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Does Organization Structure Follow Strategy: A Case Study of Uzima University, Kenya

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Abstract:

This was a desk review of literature to try to establish what other authors have said regarding the relationship between structure and strategy. The review included an in depth study of textbooks of leadership and management, peer reviewed journals and other contemporary literature on the subject. Several search machines including Google, Google scholar and yahoo were used to access some of the literature. From the review it has been shown that organizational structure and the contextual designs are very important if organizations have to meet their goals in an ever changing competitive environment. Structural and contextual dimensions help in designing an organization to achieve high performance and effectiveness. It is the duty of the top management to ensure that organizations are correctly designed in a manner that organizes and focuses peoples work and shapes their response to customers and other stakeholders. It has also been shown that successful companies like Hewlett-Packard succeeded because their strategy of technological innovation was supported by a highly flexible organization structure which was organized around an integrated, self-contained, product divisions that were given a great deal of independence. This review has not conclusively established that structure follows strategy because at times structure may appear much later after the formulation of the strategies but what is even more important for organizations is that for organizations to achieve their goals they must carefully adopt a structure in line with their size, technologies used, strategy and the nature of their ever changing environment.

Keywords: Organization Structure Strategy

1. Introduction

Many Organizations the world over are faced with very many challenges like globalization, intense competition, ethics and social responsibility, speed and responsiveness, digital technology and diversity (Daft, 2010) and therefore in order to survive they need to learn the art of organization theory. To begin with an organization is not a visible and tangible entity and is normally vague and abstract and may be scattered all over. Therefore it cannot easily be defined although Daft views them as social entities that are goal oriented and are designed as deliberately structured and coordinated activity systems linked to the environment. This in essence means that organizations are made of people and their relationships with one another and through these interactions they perform essential functions that help them attain goals. With this in mind managers have recognized the importance of human resources and now empower their employees with greater opportunities to learn and contribute as they work towards common goals. In order to do this it is a pre-requisite for managers to deliberately structure and coordinate organizational resources to achieve the organizations purpose. Managers in both profit and no-profit organizations face many challenges like elements from the external environment including customers, suppliers, competitors and other elements and this may sometimes require tactical responses like cooperating with competitors, sharing information and technology to their mutual advantage (Daft, 2010).

But why are organizations important? According to Daft (2010), there are seven reasons why organizations are important. First, organizations bring together resources to accomplish specific goals; they produce goods and services efficiently; they facilitate innovation; they use modern manufacturing and information technology; adapt to and influence changing environment; creates values for owners, customers and employees and lastly accommodate on-going challenges of diversity, ethics and the motivation and coordination of employees. Since organizations adapt to and influence a rapidly changing environment, it is the duty of the managers to analyse which parts of the organization creates value and which parts do not and we should note that a company can only be profitable when the value it creates is greater the cost of resources. Finally organizations must cope and accommodate today's challenges of workforce diversity and growing concerns over ethics and social responsibility and also find effective ways for employee motivation in their endeavour to accomplish organizational goals (Daft, 2010).

2. Methods

This was a desk review of literature to try to establish the relationship between structure and strategy. It attempted to answer the question as to whether the structure of the organization would determine the strategies that it adopts to achieve its goals or whether it is vice versa. The review included an in depth study of textbooks of leadership and

management, peer reviewed journals and other contemporary literature on the subject. Several search engines including Google, Google scholar and yahoo were used to access some of these literature.

3. Background

3.1. Structural and Contextual Dimensions

Organizations are normally described in terms of their design characteristics which can be equated to the personality and physical traits that describe people (Daft, 2010). These so called organizations dimensions are of two types, structural dimensions that provide labels to describe the internal characteristics of an organization and the contextual dimensions that characterize the whole organization, including its size, technology, environment and goals. To understand and evaluate organizations (Hall, 1991; Pugh, 1973; Turner, Hickson, & Pugh, 1968), both their structural and contextual dimensions need to be critically examined.

