Entrepreneurial mindset and organizational competitiveness of selected agro firms in Rivers state

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Accepted 30 May, 2020

We examine the association amongst entrepreneurial minds and organizational competitiveness of selected agro firms in Rivers State. Cross sectional survey research method was applied. The study population comprises of all Agriculture and Agro Allied organizations functioning in Rivers-State, Nigeria which includes: Agric Consulting firms 8, Agric farms 14, Agricultural Equipment 9, Agro Allied services 10 firms. Fertilizer Manufacture and Sales 2, Fisheries Aquaculture 9, Livestock Feeds and Feed Millers 4, and Poultry Farms and 1-latcheries 5. Giving 61 Agro firms as the entire population. Census study technique was applied to study the entire population. Firms that cannot compete will sooner or later be outperformed by competitors. Thus, with stormy and vibrant corporate environment, firms have no choice than to be innovative, proactive and take risks when necessary. Firms cannot avoid competition. As a substance of fact, it was contended that competition is unavoidable in business. Thus, Organizations ought to embrace competition concept and make sure the organisation is always a step ahead of its competitors.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Mindset, Innovativeness, Risk Taking, Organizational Resilience.

INTRODUCTION

The competitiveness level as of the advent of 21st century is so high that each firm especially the agricultural (Agro) industries has to look out into ways of survival having powerful eagle eyes of an entrepreneur through an act, behavior or thought. In recent business time, capacity to compete is tied to the firms’ capabilities to develop new strategic directions. This strategic direction will open the firm up to fresh openings and make them look at achievable ways of grabbing the opportunities which might aid their competitiveness. Successfulness to every organization should be attached to the inbuilt strength of that organization which becomes the firm’s competitive advantage.

Competitive advantage is the set of attitude or thinking which can spur a firm into competitiveness (Ogueze et al., 2017). Again, (Darben et al., 2008) posited that competitiveness of any business can be linked to those things that makes organization perform well to endure and persist in the corporate setting. It is competitiveness that will spur and stirs up eagerness to pursue opportunity out there and not only pursuing but also being ready to hook up the opportunity and solve any problem identified which there after opens the organizations eye to new prospect in the marketplace that is enhanced than what other organizations are doing. (Iftikhar et al., 2015). Sure Porter (2001) believe that a positive line of thought of an Entrepreneurial organization aid in acquiring competitive benefit which is no longer tangible through knowledge tied toward innovation and through structure set up that can suit the environment dynamism.

The changing nature of business globally is tending towards high competition and any business without enough momentum will face serious challenge or will be phase out. The environment competitive level these days is alarming. Soberia (2011) posited that organizational competitiveness is important as it aid entrepreneur to go into fresh competitive approaches. Agoji (2014) observed that modern organization uses competitiveness to take care of large and challenging issue facing the business globally. Which means competitiveness and survival as an organization, globally or in international market required a strategic competitive decision that will

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Entrepreneurial mindset which points to philosophy of business and success methodology through cradling the prospect and risk consciously has been consign for research for many years now. According to (Senges, 2007) Entrepreneurial mindset shows innovative and strong urge to grab opportunity with all tactics and strategic actions to excel with the prospects. It is really a serious issue for a firm to continue to be competitive without a search for potential opportunity which can open them up to business odd and strength to withstand those odds. No wonder (Hirsh 2013) said Entrepreneurial mindset is a subject of survival in business world that varies from flexibility act, reactive, innovative and devising a renewal mind that expose one to opportunities, new opportunities and withstanding odd in huge uncertainty. According to Dhiwayo and Vuuren (2007) entrepreneurial mindset is related to set of personal or behavioral values, traits, perception, attitude and pattern of perceiving concerning opportunity that is associated to the trailing of prospects in the marketplace which means organization thought about the opportunity around could make them strong to achievement of a task. Also, Ngek (2012) was of the opinion that entrepreneurial mindset gives corporate competitive advantage in a prevailing or new market since it can push a firm into discovering, venturing and creating and exploiting prospects regularly, before their competitors.

Musa and Adewale (2015) looked at Entrepreneurial education and readiness to own a business and found that knowledge or entrepreneurial education has slight effect in willingness to own a business. Having the understanding of what next is good but without the urge in putting to practice the knowledge is a wasted effort. Jack (2013) studied entrepreneurial mindset and organizational success but found that a relationship exists amongst entrepreneurial mindset and organizational success and recommended that management should develop different strategies to adapt in changing competitive corporate environment. Ogueze, et al. (2017) also studied entrepreneurial orientation and organizational competitiveness and found mutual relationship existing between the variables in the small and medium scale enterprises.

