



THE IMPACT OF EXPLOITATION ON RESOURCE UTILIZATION AND GOAL FOCUS IN TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between exploitation, resource utilization and goal focus in telecommunication industry. *The sample for this study consisted of 84 management staff from the four leading Telecommunication giants (MTN, Globacom, Airtel and 9 Mobile). The data for this research was collected using the questionnaire method. The Kendall Tau statistical tool was used to test the relationships between the variables under review. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between Exploitation and both Resource utilization and Goal focus. It was concluded based on our statistical analysis that organizational exploitation enhances corporate health. More specifically, it was concluded that exploitation enhances resource utilization and goal focus. In view of these results and conclusions above, this study recommends that; Managers should acknowledge the importance of exploration in fostering a better resource utilization which will bring about a healthy organization. Employee involvement, especially employees that are opened to change should be encouraged at all organization level.*

Keywords: *Exploitation, Resource utilization, goal focus, health, organization*

Introduction

Ambidexterity has been defined as the ability of organization to balance short and long-term goals. Given that this is the capability to keep up a balance between research and operational processes, the most important result of ambidexterity is innovation, since innovation requires both research and operational aspects. Innovation is described as "the sequence of actions by which a new element is introduced into a social unit to benefit the unit, a part of it or society in general" (West and Farr, 1990). The new element need not be entirely novel or unfamiliar to members of the unit, but it must involve some discernible change or challenge to the current parameters (West & Farr, 1990). Most theoretical models of innovation differentiate at least two processes: idea generation and idea implementation (e.g., Amabile, 1988; West, 2002). The generation phase is directly related to research activities, and the implementation phase is kinly related to operational activities. A two-sided organization is capable of introducing innovations (creating new products / services), while maintaining constant use of proven methods / products.

Furthermore, ambition can contribute to other positive organizational outcomes in addition to innovation. The literature has shown that the interface between research and operational innovation strategies (in other words, ambidextrous) is positively related to the growth in sales rates, and the imbalance between research and operational innovation strategies is adversely associated to sales growth rates (He & Wong, 2004). Several organizations have been able to overcome organizational challenges and be more innovative due to ambiguity. A study carried out in 41 companies showed that ambidexterity is closely connected to efficiency. Similarly, another study of 34 high-tech organizations showed that their ability to simultaneously perform exploration and operation was associated with higher performance (Chandrasekaran et al. 2012).

Therefore, to achieve ambition, the organization's task is to organize a set of processes and systems that allow it, so also to encourage the organization' members to act ambitiously at their own discretion. This stream of research generally considers contextual strand, such as connectivity, trust, relaxation, discipline, and support, as the most influential.

Although scientists seek to study the prerequisites for organizational ambidexterity, the empirical results do not fully support the ambidexterity hypothesis in the strategy literature. Some studies have shown that companies that pursue different strategies in same vein may not produce better results than those that concentrate on any strategy (Ebben and Johnson, 2005; Ghemawat and Costa, 1993; Porter, 1980) in this work, we maintain that to actualize organizational ambidexterity; some contingent conditions must be met. To be more specific, both external and internal conditions must fit to make the organizations perform better. In the following sections, we first explicate the dimensions of organizational ambidexterity. Then we try to find out the factors affecting organizations to be ambidextrous.

Though organizational ambidexterity embodied on many organizational aspects, such as alignment and goal focus (Gibson et al., 2004), evolutionary and revolutionary change (Tushman, O'Reilly, & Anderson, 2004), flexibility and efficiency (Adler et al., 1999; Ebben& Johnson, 2005), this paper focuses on aspects related to corporate health. We are concerned in corporate health in that capabilities of innovation have been regarded as main sources of competitive advantages (Grant, 1996; Marsh & Stock, 2006). In addition, through

innovation, organizations develop and adjust to the changing environment (Nelson & Winter, 1982).

Organizations adapt to the changing environment by utilizing their existing technology or knowledge and also by creating new ones (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). In the following segment, we discuss different kinds of innovation and the connection between organizational ambidexterity.

It is a common practice for people to care less about their health until they develop symptoms of illness. This attitude is replicated at the level of organizational where management gives less attention to the health status of an organization a situation where no one pays attention to organization management, methods of doing business, policies and practices until a warning is received. Top management does not imbibe the habit of constantly measuring the health status of the organization until the organizational develops symptoms of illness or even become sick. However, in order to avoid such situations and achieve as well as sustain a healthy organization, management should maintain activities that will promote a healthy organization structure through appropriate organizational health policies. According to Ardiç and Polatci (2007), from the time an organization is established appropriate measures should be put in place that will guard against the problems that may occur, and organization health should be measured periodically.

Measuring the health of the organizations goes beyond revealing how healthy an organization is, but to also put in place appropriate measures that guarantee improvement for the organization in tandem with the result obtained. The fact that an organization is seen as healthy or unhealthy indicates the need for change and innovation. Determining the causes of an unhealthy organizational structure is essential. In summary, measurements establish a conceptual framework in identifying and solving problems. Organizational strengths and weaknesses, as well as threats and opportunities are shown through paradigm of organization health.

Thus, it is strived to derive more resources from the strengths, and to improve and strengthen the weaknesses (Polatci et al., 2008).

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between exploitation and resource utilization in the Nigerian telecommunication sector

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between exploitation and goal focus in the Nigerian telecommunication sector

Theoretical Framework

March's model of organizational learning theory shall be examined under this heading.

