, economic liberalization tries to open up economies completely for international businesses. Onwuka & Eguavoen (2007) opine that the intangible assets of trans-national corporations such as knowledge, investment, skills, management know-how (which are transferred across borders due to liberalization) and market competitiveness and hence increase the firms' performance.

**Hypothesis Two–Economic Liberalization and Customer Satisfaction**

Economic liberalization and customer satisfaction correlate at .466, when the value of p 0.000<0.05. Trade liberalization and introduction of foreign government's macroeconomic policies relating to globalization gives firms all over the world easy entrance to other geographical markets, which intensify the competition among companies (Hafsi 2002; Harvey & Novicevic, 2002). Firms operating at different levels; local, foreign, zonal and world, now compete amongst themselves (Nolan & Zhang 2003; Scully & Fawcett, 1994). Each company management tries to devise strategies to fulfill consumer perspective to survive in this competitive market, company needs to mirror competitor weakness situation (Onwuka & Equavoen, 2007).

**Hypothesis Three–Technological Revolution and Productivity**

Technological revolution and productivity correlate at .804, when the p-value is 0.000<0.05. The result corresponds with the result of Kwanashie, (1999) which says technology came with a highly flexible procedure for preserving, transforming, analyzing and presenting data. The capacity of fresh solutions and adequate reaction to handling set back has increased. Adequate manufacturing techniques are available and nations that have the resources are keying in and using them to gain competitive advantage over others in the dynamic global atmosphere.

**Hypothesis Four–Technological Revolution and Customer Satisfaction**

Technological revolution and customer satisfaction correlate at .511, when the p-value is 0.000<0.05. Computers have brought internet to prominence as a reservoir of information (Usman, 1999). In globalization, the firm is experiencing a competitive business competition. A most visible effect is the improved product quality due to global competition. Customer is the king's approach or production has led to improved product quality. Local companies have to face foreign competitors; they are forced to raise their standards in order to survive (Onwuka & Equavoen, 2007).

**Hypothesis Five–Quality Management on the Link in Globalization and Firm Performance**

Hypotheses five outcome shows how quality management moderate globalization and firm performance links at 0.806 correlations (p 0.000) significance level. One crucial aspect of production process management is confirming output quality. Quality control is very relevant to ensuring that process outputs meets desired standards quality control has technological implications. In recent production system, quality control is highly automated (Mac'odo, 2001). A Company's products quality has a linear link with its image and market position. Now companies' aim is nothing short of excellence to attain excellence; however, managers must be willing to consider the customers' demands first. They must never forget that buyers are indispensable; they are the reason why the company exists (Welhrick, Cannice & Koontz, 2010).

**Conclusion**

In the findings of this work, globalization affects performance of manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt significantly. Hence, the study made the following conclusions:

Economic liberalization tries to open up economies completely for international businesses. It is the procedure whereby international economies allow for privatization and deregulate of their economies for increased profit and more cooperation among private firms.

Trade liberalization and introduction of foreign government's macroeconomic policies relating to globalization gives firms all over the world easy entrance to other geographical markets, which intensify competition among companies (Hafsi 2002; Harvey & Novicevic, 2002).

In globalization, a firm that acknowledges that customer is the king's approach of production attains improved company products quality.

Technology came in with flexible procedure for preserving, transforming, analyzing and presenting data. The capacity of fresh solutions and adequate reaction to handling setbacks has increased. Nations with abundance of resources are keying in and using the availability of the adequate manufacturing techniques advantageously over other nations in the dynamic global atmosphere.

Production process management is confirming the quality of outputs. Quality control is very relevant to ensuring that process outputs meet desired standards; quality control has technological implications. In recent production system, quality control is highly automated (Mac'odo, 2001).

**Recommendations**

Based on our findings come the following recommendations:

1. In the opening of economic borders and removal of trade barriers, nation's economic flows should be increased to enable firms increase their productivity and efficiency.
2. Company management should try to devise strategies to fulfill consumer perspective to survive in competitive market.
3. Nations with abundance of resources should key in and use the availability of the adequate manufacturing techniques advantageously over other nations in the dynamic global atmosphere.
4. Firms should have skill, knowledge and be committed to quality service delivery to satisfy customers.

5. Quality control and its technological implications is very relevant to ensuring desired standard quality.

**Contribution to Knowledge**

This study provides key contributions to literature. Globalization significantly influences manufacturing firm's performance. Therefore make up to cover the vacuum in literatures. This study increases the volume of knowledge from the outcome and could assist the manufacturing companies tap into globalization that improves their performance.

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