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Strategic Planning and Organizational Performance in the Covid-19 Era in Tertiary Healthcare Institutions in South East Nigeria

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The study examined the strategic planning and organizational performance in the covid-19 era in tertiary healthcare institutions in south east Nigeria. The objectives of the study are as follows to: Examine the effect of strategy analysis on health care services in tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era. Investigate the effect of strategy formulation on health care services in tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era. Determine the effect of strategy implementation on health care services in tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this research work. The purpose of the study was to assess the effect of strategic planning on organizational performance in the COVID-19 era. The area of the study was in the South East Geopolitical Region of Nigeria. The target population of this study was the 2,877 senior level personnel from five departments in each of the five tertiary healthcare facilities in the South East Nigeria. The sample size of 553 was derived through Borg and gall (1973). The questionnaire was the research instruments used for data collection. The percentage frequency was used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to give a baseline information about the status of the variables. The findings of this study revealed that, Strategy analysis has a significant weak positive (rho = 0.48, p = 0.006) effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era. Strategy formulation has a significant very weak positive (rho = 0.134, p. = 0.027) effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.The study recommends that Firms are advised to consistently carry out an inept strategic analysis aimed at understanding the business environment within which their business organization operates. Organisation should intermittently review and update her business visions, mission statements and the strategic organisational goals. This will assist it to remain focused and resolute at maintaining a competitive front and quality service delivery to its customers.

***Keywords**: strategic planning, organizational performance, covid-19, Strategy formulation, Strategy analysis*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

COVID-19 arrived with force and unpredictability, dragging sectors and industries to an unprecedented and uncertain situation. Companies and organizations reacted but were not prepared for it. Tourism, retailing, manufacturing, logistics, education, healthcare, and automobile are some of the industries most affected by the lockdown situation created by COVID-19, to restrict mobility and reduce the pandemic

diffusion through contacts. With the available data, the tourism sector provided by United Nations' World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2020) shows 22% decrease of international travels in Q1 2020, and 57% down in March. This resulted to a loss of 67 million international arrivals and USD 80 billion in receipts. The scenario continues with an estimated decline of 58% to 78% depending on the advancement of containment and travel restrictions. UNWTO (2020) estimated this scenario that 100 to 120 million direct jobs is at risk in the tourism sector, the worst result since 1950 and disruption of sustainable growth since the 2009 financial crisis. Many organizations are under pressure on how to survive with different measures and trying hard not to go bankrupt.

The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on our society cannot be undermined; it pushed individuals and organizations around the world to seek ways to adjust to the new normal. Technologies such as zoom and the likes which hitherto were not recognized became household names (Keick & Gain, 2021). For many managers, it was not easy adapting to such a drastic change in a very difficult time as there was little or no guidance available. Biswakerma, Rushworth, Srivastava, Singh, Kang, Das, Anantharaman, Aepph, Popp & Bhuyah (2021) posited that the COVID pandemic gave rise to a number of challenges for many organizations across the globe. Such challenges as the providing education remotely which came up as a result of imposed mandatory lockdown to control the spread of the virus. This gave a heavy workload on the technology departments of organizations where they exist and threat to organizations that do not have.

Like other sectors, the COVID-19 pandemic revealed how vulnerable our health systems are and has intense implications for health, economic progress, trust in governments, and social cohesion. Containing and mitigating the spread and infection rate of the virus is essential. But so is strengthening the capacity of health systems to respond swiftly and effectively (OECD). It drew attention to the already overburdened public health systems in many countries, and to the challenges faced in recruiting, deploying, retaining and protecting sufficient well-trained, supported and motivated health workers. It highlights the strong need for sustainable investment in health systems, including in the health workforce, and for decent working conditions, training and equipment, especially in relation to personal protective equipment and occupational safety (ILO). International hospitals and healthcare facilities are facing catastrophic financial challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The American Hospital Association estimates a financial impact of $202.6 billion in lost revenue for America's hospitals and healthcare systems, or an average of $50.7 billion per month. Furthermore, it could cost low- and middle-income countries ~ US$52 billion (equivalent to US$8.60 per person) each four weeks to provide an effective healthcare response to COVID-19. In the setting of the largest daily COVID-19 new cases in the US, this burden will influence patient care, surgeries, and surgical outcomes. From a global economic standpoint, The World Bank projects that global growth is projected to shrink by almost 8% with poorer countries feeling most of the impact, and the United Nations projects that it will cost the global economy around 2 trillion dollars this year. Overall, a lack of preparedness was a major contributor to the struggles experienced by healthcare facilities around the world. Items such as personal protective equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers, hospital equipment, sanitizing supplies, toilet paper, and water were in short supply. These deficiencies were exposed by COVID-19 and have prompted healthcare organizations around the world to invent new essential plans for pandemic preparedness.

