

Research Article

Quality Assessment and Corporate Efficiency in The Manufacturing Industries in Nigeria

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A B S T R A C T

The aim of the study was to ascertain the nature of the relationship between Quality assessment and corporate efficiency in the manufacturing Industries in Nigeria. The population for the study was a total of 146 senior management and supervisors of the manufacturing industries in Nigeria. The sample size of 103 respondents was finally used for data analysis. We recommended that, the design and growth of quality assessment should be transparent and follow formats which clearly identify what is expected from the worker and how deviations from expectations are to be managed or corrected. Performance measurement should emphasize on outcomes and goals of objectiveness of the organization. Such specifications should guide what is expected of the workers and the extent to which their performance matches with the requirement. And that consideration should also be given to other performance assessment indices such as relationship with others as it is evident that support and relational leveraging is critical to the performance of the workers and in the actualization of corporate efficiency.

Keywords: Quality Assessment, Social Sustainability, Manufacturing Industries, Corporate Efficiency

Introduction

There has been multiple issues with respect to business competition in Manufacturing industries in Nigeria, several these organisations has been faced with the challenges of improving performance to aid competitiveness recently; otherwise, a lot of business challenges will emanate, including running the risk to loose of business funds caused by ill operational challenge. Thus, performance could be seen to relate to the individual as well at the corporate level which sees the human resource becoming the most determining factor to achieve the organisations' goals. The abundance of organisational resources is made meaningless without the supervision of enhanced human resources personnel that direct the day to day activities of

the employees in the organisation. Within the framework of the professionals, good employee performance mirrors the ability to contribute through their works leading to the behavioural achievement that is in accordance with the goals of the organisation (Johnson et al, 2019).

Several organisations according to Johnson & Celine, (2018) "have faced constant changes and suffered pressure from legislations and society, forcing them to seek alignment with sustainability". One of the main obstacles of corporate efficiency is the confrontation with the economic pillar or forces, since, in the classical view, organisations have as sole function the maximization of the shareholders capital. The idea of a company aligned with sustainability is that of company activities developed in a social environmental

context which conditions the quality and the availability of natural and human capital. More than these elements, the balance between them is primary (Hart, 2019; Lemme, 2010).

Quality assessment is vital for corporate efficiency and acts as the main factor for achieving anticipated organisational goals. In the organisational context, performance is usually defined as the extent to which an organisational member contributes to achieving the goals of the organisation. Performance measurement is seen as “the process of identifying, evaluating and developing the work performance of the employee in the organisation, so that organisational goals and objectives are effectively achieved while, at the same time, benefiting employees in terms of recognition, receiving feedback, and offering career guidance” (Van Marrewijk & Werre, 2003; Munck & Souza, 2009). The terms ‘performance assessment’, ‘performance evaluation’, ‘performance management’ are also used to describe the process. Employee quality assessment has been practiced by numerous organisations for centuries. Though quality assessment system has been debated by many, however, overall, it is viewed that quality assessment is an inseparable part of organisational life. Research on corporate sustainability has over the past decades, bordered primarily on antecedent factors such as organisational strategies, stakeholder management, organisational policies and organisational politics (Johnson & Ossia, 2019; Lemme, 2010). These provided a premise for assessing corporate efficiency at the organisational level; however, little regard has been paid to the role of the employee and the measurement of workers performance in the actualization of corporate sustainability. This is as quality assessment contributes to strategy formulation and implementation by revealing the links between goals, strategy, lag and lead indicators (Kaplan & Norton 1992, 1996) and subsequently communicates and operationalizes strategic priorities (Nanni et al. 1992). The role of quality assessment evolves from a simple component of the planning and control cycle to an independent process that assumes a monitoring function. This function entails measuring movement in a strategic direction instead of distance from a goal, which is different from the planning and control cycle (Nanni et al. 1992). This study therefore departs from previous research as it attempts to empirically ascertain the relationship between quality assessment and corporate efficiency.

Statement of the Problem

Organisations according to Johnson et al are commonly defined as instruments of purpose that are seen as coordinated by intentions for the purpose of attainment of organisational goals (Johnson & Kalio, 2018), purpose of organisational success and failure in fulfilling those purposes are striking part of conventional discourse, business firms

are not just compared only in terms of profits, sales, market share, productivity, debt ratios, and stock prices (James & Robert, 1997) but also with regards to their social and environmental tendencies and functionalities”. The sustainability of corporations today is one which borders on their capacity for effectively harmonizing economic values with the required social and environmental values, failure to accomplish this would most definitely affect not only the survival or continuity of the business, it would also affect its external relations and image in the eyes of its host communities and market.

