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**Role of Leadership in Strategic Management in Nigeria**

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The study sought to analyze the role of leadership in strategic management in Nigeria

**Methodology:** The research was conducted entirely on desktop review methods. Secondary data, or data that doesn't require actual observation in the field, are the focus of desk research. Because it requires little more than an executive's time, telephone rates, and directories, desk research is generally seen as a low-cost strategy in comparison to field research. As a result, the research used data that had already been collected and reported. Secondary sources such as internet journals and libraries made this information readily available.

**Findings:** The results show that Leadership is a critical element of strategic management. Leaders are responsible for setting the direction, vision and culture of the organization. They must also be able to develop and execute plans to achieve the organization's objectives. Leaders in Nigeria must be able to anticipate, plan, lead, motivate and manage change. They must be able to develop strategies that are aligned with the organization's objectives, and that will enable the organization to achieve a competitive advantage. They must also be able to effectively manage risk, create an environment of performance and excellence, and create a culture of trust and collaboration.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** Future research in the field of strategic management may employ the transformational leadership theory and the contingency leadership theory as a foundation. Policymakers, researchers, and academics from all across the world will all stand to gain from this study's findings. The study's findings will also be used by the country's top strategic management executives to boost the effectiveness of their teams' leadership across the board. Effective strategic management policies in the leadership are advocated for in the study as a means to boost efficiency across key operations and activities.

**Keywords:** *Leadership, Strategic Management, Nigeria*

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## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is one of the most important elements of strategic management. It is the process of influencing others to achieve a desired result. Strategic management is the art and science of formulating, implementing and evaluating cross-functional decisions that will enable an organization to achieve its objectives. In strategic management, leadership is critical for setting the vision, direction, and goals of the organization (Cheng, 2019). It is also essential for creating and maintaining a culture of accountability and high performance. Strategic leaders play a key role in the success of any organization. They are responsible for setting the direction and vision of the organization and ensuring that the organization is on track to achieve its goals. They must also ensure that the organization has the resources and capabilities it needs to succeed. Strategic leaders must have a clear understanding of the organization's mission and goals, and they must be able to communicate this to their team (Smith, 2014). They must also be able to identify and assess opportunities and risks, and develop strategies to capitalize on opportunities while mitigating risks. They must be able to develop and execute plans to achieve the organization's objectives and they must be able to effectively lead and motivate their team to do the same. Leadership is a fundamental element of strategic management in Nigeria. It is the driving force behind the success of any Nigerian organization. (Hughes, 2013). It is the capacity to influence people and resources to achieve organizational objectives.

Leadership helps to define the purpose of an organization, set goals and objectives, develop strategies and tactics to realize the organization's objectives and ensure that the organization is able to adjust to its changing environment. Strategic management is the process of developing a strategy for the organization, implementing the strategy, and monitoring the results of the strategy (Abosedo, 2016). In order to be successful, organizations must have strong leadership in place to ensure that the strategy is implemented effectively and that the results are monitored to ensure that the organization is achieving its goals. Leadership in strategic management in Nigeria is a complex and multi-faceted concept. It involves the ability to anticipate, plan, lead and motivate people to achieve organizational goals. It is the foundation of successful management, and it is critical to the success of any organization. Leadership plays a critical role in the success of any Nigerian organization. Leaders are responsible for determining the organization's vision, mission and objectives. (Thomas, 2014). They are also responsible for developing the strategies and tactics needed to achieve those objectives. Leaders must be able to identify and leverage opportunities and challenges in the environment, as well as anticipate, plan and coordinate the organization's activities.

Leaders must be able to create an environment that is conducive to innovation, creativity, and problem solving. They must be able to create a sense of trust and collaboration among team members, and foster an environment of continuous learning and improvement. Leaders must also be able to motivate their employees and create an environment of accountability. Leaders in Nigeria must also be able to create and maintain a culture of performance and excellence. They must be able to provide feedback and guidance to ensure that team members understand their roles and responsibilities, and that they are doing their best to meet organizational goals. Leaders must be able to monitor performance, identify areas of improvement, and take corrective action as