An European multinational's board of directors asked a strategic question during the 2009 financial crisis: how can companies think strategically when running short of cash to survive for tomorrow? Yet, it is hard to think of a long term when one cannot survive in short term. However, arriving in such an extreme situation of cash shortage may also be the consequence of strategic errors, decisions made previously. A well-known entrepreneur, Jack Ma, the founder of Alibaba, has a saying 'repair the roof while it is still sunny' (Tsui, Zhang & Chen, 2017). Companies do have one or other imperfections in different organizational parts of system, structure, practice and policy. As the company grows, internal resources, assets, restructures, merges and capabilities regulate constantly in the process. Have the organizations been preparing themselves both for growth and crisis during the brilliant sunny days? Fixing the hole in the roof during sunny days is relatively easy with planning. If not done when rain comes, it is hard to fix and situation worsens. In the airline industry, though the whole industry is affected severely, the one most likely that has a strategic problem previously goes bankrupt first. To prepare companies for different

circumstances, the strategic tool of management is very useful to allow companies to tackle different options and possibilities in hand for quick responsiveness. Nevertheless, this optimistic formal strategic means for management is not perfect either.

COVID-19 is such an unprecedented occurrence that the last comparable pandemic is from a century ago i.e., the Spanish Flu. Hardly any organization has taken such a scenario into recent cognizance and analyzed it in advance. Mintzberg 1994 has long alerted us to the fallacy of planning and design school with emerged and non-deliberate approaches. Scholars such as Dyer (2013) estimate that around 70–80% of all company strategies are as a result of informal processes than formal processes. Based on this, Zhang, Dolan, Lingham and Altman (2019) suggested a dynamic model of strategic human resources to function in an intense and dynamic operational environment, in which learning and leadership are changed into strategic human features to build, trigger and reinforce organizational structure and system formed by a human pool of knowledge workers.

No strategic plan could have foreseen the arrival of COVID-19 like a hurricane. After several months of data accumulation, now we may be able to adjust a relatively accurate estimate to set up a scenario for analysis and planning. Organizations need to act and react at the first instance to keep making decisions. Waiting could have been an option but the price to be paid is the loss of opportunity which appears in a very short time of window opening (Bourgeois & Eisenhardt, 2018).

Strategic planning is referred to as the process of formulating strategies and setting guidelines that controls the activities being undertaken to attain organizational objectives and set goals (Efendioglo & Karabulut, 2010). Strategic planning examines a company as a system composed of subsystems. It permits managers to look at the organization and the interrelationship of parts. It provides a structure for coordination and control of the organization's activities, decision-making and services the setting of objectives, which presents a basis for evaluating performance (Arasa & K'Obonyo, 2012). It is an important performance driver in all work settings as well as enhances organizational innovation and economic performance (Song, 2011). For an organization to realize its vision it must have reliable strategies that provide the direction to be followed.

Strategic planning assists organizations to survive in the market environment with competitive advantage. It also assists executives in signifying the business there is, the ends it seeks, and the process in accomplishing those ends (Song, 2011). It also provides sustainability in the market even when there are environmental changes. The primary goal is to guide a company in setting out its strategic priorities and intent in focusing itself towards realizing the same (Kotler & Keller, 2017). Strategic planning helps organizations to anticipate future challenges and opportunities (Volberda, 2010). To be competitive, strategic planning practices are therefore essential in the industry. Strategic planning is a key in the health industry in maintaining a focused, long-term vision of the organization's mission and purpose and it aids decisions about the allocation of human and financial resources.

