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ADAPTIVE CAPABILITY AND OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between adaptive capacity and operational performance in electricity distribution companies in the South-South Region of Nigeria. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, targeting Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company and Benin Electricity Distribution Company, with a population of 442 employees. A sample size of 205 respondents was determined using the Yamane formula, and data were collected via structured questionnaires. The independent variable, adaptive capacity was measured, while operational performance was measured using service quality and service flexibility. Findings revealed a significant and positive relationship between adaptive capacity and service quality ($\beta = 0.524$, $p < 0.05$), as well as between adaptive capacity and service flexibility ($\beta = 0.496$, $p < 0.05$). The coefficients of determination (R^2) were 0.275 and 0.246, respectively, indicating that adaptive capacity accounts for 27.5% and 24.6% of the variations in service quality and service flexibility. These results underscore the critical role of adaptive capacity in enhancing operational performance within electricity distribution firms. The study concludes that companies with higher adaptive capabilities are better positioned to improve service delivery and respond flexibly to customer needs. The study recommended the implementation of predictive maintenance using data analytics to minimize equipment failure and the deployment of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) to facilitate real-time energy monitoring and management. Overall, strengthening adaptive capacity can significantly boost the efficiency, responsiveness, and reliability of electricity distribution companies in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Keywords: Adaptive Capacity, Operational Performance, Service Quality and Service Flexibility.

Introduction

Background to the Study

The electricity distribution sector in Nigeria is one of the major sector in the nation. However, the sector is faced with challenges as a result of operational inefficiency, infrastructure deficits, insufficiency in energy supply and other challenges. This aforementioned challenges has posed security threat to the operational performance of electricity distribution companies especially in the South-South, Nigeria. Without performance it will be difficult for organizations to remain sustainable, compete effectively and satisfy their customers, therefore operational performance is very important. Corporate performance refers to stakeholders' favourable opinions of the company (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). It cannot be replaced exactly by rival products. Organizational performance increases a company's intrinsic value and is essential to a company's competitive advantage and operational performance (Schwaiger & Raithel 2014). The notion of organizational performance is rooted in a variety of fields, including organizational theory, marketing, and strategic management (Dean, Arroyo-Gamez, Punjaisri, & Pich, 2016; Martin, Beaumont, Doig, & Pate, 2005).

Operational performance refers to an organization's ability to generate value for its stakeholders in the face of uncertainty (Kia, Halvorsen, & Bartram 2019). Additionally, a

company's performance is an essential asset of that company has because it has the ability to increase that company's profit and also in boosting the favourable position of that company (Gardberg & Fombrun, 2002). The issue of corporate performance is also very essential in reducing legal litigation and in enhancing the image of the entire organization. The electricity distribution companies are often in search of ways to operate effectively while delivery superior services to relevant stakeholders. Hence, it is important to enhance their performance in order to thrive effectively and reduce incident of conflict between the customers and staff of the company (Kasiri, Cheng, & Sambasivan, 2017). The adaptive capability of a firm is one of the various ways with which the operational performance of firms can be enhanced.

In this context of volatility in the electricity distribution subsector, one would argue that it is imperative for electricity distribution companies (EDCs) to develop adaptation capacity, in order to enhance operational performance. Adaptation capacity refers to an organization's deliberate capacity to adjust and reshape its resource foundation (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). In today's fast-paced and turbulent business environment, firms must be able to adapt and innovate to remain competitive (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). Over the years, various authors have focused on the issue of coping with unpredictable, dynamic, and constantly changing environments (Sherehiy, Karwowski & Layer, 2007). The perception that stakeholders have of an organization as a whole when it comes to its ability to live up to their expectations is known as its performance.

This study aim is to examine the correlation between adaptive capability and operational performance of electricity distribution companies in South-South, Nigeria. Research on dynamic capabilities has shown that there is a lack of systematic research on the relationship between adaptive capability and operational performance, as well as a dearth of scholarly work on the relationship between adaptive capability and operational performance of electricity distribution companies.

Statement of the Problem

Consumers receive the final services from energy distribution businesses in the value chain of the power supply. The same exorbitant prices and subpar service are experienced by electricity distribution businesses, who link consumers to the electrical grid. Even before to privatization, the electrical distribution corporations had a bad image. Nigerian electricity distribution was privatized as a result of the necessity to improve the service quality and address the issue of the firms' reputation. Nevertheless, public opinion surveys show that the reputation of energy distribution businesses remains extremely low in spite of these attempts to improve operational performance (Omonfoman, 2016). Lack of confidence, poor service delivery, poor customer relations, excessive power rates, noncompliant handling, and inconsistent service delivery are some of the elements that might harm the standing of the organizations that distribute electricity.