The structural dimensions include formalization, specialization, Hierarchy of authority, centralization, professionalism and personnel ratios (Daft, 2010). Formalization pertains to the amount of written documentation in the organization including procedures, job descriptions, regulations and policy manuals and there are smaller companies which hardly have any documentation while larger ones may have huge volumes of documentation. Specialization on the other hand refers to the degree to which organizational tasks are subdivided into separate jobs and the more extensive it is the narrower the range of tasks the employees perform. The Hierarchy of authority describes the chain of command in an organization and the span of control of each manager and when the spans of control are narrow the hierarchy tends to be tall. The term specialization as used by Daft (2010) refers to the hierarchical level that has authority to make decisions and when this is kept at the top level, the organization is said to be centralized and when decisions are delegated to the lower levels we say that it is decentralized. The term professionalism is used to describe the level of formal education and training of employees and it is considered high when an employee takes many years to be trained in a particular type of job for example a medical officer who trains to in surgery then becomes a specialist as a surgeon. Professionalism is generally measured as the average number of years of education of employees. Lastly structural dimensions includes the personnel ratios which refers to the deployment of people to various functions and departments and it includes the administrative ratio, the clerical ratio, the professional staff ratio and the ratio of direct to indirect labour employees (Daft, 2010).

The contextual dimensions according to Daft (2010) includes the size, organizational technology, the environment, the organizations goals and strategy and an organizations culture. The size of organization uses several variables for measurement for example number of employees, total sales or total assets. Organizational technology refers to the tools, techniques and actions used to transform inputs into outputs and includes such things as flexible manufacturing, advanced information systems and the internet. The environment includes all those elements that are outside the boundary of the organization such as industry, government, customers, suppliers and the financial community. The organizations goals and strategy define the purpose and competitive techniques that set it apart from the other organizations Goals are usually written down as an enduring statement of company intent while the strategy is the plan of action that describes resource allocation and activities for dealing with the environment and for reaching the organizations goals. Goals and strategies therefore defines the scope of operations and the relationships with employees, customers and competitors. The final aspect of contextual dimension is the organization culture which describes the organizations key values, beliefs, understandings and norms shared by employees. These underlying values and norms may pertain to ethical behaviour, commitment to employees, efficiency or customer service and they provide the glue to hold the organization members together (Daft, 2010).

In conclusion, according to Daft (2010), the dimensions discussed above are interdependent and in addition to providing a basis for measuring and analysing characteristics that cannot be seen by a casual observer they also provide significant information about an organization. The structural and contextual dimensions can tell us a lot about organizations and the differences that exist among them.

3.2. Organizational Effectiveness and Performance

Structural and contextual dimensions help in designing an organization to achieve high performance and effectiveness (Daft, 2010). Managers need to adjust structural and contextual dimensions to most efficiently and effectively transform inputs into outputs and provide value. Daft also defines efficiency as the amount of resources used to achieve the organizations goals while effectiveness is a broader time meaning the degree to which the organization achieves its goals. To be effective organizations need clear, focussed goals and appropriate strategies for achieving them. The concept of effectiveness is not in itself easy to visualize for example for customers it may mean high quality products and services at reasonable prices, employees on the other hand are concerned with adequate pay, good working conditions and job satisfaction so in essence different stakeholders may define effectiveness differently depending on their interests. The satisfaction level of each group is then assessed as an indicator of the organizations performance and effectiveness (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Tusi, 1990; Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Connelly, Conlon & Deutsch, 1980). The authors further posit that stakeholder interests sometimes conflict, and organizations often find it difficult to simultaneously satisfy the interests of each group for example a business might have high customer satisfaction but may have difficulties with creditors or supplier relationships might be poor. For example consider an organization like St. Monica's hospital Kisumu. It has the infrastructure to operate as a full-fledged hospital but unfortunately patient numbers remain low due to poor customer care. Research has shown that the assessment of multiple stakeholders groups is an accurate reflection of

organization effectiveness, especially with respect to organizational adaptability (Multiple constituency model of effectiveness) (Daft, 2010).

3.3. Organization Theory and Design

According to Taylor's mechanistic view, organizations should emphasize on precise procedures in order to improve production and efficiency in organizations (Crossen, 2006). Using this approach managers should develop precise, standard procedures for doing each job, select workers with appropriate abilities, train workers in the standard procedures, carefully plan work and provide wage incentives to increase output (Crossen, 2006). This view gave rise to the administrative principles that instead of concentrating on the technical core, now looked at the design and functioning of the organization as a whole and contributed to the development of the bureaucratic organizations. The bureaucratic organizations emphasized designing and managing organizations as impersonal and rational basis through such elements as clearly defined authority and responsibility, formal record keeping and uniform application of standard rules. Both the two contexts of the classical perspectives were criticised for their failure to consider the social contexts and the human needs. The Hawthorne experiments filled this gap by concluding that positive treatment of employees improved their motivation and productivity and changed the older views of managing organizations. These experiments have drastically transformed organizations to be more flexible and more people centered the new designs have increased quality, decreased costs, enhanced innovation and have increased competitiveness in the ever changing external environment. These new designs have taken consideration of the advances in information and communication technology, globalization and the increasing interconnections of organizations, the rising education level of employees and their growing quality of life expectations and the growth of knowledge and information based work as primary organizational activities (Ford & Randolph, 1992).