Strategic planning consists of a set of essential processes that are intended to form or influence a situation to create a more favourable result for a company. This is quite different from traditional planning which is more defensive based and depends on the move of competition to drive the company's move (Ansoff, Miller & Friesen, 2010). In business dealings, it provides in general ways for specific units such as projects, marketing, financial focuses and human resources. It may be advantageous to productivity development when there is agreement about the mission and when most work dealings depend on technological or technical considerations. It is the basis at which every company or firm knows its direction or purpose. An important conception of strategic planning is an understanding that for a company to do well, each person needs to work to ensure the team's goals are met (Johnson and Scholes, 2017).

Organizational performance will depend on factors such as the efficiency of the business processes, the productivity of her employees, the ability of the organization to meet up with its set objectives, the alignment among the organizational functions alignment with the organization's strategy, the organizational culture and climate. Before an organization will define its key performance indices, it should define a model and concept of its effectiveness. Some top indicators of organizational performance include achievement of organization's goals and targets, business process efficiency, results of business investments and projects, market place performance, organization alignment and the workforce experience (Smith, 2019).

Edwards (2014) adduced that the balanced score card developed by Professors Kaplan and Norton of Harvard University gives a more predictive set of organization performance measures as it compels managers not to concentrate only on financial measures but to monitor other important measures that lead to sustained long-term performance such as customers focus, internal business process focus, learning and growth focus. For health organizations, the performance measure is the quality of the healthcare service delivery.

Ross, Mamaqi, Albisu & Banterle (2011) argue that organizations have to learn, adapt and reorient themselves to the changing environment. This process has to be coordinated and deliberate leading to radical or gradual systematic repositioning between a firm's strategic orientation and the environment that results in an enhancement in effectiveness and performance. Strategic planning is now a routine part of business organizations since it plays a significant role in providing direction to the operations of the firm. Firms that slot in strategic planning place a better opportunity of experiencing the better and improved performance. Thus, strategic planning is a vital key any company or firms that seeks to survive competition in the unending global competitive business environment. Against this background, the study will examine strategic planning and organizational performance in the Covid-19 era in the tertiary healthcare facilities in the South East, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Every organization operates in a constantly changing and dynamic environment. The unpredictability of today's environment of business operations is worrisome as it adversely affects organizational performance. The sudden change brought about by COVID-19 and the risks and threats associated with it crippled many business organizations. Globally, the waves of COVID-19 imposed unprecedented challenges to individuals, firms and organizations and called for new tools and approaches to quickly and effectively manage the turbulent environment to remain competitive. Strategic decision-making is one of the areas of current management that played a crucial role in achieving success and survival of firms in different industries in the COVID-19 era (Arnoud, 2020). It is alleged that failure on the part of many organizations to survive in the COVID-19 era was due to poor strategic management practice; firms and organizations with strong and robust strategies and those that adopted strategic management practice had a significant competitive edge (Arnoud, 2020).

Markins and Steele (2015) and Scholes and Whittington (2015) note that not all organizations that are engaged in strategic planning process do have high performance due to inherent weaknesses in one or some of the processes involved in strategic decision making. A well analyzed strategy that is poorly formulated and implemented with poor evaluation and control processes does not yield superior performance. Against this background, the study tends to examine strategic planning and organizational performance in tertiary healthcare centers in the South East, Nigeria in the Covid-19 era.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main aim of this study is to examine the effect of strategic planning on organizational performance in the COVID-19 era. Its specific objectives are to:

(i) Examine the effect of strategy analysis on health care services in tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

(ii) Investigate the effect of strategy formulation on health care services in tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.
(iii) Determine the effect of strategy implementation on health care services in tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

1.4 Research Questions

To direct the thrust of the study, the following research questions were formulated and used:

(i) How does strategy analysis affect health care services of tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?
(ii) What effect does strategy formulation have on health care services of tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?
(i) How does strategy implementation affect health care services of tertiary healthcare institutions in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Review