Mental Models

OL is grounded in work on mental models. LanganFox, Anglim, and Wilson (2004) defined mental models as internal (mental) representations of objects, actions, situations or people, and are built on experience and observation, of both the world in general and the particular

entity of interest. This is similar to Argyris and Shon’s (1996) notion of theory in use, ‘which is an inner characterization of actions, values, and embedded assumptions constructed from observing patterns of action. Huber and Lewis (2010) define mental model as a person’s mental picture of a system and how it work. This definition includes (1) the variables included in the system, (2) the properties and states of those variables, and (3) the causal or other relationships among those variables (Huber & Lewis, 2010). Chermack (2007) noted three phases of an effective and efficient organizational learning process as (1) mapping mental models, (2) challenging mental models, and (3) improving mental models.

Mental models shape managerial perceptions of their environment and enable sense making in complex situations (Johnson & Huff, 1998). This in turn affects development and use of EE strategies (Atuahene Gima, 2005).

Methodology

The population of this study consists of all Telecommunication firms registered with the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC). However, this study only focused on the four major and visible firms that have national coverage namely MTN, Airtel, Globacom and 9mobile with a population of 190. A sample size of 129 was gotten using Taro Yamene formula. To empirically evaluate the relationships between organizational ambidexterity and corporate health in Nigerian telecommunication firms, data obtained with the aid of questionnaire was analyzed using the Kendall’s Tau correlation Coefficient statistical technique. The test requires that the responses be at least ordinal level. That is, the response can be ranked from high to low. This statistical tool is considered appropriate as the variables in this study were measured in ordinal scales.

Table 1: Correlations between exploitation, resource utilization and goal focus

			Exploitation	Resource Utilisation	Goal Focus
Kendall's tau_b	Exploitation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.446**	.450**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.002	.000
		N	84	84	84
	Resource Utilisation	Correlation Coefficient	.446**	1.000	.491**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.	.000
		N	84	84	84
	Goal Focus	Correlation Coefficient	.450**	.491**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	84	84	84

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

Table 1 revealed the correlations between exploitation and resource utilization, and exploration and goal focus. The output showed moderate positive relationships between the variables. Specifically, there was a moderate positive relationship between exploitation and resource utilisation (tau_b = .446, n = 84, P < .01), while the relationship between exploration

and goal focus was also moderately positive ($\tau_b = .450$, $n = 84$, $P < .01$). These results imply that, the higher the exploitation among the firms, the higher they achieve resource utilization and goal focus. Based on these results, the null hypotheses were rejected and the alternative hypotheses accepted.

Results in table 1 showed the correlations between exploitation and the measures of corporate health (resource utilization and goal focus) of the organizations. The output indicated positive but moderate relationships between the variables.

This outcome implies that an increase in exploitation leads to an increase in resource utilization and goal focus in telecommunication firms. Based on this conclusion, hypotheses 1 and 2 were rejected.

Therefore, it was concluded that:

- i. Exploitation is positively and moderately correlated with resource utilization and goal focus of the telecommunication firms.
- ii. Also, an increase in exploitation leads to increase in resource utilization and goal focus of the telecommunication firms.

Conclusion

Empirical evidence here revealed a positive and moderate relationship between exploitation and resource utilization. Although no study in time past has linked exploitation with resource utilization. This revelation signifies that ambidexterity can bring about efficient and effective use of organizational resources, which will in turn predict sound organizational health. Given the fact that when an organization is healthy, employees are committed, responsible and beneficial and have high spirit and performance, A healthy organization is a wealthy organization where people come to their work enthusiastically and are proud of working in that place. In fact, the health of the organization in terms of physical and mental dimensions, safety, attachment, meritocracy and valuing knowledge, expertise, personality of beneficiaries, and developing their capabilities and performing the duties by their meta-systems have a significant effect on effectiveness of behaviour of each system (Jahed, 2006).

A healthy organization is where the organization possesses the ability to detect failures in existing processes and prevent the repetition of these failures in the future by preparing action plans necessary for the success of the firm. The firm also has the ability to solve new problems that are not covered by the action plans; to perceive threats and opportunities in a timely manner and take proactive action; to create knowledge, experience, and lessons learned from exploratory activities for the success of the overall organization.

Empirical evidence on the relationship between exploitation and goal focus shows a positive and significant relationship between the two variables. Previous studies even acknowledged the importance of organizational ambidexterity as a factor for organizational performance and survival, but there is no empirical evidence showing a relationship exploitation and goal focus, this result is therefore very significant as it reveals that when organization exploit future opportunities such organizations become healthy in the sense that they will pursue clear cut goals and her employees will have a sense of direction. More so, higher level of exploitation leads to higher level of goal focus, that is, an increase in exploitation results in an increase in goal focus among the telecommunication firms.

Recommendations

- (i) Management should give full support to exploitative activities within the organization since exploitation enhances resource utilization. Partnering up with competitors, customers, as well as suppliers is very important. There should be sound and robust communication channels as these will foster healthy relationship among organizational members as well as accentuate the importance of cooperation across organizational boundaries as a way of hastening the process of a healthy organization.
- (ii) Members of the organization should be well motivated as they drive organizational policy on exploiting future opportunities.
- (iii) Lastly, initiating the right organizational structure that will pave way for exploitative activities should be paramount in the minds of decision makers in the organization. A flexible organizational structure will promote exploratory and exploitative activities which will bring about a healthy organization.

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