William (2010) reports that most organisations currently groan under undesirable reputes for being inconsiderate and for engaging in practices considered as environmentally unfriendly. This is as their sole focus has been rather on emphasizing on the economic angle of their businesses. He also notes that the leadership or management of most organisations have an imprecise perception, as they have failed to maintain consistent feedback, control or measurements of their own activities and the roles of their workers, secondly, they also lack the monitoring systems or measurement of outcomes required to successfully implement their actual business strategies and corporate sustainability goals.

According to Johnson, Orusa & Fred (2018), there are numerous psychological and emotional factors that seem likely to influence organisations and the achievement of their goals such as investors, customers, and client confidence in the organisations are hinged primarily on workers activities and performance outcomes. The resulting levels of control and monitoring of functions and outcomes with regards to organisational members is likely to contribute positively to the streamlining and focus on planned sustainability objectives, hence the need to ascertain the relationship between quality assessment and corporate sustainability. Literature on corporate sustainability is currently gaining popularity in management studies however it remains an unclear and somewhat undifferentiated construct from the likes of corporate performance and competitiveness. Johnson et al, (2018) indicates that there is a clear and apparent difference between these constructs for while corporate performance and competitiveness reflect the corporation’s ability to adapt, strive and returns based on its innovativeness, corporate sustainability focuses instead on the advantages accruable to the corporation activities. This study investigates the relationship between quality assessment and the corporate sustainability of manufacturing industries Nigeria.

The following are research hypotheses stated to guide the study

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between quality assessment and economic sustainability

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between quality assessment and social sustainability

Literature Review

The review of related literature for this study draws mainly from theoretical content which focuses on the conceptualization and operational attributes of quality assessment and corporate sustainability. This part provides an in-depth discourse into the theoretical and empirical assertions of previous studies with regards to the nature of the variables and the possible relationship that exists between them. The theoretical framework adopted for examining these relationships is the goal setting theory (Latham & Locke, 1991). This is as Latham & Budworth (2007) argue that “employees are expected to perform in certain ways to optimize the operations of an organisation in order to achieve this, numerous methods have been adopted and utilized on employees to maintain and control workers performance as a means towards achieving organisational objectives, while some of these have been successful, some have not, what makes the employees perform in the optimum level desired by their employers falls into the field of motivation of the goal setting theory”.

According to Latham & Locke (1991), an important aspect of goal setting theory is that “feedback should help employee performance to specific difficult goals, which increases motivation”. Amano (1999) stated that “feedback is a critical element for improving performance because it informs the individual (or group) about his/her performance in a timely fashion”. Human resource practitioners are expected to educate employees. According to spectre “is that employees should accept the goals, and feedback should be provided during the progress toward goals, goals should be challenging and difficult the last factor is that goals should be specific enough”. Any goal-setting program should contain the above mentioned factors, in order for it to result in a successful performance. In some cases, group goals are preferable to goals for individuals.

As indicated by Weldon, “The two center objective setting hypothesis standards are normally expected to sum up to the gathering level, despite the fact that the fundamental components are progressively intricate, explicit troublesome gathering objectives have additionally been found to inspire bunches by coordinating consideration, activating exertion and tirelessness, and empowering advancement and utilization of errand procedures that encourage objective fulfillment, moreover, bunch objectives trigger one of a kind persuasive instruments, for example, arranging, participation, confidence building correspondence, and aggregate viability” (e.g., Weldon and Weingart 1993 cited by Johnson et al, 2019). The objective setting hypothesis as embraced in this structures the talk and examination concerning how the accentuation and estimation of workers

execution regarding quality, time and proficiency, can add to the completion of the organisational interest and objectives of sustainability.