The research is anchored under the Strategic Fit Theory

2.1.1 Strategic Fit Theory

Strategic Fit Theory originated from the works of Venkatraman (1989). This theory is also known as best fit strategic management or strategic decision theory. The theory explains that there are no universal prescriptions of strategic management practices. Wright and Snell (2015) argue that the application of strategic management practices depends on the firm context, business strategy and culture. The proponents of this theory further observe that strategic planning practices are only effective to the extent that they are aligned to the business environment both within and outside of the business. A major assumption in the field of the strategic planning process is that an organization needs to align its strategy with the external environment, internal environment, competitive environment, mission, vision, structure, capabilities and resources to improve the performance of an organization. The emphasis that the theory places on the emergent strategic planning process suit the theory in analyzing the strategic planning process in organizations that operate in a dynamic and challenging environment(Shankar & Shepherd, 2019). Thus the theory views an organization as continuously engaged in an emergent strategic planning process to incorporate the complexity and uncertainty of business.

Strategic fit is central to the strategy formulation and implementations process as it requires all organizations to process information obtained through scanning by transforming it into vision and mission statement. Thus it ensures that the mission and vision statement aligns to information sourced through environmental scanning. Lindow, Stubner and Wulf (2010) assert that strategic fit enables a firm to adopt strategy with competitive advantage and strategic choices of integration and coordination of strategies to provide superior performance. The theory of strategic fit places significant emphasis on the availability and relevancy of resources and elements in the strategic planning process. The lack of these resources and their alignment to the strategic goal is an obstacle in the strategic planning process. The theory of strategic fit is concerned with strategic implementation and how the process is implemented through the availing of necessary resources that will align the organization strategy. The strategic fit theory also states that implementing a strategy may face challenges in the implementation process, both internal and external resources. These determine the extent to which a supportive environment exists in strategy implementation (Prajogo, 2016).

The strategic fit has been established as a framework under which various strategies can be oriented to affect the performance of an organization. Shankar and Shepherd (2019) assert that the strategic fit process involves the management of all other elements relating to the strategic planning process to ensure

that the intended goal is achieved. Strategic fit is also central in the strategic planning process as it ensures that strategies adopted by an organization fit within an organization and its environment and result in improved performance. The theory further presupposes that the strategic fit allows organizations to evaluate existing strategies depending on the level of business alignment, resources availability and performance impact. To this extent, Aleksic and Rasicjelavic (2017) apply strategic fit theory in analyzing the strategic planning process in small and medium scale enterprises and thus the suitability of the theory in understanding the effect of the strategic planning process on the performance of organizations.

2.2 Empirical Review

Chijioke, Vu & Olatunji (2018) investigated the influence of strategy formulation drivers on strategic performance. The study adopted a survey research design and quantitative technique in its data analysis. The telecommunication companies operating in Nigeria were studied, in which 120 managers across all the departments were randomly selected as participants. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression techniques were used to analyze the data generated from the field using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 25). The result showed that strategy formulation drivers jointly control the strategic performance of mobile telecommunication firms in Nigeria. Attention was given to company long-term objectives and vision which has a significant and positive impact on strategic performance. The result also showed that the company's mission had a significant negative impact on strategic performance.

Otieno (2019) conducted a cross sectional descriptive study to investigate the strategic planning process on the financial performance of professional service SMEs in Kenya. The senior, middle-level managers and owners of professional service SME's in Nairobi were studied. From a target population of 51287 registered professional service SMEs in Nairobi, 381 respondents were chosen using proportionate and purposive sampling, with one respondent selected from each SME. The questionnaire instrument was used to collect data and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The findings of the study revealed that environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation had positive significant effects on the service of SMEs in Nairobi. The findings also indicated that innovation has a moderating effect between the strategic planning process and the financial performance of professional service SMEs.

Njoroge (2018) examined the influence of strategic planning in event planning firms in Nairobi Central Business District. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Sixty (60) event planning firms was the sample size of the study and it was gotten through non-probability sampling technique. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed with descriptive statistical tool. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis. The result of the study showed that strategic planning significantly impact on the financial performance of the firms studied.

Ikoro and Nwosu (2017) carried out a study on the effects of strategic planning on organizational performance of Nigerian Bottling Company Enugu, using descriptive survey research design. The population of study was 180 members of staff of the Nigerian Bottling Company Enugu while the sample size was 124 which were determined using Taro Yamen's formula. The result of the analysis indicated significantly positive relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance and significant negative correlation between poor implementation of strategic plan and performance.