The scientific management and administrative principles had attempted to design all organizations alike but these designs may not work in all environments therefore there is need to apply the contingency theory for organizations which simply means 'it depends'. It just means that one thing depends on many other things and therefore for organizations to be effective, there must be 'a goodness of fit' between the structure and the conditions in their external environment (Daft, 2010).

3.4. Organizational Configuration

Configuration refers to the composition of the organizations parts and how they relate to one another and according to Mintzberg, every organization has five parts (Mintzberg, 1979, 1981, 1989). These parts include the technical core, top management, middle management, technical support and administrative support. The technical core include people who do the basic work of the organization and it is the part that produces the product and service outputs and where the transformation of inputs to outputs takes place. The technical support functions helps the organization adapt to the environment and includes employees such as engineers, researchers and information technology professionals who scan the environment for problems, opportunities and technological developments. Administrative support is responsible for smooth operations and upkeep of the organization including its physical and human elements for example recruiting and hiring, establishing compensation and benefits and employee training and benefits. The management component is responsible for directing and coordinating the other parts of the organization. Top management provides direction, planning, strategy, goals and policies for the entire organization of its major division. The top management makes sure that the organization is designed correctly in a manner that organizes and focuses peoples work and shapes their response to customers and other stakeholders. Middle management is responsible for implementation and coordination at the departmental level and sometimes mediating between top management and the technical core. In real life organizations these five parts are interrelated and often serve more than one function. For example in St. Monica's hospital, the hospital director who is also a medical officer also participates in ward rounds in the hospital and is therefore also part of implementation. Mintzberg also proposed that the five parts could fit together in five basic types of organizations which are entrepreneurial structure, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, diversified form and adhocracy. In each of these five types of organizations the five parts would vary in size and importance (Daft, 2010).

In entrepreneurial structure is thought of as a new, small start-up company consisting of a top manager and workers in the technical core and the organization is managed from the top rather than by middle managers (Daft, 2010). The key part of the structure is top management with very few support staff and its primary purpose is to survive and become established. It is simple and flexible with very little formalization or specialization. The machine bureaucracy is considerably larger and typically mature with an orientation towards mass production of its products. It has full-fledged technical and administrative departments with a narrow middle management which reflects the tall hierarchy for control. It reflects extensive formalization and specialization and is suitable for a simple stable environment (Daft, 2010).

The distinguishing feature of a professional bureaucracy is the size and the power of the technical core which is made up of highly skilled professionals (Daft, 2010). The technical support staff is small or non-existent, because professionals make up the bulk of the organization. A large administrative support staff is needed to support the professionals and handle the organizations routine administrative activities. The primary goal of a professional bureaucracy is quality and effectiveness and the organizations typically provide services rather than tangible goods. The diversified forms of organizations are mature firms that are extremely large and have several divisions for example product and marketing divisions. Its characteristics includes small top-management, small technical support group for the top level and large administrative support staff to handle paper work to and from the divisions. The divisions may sometimes be independent of one another with their own structures. The last type of organization is adhocracy which

usually develops in a complex, rapidly changing environment. Its design goal is based on frequent innovativeness to continually meet the changing needs with many overlapping teams rather than a vertical hierarchy (Daft, 2010).

In a traditional organization structure activities were grouped together by common work from bottom to top, there was very little collaboration across departments and the whole organization was controlled through the vertical hierarchy with the decision making authority residing with upper level managers (Daft, 2010). The advantages with the traditional structure was that it promoted efficient production and in-depth skill development and the hierarchy of authority provided a sensible mechanism for supervision and control especially in larger organizations. But since top managers are not able to respond rapidly enough to problems or opportunities this structure has been disbanded in learning organizations. In this type of organizational design structure is created around horizontal workflow and processes rather than departmental functions. The vertical hierarchy is flattened with only a few senior executives in traditional support functions such as finance or human resources and it makes use of self-directed teams as a fundamental work unit. In learning organizations employees play a role in the team and these roles are continually re-defined or adjusted and this allows them the use of their own discretion and therefore gives them ability to achieve an outcome or meet a goal. In learning organizations information is widely shared so that information is possessed by all the employees just like in an entrepreneurship actions can be taken immediately as soon as information comes through the open lines of communication. Compared to traditional organizations where strategy is controlled by top management, in learning organizations strategy is formulated by the accumulated actions of an informed and empowered workforce. In addition in learning organizations strategy emerges from partnerships with suppliers, customers and other firms (Daft, 2010).