Entrepreneurial mindset is needful as it aids in pushing organization forward exposing the organization to opportunities around and tactics required to grabbing the opportunities. It is no obvious to know that researcher has done much work in trying to solve the problems facing organization through entrepreneurial angle but little or none has been done, seen or heard about Agro or Agricultural firms for the last past three decades and required an opportunity to defeat, survive and be successful in business and retain the upfront position in the international trade as usual and high economic assonants of this country Nigeria. The environment of every business needs scanning of information, opportunities around and new opportunity that stirs up the intentions that leads to competitiveness.

This study, therefore, deemed it fit to examine and provide intuition into the Agro industry through entrepreneurial mindsets perception and behaviour that could best suit and alleviate them to tackling the competition tinting towards them now seeing how they can be improved which may help in harnessing the economy of this county.

It was in the history of this nation Nigeria during the boom of the Agro industries that naira was exchanged in the global market at one pound to two naira because of export has been dominated by the single export oil commodity, later rubber, timber, cocoa and groundnut made the list of exported goods. Agricultural firms contributed about 65% of Gross Domestic Product (Mordi, Englama & Adebusuya, 2010).

According to (Nwachukwu, 2009) government budget allocation to agriculture was mirage to surge the corporate environment. This has made entrepreneurs to possess a mindset and behaviour that has shifted to another area abandoning this sector to a competition of foreign made product which has caused a knock down to our economy and the present administration assumed that closure of the boarders will eliminate the problem without establishing a measure to putting our Agro industries in order. These complications can be noticed on the rate at which price of commodities were going higher every day.

Production firms or industries are in charge of bringing and making of fresh products that might be bought or sold which can place an organization on competitive rate. A country without entrepreneurial mindset will later become a dumping ground for other countries.

**Entrepreneurial Mindset**

Entrepreneurial mindset is an imperative issue in the survival of any firm in a vibrant corporate environment. That means a firm need to explore all opportunities and innovation, risk taking, uncertainty and change management. Mindset is the capability to think, identify and explore new opportunities through Entrepreneurship Mind-set are constellation and/or set of features connected with the positive growth of fresh business (Colombo & Grilli, 2005). This Mindset is defined as the essential features of an individual, which results in
effective action and superior performance in a job. For example, innovativeness could be defined as a competency type. Innovative is a skill and not a gift that could be enhanced overtime with increased understanding and improvement of core skill set (Boyd, 2013). Mindset ranges from personality characters and individual innovativeness to specific skills and knowledge (Mitchelmore & Rowey, 2008). As reviewed previously, traits and motivations can spur the improvement of entrepreneurial mindset. Traits lead to the growth of work place skills necessary for success of entrepreneurial.

Since many factors are impacting a growing firm, researchers had hard time identifying specific entrepreneurial mindset that always significantly predict organizational success. The current market growth rate, access to key resources and network connections all impact the small business success possibilities. While many research has focuses on these environmental features and the entrepreneurial opportunity (David, 2008). Researchers have continue to recognize the crucial influence of human agency in form of attributes and mindset when predicting what makes a small business successful, while external factors will always affect entrepreneurial success, so too will the features of the single entrepreneurs who make decisions about undertaking the venture process (Ditkoff, 2013) researcher have yet to identify traits and features that are always predictive of success and perhaps never will, they have identified specific mindset that play vital part in supporting successful business growth. Researchers from Central Michigan University developed an innovativeness competency model, which specifies the way creativity, enterprising, integrating perspectives, forecasting and managing change related to entrepreneurial success (Boyd, 2013). Although, when considering new business ventures, mindset must not be assessed in seclusion from other critical environmental factors, they are nevertheless vitally important elements to consider.

Mindset with respects to enormous business must be ready over the full course of planning, with the dimension of business start-up introduction being reached out in later years (CBN, 2010). A few nations (for example US, Ireland, Denmark) have settled on a dynamic context in which early mediation is followed up by also dissipated interventions all through right hand and tertiary direction. Regardless, in different nations there exist a nonappearance of business attempt planning rehearses in lower estimations of direction (CBN, 2010). Precisely when early mediation does not occur, regardless, it challenges buildup of certain business mindset at later stages (De Koning, 2003). There exist stretching out move to systematize business limits to help plan and authorized proper directional reactions. Entrecomp, for example, is a proficiency structure utilized in European Union nations for the limits majority, the system sets out a huge amount of portrayed learning results and a delineation of various segments of accomplishment. The truth is to empower the system utilization for enlightening project structure and instructor arranging (CBN, 2010).