Owolabi and Makinde (2012) conducted a case study to assess the effects of strategic planning on corporate performance of Babcock University. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study to obtain information from Babcock University employees. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Hypotheses were tested using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to establish the significance of the relationship between the different variables used in evaluating performance. The results of the hypotheses showed a significant positive relationship between strategic planning and corporate performance.

Arome (2020) investigated the relationship between strategic planning practices and performance of SMEs in the Nigerian service sector and to assess the attitudes of the SME owners and managers in Nigeria towards strategic planning. Mixed methods approach was adopted in carrying out the study.

Primary data were collected from managers and owners of SMEs using structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews and the finding of the study showed significant relationship between strategic planning and SMEs performance.

Ansah (2016) executed a study to investigate the effect of strategic planning on organizational capability for the performance of MSFBs in Ghana. In the study, organizational capability was used as the moderating variable between strategic planning (independent variable) and performance of MSFBs (dependent variable). The study employed convenience sampling method to get the sample size of 200 respondents which were studied. To ensure higher reliability and validity of the constructs, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were performed using LISREL 8.5. In determining the causal relationship between the constructs, a hierarchical multiple regression (HMR) analysis was employed. The result revealed that strategic planning has a positive effect on the financial and operational performance of MSFBs in Ghana. It also revealed that managerial capability has significant positive moderation effect between strategic planning and performance of MSFBs in Ghana.

Donkor, Donkor, and Kwarten (2018) examined the effect of market dynamism and strategic planning on the performance of small and medium scale enterprises in Ghana. The study adopted quantitative approach in carrying out the study. Two hundred (200) small and medium sized manufacturing and service firms in Ghana were the sample size of the study. Multiple regression analysis was carried out to test the hypotheses and the result of the study revealed that strategic planning significantly impact on the performance of SMEs in Ghana. Also, the finding of the study showed that market dynamism had a significant positive effect on the performance of firms studied.
Kwame & Kwame (2012) conducted a study to examine the connection between strategic planning and organizational performance of firms, using micro data from small and large firms operating in a developing economy. The research result revealed that strategic planning significantly impact on organizational performance of firms.

3. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this research work. The purpose of the study was to assess the effect of strategic planning on organizational performance in the COVID-19 era. The area of the study was in the South East Geopolitical Region of Nigeria. The target population of this study was the 2,877 senior level personnel from five departments in each of the five tertiary healthcare facilities in the South East Nigeria. This includes the administrative directors, medical directors, consultants, registrars, nursing directors and senior nursing officers, food science directors and chief pharmacists and laboratory and diagnostic directors. The sample size of 553 was derived through Borg and gall (1973). The questionnaire was the research instruments used for data collection. The copy of the questionnaire, the objectives, research questions and hypotheses of the study was given to the supervisors and other experts in business administration to ensure that the questionnaire instrument covered the phenomenon and relevant study variables it was supposed to cover. Their criticisms were noted while their suggestions were incorporated in the final draft of the questionnaire. The method applied to determine the reliability of the instrument was the test re-tests method. A Pilot test was conducted on 20 healthcare staff in government hospitals in Delta state. The scores obtained from the responses were used for test of reliability of the instrument. The percentage frequency was used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to give a baseline information about the status of the variables

SUMMARY, ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The results obtained from the analyses of responses are presented and interpreted in this chapter. 553 copies of the questionnaires were distributed and 531 copies were duly completed and returned. The response rate of the questionnaire was 96%, which is high and acceptable for survey study. The results were presented in line with the objectives of the study. At first the analyses of the characteristic of the respondents was performed and followed by the analyses of the study status of the variables. Then the model estimation were done to analyze the specific objectives using the Spearman's correlation.