According to Daft (2010) organizations that may have seemed highly successful in stable environments may suddenly become very vulnerable in a rapidly changing environment. For example looking at our initial example of St. Monica's hospital in Kisumu, the hospital was allowed to use the governments free maternity package and their maternity wing became one of the busiest in the region but when this facility was suddenly withdrawn the numbers rapidly dwindled and is now a shell of its previous self. In learning organizations, the culture encourages openness, equality, continuous improvement and change and each person therefore becomes a valued contributor and the organization becomes a place for creating a web of relationships that allows people to develop and apply their full potential. When a company emphasizes on treating everyone with care and respect it creates a climate in which people feel safe to experiment, take risks and make mistakes, all of which encouraging learning (Daft, 2010).

3.5. Organization Theory

Daft (2010) says that to facilitate innovation within an organization, managers need to understand how structure and context (organization theory) are related to the interactions among diverse employees (organizational behaviour) to foster innovation, because both macro and micro variables account for innovation (House, Rousseau, & Thomas-Hunt, 1995). Organization theory is directly relevant to top and middle level concerns and partly relevant to lower management and is concerned with the big picture of the organization and its major departments.

According to Daft the choice of goals and strategies influences how an organization should be designed. As indicated earlier the top executives normally decide the end purpose an organization will strive for and also determine the direction it will take to accomplish it. It is their primary responsibility to determine an organizations goals, strategy and design, thereby adapting the organization to a changing environment (Adamy, 2008). The direction setting process begins with an assessment of the opportunities and threats in the external environment, including the amount of change, uncertainties and resource availability and together with these they also assess internal strengths and weaknesses to determine the companies' distinctive competence compared with the other firms in the industry. It is this competitive analysis of the internal and external environments which is one of the central concepts of strategic management. This analysis is then followed with the definition and articulation of the organizations strategic intent which includes defining the overall mission and official goals based on the correct fit between external opportunities and internal strengths. From here leaders can then formulate specific operational goals and strategies that determine how the organization is to accompany its overall mission (Daft, 2010).

Daft posits that the organizations design reflects the way goals and strategies are implemented so that the organizations attention and resources are consistently focussed towards achieving the mission and goals. He argues that organization design is the administration and execution of the strategic plan and that organization direction is implemented through decisions about the structural form, including whether the organization will be designed for a learning or an efficiency orientation. This includes making choices about information and control systems, the type of production technology, human resource policies, culture and inter-organizational linkages. He further postulates that strategies should be made within the current structure of the organization, so that current design constraints does not put limits on goals and strategy. Quite often the new goals and strategy can be selected based on the environmental needs and then top management attempts to redesign the organization to achieve this ends. The best example of this is a university that has been offering diploma courses which now finds that a new entity called TIVET is now sponsoring all diploma courses and selecting the students from the same pool with the university. Since sponsorship by TIVET means no fee payment most students would rush for this sponsored courses and thus the universities may lose out on this. Therefore the universities may have to come up with structures which may fit into the sponsorship plan of TIVET or stop offering the diploma courses all together. The choices top managers make about goals, strategies and organization design have a tremendous impact on effectiveness and it is the organizational design that is used to implement goals and strategy and also determines organizations success (Daft, 2010).

It is suggested that all organizations exist for a purpose, which may be thought of as the overall goal or mission (Daft, 2010). Different parts of the organization usually establish their own goals and objectives to help meet the overall

goals, mission and purpose of the organization. For organizations to succeed its goals and strategies should be focussed with strategic intent, meaning that all its energies and resources must be directed towards a focussed, unifying and compelling overall goal (Hammonds, 2003). The strategic intent provides a focus for management action and there are three aspects related to strategic intent, the mission, core competence and competitive advantage.