**Innovativeness**

Innovativeness could be described as using of new plans to the substances, forms, or different portions of the exercises of an organisation that lead to expanded “esteem.” This “esteem” is defined extensively to incorporate higher esteem included for the firm and furthermore benefits to customers or different firms. Two vital definitions are:

i. **Product innovation:** the presentation of another item, or a huge subjective change in a current item.

ii. **Process innovation:** the presentation of another procedure for making or conveying products and ventures.

Innovativeness, notes Slade and Bauen (2009), is something of a catch all term. It is once in a while separated from creation (characterized by Schumpeter as the main disclosure of new items or procedures) however might be utilized conversely with mechanical change to depict the means required to get another item to advertise. It might allude to another item itself, to a phase in an item’s lifecycle, or to an iterative procedure of creation and application that joins specialized, societal and political change. Imaginativeness might be named gradual, radical or troublesome relying on whether it begins inside, or outside, the standard and whether it renders an occupant innovation (or procedure) old. Creativity incorporates some component of curiosity.

Innovativeness is tied in with changing the manner in which we get things done. It is tied in with pushing the boondocks of what we know in the expectation of creating new and valuable thoughts, and after that placing them into training. Fruitful innovativeness raises profitability and expectations for everyday comforts, extending the scope of products and ventures accessible for people and society all in all.

**Risk-Taking**

Risk is a fundamental part of business since firms cannot work without going out on a limb. Risk is normally connected with vulnerability, as the occasion could possibly happen. Risk infers introduction to vulnerability or risk (Kannan & Thangavel, 2008); and ‘a choice to do nothing expressly stays away from the opportunities that exist and leaving the dangers unmanaged’ (Hillson & Murray-Webster, 2007). Customarily, chance has been seen as negative results and troublesome occasions. The thought of risk from the negative viewpoint is prohibitive
and deceiving for two primary reasons. Firstly, vulnerability may show in either negative (danger) or positive (opportunity) structure, or both; and second, the way a risk is seen impacts the method it is care for (Hillson, 2002). Overseeing dangers from negative viewpoint can lead to finish oversight of chances (benefits/gains) in the considered occasion. In any case, viewpoints on risk vary, as the risk definition relies upon and risk spectator influenced by it. (Kelrnan, 2003). In addition, chance here and there involves some financial advantages, as firms may determine significant gains by going for broke. Business develops through more serious risk taking (Drucker, 1997). Risk is, hence, necessary to circumstances and dangers which may unfavorably influence an activity or anticipated result (Kaye, 2009; Lowe, 2010). Besides, disposing of risk undermines the wellspring of significant worth creation; subsequently truncates potential chances (Knight & Petty, 2001; Graziano & Aggarwal, 2005; Garvan, 2007). Basically, to business undertaking dangers is vulnerability that issue (Hillson & Murray-Webster, 2011).

Concept of Organizational Competitiveness

Competitiveness as an important factor for survival in challenging business environment. Roman, et al. (2012) identified fifteen organizational competitive factors that aid organization in attaining competitive advantage against other firms like innovation, cultural factors, knowledge, reliability, social responsibility, technology and human capital relation and production techniques. Hector and Olmos (2012) is of the view that competitiveness makes for consciousness that is an organization required to be conscious of what is happening around them with other organization in the same industry though engaging into meaningful abilities to maintain and achieve competitive advantage which could fetch market repositioning Porter (2005).

Ketel (2016) saw competitiveness as the capability of a firm to compete in the market. This shows that a firm could only compete favourably when loaded with abilities, skill and quality resources weather human or material. Gal (2003) was of the opinion that organizational competitiveness is organization strength in offering right products that can stand the test of time on its environment. Which means organizational products to the marketplace or environment should withstand other similar products and should add more meaningful value than what other organization could offer.

Competitiveness in Business Organizations

Every organization expectations must be met and it comes as a result of consistent search for profit through mending all business uncertainties that lead to being competitive later. Achieving this required organization developing capabilities that will bring their expectations to reality. (Lemos & Nascimento, 1999).

Those capabilities must fall in line to the elements that express abilities like market development, to production and finance. The capabilities should relate to those factors as material and human resources to the meeting point its challenges and that of rival firms and capable to stand and compete. Standing and competing in the dynamism of business environment required organization survival and being alive in the market. Organization supersedes the other through the capability of proactively anticipating opportunities in the market. Organization should understand that the ability to compete is a different competencies function derived from decision makers, administrative functions and specialization.