4.1 Analyses of the Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the respondents in the selected tertiary healthcare institutions for the study

SN	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	**Age Range**		
	Below 35 years	104	19.6
	Between 35 and 45 years	168	31.6
	Between 46 and 55 years	165	31.1
	Above 55 years	94	17.7
	Total	**531**	**100**
2	**Gender**		
	Male	295	55.6
	Female	236	44.4
	Total	**531**	**100**
3	**Job status in the healthcare facility**		
	Administrative Directors	39	7.3
	Medical Directors/Consultants	80	15.1
	Nursing Directors	207	39.0
	Food Service Directors	125	23.5
	Laboratory/Diagnostic Directors	80	15.1
	Total	**531**	**100**
4	**Years of experience in healthcare sector**		
	Less than 10 years	122	23
	Between 10 and 20 years	149	28.1
	Between 21 and 30 years	176	33.1
	Above 30 years	84	15.8
	Total	**551**	**100**

The result on Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the survey. Four demographic variables are examined, namely age bracket, gender, job status and years of experience. The

responses on age range shows that 104 respondents representing 19.6% of the sample are below 35 years of age while those between the brackets of 35 and 45 and between 46 and 55 are 168 (31.6%) and 165 (31.1%) respectively. However, those above 55 years are 94 (17.7%).

The gender grouping shows that males are 295 being 55.6% of the sample while females are 236 which accounts for 44.4%. This indicates gender proportion of 55.6% to 44.4% of male – female employment in tertiary healthcare institutions in the south east. Thus, male staff are more in number in the tertiary health care facilities than female.

Furthermore, the rank of the respondents in the tertiary healthcare institutions are shown. The job status reveals that administrative directors account for 39 (7.3%) of the sample, medical directors/consultants are 80 (15.1%), and nursing directors being 207 (39%). The food services directors are 125 (23.5%) persons while the laboratory/diagnostic directors are 80 (15.1%).

The years of experience was also analyzed. The result shows that the respondents with experience of less than 10 years are 122 (23%). However, those between 10 and 20 years are 149 representing 28.1% of the sample while those between 21 and 30 years are 176 which accounts for 33.1% of the sample. Those with years of experience above 30 years are 84 persons which makes up 15.8% of the respondents.

4.2 Baseline analysis of the variables

This analysis explains the status of the three included variables for the study. Also, the extent of organizational performance is determined.

Table 2: **Analysis of the Extent of Strategic Analysis in tertiary healthcare institutions in South East Nigeria**

SN	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
1	Our healthcare facility were able to keep up with the organisational goals during the COVID 19 pandemic	2.344	0.1556	Less extent
2	Our healthcare facility did not deviate from the vision and mission we hold during the COVID 19 pandemic	3.443	0.5378	More extent
3	COVID 19 new normal has impacted on our goals as healthcare facility in the country	1.431	1.2456	Less extent
	Cumulative Mean response	**2.4060**		**Less extent**

The result on Table 2 is the mean scores and standard deviation of the extent of strategic analysis in the tertiary healthcare institutions in South East Nigeria. The overall results shown on the cumulative mean response is 2.41 which indicates less extent in the strategic analysis carried out by the tertiary healthcare facilities under study.

This connotes that strategic analysis as an aspect of corporate strategic planning process is less carried out in the tertiary healthcare institutions in south east Nigeria, especially during the COVID 19 era.

Table 3: **Analysis of the Extent of Strategy formulation in tertiary healthcare institutions in South East Nigeria**

SN	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
1	The advent of COVID 19 influenced the healthcare facility demands overtime the years	3.4343	0.67855	More extent
2	The incidence of COVID 19 affected our healthcare supplies	2.6747	1.42467	More extent
3	The COVID 19 pandemic exposed our healthcare to challenging competitive factors	4.5421	0.9775	More extent
4	The COVID 19 era ushered some technological changes that disrupted our medical processes.	3.6754	0.6477	More extent
	Cumulative Mean response	**3.5816**		**More extent**

The result on Table 3 is the extent of strategic formulation in tertiary healthcare institutions in South East Nigeria. The cumulative mean response value is 3.58. This explains that there is more extent of involvement in strategic formulation during the COVID 19 era. The tertiary healthcare facilities in the south east engaged more in strategic formulation.

This suggests that strategic formulation as an aspect of strategic planning in the tertiary healthcare institutions in South East Nigeria was well conducted during the COVID 19 era.