Nigeria's electricity supply issue persists despite some efforts to address the issue of low organizational operational performance electricity distribution companies. The consequences of this issue include a decline in trust, customer dissatisfaction, a refusal to pay electricity bills, conflicts between customers and staff, financial losses, hostility from host communities, vandalism of infrastructure, connections that enable customers to access electricity supply, setup, maintenance, meter measurement, revenue collection, and many other issues (Obeta, 2008).

Despite significant improvements to Nigeria's electrical distribution network, many consumers continue to experience high losses, frequent outages, and high levels of customer discontent

due to poor operational performance. The improvement and use of adaptation capacities is one strategy to solve these issues, allowing power distribution businesses to adjust to environmental changes and stay viable. South-South Nigerian power distribution firms continue to struggle to attain optimal operational performance in spite of reforms and infrastructure expenditures. This research closes this gap by examining the precise correlations between these factors and offering solutions to enhance operational effectiveness.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aim is to examine the link between adaptation capability and operational performance of electricity distribution companies in South-South, Nigeria. The objectives are to:

i. Investigate the relationship between adaptive capability and service quality of electricity distribution companies in South-South, Nigeria.
ii. Examine the relationship between adaptive capability and customer satisfaction of electricity distribution companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between adaptation capacity and service quality of electricity distribution companies in South South Region, Nigeria.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between adaptation capacity and customer satisfaction of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Adaptive Capability

Adaptive capacity is the ability to adjust strategies, processes, and resources to respond to changing internal or external conditions (Teece, 2007). Adaptive capacity is to the ability of an employee to maintain an experimental attitude towards new situations as they occur and to act in terms of changing circumstances (McManus, Seville &Brunsdon, 2008). Adaptive capacity is a term used to describe an entity's capacity to recognize and capitalize on emerging-market possibilities (Wang & Ahmed, 2007). Any person, group, or social ecological system's latent adaptive capacity, which is awakened in response to a crisis or opportunity, is a latent attribute (Engle, 2011). According to Gupta et al. (2010), adaptive capacity is the quality of institutions that enable social actors to react to both immediate and long-term effects through planned actions or by facilitating and encouraging innovative social reactions both before and after. According to McManus, Seville, Vargo, and Brunsdon (2008), adaptive capacity is the ability of an employee to respond in response to changing circumstances and to keep an exploratory attitude toward new situations as they arise.

According to Davenport et al. (2006), adaptability is the capacity to promote an innovative and experimental culture and to adjust to shifting social and cultural contexts (Hofstede, 1980). One aspect of the process is "the ability to manage change and transition." Kotter (1995).

According to Dalziell and McManus (2004), adaptive capacity is the system's capability to react to changes in its external environment and bounce back from internal structural damage that compromises the system's ability to accomplish its goals. The significance of adaptability and the fact that the goal is to gain an edge over less adaptable rivals. This implies that competitiveness and adaptive capacity are related. A further definition of adaptive capacity was the organization's culture's ability to make prompt, appropriate judgments in both routine business operations and emergency situations (McManus, 2007).

According to Horne and Orr (1998), adaptability is "the ability to manage organizational resilience." (Porter, 1980) and "the ability to adapt to changing industry structures." (Helfat &

Peteraf, 2003). Adaptive capacity takes into account various aspects of an organization, including the leadership and decision-making structures, the flow of information and knowledge, and the degree of creativity and flexibility that the organization promotes or tolerates. Starr (2003) discusses the importance of adaptation and notes that the aim is to create advantages over less adaptive competitors.

Because they are aware of the connections between the organization's resilience and its long-term success, organizational staff members who are engaged and involved in its development are responsible, accountable, and focused on its resilience (Dalziell & Mc-Manus, 2004). It is the system's capacity to react to changes in its external environment and bounce back from internal structural damage that compromises the system's ability to accomplish its goal. Grid modernization and upgrade (IEA, 2020), smart metering and prepaid metering (NERC, 2020), integration of renewable energy (REAN, 2020), energy efficiency and demand side management (EE/DSM) (NERC, 2020), and capacity building and training are the adaptation capacities of Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company and Benin Electricity Distribution Company

(TCN, 2020). The growth of metering infrastructure, penetration of renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation, customer involvement and education, and distribution network extension and improvement are the two firms' primary distribution metrics. The Smart Metering Project (PHED, 2020), Renewable Energy Integration Project (REAN, 2020), Energy Efficiency and Conservation Program (NERC, 2020), Staff Training and Development Program (PHED, 2020), and Customer Engagement and Education Initiative (PHED, 2020) are the initiatives created by the Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHED) to adapt to environmental and other changes.

Nigerian electricity distribution companies can improve their ability to respond to changes by addressing issues including infrastructure deterioration and insufficient investment (NERC, 2020), high energy losses and theft (TCN, 2020), limited access to finance (CBN, 2020), security issues (NSCDC, 2020) and regulatory obstacles (NERC, 2020). Nigerian electrical distribution companies' organizational, technological, human resource, financial, environmental, regulatory, and social components make up its adaptive capabilities.