Parasuraman et al. (1988) defined quality assessment as the global judgment or attitude relating to the superiority of the service, the superiority of the service is confirmed by what the service delivers, which is the outcome and is evaluated after the performance, and how the service is delivered, which is the process and is evaluated during delivery. According to Asubonteng et al. (1996) a service delivers is difficult to assess for any service, so consumers or customers rely on other measures of quality attributes associated with service delivery, as evidenced in the five generic dimensions of service quality. A survey of service theory, indicate that, clients will judge that quality is low if performance does not meet their expectation and that quality is high if performance exceeds their expectations. Service quality is defined as, an attitude formed by a long-term, overall evaluation of a firm’s performance (Hoffman & Bateson, 2006). The definition also distinguishes the concept from customer satisfaction which is a short-term, transaction-specific measure (Hoffman and Bateson, 2006). Quality assessment process can be carried out in terms of the gaps between management, employees’ and customers’ expectations and perceptions (Hoffman & Bateson, 2006). According to Hoffman & Bateson (2006), service quality focuses on the customers’ cumulative attitude towards the firm which is the result of a number of successful or unsuccessful service experiences.

According to Otley (1999), an effective quality assessment must consider such problems as relates to the key objectives that are central to the organization’s overall future success, how it goes about evaluating its achievement for each of these objectives, the strategies and plans the organisation adopted and most importantly the quality factor required for the achievement of these objectives or goals. The assessment and measurement of workers responsiveness and timeliness in service delivery is an effective method and mechanism for controlling and maintaining process and operational harmony within the organisation. This also plays out in the organisations interaction with its market as a good integration of internal systems are considered effectively only when they are able to align and match on a timely basis, the expectations and demands of the market and the organisations customers.

According to Cumming (1995), one of the fundamental causes of workers inefficiency can be traced to cultural practices and events that can be considered as the norm of the organisation or its workers. Cultural practices as applied here refers to those job related attitude and emergent behavioural patterns derived from prevalent societal values acquired or transmitted from one generation to another

with respect to the worth of work and how it should be addressed, when and where these values and derivable attitudes are supportive of optimum exertion of human energy, they are considered as good and bad resulting in the interminable vicious cycle of organisational failure, workers nonchalance and poor regard for work (Herzberg, 1996).

Corporate efficiency In response to the increasing pressures coming from national and international regulations, and from society in general, “corporations are gradually pushed towards the adoption of principles of both social and economical responsibility within their strategies, structures and management systems” (Werbach 2009). In this context, a sort of ‘sustainability rhetoric’ is emerging in mission statements, internal codes and external reporting systems. As argued by Gond et al. (2012), in some cases, this rhetoric was used in the attempt to reconstruct the eroded legitimacy of companies and did not necessarily involve the actual implementation of (or participation in) sustainable development, and otherwise, such active implementation and participation would require organisations to alter their existing practices and to allow a concrete strategic move towards sustainability (Hopwood 2009).

Looking at it from a business point of view, sustainability has been referred to as the capability of a corporation to last in time, both in terms of profitability, productivity and financial performance, as well as in terms of managing economic and social assets that compose its capitals. In one sentence, business sustainability is the business of staying in business (Doane & MacGillivray 2001). Dyllick & Hockerts (2002) define business sustainability as meeting the needs of a firm’s direct and indirect stakeholders without compromising its ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders as well.

Economic Sustainability Economic sustainability also referred to as “economic viability is at the core of corporate sustainability (Azapagic, 2003) since it generates profit and jobs it therefore contributes to the general social welfare”. Even in an ambient of sustainability development, there is the need to recognize the traditional accounting vision (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002), because without the economic capital the company ceases to exist. Therefore, “it is important that economic sustainability must guarantee sufficient liquidity cash flow by producing above average return for its stockholders, it also includes topics such as competitiveness, job offer, insertion into new markets and long term profit. In short, to achieve economic sustainability means that the organisation conducts its activities in a responsible and recognized manner, with social and economic return for those involved” (Munck, Munck, & Souza, 2011).