Table 6: **Analysis of the Extent of Strategy implementation in tertiary healthcare institutions in South East Nigeria**

SN	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
1	The incidence of COVID 19 had negative effect on staff responsiveness to patients.	1.4245	0.8832	Less extent
2	The COVID 19 pandemic altered the organizational structure and process for treatments in our facility	1.3975	1.4214	Less extent
3	The COVID 19 engendered more competitive edge to our facility	2.3435	1.7588	Less extent
	Cumulative Mean response	**1.7218**		**Less extent**

The extent of involvement in strategic implementation by the tertiary healthcare facilities in south east is shown on Table 6. Negatively cued responses are converted to positive cue questions. The results generally revealed that the tertiary healthcare institutions were less involved in strategic implementation (Cumulative Mean = 1.72) during the COVID 19 era.

The results connotes that strategic implementation not well carried out during the COVID 19 era. This suggests that strategic plans were not strictly followed during the period under study.

4.3 Model Estimation

The model estimation is carried out to address the objectives of the study. The analysis is done using the correlation coefficient obtained from Spearman correlation analysis. The Spearman correlation was used since the analysis is a measure of association between two variables (strategic planning and organisational performance). The Spearman correlation is more suitable especially when the data do not have normal distribution. The data for this data were gathered through s survey process and is expected to lack normality. Thus the non-parametric tool as the Spearmen has been used as the statistical tool.

The results are used to answer the research questions and as well test the hypotheses. The correlation coefficient which indicates direction and magnitude of relationship is used to answer the research questions while the p.value is used for test of hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Decision is to accept reject the null hypothesis and accept as statistically significant, p.values less than 0.05. Otherwise we accept the null hypotheses.

4.3.1 Effect of strategy analysis on organizational performance

Research Question One: How does strategy analysis affect organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?

Hypothesis One: Strategy analysis has no significant effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

The variables of the analysis are strategic analysis and organisational performance. It is shown on Table 4.

Table 4: Result of the Correlation between Strategic Analysis and Organisational Performance

Correlations

			Strategic Analysis	Organizational Performance
Spearman's rho	Strategic Analysis	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.476
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.006
		N	531	531
	Organizational Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.476	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.
		N	531	531

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

Correlation Coefficient (rho) = 0.48

Significance value = 0.006 ($p < 0.05$, that is, significant)

The correlation coefficient is 0.48. this indicates that there is a weak positive relationship between strategic analysis and organisational performance. this indicate that a unit increase in the extent of strategic analysis can lead to increase in organisational performance. in answer to research question one "how does strategy analysis affect organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in south-east Nigeria in covid-19 era?" the study posit that strategic analysis has a positive effect on organisational performance.

However, the significance level (0.005) is less than 5%, thus, we reject the null hypothesis that "strategy analysis has no significant effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in south-east Nigeria in covid-19 era". since we rejected the null hypothesis, we then accept the alternative hypothesis. thus, the study thus concludes that strategy analysis has a significant weak positive effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in south-east Nigeria in covid-19 era.

4.3.2 Effect of strategy formulation on organizational performance

Research Question Two: What effect does strategy formulation have on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?

Hypothesis Two: Strategy formulation has no significant effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

The variables of the analysis are strategic formulation and organisational performance. It is shown on Table 5.

Table 5: Result of the Correlation between Strategic Formulation and Organisational Performance

Correlations

			Strategy formulation	Organizational Performance
Spearman's rho	Strategy formulation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.134
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.027
		N	531	531
	Organizational Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.134	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.027	.
		N	531	531

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

Correlation Coefficient (rho) = 0.134

Significance value = 0.027 ($p < 0.05$, that is, significant)

The result of the coefficient correlation between strategic formulation and organisational performance is 0.134. This falls within the boundary of very weak correlation and the value is positive. This indicates that there is a very weak positive relationship between strategic formulation and organisational performance. This implies that a unit increase in the extent of strategic formulation will result to about 0.13 unit increase in organisational performance. In answer to research question two" "What effect does strategy formulation have on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?" the study posit that strategic formulation has a very weak positive effect on organisational performance.

The p.value is 0.027 which is less than 5% level of significance. The study thus rejected the null hypothesis that "Strategy formulation has no significant effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era". Hence, it accept the alternate and conclude that strategy formulation has a significant very weak positive effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

4.3.2 Effect of strategy implementation on organizational performance

Research Question Three: How does strategy implementation affect organizational performance of tertiary healthcare centers in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?