necessary. Leaders must also be able to effectively manage risk (Solaja,2016). They must be able to identify potential risks and develop strategies to mitigate those risks. Leaders must also be able to effectively manage change. They must be able to respond quickly and effectively to changing external conditions and adapt the organization's strategies and tactics as needed.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Leadership is a critical factor in the success of any organization. It is the driving force that sets the tone for the organization and helps to shape the direction of the organization. In Nigeria, leadership plays a crucial role in the development and implementation of strategic management plans. Leadership is essential in setting the tone for the organization and helping to guide the organization towards the desired outcomes. Leaders must be able to communicate the strategy to all stakeholders, ensure that the strategy is properly implemented, and ensure that the strategy is monitored and evaluated to ensure that the desired objectives are being achieved. Leadership is also important in the context of strategic management in Nigeria because it provides a sense of direction and purpose to the organization. Leaders must be able to provide clear direction and guidance to the organization in order to ensure that the strategy is successful. Leaders must also be able to inspire the organization and motivate all stakeholders to work together to achieve the desired objectives. Despite the importance of leadership in the context of strategic management in Nigeria, there are several challenges that organizations face in terms of leadership. One of the primary challenges is the lack of leadership skills and experience among many leaders in Nigeria.

Many leaders in Nigeria lack the necessary experience and skills to effectively lead an organization in the context of strategic management. Additionally, many leaders in Nigeria lack the necessary training and education to effectively lead an organization. As a result, many organizations struggle to effectively implement their strategies and realize their desired objectives. Another challenge in the context of strategic management in Nigeria is the lack of accountability among many leaders. In many cases, leaders in Nigeria lack the necessary accountability to ensure that their decisions and actions are in line with the organization's goals and objectives. As a result, many strategies are not effectively implemented and the organization fails to realize its desired objectives. Another challenge in the context of strategic management in Nigeria is the lack of transparency among many leaders. Many leaders in Nigeria lack the necessary transparency to ensure that the organization's strategies are properly communicated to all stakeholders. However, there are also many opportunities for leadership in Nigeria. One of these is the fact that Nigeria is a rapidly developing economy and there are many opportunities for businesses to grow and succeed.

### **Theoretical Review**

This study will benefit from the transformational leadership theory which was proposed by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and contingency leadership theory by Prof Fred Fiedler (1960).

### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

The transformational leadership theory is focused on motivating and inspiring followers to achieve a common goal. It is based on the idea that leaders should be able to inspire and motivate their followers to take action and achieve the desired outcome. Transformational leaders are seen as charismatic and inspirational, as they are able to communicate their vision and motivate their



followers to work towards it (Korejan,2016). In terms of strategic management, transformational leadership is particularly important for setting the long-term vision of the organization and inspiring followers to work towards it. Transformational leaders are able to create a sense of purpose and motivation within the organization, which is essential for long-term success. Transformational leaders also have the ability to think strategically and make the right decisions at the right time. The main strength of the transformational leadership theory is that it provides a clear and inspiring vision for the organization (Gomes,2014). Transformational leaders are able to set a clear direction and motivate their followers to work towards it. This is particularly important in the context of strategic management, as it is the leader who will set the long-term direction of the organization.

### **Contingency Leadership Theory**

This theory is focused on understanding the context in which a leader is operating. The theory suggests that the most effective leadership style depends on the context in which the leader is operating. It is based on the idea that different situations require different leadership styles, and that the leader must be able to adapt to the situation in order to be successful (Fiedler ,2015). In terms of strategic management, the contingency leadership theory is particularly important for understanding the external environment in which the organization is operating. It is the leader's responsibility to understand the external environment and make the appropriate changes to the organization's strategy in order to take advantage of opportunities and minimize risks. The contingency leadership theory helps leaders to understand the external environment and make the necessary changes. The main strength of the contingency leadership theory is that it provides an understanding of the external environment and allows leaders to make the necessary changes to the organization's strategy. This is particularly important in the context of strategic management, as it is essential for the organization to be flexible and able to adapt to changing conditions.