Social Sustainability: This alludes principally to angles, for example, “aptitudes, inspiration and dependability of

management and colleagues, it obliges the organisation to disguise the social expenses, keeping up and giving the development of the social capital; abstain from misusing the individual, offering motivating force to auto-inexhaustible structures; advancing popular government, enhancing the extent of individual decisions and circulating assets and property rights in a reasonable way” (Dyllick and Hockerts, 2002). It incorporates the administration of the effect that associations cause on the social frameworks by its operational exercises. The desires for the distinctive social gatherings identifies with the association are really considered. In rundown, it fuses addresses identified with human advancement (instruction, preparing, word related wellbeing, working environment security and skill improvement), to fairness (reasonable pay rates and advantages, equivalent chances and nonattendance of work environment segregation) and to moral contemplations (human rights, social qualities, intergeneration and intra-age equity) (Munck, Munck, and Souza, 2011). The social sustainability measurement covers the accompanying attributes (Azapagic, 2003): “reasonable compensation, equivalent chances, great wellbeing and wellbeing conditions, delight framework, verifying thoughts for the improvement of the Triple Bottom Line, capability advancement and preparing, vocation plans and moral authoritative conduct”.

Methodology

Baridam (2001) described the research design as comprising of various activities which when effectively integrated provides the framework or plan that will be utilized as a guide in the collection and analysis of the data for a study. It could be seen as the blue print which dictates the empirical activities of the research. Nachmias and Nachmias (1976) note that the research design of any study provides the study with a structure and format through which its activities are well grounded on scientific principles and appropriate actions towards the investigation of the constructs. Baridam (2001) identifies two basic forms of research: the experimental (which is carried out in the pure sciences and within laboratory contrived settings) and the quasi-experimental (which is carried out in the social sciences and based on the natural, non-contrived organisational settings) research. This study as a quasi-experimental design is correlational and investigates the relationship between quality assessment and corporate efficiency in manufacturing industries in Nigeria. The population for this study comprises of a total of 146 senior management and supervisors of the studied manufacturing industries. The choice of units of measurement is based on the level of analysis being at the organisational level of analysis.

Baridam (2001) observes that after the accessible population for the study has been defined, and the study

subjects can be identified. It is imperative to draw a sample from the sampling frame provided by the population. Sampling involves selecting a representative model or set of significant unit size from a given population where is believed that a common feature is substantially shared between the sample and the population of the study. This is important for effective generalizations of findings given assumed parameters of the sample which are expected to be shared by the population. We determined the sample size using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table on sample size determination. Consequently, the identified population is simply matched to a corresponding sample size to arrive at an adequate sample size for the study. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) provided the following formula as the basis for arriving at their sample size determination table.

$$s = X^2 NP(1-P) \div d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P(1-P).$$

Where: s= required sample size; X² = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence interval (95%); N = the population size; P = the population; d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Given this framework, the sample size for this study is one hundred and three (103) employees Ogolo (1996) observed that there are basically two sets of data in social research. These are the primary and secondary data. However, empirically the primary data of this study were gathered from a cross-sectional study process with the instrument of a questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire designed by the researcher to accommodate indicative statements with direct bearing and relationship with the study variables (quality assessment, corporate sustainability). The operationalization and measurement

of the variables is based on the models presented by previous studies.

Corporate efficiency, which is the criterion variable is measured using two variables, namely: economic sustainability, social sustainability; as adapted from the study of Munck, Munck & Souza (2011). The two indicators are also scaled on a 5-item instrument.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between quality assessment and economic sustainability (where rho = .584; and P = 0.000). This hypothesis is rejected.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between quality assessment and social sustainability (where rho = .458; and P = 0.000). This hypothesis is rejected.

The result depicted in table 1 indicates that contrary to the previous hypothesized statement of no significant relationship between the variables, the results show that quality assessment significantly influences the organisations economic and social sustainability. On this basis all two hypotheses are rejected as findings indicate differently.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between quality assessment and economic sustainability (where rho = .584; and P = 0.000). This hypothesis is rejected.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between Quality assessment and economic sustainability (where rho = .596; and P = 0.000). This hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings for the analysis of this study centres on the results for the outcome of the study variables. The evidence presented by the study indicates

Table 1. Quality Assessment and Corporate Efficiency

| | | | Quality | Economic | Social | Environment |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------|
| Spearman's rho | Quality | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .584** | .458** | .467** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 |
| | Economic | Correlation Coefficient | .584** | 1.000 | .442** | .733** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . | .000 | .000 |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 |
| | Social | Correlation Coefficient | .458** | .442** | 1.000 | .518** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | . | .000 |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 |
| | Environment | Correlation Coefficient | .467** | .733** | .518** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | . |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 |