Hypothesis Three: Strategy implementation has no significant effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

The variables of the analysis are strategic implementation and organisational performance. It is shown on Table 13.

Table 13: Result of the Correlation between Strategic implementation and Organisational Performance

Correlations

			Strategy implementation	Organizational Performance
Spearman's rho	Strategy implementation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.717**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	531	531
	Organizational Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.717**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	531	531

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

Correlation Coefficient (rho) = 0.72

Significance value = 0.000 ($p < 0.05$, that is, significant)

The coefficient correlation between strategic implementation and organisational performance is 0.71 which is positive and strong. This indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between strategic implementation and organisational performance. This implies that a unit increase in the extent of strategic implementation leads to about 0.71 unit rise in organisational performance. In answer to research question three" "How does strategy implementation affect organizational performance of tertiary healthcare centres in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era?" the study posits that strategic implementation has strong positive effect on organisational performance.

The p-value is 0.000 which is less than 5% level of significance. The study thus rejected the null hypothesis that "Strategy implementation has no significant effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era". Hence, it accept the alternate and conclude that strategy implementation has a significant strong positive effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the specific objectives of the study.

4.4.1 Strategy analysis and organizational performance nexus

Strategic analysis has a weak positive and significant effect (rho = 0.48, p = 0.006) on organisational performance. Strategic analysis planning process will bring about enhanced organisational performance. When organisations improve in extent of strategic analysis they engage in the process of business planning, it would enhance its performance level by 48%. This follows that business analysis is essential for improvement in business outcome. The baseline study showed that the tertiary healthcare facilities in south east Nigeria had low level of strategic analysis in their strategic planning process. This outcome of this study supposes that enriched and in-depth analysis could improve healthcare service delivery, satisfaction and staff cooperation by about 48%.

4.4.2 Strategy formulation and organizational performance nexus

The study showed that strategy formulation has a significant very weak positive (rho = 0.134, p. = 0.027) effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era. This implies that formulation improves performance by 13%. Any unit improvement in strategic planning formulation will result in improved organisational performance. The baseline study showed a rich level of strategic formulation in the tertiary healthcare institutions in the study area. This implies that strategic formulation is being well practiced in the planning processes of tertiary healthcare facilities, especially in the south east of Nigeria. The notional effect is increased rise of 13% in healthcare sector performance. Chijioke, and Olatunji (2018); Otieno, *et al* **(**2018**);** Otieno, (2019) and Brorström, (2019) reported similar findings in different locations and sectors. This implies that strategic formulations has a proven record of enhanced performance for organisations.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study have investigated the effect of strategic planning on organisational performance of tertiary healthcare facilities in south east Nigeria. Strategic planning was disaggregated into six aspects, namely strategic analysis, formulation, implementation, evaluation, control and innovation. Each of the six strategic planning variables was correlated with organisational performance, to examine the association between them. The analysis were performed using the Spearman's correlation coefficient. The results showed that:

1. Strategy analysis has a significant weak positive (rho = 0.48, p = 0.006) effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.
2. Strategy formulation has a significant very weak positive (rho = 0.134, p. = 0.027) effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.
3. Strategy implementation has a significant strong positive (rho = 0.72, p = 0.000) effect on organizational performance of tertiary health care facilities in South-East Nigeria in COVID-19 era.

5.2 Conclusion

Strategic planning have not been fully and effectively employed in management of tertiary healthcare facilities in the south east Nigeria. The study showed that strategic planning is a sound driver of organisational performance in the healthcare sector. All the three strategic planning processes showed positive effects on performance, however, implementation and innovation are the strong drivers of performance while control was not statistically significant in driving organisational performance in healthcare facilities, especially in emergency cases as the COVID 19 era.

5.3 Recommendations

Amongst the recommendations of the study are as follows:

1. Firms are advised to consistently carry out an inept strategic analysis aimed at understanding the business environment within which their business organization operates.
2. Organisation should intermittently review and update her business visions, mission statements and the strategic organisational goals. This will assist it to remain focused and resolute at maintaining a competitive front and quality service delivery to its customers.
3. It is also recommended that strategic plans should be followed by organisations in strict terms. The action plans must align with the organizational goals.

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