Operational Performance

Managers and industry observers have continued to pay attention to operational performance. According to scholarly literature, operational performance—which is based on cost, waste, and order time reduction, production efficiency, service delivery, cycle time, environmental responsibility, and regulatory compliance—is the cornerstone of quality practices and an organization's overall performance (Salem, 2003; Sharma & Modgil, 2020). Additionally, one of the main factors promoting competitive advantage is operational performance (Narasimhan & Das, 2001; Schroeder, Shah & Xiaosong-Peng, 2011). Additionally, operational performance is significant to businesses because it indicates improvements in waiting time quality (Ko, Mai, Shan & Zhang, 2019) and service delivery flexibility (Kaynak, 2008), which boosts sales and profitability for businesses (Zhang & Xia, 2013). The idea that what cannot be assessed cannot be changed is widely held in the literature on performance measurement (Tzanakakis, 2013; Lingard, Wakefield & Blismas, 2013).

As a result, organizations that want to enhance their operational performance must first measure it precisely. In order to turn an organization's vision or goal into reality, metrics and performance monitoring are crucial. Researchers have been forced to develop a number of indicators due to the significance of operational success to the general well-being and efficacy of organizations.

Even though these metrics are widely used, operations managers seldom comprehend them as most of them are "often poorly articulated" and lack a consistent quantity or variety of measures (Melnyk et al, 2004). It's interesting to note that while many operational performance metrics have been used specifically for supply chains and logistics (e.g. Lyu, Chen & Huo, 2019), information technology (Cámara, Fuentes & Marín, 2015), the pharmaceutical industry (e.g. Sharma & Modgil, 2020), and the manufacturing sector (Onofrei, Prester, Fynes, Humphreys & Wiengarten, 2019), none seem to measure how efficiency in electricity distribution companies, in particular, improves quality, lowers costs, and ensures on-time service delivery while being adaptable and creative in a culture that supports environmental sustainability and safety.

According to Govindarajan and Gupta (2020) and Bharadwaj (2022), performance is dynamic and prone to change over time as well as adapt to changing environmental conditions. For example, the COVID-19 epidemic had a major effect on these businesses' performance in Nigeria, resulting in lower revenue and more expenses. In order to pinpoint their areas of strength and room for development, electricity distribution companies in the South South region of Nigeria must conduct quarterly performance reviews. They may then utilize this knowledge to modify their operations and strategy as needed. For instance, businesses may need to create new client retention strategies if they find a high incidence of customer attrition.

In a similar vein, in order to increase operational efficiency, businesses must build creative ability to invest in new technologies if significant energy losses are found. For businesses to stay competitive and accomplish their long-term objectives, ongoing evaluation and development are crucial. through consistent performance monitoring (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). In addition to helping to increase internal business processes and other activities meant to further and improve innovativeness and creativity in the organization, a company's operational performance has a significant impact on shareholder wealth, business growth, profitability, and customer satisfaction (Meriones & Cerio, 2002). Therefore, organizations and their stakeholders may eventually see increased future financial advantages as a result of satisfying operational performance.

Organizational operational performance, according to Walker (2010), is a comparatively constant, issue-specific aggregate perceptual depiction of a business's past activities and future prospects in relation to a standard. Organizational operational performance was described by Barnett, Jermier, and Lafferty (2006) as "observers'" collective assessments of a company based on evaluations of the financial, social, and environmental repercussions attributed to the company over time. "Subjective and collective recognition, perception, attitude, and evaluation of an organization over time among all involved stakeholder groups that is based on specific organizational quality aspects, past behavior, communication, symbolism, and, possibility and potential to satisfy future expectations compared to competitor" is the definition of organizational operational performance (Petkeviciene, 2014).

"A stakeholder's overall evaluation of a company over time" is how performance is defined. The aforementioned definitions make it clear that people's perceptions and assessments of an organization's performance are its foundation (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001). Stakeholders' firsthand experiences with the company, their connections with staff members or firm representatives, organizational symbols and information shared via communication channels, and comparisons with competitors form the basis of these opinions and assessments (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012; Gotsi & Wilson, 2001).

It is possible to examine how identity and image affect operational effectiveness (Tkalac & Vercic, 2007). The company's culture serves as the foundation for identity construction. It

includes history, ideals, behavior, and present practices (Melewar, Karaosmanoglu & Paterson, 2005).

Image is created in the minds of external stakeholders and describes their perception of the organization's identity at a certain moment in time, influenced by direct or indirect encounters (Balmer & Greyser, 2002; Melewar, Karaosmanoglu & Paterson, 2005). Since performance is operational and has a history component, it is comparatively more stable and long-lasting than an image. Organizational performance has been conceptualized as the accumulation of images over time, and the two ideas are connected (Gotsi & Wilson, 2001; Mahon, 2002). It should be mentioned that techniques used by the same company or its rivals, as well as changes occurring in the organization's social environment, may have an impact on its success (Garcia de los Salmones, Herrero & Rodriguez del Bosque, 2005).