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

Source: Survey Data, 2020

Table 2. Quality Assessment and Social Sustainability

| | | | Time | Economic | Social | Environment | |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------|----------|--------|-------------|--|
| Spearman's rho | Social | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .596** | .643** | .563** | |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 | |
| | Economic | Correlation Coefficient | .596** | 1.000 | .442** | .733** | |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . | .000 | .000 | |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 | |
| | Social | Correlation Coefficient | .643** | .442** | 1.000 | .518** | |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | . | .000 | |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 | |
| | Environment | Correlation Coefficient | .563** | .733** | .518** | 1.000 | |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | . | |
| | | N | 97 | 97 | 97 | 97 | |

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

Source: Survey Data, 2020

that the variables are well identified with as being relevant, significant and a substantial aspect of their daily lives within their various organisations. This is as quality assessment, corporate efficiency are all observed to have significant central tendencies and low dispersions based on the opinions and responses of the participants of the study. Their relationships are discussed as follows:

Quality assessment and corporate efficiency This relationship tended to the effect of value appraisal on the two proportions of corporate effectiveness: social and monetary natural manageability. The proof of the relationship uncovers that there exists a huge degree of relationship between quality appraisal and corporate efficiency. The outcomes bolster the proof by Asubonteng et al. (1996) in their own investigation and those of Asubonteng et al. (1996) who recognized quality evaluation as a key practice in keeping up guidelines and economical result for the association. Quality appraisal as per Asubonteng et al. (1996) takes into consideration criticism and enhancements to quality norms and objectives and hence is basic in the quest for cultural, prudent and natural sustenance (Otley, 1999; Hoffman and Bateson, 2006). Inside the structure of the examination attempted a lot before by Parasuraman et al. (1988), the situation of value evaluation in the upgrade of authoritative exercises and results (particularly as identifies with looking after standard, sound and supportability rehearses) is additionally underscored. The consequence of this investigation unequivocally distinguishes quality appraisal as a forerunner to corporate supportability estimates, for example, monetary, social maintainability.

Quality assessment and social sustainability: social appraisal is seen to altogether affect on corporate manageability

estimates, for example, social and monetary natural supportability. The consequences of the investigation uncover that social evaluation adds to results which reflect adherence to maintainable authoritative practices which are monetary, social situated. The result of the outcomes credit the contention set forward by past research (De Waal, 2003; Ukko et al., 2007) which accentuate on the issue of authoritative objectives or destinations as a significant essential for deciding sensible and practical results. The proof from the investigation additionally focuses to a comparable truth shared by De Waal (2003) that the checking and accentuation on social, altogether describes and recognize authoritative goals or practices that are applicable, steady and feasible to those that are pointless, ill-organized and profoundly hallucinating. Asubonteng et al. (1996) in their investigation distinguish the appraisal of social as a preclusive factor in the choice of hierarchical results that can be considered as compelling and even productive. This situation of this examination insists that social evaluation adds to improving estimates, for example, practical and social maintainability.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

The findings of the analysis reveal that a significant relationship among the variables of the study, especially as manifested within the identified contexts of the study. The outcome provided that quality assessment relates significantly with the measures of corporate efficiency such as Economic sustainability and social sustainability. The evidence showed that these dimensions all significantly contributed to the manifestations of corporate efficiency and as such enhanced measures such as economic, social

sustainability. Based on the results presented by the analysis, all previous null hypotheses on the relationship between the variables are rejected as the evidence indicates the lack of statistical support for the tentative statements.

The implications of this is that quality assessment within organisations, is a fundamental practice and function which not only provides a premise for assessing competence and workers contributions, but also facilitates feedback on processes and the maintenance of standards and adherence to goals and objectives. Such activities enable organisations maintain their focus and attain sustainability in their functions and activities. The evidence from the analysis also supports the theoretical position of previous research (Hellriegel et al, 1998; De Waal, 2003; Ukko et al., 2007) which regards quality assessment as a major factor and precipice in the actualization of corporate efficiency.

The outcomes on the connection between the factors give observational premise to the declarations set forward as follows: Quality assessment adds to upgrading corporate proficiency and in that capacity encourages financial and social manageability inside the considered assembling enterprises. The examination given the proof of critical connection between the investigation factors quality evaluation and corporate productivity.

The design and development of performance measurement systems should be transparent and follow formats which clearly identify what is expected from the worker and how deviations from expectations are to be managed or corrected.

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