The mission is the overall goal for an organization and its reason for existence and are considered the official reason for its existence (Daft, 2010). Official goal statements typically define business operations and may focus on values, markets and customers than distinguish the organization from similar ones and makes them unique in the market. The organizations general statement of its purpose and philosophy is often written down in a policy manual or its annual report. A mission statement serves many purposes: it communicates to current and prospective employees and competitors; communicates legitimacy to internal and external stakeholders who may want to be identified with the stated purpose and vision. Uzima universities mission statement which is 'to produce qualified professionals who are: focused, morally upright, innovative and well equipped for research and work in health care systems with minimal resources' may be quite appealing to some stakeholders who may want to be associated with the university because of the appeal for morals. Another role of strategic intent is to help the organization achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, which is what sets the organization apart from others and provides it with a distinctive edge for meeting customer or client needs in the market place. This requires the manager to analyse changes in the external environment paying close attention to trends that may impact negatively on to the organization, analyse competitors to find potential openings and learn what new capabilities the organization needs to gain an upper hand in the industry (Serres, 2008). Establishing core competencies in what an organization does well may be advantageous in a highly competitive business world. The core competency may be in an area of superior research and development, expert technological know-how, process efficiency and provision of exceptional customer service (Esterl, 2004).

3.6. Organizational Structural Designs-A Case of Uzima University

Uzima University located in Kisumu with its vision being to be a centre of excellence in teaching and learning, research and healthcare for the continued improvement of the health of the people of the great lakes region of East and Central Africa. Therefore this means that it has a very robust vision which targets both Kenyan customers and customers outside Kenya. To achieve this vision it has a mission which is to produce qualified professionals who are focussed, morally upright, innovative and well equipped for research and work in health care systems with minimal resources. So this mission covers both morals, proper training, professionalism and self-sufficiency and should be able to appeal to many stakeholders. To achieve its mission Uzima University has adopted Mintzberg (1992) framework and is therefore organized into the five parts as suggested and these includes the technical core (Lecturers), top management (the principal, deputy principals, registrar, deans and directors of schools, Librarian), Middle management (Heads of departments), technical support (Information technology professionals and researchers) and administrative support staff (Human resource officer, Administrative assistants, accounts assistants, accountants and maintenance departments). Uzima University has adopted a professional bureaucracy type of organization structure with a large technical core consisting of highly skilled professionals (Professors, senior lecturers and lecturers) and it is these that constitute the bulk of the organization. The technical support staff is very thin, in this case mainly the ICT staff and a large administrative support staff to support the professionals and handle the Universities routine administrative activities.

This type of framework adopted by Uzima University is aimed at quality provision and effectiveness to support the mission of the university. Although it allows for formalization and specialization the professionals are given a free hand to design programs and to decide the type of teaching modalities that will be used in their departments and to decide on the type of staff that should be brought on-board to meet the different goals of the various departments. As opposed to other organizations Uzima University only provides services rather than tangible goods and have to compete with other universities who also provide similar service. Being private it must be able to excel in the type of services offered and seek to provide client satisfaction and at the end employability of their products at the end of the course. Although at Uzima University decision making authority resides with the upper level management there is also collaborations across functional departments in terms of sharing information, sharing lecturers for similar courses and therefore Uzima University's model is that of a mix between highly structured organization and a learning type of organization structure.

The goals of Uzima University is to nurture the students spirituality, socially and mentally and build up lives through education and specifically make concerted efforts to foster in all students a respect for the gift of life. It goes further to say that it is the task of the educators to educate students in body, mind and spirit. By giving this autonomy to the educators, it means that the educators have a major role to play in providing strategic directions to ensure that these goals are met. The overall mission and goals as defined above then reflects Uzima's strategic intent and should therefore dictate the structure the university takes to achieve them. In order to find its competitive edge in the ever changing environment which has a lot of competitors Uzima University has adopted the focus strategy in which it has only concentrated on health courses and although health courses are expensive.

Uzima University has tried to offer quality services at competitive market rates and therefore is able to compete both with public universities who enjoy government funding and other private universities that offer similar courses. Therefore Uzima University enjoys both a competitive edge and a competitive scope and concentrates all its efforts towards offering the best training to students who hope to work as health practitioners in Kenya and beyond. Uzima's aim is to create a differentiation strategy that makes its products unique and different from others in the industry but this has been hampered by the expensive nature of the health courses and poor support from the county governments including delay by the government to remit funds for the sponsored students. This has interfered with how far the university can advertise its products in the market and has contributed to the small admission numbers. The other factor that has

seriously affected the university are the regulatory bodies for various courses who have placed a lot of unfair demands on the private universities including a restriction of numbers of students who can be admitted at any particular time.