The way a company is seen by all of its stakeholders—including its staff, customers, shareholders, and the general public—is referred to as its operational performance. It is impacted by the business's operations, products, and stakeholder communications. It is also influenced by external factors, such as market movements and media coverage. In addition to financial success and advantages like increased stock prices and revenue, a company's positive performance may result in increased trust, customer loyalty, and contented staff, making it one of its most important assets. However, poor performance can result in serious issues including diminished trust, lost business, and financial losses.

Measures of Operational Performance

Service Quality

The customer's total evaluation of a service is known as service quality (Eshghi, 2008). According to Ghylin (2006), businesses may provide services with a higher quality level by defining service quality, which is likely to boost customer satisfaction. Recognizing the intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability of services is essential to comprehending their quality (Ladhari, 2009). All economies depend heavily on services, which are becoming more and more integrated into daily life as economies grow. Providing excellent customer service is essential to building a devoted retail clientele and, eventually, prosperous retail enterprises. Free parking, gift wrapping, the atmosphere, and delivery are all examples of customer service, which is defined as an activity that enhances or supports in-store sales.

Salespeople also provide customer service by interacting and building connections with clients. The kind and degree of service quality depends on a few observable elements or dimensions that may be maximized by prudent managerial decision-making. The capacity of a service provider to effectively please customers in order to improve company success is known as service quality. "Quality" is also a crucial component of corporate success in the service industry. This is due to the fact that its favorable correlation with earnings, market share, and customer happiness has been realized. How well the degree of service rendered matches the expectations of the client is a measure of service quality (Tjiptono & Chandra, 2012).

The ability of the level of service to satisfy customer expectations and the highest degree of service to ensure customer satisfaction is a measure of quality of service (Wijaya, 2011). The general perception that customers have of a service is known as service quality (Huang, 2009). According to Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gramler (2009), service quality is a customer's opinion of the service element of a product and a key factor in determining customer satisfaction. When comparing the expected and actual services, service quality is evaluated (Saleem & Raja, 2014). Businesses view service quality as a crucial instrument for creating and preserving a long-term relationship with their clients (Yousuf, 2017).

According to Gefan (2002), service quality is a subjective comparison between the customer's perceived and actual service quality. According to Yarimoglu (2014), service quality

is seen as an organizational asset and a significant determinant of the company's marketing and financial performance. According to Wu et al. (2011), service quality is the capacity to adjust to the demands of the client while delivering the services. Senior management teams of organizations can utilize a set of indicators to track the effectiveness of their service quality efforts, which are predicated on the need to enhance the overall performance of the firm. An organization's performance in delivering services may be evaluated using effective governance and accountability procedures. Customer satisfaction is still a critical factor in evaluating how well a business does when providing its services to the public (Verhoef & Lemonk, 2015).

Service Flexibility

Service flexibility is a critical component of service delivery and measure of operational performance in electricity distribution companies (EDCs). It refers to the ability of EDCs to adapt their services to meet changing customer needs and preferences (Adeyeye et al., 2020). Service flexibility involves responsiveness to dynamic customer requirements and the capability to customize offerings efficiently (Zhang, 2002). Flexibility in service systems is defined as the capability to handle variety in operations without a loss in efficiency or effectiveness (Slack, 2017).

Service flexibility is the capacity of a service provider to respond quickly and cost-effectively to customer-specific requirements (Chang, 2003). Flexibility in services is the readiness to adapt and reconfigure operational processes to meet changing demand patterns (Golden & Powell, 2000). The concept of service flexibility refers to the ability of a service system to handle a range of functions or outputs with minimal disruption (Beamon, 1999). Service flexibility is a measure of how quickly and efficiently an organization can respond to variability in customer demand (Oke, 2005). Flexibility in services is the ability to customize offerings or modify delivery mechanisms based on situational needs (Fitzsimmons & Fitzsimmons, 2011).

Service flexibility in the electricity sector encompasses multiple dimensions, each addressing a specific aspect of adaptability. These dimensions include Operational flexibility which involves the ability to modify or adjust grid operations in real time to respond to changing conditions. This includes managing supply and demand imbalances, integrating distributed energy resources (DERs), and addressing outages. Lund (2015) emphasize the importance of operational flexibility in ensuring grid stability and reliability, particularly in systems with high levels of renewable energy penetration.

Customer-Centric Flexibility focuses on the ability of electricity distribution companies to tailor services to meet the diverse needs of consumers. Initiatives such as demand response programs, dynamic pricing, and energy efficiency services fall under this category. Customer-centric flexibility enhances consumer satisfaction and fosters sustainable energy consumption behaviors. Technological flexibility refers to the capacity of electricity systems to integrate and leverage emerging technologies, such as smart grids, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, and artificial intelligence. Technological advancements enable grid operators to enhance flexibility by improving monitoring, forecasting, and control capabilities (Siano, 2014).