Competitiveness for which uncertainties threatens the firm could only be attained via setting priorities that take into account those things that could make a firm to compete within the time limit set sideways for that achievement. Slack, et al. (1999) outlined five factors that give firm competitive benefit as: dependability, cost, flexibilities speed and quality. Saying that attainment of those factors makes an organization better and superior in the market.

Davis (2001) said that apart from quality, cost, and flexibility, delivery of products fast is also competitive primacies. Delivery as Davis stated to do with the speed factor outlined by Slack, et al., as it necessitates supplying of goods faster to owners after purchase was made. Davis also pointed at organization offering a product not harmful to the firm’s surroundings as other competitive primacies that should lead organization into competitiveness. Greenan, et al. (2001) thought on success strategies submitted that it is making a product that cannot easily be replaced and also can stand business environment test of time. Therefore, organization must identify elements that can spur them into competitiveness.

METHODOLOGY

Cross-sectional survey research method was used. The study population comprises of all Agriculture and Agro Allied firms situated in Rivers-State, Nigeria which includes: Agric Consulting firms 8, Agric farms 14, Agricultural Equipment 9, Agro Allied services 10 firms, Fertilizer Manufacture and Sales 2, Fisheries Aquaculture 9, Livestock Feeds and Feed Millers 4, and Poultry Farms and 1-lateheries 5. Having population and sample of 61 Agro-firms using census study technique.

Ho1: There is no relationship between innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of selected agro firms in Rivers State.

Table 1 revealed that innovativeness is positively
related with organizational competitiveness of the selected agro firms, with rho = .753, n = 59, p < 0.05. Relying on the result, the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis which states that there is relationship between innovativeness and organizational competitiveness was accepted.

**Ho**: There is no relationship between risk-taking and organizational competitiveness of selected Agro firms in Rivers State.

Table 2 revealed that taking risk is positively related with organizational competitiveness of the selected agro firms, with rho = .556, n = 59, p < 0.05. Relying on the analysis result, the null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis which states that, there is relationship with taking risk and organizational competitiveness was accepted.

DISCUSSIONS ON FINDINGS

**Ho**: There is no significant relationship between proactiveness and organizational competitiveness of selected Agro firms in Rivers State.

1. It was established that proactiveness has the prospect of influencing the organizational competitiveness of selected Agro firms in Rivers State.

The outcomes steered the null hypothesis rejection, and the alternative that stated that there is relationship amongst proactiveness and organizational competitiveness was accepted. Relying on the result, it was affirmed that understanding proactiveness has bestowed upon Agro firms the capability to detect problems and challenges and strategically devising means to solve them. The outcome is in tandem with the study of Tsai and Yang (2013) which states that proactiveness can be a driver of organizational competitiveness.

**Ho**: There is no significant relationship between innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of selected Agro firms in Rivers State.

2. It was revealed that innovativeness can significantly influence organizational competitiveness of selected Agro firms in Rivers State.

The outcomes steered the null hypothesis rejection, and acceptance of the alternative that stated there is relationship amongst innovativeness and organizational competitiveness of agro firms was accepted. Relying on the result, it was decided that innovativeness that innovation contributes to firm and corporate performance regardless of the business turbulence. The outcome agrees with the submission of Manyena and Gordon (2015) that suggests that the innovation outcome is new and improved goods or services that increases a firm’s competitiveness.

CONCLUSION

Exploring entrepreneurial mindset and organizational competitiveness of selected Agro firms in Rivers State was the primary purpose of this study. Entrepreneurial mindset is crucial in every industry and sector of the economic sphere particularly when observed through the
encouragement of the Agro firms. Entrepreneurial mindset provides the firm with the capability to develop relevant innovative ideas, increase its rate of risk taking plus developing a spirit of proactivity for competitiveness as a lifestyle (organizational culture) given the vibrant and uncertain business environment. Organizational competitiveness helps managers’ development the correct mindset, by activating endogenous factors such as self-efficacy, intelligence quotient, behavior, level of efforts, knowledge, perception and also, the exogenous factors. Competitiveness can also be things that make a business grow sustainably. Firms that cannot compete will sooner or later be outperformed by its competitors. Thus, in this turbulent and self-motivated business environment, firms have no choice than to be proactive, innovative, and risks taking when necessary. Firms cannot avoid competition. Importantly, it was argued that competition is unavoidable in business. Thus, organizations ought to cuddle the competition concept and ensure a step ahead of competitors.

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