Uzima University has also adopted a low-cost leadership approach through multi-tasking so that fewer people are needed to handle different roles for the quality assurance department also runs the examination to ensure quality in the whole process. This low-cost leadership approach requires that Uzima University takes an efficiency approach to organization design so it should have a strong centralized authority and tight control and standard operating procedures, all of which Uzima University has in place. On the other hand it has also adopted a differentiation strategy in which the technical core are allowed to constantly experiment and learn with a lot of horizontal coordination and are empowered to work directly with customers (students) and the university also values research, innovativeness over efficiency but for quality standard procedures have to be followed (Daft, 2010).

Uzima University's organization structure can be visually represented in an organizational chart which when viewed is representative of a vertical hierarchical structure. In this kind of structure the CEO (Principal) is at the top of the chart and below him the two deputy principals (Deputy Principal Academics and Deputy Principal Finance and Administration). This then continues down wards up to the lower hierarchies. This type of structure emphasizes efficiency and control and is associated with specialized tasks, a hierarchy of authority, rules and regulations, formal reporting systems, few teams and task forces and centralized decision making which means that problems should be channelled to top levels for resolution. At Uzima University though not all problems are channelled to the top for resolution since some can be solved at departmental level or at faculty level, the top management only being notified of the decisions that have already been made. At Uzima University vertical communication is encouraged through the use of Hierarchical referral system so that if problems arise that employees don't know how to solve, it is referred to the next level of the hierarchy and is a solution if found the answer is passed back to the lower levels. Uzima has also developed a set of rules and procedures that can be easily referred to so that employees know exactly how to respond without communicating directly with their supervisors for example the examination rules (Daft, 2010).

Although the university specifically trains students on health related courses, due to the diversity of these courses the university has been departmentalized to include the department of clinical medicine with its core staffing, the department of nursing, department of medicine and the department of microbiology. These according to Daft (2010) are similar to divisional groupings because they share a common supervisor (Head of department) and common resources in being jointly responsible for performance within their section in order to achieve the wider organizational goals. In addition to these academic departments there are other support departments including accounts department, administrative department that help the academic departments to achieve their goals with minimum effort. We can compare this organizational structure to a product structure in a business unit because each department produces different products for example clinical officers, nurses, medical officers and microbiologists (Daft, 2010). This kind of structure promotes flexibility and change because each department can easily adopt to the needs of its environment. In addition the divisional structure as Uzima University depicts, decentralizes decision making because the lines of authority converge at a lower level of its hierarchy. For example they have their own departmental meetings, they have developed their own curricula, and they are involved in the preparation of their own budgets, and can also recommend the kind of staff they would need. These decisions are then passed to the top management through the head of department who is part of this management team. According to Daft, the division organization structure is excellent for achieving coordination across functional departments and works well when organizations can no longer be adequately controlled through the traditional vertical hierarchy and when goals are oriented towards adaptation and change (Daft, 2010).

The divisional structure has several strengths (Duncan, 1979). This structure is suited to fast change in unstable environment and products high product or service visibility, since each product line has its own separate division, customers are able to contact the correct division and achieve satisfaction. Coordination across functions is excellent and each product can easily adopt to the requirements of individual regions or customers and it typically works best in organizations that have multiple products such as Uzima University College (Duncan, 1979).

Daft (2010) posits that one disadvantage of using divisional structuring is that the organization loses economies of scale due to high human resource demands and reduplication of roles and occasional the departments may start working as different entities within the same organization (Weber, 1992). There are also issues to do with cross-departmental coordination and unless effective horizontal mechanisms are in place, a divisional structure can hurt overall performance because the products produced may be incompatible with one another, customers may become frustrated when representatives from one department are unaware of what goes on in other departments therefore the need for task forces and other horizontal linkages devices are needed to coordinate across divisions. At Uzima University this is achieved through fortnightly meetings of the different departmental heads for exchange of information and achieving consensus in whatever goes on at different levels. Another problem commonly seen in a divisional structure is lack of technical specialization as employees tend to identify with the product line rather than the entire organization (Daft, 2010).

Ideally the structure that is most appropriate for Uzima University would be the matrix structure, because the university is medium sized (total population of only 700 students) with few product lines (four core courses) and therefore feels the pressure for the shared and flexible use of people, equipment and services across these products (Davis & Lawrence, 1977). For example the organization is not large enough to assign full-time lecturers to each of its products so most of them are assigned part-time. Secondly due to environmental pressures in terms of remuneration and other work related benefits and infrastructural developments a dual structure is needed to balance these with the inputs which is critical for the survival of any organization. This creates very high interdependence across departments and this requires a lot of coordination and information processing in both vertical and horizontal directions (Daft, 2010).