Regulatory flexibility involves adapting to evolving policy frameworks and market conditions. This includes compliance with renewable energy mandates, decarbonization goals, and market liberalization policies. Regulatory flexibility is essential for navigating complex and dynamic electricity markets while ensuring compliance with legal requirements (Elliston, 2012). Economic flexibility refers to the ability to adapt pricing models, investment strategies, and cost structures to remain competitive in changing market environments. Economic flexibility in

optimizing resource allocation and ensuring financial sustainability for electricity distribution companies (Gielen, 2019).

Service flexibility improves resource allocation and reduces operational costs by enabling EDCs to respond proactively to demand fluctuations and system inefficiencies. Notes that predictive analytics and automation technologies empower EDCs to optimize grid operations and minimize energy wastage (Siano, 2014). Economic flexibility allows EDCs to adopt cost-effective strategies for grid management and energy distribution (Gielen, 2019).

Relationship between Adaptive Capacity and Operational Performance

Studies have consistently shown a positive relationship between adaptive capacity and operational performance in Nigerian electricity distribution companies. Oyedele (2018) in his research stated that adaptive capacity predicts operational performance in Nigerian electricity distribution companies while Adewole (2020) confirms that adaptive capacity mediates the relationship between regulatory framework and operational performance. Adebayo (2022) reiterate that adaptive capacity drives innovation and operational performance in Nigerian electricity distribution companies. Research confirmed that adaptation capacity has a positive impact on operational performance in electricity distribution companies in Nigeria through improved reliability which enables electricity distribution companies to respond to changing environmental conditions, reducing power outages and improving reliability also through enhanced efficiency by facilitating the adoption of new technologies and processes, optimizing energy distribution and reducing losses and increased customer satisfaction: PHED's adaptive capacity score: 7.2/10 (PHED Annual Report, 2020) Adaptive capacity enables electricity distribution companies to respond to changing customer needs, improving customer satisfaction. BEDC's adaptive capacity score: 6.5/10 (NERC 2023)

Theoretical Framework

Resource Based View (RBV)

In the late 1950s, Penrose created an analysis of the firm, as economists often refer to the company, based on its capacity to develop strategies. This analysis can be viewed as a challenge to the neoclassical scholars' assumptions that the firm only adjusted to the market. According to the author, the management of a company's internal productive resources determines its growth. The idea that the firm is discretionary—that is, that it determines its strategy—has evolved. The internal components and resources of the company would then determine its behavior and strategy. Furthermore, in contrast to neoclassical economic theory, which would lead the enterprise, the firm would alter the market structure (Penrose, 2006). When it came to explaining why businesses in the same industry perform differently, Penrose's study of internal resources developed as a solution to the shortcomings of traditional strategy models, which were derived from the Structure-Conduct-Performance paradigm (Kumlu, 2014; Villalonga, 2004). The discovery of internal resources as sources of competitive advantage was further aided by Wernerfelt (1984) and Rumelt (1984). Among others, Wernerfelt (1984), Rumelt (1984), and Barney (1991) advocated the idea that strategic resources—which are uncommon, important, and challenging to replicate and replace—define organizational performance (Barney, 1991; Zigan, 2013). The notion of core competencies, which are composed of resources that are deliberately assigned by management and have varied performances, was introduced by Prahalad and Hamel (1990), who also worked together in the study of strategic resources.

In the expansion stage, new ideas develop - dynamic capacities, knowledge - and branches of RBV evolve, such as the natural resource-based view (NRBV) and the knowledge-based view (KBV). According to NRBV, three primary strategic competencies—pollution

avoidance, product stewardship, and sustainable development—are sources of competitive advantage. It makes the claim that RBV ignores the interaction between the natural environment and the organization (Hart, 1995; Hart and Dowell, 2011). In turn, KBV goes beyond conventional notions of strategy, including competitive advantage and strategic choice, and investigates core ideas of firm theory, including organizational structure, internal management, and innovation theory, among other things (Grant, 1996). RBV foundations receive additional contributions from the mature stage. As of right now, several writers have already regarded it as a resource-based theory rather than merely an RBV. At this point, researchers concentrated on intangible resources, which are the factors that influence corporate success, with organizational performance being one of its primary components (Gavetti, 2005; Makadok and Barney, 2001; Makadok, 2001; Teece, 2007). Intangible resources are typically hard to quantify because of their immaterial and non-physical nature. Similarly, the variety of ideas around organizational performance demonstrates the absence of a definition that enables progress toward the study's main objective, which is the measurement of the performance construct.