### **Empirical Review**

Ateka (2020) looked into how employees at Equity Bank in Nairobi felt their leadership impacted the success of a strategic plan. A total of 111 employees were chosen at random from the population of interest and given a questionnaire to fill out in order to collect the necessary information. The results showed that Equity Bank demonstrates characteristics of strategic leadership, with a score of 74.6% in "people wisdom," 83.4% in "contextual wisdom," and 79.6% in "procedural wisdom" from the bank's workers. Respondents rated the bank's strategic plan implementation process at 84.8%, indicating that it is being effectively implemented.

Adeoye (2019) investigated the link between strategic leadership and the performance of a sample of service businesses in Lagos and Ogun State by After establishing its validity and reliability. A questionnaire used to collect primary data. According to the hierarchical regression findings, purpose moderates the connection between strategic leadership and organizational performance at the 5% significance level.

Vi minh (2019) determined how the strategy evaluation process affects the strategic performance of multinational enterprises in developing markets like Nigeria. The study focused on a specific sector, collecting data from workers at four mobile phone MNCs in Nigeria via quantitative

methodologies and a survey. According to the results, the strategic performance of a mobile telecommunications company improves noticeably after it implements a systematic approach to evaluating its strategies.

Muthoni (2018) investigated the strategic plan of the Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) was impacted by leadership styles, resource allocation, and staff attitudes. Case study methodology was used for this research. Employees and supervisors at KTDA were the primary participants in the study. There were 322 regular workers and 12 upper-level management members chosen via random and purposeful sampling. Strategic plan execution at KTDA was found to be influenced by leadership styles, resource allocation, and employee attitudes. Attitude, resource allocation, and leadership styles ( $C. V=47.17, 46.618, \text{ and } 27.465$  correspondingly) all have an impact on the success with which a strategic plan is put into action.

Palladan (2017) investigated the impact of strategic leadership, organizational inventiveness, and IT competency on strategy implementation in universities and colleges in the Nigerian state of Kaduna. The state's college and university deans each filled out a questionnaire, totaling one hundred twenty-four (124). Strategic leadership, organizational innovation, information technology capacity, and strategy implementation all exhibited strong correlations in the study's findings.

Gahye (2016) created and tested an empirical model based on the culturally accepted implicit leadership theory to learn how Americans and Koreans differ in their leadership styles and how they feel about their organizations. In both America and Korea, researchers used a cross-sectional survey design. The positive correlation between consideration leadership (i.e. people-oriented leadership) and affective organizational commitment was shown to be larger among U.S. workers ( $n=452$ ) than among Korean workers ( $n=452$ ). Affective organizational commitment was adversely correlated with initiating structural leadership (i.e. task-oriented leadership) in the United States, but positively correlated in South Korea.

Gacharia (2015) Established challenges of Chase Bank Kenya Limited's Strategic Leadership and Change Management Practices. Respondents were interviewed using an interview guide, and key informant interviews were conducted to supplement the data. There were a total of 5 interview schedules used. According to the study's findings, Chase bank Kenya Limited's strategic leadership is best understood as the visionary leadership that guides the organization, with bank strategists formulating strategies that guarantee need-based solutions and, ultimately, competitive advantage.

Wafula (2015) identified the strategic management procedures implemented by the Architectural Association of Kenya. A case study research design was implemented at AAK to efficiently accomplish this goal. The information was gathered through in-depth interviews with a key informant who has been a member of the Association for many years. According to the findings, the Association has developed and implemented a strategic plan every five years, with the most recent plan spanning the years 2013-2018 with the assistance of an outside consultant.

Mendeley (2014) investigated the connections between transformational and transactional leadership. Human resource and company-wide managers from 119 service organizations provided

the data. The proposed hypotheses are analyzed using exploratory factor analysis and hierarchical regression analysis. Even after accounting for the influence of transactional leadership, the findings showed that transformational leadership had a significant and favorable impact on KM process and organizational performance.

Sebahattin (2014) examined the impact of leadership styles and inventiveness on corporate success. The questionnaire served as the primary data collector in this explanatory study. The case study includes 576 service and industrial sector workers in Istanbul. Two types of leadership and inventiveness were found to have a beneficial impact on company results. Business performance was found to be positively impacted more by innovativeness, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership in that order.