The matrix structure has several advantages (Daft, 2010). It is best when environmental change is high and when goals reflect a dual requirement for both products and functional goals. The dual authority structure facilitates communication and coordination to cope with rapid environmental change and enables an equal balance between product and functional bosses. Additionally the matrix facilitates discussion and adaptation to unexpected problems and tends to work best in organizations of moderate size with few product lines. Daft further alleges that it enables organizations to meet dual demands from customers in the environment and resources can be flexibly allocated across different products and the organization can adapt to changing external requirements. One disadvantage of this system is that employees experience dual authority, reporting to two bosses (for example lecturers reporting to two heads of department) and sometimes juggling conflicting demands and this can be frustrating and confusing especially if roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined by top managers (Hymowitz, 2003).

Whatever the structure, managers must try to align the structural design to the needs of the organization (Daft, 2010). The vertical structure is usually associated with goals of efficiency and stability, while horizontal structure is associated learning, innovation and flexibility. Further, a functional structure is appropriate when the organization needs to be coordinated through the vertical hierarchy and when efficiency is important for meeting organizational goals. The functional structure uses task specialization and a strict chain of command to gain efficient use of scarce resources, but it does not allow the organization to be flexible or innovative compared to a horizontal structure which is appropriate where there is a need for a well-coordinated functions to achieve innovation and promote learning (Daft, 2010). However there are certain symptoms that should alert the managers to the presence of a structural deficiency: when decision making is delayed and is lacking in quality; failure of the organization to respond innovatively to a changing environment; decline in employee performance and failure to meet organizational goals and evidence of too much conflict within the organization (Day, Lawson, & Leslie, 2003). Lastly the managers must realize that organizational charts are not only to show relationships in terms of boxes and arrows but their purpose is to encourage and direct employees into activities and communications that enable the organization to achieve its goals. Although it provides the structure, employees provide the behaviour and therefore it serves as a guideline to encourage people to work together, but it is the duty of the management to implement the structure and carry it out.

According to Robbins (1999) successful companies like Hewlett-Packard succeeded because its strategy of technological innovation was supported by a highly flexible organization structure which was organized around an integrated, self-contained, product divisions that were given a great deal of independence. In Hewlett-Packard divisions arose when particular product lines became large enough to support their growth out of the profit they generated. Although in the past it was said that structure was determined by organizational goals and strategies there has been a deviation away from this and strategy is only but one variable. According to (Miner, 1982) strategy and structure are positively related but is also possible that structure determines strategy for example following the installation of a multi-divisional structure because other companies are doing the same and later on an acquisition of strategy is made to make the structure viable. Further structure can motivate or impede strategic activity as well as simply constrain strategic choices for instance strategic decisions made in a centralized structure are typically going to have less diversity of ideas and are more likely to be consistent over time than in a decentralized organization, where input is likely to be diverse and the people providing that input change depending on the situation. The notion that structure determines strategy has also received support from a study of 110 manufacturing companies which found that strategy followed structure and another study of 52 firms listed among the top half of Fortunes magazine top 500 found that structure influences and constrains strategy rather than the other way round (Pitts, 1979).

Another factor that has been found to influence structure is industry and because there are a lot of similarities within different industry categories, they tend to have largely common elements which results in structural characteristics that are very similar (Miles & Snow, 1981). Simply knowing the industry in which an organization operates allows one to know something about its product life cycles, required capital investments, long-term prospects, types of production technologies and regulatory requirements among many other things and therefore it tells us the type of structure the firm is most likely to adopt. Therefore in summary the earlier position that the organizations goals and strategies is what determined structure was seen as just a rational means to facilitate goal attainment. Strategy was then defined as including both the long term goals of the organization plus a course of action that would provide the means toward their attainment. Chandler studied nearly 100 of America's largest businesses and concluded that structure followed strategy but while there is considerable support for his views the limitations of his research limited the universal adoption of his views (Chandler, 1962).