Empirical Review

Okuwa & Onuoha (2019) examined the relationship between dynamic capabilities and organizational agility in manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey of the quasi- experimental design. The population of study consists of seven (7) manufacturing firms that were systematically selected from the 31 firms registered under the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria Rivers State. Questionnaire were given to managers of these firms and hypotheses analyzed. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between dimensions of dynamic capabilities and measures of organizational agility. This study therefore recommended that organizational managers should endeavour to frequently scan the environment, and devise means of embracing opportunities to gain competitive advantage.

Adeyemi (2020) examined the Role of Dynamic Capabilities in Nigerian SMEs. The specific objective was examined how dynamic capabilities influence the operational performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. A mixed-method approach was used, including interviews with 50 SMEs owners and surveys with 200 employees. The study found that SMEs that developed sensing capabilities (e.g., market trend identification) and seizing capabilities (e.g., resource allocation to new opportunities) experienced enhanced operational performance. The researcher concluded that Nigerian SMEs that build dynamic capabilities, especially in sensing and seizing opportunities, significantly improve their operational processes.

Nwachukwu and Onwuka (2019) explored the link between dynamic capabilities and overall firm performance, focusing on operational efficiency in Nigerian manufacturing companies. A survey methodology was used, with data collected from 30 manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Findings indicated that firms with high dynamic capabilities in resource integration and reconfiguration significantly outperformed competitors in terms of operational efficiency and profitability. The study suggested that Nigerian manufacturing firms must focus on enhancing their dynamic capabilities to improve operational processes and adapt to market changes.

Ogunyemi and Salami (2022) **i**nvestigated the effect of dynamic capabilities on the operational success of SMEs in Nigeria. The research adopted a quantitative survey method, involving 100 SMEs across Nigeria. The study revealed that SMEs with strong dynamic capabilities in recognizing market opportunities and adapting their strategies performed better

operationally. The researchers concluded that enhancing dynamic capabilities in Nigerian SMEs is essential for achieving long-term operational success and competitiveness.

Adegboyega (2020) examined the relationship between dynamic capabilities and operational performance in Nigerian manufacturing firms. The aim of the study was to explore the impact of dynamic capabilities on the operational performance of firms in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to investigate how Nigerian firms leverage their dynamic capabilities such as sensing opportunities, seizing opportunities, and reconfiguring resources to improve operational performance in a rapidly changing environment. The research utilized a quantitative research design. A survey questionnaire was distributed to 300 managers of Nigerian firms across various sectors, including banking, telecommunications, and manufacturing. The data collection focused on assessing how different aspects of dynamic capabilities influenced firms' operational performance metrics such as efficiency, innovation, and responsiveness to market changes. Data was analysed using regression analysis to examine the relationship between dynamic capabilities and operational performance. The study found a strong positive correlation between dynamic capabilities and operational performance.

Abou-AL-Ross and Shatali (2022) to explored the impact of dynamic capabilities on organizational development and adaptation in INGOs working in Gaza strip in Israel. The descriptive analytical approach was adopted, and a questionnaire was designed to collect data from the employees (excluding service employees) who work at INGOs in Gaza Strip depending on a stratified random sample. The conclusions indicated that dynamic capabilities and organizational development adaptation were statistically positive and reasonably high. Though there was weakness in the organization practices encouraging-rule (autonomy). Also, involving change experts in the organizational development practices. In addition, it was concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between dynamic capabilities and organizational development adaptation. Moreover, dynamic capabilities has strong impact on the organizational development adaptation. Accordingly, it is recommended that the INGOs need to exert and develop more mechanisms related to enhance different mechanisms related to organizational development planning

Oke, Ogunnaike and Ajagbe (2012) investigated on Assessing the Link between Service Innovation and Performance in Nigerian Bank. The objective of the study was to examine the relationship between service innovation, absorptive capacity, and performance in the Nigerian banking sector. The study conducted a survey of 25 banks, collecting data through questionnaires and analyzing it using correlation and regression techniques. The study finds out that there is a significant positive relationship between absorptive capacity and bank performance, moderated by the bank's service innovations. It was recommended that Banks should focus on building their absorptive capacity to maximize the benefits of service quality and innovations.

Tamunomiebi and Adim (2019) investigated on Adaptive Capacity and Corporate Reputation in the Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company, Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The objective was to investigate how adaptive capacity influences corporate reputation in PHEDC. The researchers employed a cross-sectional survey design, collecting primary data through self-administered questionnaires. The study targeted 150 employees of PHEDC, with a sample size of 109 respondents determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Reliability of the instrument was confirmed via Cronbach Alpha coefficients, all exceeding 0.70. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, with hypotheses tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 significance level. The study found a positive and significant relationship between adaptive capacity and corporate reputation in PHEDC. Enhanced adaptive capacity contributed to a favorable corporate image and identity.