Ndungu (2013) examined leadership in the management of strategic transformation at Nairobi bottlers limited. This research used both primary and secondary sources for its data. The researchers used an interview guide with questions about strategic shift to acquire primary data. The corporate profile, bulletins, annual report of accounts, relevant company correspondence, and numerous industry magazines were all used as secondary sources of information. Research conducted on Nairobi Bottlers Limited found that the company's management actively encouraged employee input and involvement. Team members were given leadership roles inside the organization and tasked with overseeing day-to-day operations while upper-level managers focused on implementing strategic initiatives.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library

## **RESULTS**

The results were grouped into various research gap categories namely as conceptual, methodological and geographical gap.

### **Conceptual Gaps**

Studies by Ateka (2020), Adeoye and Vi minh (2019), Muthoni (2018), Palladan (2017), Gahye (2016), Gacharia and Wafula (2015), Mendeley and Sebahattin (2014) and Ndungu (2013) had conceptual framework gap in addition, all the mentioned studies did not establish the challenges of leadership in strategic managements. The studies did not outline the challenges in a clear manner. Therefore, the current study seeks to address these conceptual gaps

### **Geographical Gap**

Studies by Ateka (2020), Muthoni (2018), Gahye (2016), Gacharia and Wafula (2015), Mendeley and Sebahattin (2014) and Ndungu (2013) had geographical gap because they were not conducted

in Nigeria. This implies that the results may be inapplicable in Nigeria since the social economic environment of Nigeria and other countries differ. The current study seeks to address this gap.

### **Methodological Gap**

A methodological gap presents itself in this study, Adeoye (2019) investigated the link between strategic leadership and the performance of a sample of service businesses in Lagos and Ogun State by After establishing its validity and reliability. A questionnaire used to collect primary data to analyze data while our study will use a desk study literature review methodology.

## **SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

Leadership is a vital part of strategic management in Nigeria. Leadership is defined as the ability to influence and motivate people to achieve a desired outcome. Strategic management is the process of creating and implementing strategies that help an organization achieve its objectives. In Nigeria, leaders must be able to effectively manage the country's resources and develop strategies that promote the overall growth and development of the nation. leadership plays a vital role in strategic management in Nigeria. Leaders are responsible for setting the direction of the organization and making sure that the organization is able to reach its objectives. Leaders must also be able to develop strategies that will help the organization achieve its goals and objectives. They must also be able to effectively manage the resources available to them and allocate these resources in the most efficient manner. Leaders must be able to motivate their team and ensure that everyone is working towards the same goal. In conclusion, leadership is a critical factor in the success of any organization in the context of strategic management in Nigeria. Leaders must be able to set the tone for the organization and provide clear direction and guidance to ensure that the strategy is implemented effectively and that the organization is able to achieve its desired objectives. Unfortunately, leadership is a problem in many organizations in Nigeria due to the lack of experience, accountability, and transparency among many leaders. As a result, many organizations struggle to effectively implement their strategies and realize their desired objectives

### **Recommendations**

Leadership in strategic management in Nigeria is a major challenge. The country is faced with numerous challenges such as poor infrastructure, corruption, lack of access to resources, and an unstable political environment. These issues have made it difficult for businesses, government institutions, and non-governmental organizations to effectively plan for the future and manage their resources. In order to effectively address these challenges, it is important to implement strong leadership in strategic management in Nigeria The following recommendations aim to increase the effectiveness of leadership in strategic management in Nigeria. First, it is important to create an environment of trust and collaboration between leaders and their subordinates. This can be achieved through the development of a culture of open communication, which encourages open dialogue and the sharing of ideas. Leaders should also be given the opportunity to learn from their experiences and the experiences of others. Nigeria should strive to develop a culture of accountability and transparency. This can be achieved through the implementation of systems and procedures that make it easier for leaders to be held accountable for their decisions and actions.



This includes the development of a reporting system that allows leaders to track their progress and identify areas for improvement. Finally, Nigeria should strive to develop an effective system of governance that is based on the principles of good governance. This includes the establishment of an effective legal and regulatory framework, as well as the implementation of policies that promote transparency and accountability. By implementing these recommendations, Nigeria can create an atmosphere in which leaders are able to effectively manage resources and plan for the future. This will result in improved economic performance and the development of a more prosperous nation. With the right leadership in strategic management in Nigeria, the country can create a strong foundation for long-term economic growth and development.

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