Another determinant of structure is the organizations size and in terms of structure the term size refers to the number of employees since it is people and their interactions that are usually structured (Kimberly, 1976). But defining size in this matter is fraught with certain problems since using count of the total number of employees as a measure of organizational size inherently mixes size with efficiency (Gupta, 1980). For example if an organization requires one hundred people to carry out the same activities performed by fifty people in another organization, is the first twice as large or less efficient. Although it can be argued that different measures of size are not interchangeable (Gupta, 1980), most of the evidence suggests that counting the total number of employees is as good as many other measures, the reason being that the total number is highly related to other measures of size (Pugh, Hickson, Hinings, & Turner, 1969). According to Blau & Schoenherr (1971), size is the most important condition affecting organization structure and that increasing size promotes structural differentiation but at a decreasing rate (Blau, 1970). Further he stated that increases in organization size are accompanied by initially rapid and subsequently more gradual increases in the number of branches into the number of local branches into which the agency is spatially dispersed, the number of official occupational positions expressing division of labour, the number of vertical levels in the hierarchy, the number of functional divisions at the

headquarters and the number of sections per division. The importance of size in determining organization structure has also been echoed by researchers at the University of Aston who found that increased size was associated with greater specialization and formalization and they concluded that an increased scale of operation increases the frequency of recurrent events and the repetition of divisions and makes standardization preferable (Pugh, Hickson, Hinings, & Turner, 1969). Another researcher also confirmed this in his finding that organizational size was related positively to specialization, formalization and vertical span and negatively to centralization (Child & Mansfield, 1972). Meyer further posits that one cannot underestimate the impact of size on other characteristics of organizations and the effect of size normally shows everywhere and is unidirectional (that is size caused structure but not the reverse) and that the impact of other variables that appeared to affect structure disappeared when size was controlled. Although size is important in structure it certainly does not dictate all of the organizations structure but it is important in predicting some dimensions of structure. Once an organization becomes large in size, it tends to be high in complexity, high in formalization and decentralization and this implies that once an organization becomes big, increases in the number of employees have no noticeable further influence on structure (Meyer, 1972). This can be seen at Uzima University College which although increasing the number of employees, its structure has remained fairly constant.

The way an organization converts inputs into output has some bearing on structure (Robbins, 1990) and is usually referred to as technology. Woodward in her earlier studies in the 1960s on technology found a distinct relationship between technology classifications and the subsequent structure of the firms and that effectiveness was linked to the fit between technology and structure. This view was supported by Harvey (1968) who found a relationship between technical specificity and structure and that organizations with specific technologies had more specialized sub-units, more authority levels and higher ratios of managers to total personnel than did those with diffuse technologies. Another researcher (Zwerman, 1970), also supports this in his finding that unit, mass and process production result in different structural forms and that proper fit within categories increased the likelihood of success in an organization. Perrow (1967) argues that control and coordination methods in organizations should vary with technology type and that the more routine the technology, the more highly structured the organization should be and that non-routine technologies require greater structural flexibility.

Perrow (1967) also identified the key aspects of structure that could be modified to the technology as the amount of discretion that can be exercised for completing tasks; the power of groups to control the units goals and basic strategies; the extent of interdependence between these groups and; the extent to which these groups engage in coordination of their work using either feedback or the planning of others. This simply means that routine technologies can be best accomplished through standardized coordination and control and that these technologies should be aligned with structures that are high in both formalization and centralization. Further, non-routine technologies demand flexibility and would basically be decentralized, have high interaction among all members and be characterized as having a minimum degree of formalization. In between the two, craft technology requires that problem solving be done by those with the greatest knowledge and experience which means decentralization (Perrow, 1967).

Different environments organizations face different degrees of environmental uncertainty and the structural design is the major tool that managers have for controlling environmental uncertainty (Robbins, 1990). According to Burns & Stalker (1961), the type of structure that exists in rapidly changing and dynamic environments is significantly different from that in organizations with stable environments and they labelled the two structures as organic and mechanistic respectively. Mechanistic structures are characterised by high complexity, formalization and centralization which perform routine tasks and relies heavily on programmed behaviours and are relatively slow in responding to the unfamiliar. Organic structures on the other hand are relatively flexible and adaptive, with emphasis on lateral rather than on vertical communication, influence based on expertise and knowledge rather than on authority of position, loosely defined responsibilities rather than rigid job definitions and emphasis on exchanging information rather than on giving directions (Burns and Stalker, 1961). Burns and Stalker believed that the most effective structure was one that adjusts to the requirements of the environment and the nature of the environment determined which structure was superior.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion therefore this paper has tried to define the different factors that affect structure although it has not conclusively determined that structure always follows strategy. Sometimes the reverse could be true as structure may sometimes come before strategy. I also conclude that for an organization to achieve its goals it must carefully adopt a structure in line with its size, technologies used, strategy and the nature of its ever changing environment.

5. References

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