The authors recommended that PHEDC's management should prioritize adaptive strategies to bolster various aspects of corporate reputation. This study underscores the importance of adaptive capacity in enhancing the reputation of electricity distribution companies in Nigeria.

Adeyeye and Akinsanya (2022) investigated the Assessment of Power Sector and Industrial Development in Nigeria using Ikeja Electricity Distribution Company**.** The objective of the study was to investigate the impact of power sector operations on industrial development in Nigeria, using IKEDC as a case study. The study employed a survey research design, utilizing a chi-square statistical method. The population comprised employees of IKEDC, with purposive sampling used to select participants. The study found a significant relationship between power generation, transmission, distribution, and industrial development in Nigeria. It highlighted that efficient management of power resources is crucial for industrial growth. The authors recommended that power sector operators invest adequately in infrastructure to meet consumers' electricity needs, provide quality services at affordable tariffs, and establish robust governance structures to enhance consumer confidence.

Saeed & Kersten (2023) examined the dynamic capabilities and firm performance using moderated mediation model with product innovation as mediator and technology uncertainty as moderator. The study aims investigate the relationship between dynamic capabilities and firm performance, examine the mediating role of product innovation in this relationship and assess how technology uncertainty moderates the relationship between product innovation and firm performance. The study employs a quantitative research design. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to managers and executives across various industries. The final sample comprised 200 firms operating in technology-intensive sectors. The researchers utilized structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses and assess the relationships among variables. A positive relationship was found, indicating that firms with robust dynamic capabilities tend to exhibit superior performance. Product innovation was identified as a partial mediator between dynamic capabilities and firm performance, suggesting that dynamic capabilities enhance firm performance both directly and indirectly through product innovation and technology uncertainty was found to moderate the relationship between product innovation and firm performance. Specifically, in environments with high technology uncertainty, the positive impact of product innovation on firm performance is strengthened. The researcher recommended that firms should invest in developing dynamic capabilities to enhance adaptability and responsiveness in uncertain technological environments, emphasizing product innovation can serve as a strategic pathway to leverage dynamic capabilities for improved performance and in contexts of high technology uncertainty, firms should intensify innovation efforts to capitalize on emerging opportunities and mitigate potential risks.

Methodology

This research adopted the cross-sectional survey. The population of this study covered the electricity distribution companies in South-South, Nigeria. The targeted population of this study were the electricity distribution companies in Nigeria. The accessible population covers the two electricity distribution companies in South-South which include Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company and Benin Distribution Company which covers six states in Nigeria with a population of 442. The Yamane (1968) formula was used in determining the sample size from the population of 422 to arrive at a sample of 205. The simple random sampling technique was employed.

The primary sources of data was used. The primary data was obtained using a well-structured questionnaire which took the form of multiple-choice format. The independent

variable of this study which is dynamic capabilities was measured using absorptive capacity. 5 items were used in measuring absorptive Capacity (e.g. Our company effectively identifies valuable external knowledge for improving our operations). On the other hand, organizational performance was measured using service quality and service flexibility. Service quality was measured using a set of 5 items (e.g. our services meet the expectations of our customers), 5 items were used for measuring Service Flexibility (e.g. We are quick to respond to power outages or other service disruptions) and (e.g. Our company has flexible system in responding to complaints and implementing suggestions for improvements to its electricity access). The instrument's validity was confirmed through convergent and discriminant validity analyses. The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability was used to ensure the reliability of the measurement instrument, with a threshold of 0.7 set for Cronbach's Alpha. From our findings, we realized that the Cronbach's Alpha reliability values for each of the constructs were greater than 0.7. Therefore, the constructs are reliable. The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with the aid of Smart PLS 3.3.3, was utilized in examining the relationship between dynamic capabilities and operational performance of electricity distribution company in South South Region of Nigeria.

Results and Discussion

The bootstrap method was used to test the bivariate hypotheses using the SEM. The path coefficients (*β* values) corresponding to weak, moderate, and strong correlations are.10 to 0.29, .30 to.49, and.50 to 1.0, respectively. Additionally, according to Hair et al. (2014), *t* values larger than 1.96 for a two-tailed test are significant, while t values less than 1.96 are not. Additionally, *p*-values below the 0.05 level of significance were accepted for hypotheses, whereas p-values above the 0.05 level were rejected. The predictive accuracy, also known as R^2, or coefficients of determination, were determined. R^2 values for endogenous variables are evaluated as follows: ≥ 0.75 (substantial), 0.26 to 0.50 (moderate), and 0.00 to 0.25 (weak).

Adaptive Capacity and Measures of Operational Performance

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between Adaptive Capacity and Quality Service of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region of Nigeria.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between Adaptive Capacity and Service Flexibility of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region of Nigeria.

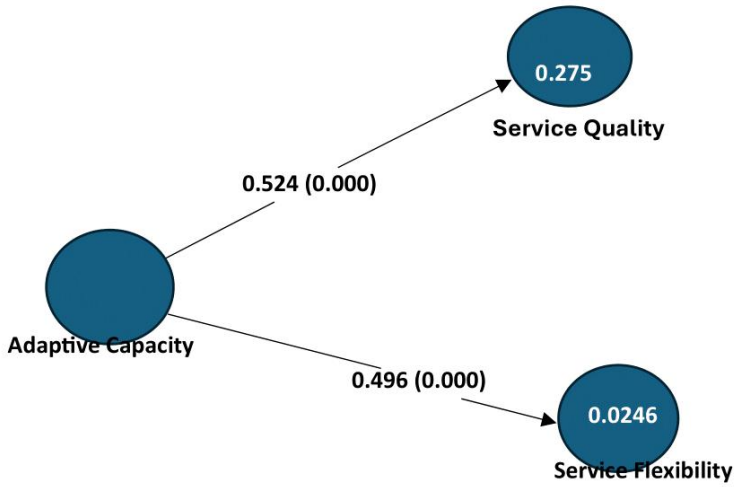

Figure 1: Adaptive Capacity and Operational Performance

Source: SmartPLS 4.0 output on Research Data, 2023

Figure 1 depicts the Path relationship between adaptive capacity and service quality. This indicates a β of 0.524. This implies that there is a strong positive correlation between adaptive capacity and service quality. Increased adaptive capacity will result in increased service quality,

while reduced adaptive capacity will result in decreased service quality. This addresses the third research question, which seeks to understand the relationship between adaptive capacity and service quality. The analysis yielded a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This suggests that there is a strong link between adaptive capacity and service quality. Given this, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between adaptive capacity and service quality of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region of Nigeria.

Figure 1 depicts the outcome of the path relationship between adaptive capacity and service flexibility. This indicates a β of 0.496. This implies that there is a strong positive correlation between dynamic capability and harmonious relationship. Increased adaptive capacity will result in a corresponding increase in service flexibility, while decreased adaptive capacity will result in a decrease in service flexibility. This addresses the forth research question, which sought to determine the relationship between adaptive capacity and service flexibility. The analysis yielded a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This suggests that there is a link between adaptive capacity and service flexibility. The study thus rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between adaptive capacity and service flexibility of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region of Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Adaptive Capacity and Service Quality

The analysis found a significant relationship between adaptive capacity and service quality, with a p-value of 0.000 (p=0.000 < 0.05). The null hypothesis was thus rejected, while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. The path coefficient (*β*) was 0.524. This suggests that there is a positive relationship between adaptive capacity and service quality in Nigeria's South-South Region of electricity distribution companies. The positive relationship implies that service quality improves when the company has adaptive capacity. Also, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.275. This means that a unit change in adaptive capacity in electricity distribution companies can result in a total variation of up to 27.5% improvement in service quality. Thus, adaptive capacity enhances service quality. This finding was consistent with that of Tamunomiebi, & Adim (2019) who claimed that there positive and significant relationship between adaptive capacity and corporate reputation in Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company.

Adaptive Capacity and Service Flexibility

The bivariate analysis found a significant relationship between Adaptive Capacity and Service Flexibility, with a *P*-value of 0.000 (less than the 0.05 level of significance). Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected because Adaptive capacity is significantly related to Service flexibility. The study found a positive correlation Adaptive capacity and Service Flexibility (*β* =0.496). This indicates that as the adaptive capacity of electricity distribution companies improves, so is the flexibility of their services. The path coefficient of 0.496 indicates that adaptive capacity has a significant influence on the service flexibility. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.246 indicates that a unit change in adaptive capacity can account for up to 24.6% of the variation service flexibility. Thus, adaptive capacity in electricity distribution companies is critical in the flexibility of their service. This finding is consistent with that of Adeyeye, Owolabi & Adewumi (2020) who noted that there is positive and significant relationship between service flexibility and customer satisfaction in Nigerian Electricity Distribution Companies. They also identified that the flexibility of Nigerian EDC's services depends on more adaptive capacity measures adopted by the companies.

Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of adaptive capability and operational performance of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region of Nigeria. The specific objectives were to examine the relationships between adaptive capacity with various aspects of operational performance measures which are service quality and service flexibility. Adaptive capacity was found to have a significant positive impact on service quality and flexible relationships within the organizations.. These findings suggest that companies that develop and leverage their adaptive capacity can achieve better service quality and become more flexible in their service delivery, ultimately enhancing their operational performance. The study concludes that adaptive capacity significantly enhances the operational performance of electricity distribution companies in South-South Region of Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. Develop predictive maintenance capabilities using data analytics and machine learning algorithms to reduce equipment failures and improve reliability.
2. Implement Advance Metering Infrastructure (AMI) to enable real-time monitoring and management of energy distribution, reducing energy losses and improving customer satisfaction.

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