

Strategic positioning of the organization in its environment (The flexibility approach)

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Abstract - This study explores the evolving dynamics of resource management, focusing on the relationship between human capital and product value creation. It examines how strategic positioning and resource engineering can enhance efficiency and innovation by treating employees as owners of their human capital. A qualitative approach, including thematic analysis of literature and case studies, was used to evaluate organizational models prioritizing personnel-product synergy, resource allocation, and their impact on value generation. Key metrics analysed included employee engagement, productivity, and product enhancement. The findings reveal a shift from a transactional to a continuum model of resource management, where employees, as dynamic human capital contributors, drive product value beyond intrinsic levels. Strategic positioning plays a crucial role, involving the reallocation of resources to functional variables. This dynamic process, termed "resource engineering", fosters innovation by aligning human energy with organizational goals. The study emphasizes the need for a visionary approach in resource management, where employers plan and implement strategies that create sustainable value. It also underscores the importance of synergizing human capital for enhanced product value and competitive advantage. Future research should explore practical applications of resource engineering across various industries to validate these findings.

Keywords: resource management; human energy; product value; strategic positioning; human resources

1. Introduction

Corporate organizations, much like living systems, face constant challenges in their quest for survival and growth. This struggle involves not only adapting to internal and external dynamics but also strategically positioning themselves to gain a competitive edge. Strategic positioning emerges as a critical tool in this endeavour, utilizing the manipulation of production factors to achieve sustainable success. This concept underscores the importance of integrating a systematic approach to resource utilization and management, enabling organizations to align their goals with market demands effectively.

The foundation of strategic positioning lies in understanding the evolving dynamics of corporate environments. As the Nigerian economy exemplifies, the oscillatory nature of economic movements—characterized by booms and troughs—creates a landscape of opportunities and challenges (Mensah et al., 2018). These fluctuations impact corporate organizations profoundly, necessitating innovative strategies to navigate through periods of growth and recession. This dynamism highlights the critical role of the private sector, which complements governmental efforts by providing essential tools and resources for economic advancement. However, this dynamic environment also intensifies competition for resources, compelling organizations to adopt innovative strategies to secure their survival and growth (Peteraf & Bergen, 2003).

Strategic positioning is not merely a reactive measure but a proactive approach that involves deliberate planning and execution. It encompasses the act of designing a company's offer and image to occupy a distinct and valued position in the target customer's mind (Zwakala, 2016). This requires a comprehensive understanding of market dynamics, customer preferences, and competitive landscapes. By aligning organizational goals with customer expectations, companies can create a positive correlation between their public image and product offerings, fostering customer loyalty and repeat patronage (McDonald et al., 2001).

Strategic positioning is a critical concept in organizational management, as it goes beyond simply shaping the market perception of an entity. It serves as a vital planning tool that effectively connects policy statements to anticipated outcomes. By aligning strategic objectives with planned actions, strategic positioning enables organizations to identify and address potential risks, thereby ensuring that both short-term and long-term goals are met. This approach provides a framework for understanding how various factors contribute to an organization's overall direction, helping leaders navigate challenges and make informed decisions. Harrison (1994) highlighted that strategic positioning is not only about differentiating the organization in the marketplace but also about leveraging internal and external resources in a way that maximizes performance and minimizes risks.

One of the most significant elements of strategic positioning is its emphasis on creating an integrated operational framework that combines several key resources, including human, structural, and technological assets. The deliberate utilization of these factors ensures that an organization's various components work cohesively toward achieving its goals. Jackson (2007) underscored that this integrated approach leads to improved efficiency, as it fosters collaboration across departments and aligns their efforts toward a unified strategic direction. When human resources, technological advancements, and structural elements are harmonized, organizations can increase their competitive advantage and adapt to changing environments more effectively.

Human resources are at the core of strategic positioning, as employees are not only the drivers of day-to-day operations but also the key to long-term innovation and productivity. In an increasingly competitive landscape, organizations must recognize the potential of their workforce as dynamic contributors of human capital. This requires organizations to prioritize the development of effective labour management strategies and communication practices. By fostering a collaborative culture, businesses can ensure that employees are motivated, engaged, and aligned with organizational goals. A well-managed workforce can drive innovation and continuous improvement, making human capital a central element of any successful strategic positioning.

Furthermore, as organizations become more reliant on sophisticated information technology, the role of technological advancements in strategic positioning has become increasingly important. Shimp (2000) emphasized that technology not only enhances operational efficiency but also facilitates better communication across the organization. By integrating cutting-edge tools and systems, organizations can streamline operations, reduce inefficiencies, and improve overall decision-making processes. In doing so, they position themselves as forward-thinking entities that are ready to adapt to market shifts and leverage emerging opportunities. This focus on technology not only boosts internal operations but also elevates the

organization's reputation among stakeholders, who increasingly value innovation and adaptability in the modern business landscape.

Moreover, strategic positioning involves addressing environmental factors and corporate-government relationships. Organizations must balance their social responsibilities with conflict resolution strategies, considering the unique costs and benefits associated with rural and urban operations (Baxi & Ray, 2012). By fostering cooperative relationships with governmental bodies, companies can navigate regulatory frameworks effectively and secure their position in the market. Additionally, understanding and mitigating external environmental factors—such as sudden corporate failures—are crucial for long-term stability and growth (Quagini & Tonchia, 2010).

Strategic positioning represents a multifaceted approach to corporate survival and success. By integrating resource management, market analysis, and innovative planning, organizations can create a sustainable framework for achieving their objectives. This expanded introduction underscores the importance of strategic positioning as a dynamic and indispensable tool in the modern corporate landscape.

Strategic positioning is a critical tool for modern organizations aiming to achieve sustainability and growth in an increasingly competitive landscape. It transcends basic operational strategies by integrating environmental considerations and fostering robust corporate-government relationships. This holistic approach allows organizations to not only survive but thrive by adapting to dynamic market conditions and addressing external pressures effectively.

One of the core aspects of strategic positioning involves addressing environmental factors, both internal and external, that influence corporate operations. Internally, companies must evaluate the socio-economic environments of their locations, distinguishing between rural and urban operations to optimize costs and maximize benefits. Rural settings may offer cost advantages such as lower wages and operational expenses, but they might lack infrastructure and skilled labour. Conversely, urban environments, while more resource-intensive, provide access to advanced markets and talent pools. Balancing these factors is essential for long-term viability and growth (Baxi & Ray, 2012).

Externally, strategic positioning requires organizations to navigate complex regulatory frameworks and build cooperative relationships with governmental bodies. These relationships are vital in ensuring compliance with legal standards, securing incentives, and mitigating risks associated with policy changes. By aligning their objectives with governmental priorities, companies can foster partnerships that support mutual growth and stability. This proactive engagement is especially important in sectors with high government oversight or frequent regulatory updates.

Furthermore, environmental factors extend to market unpredictability and external economic shocks. Sudden corporate failures or financial crises often result from unanticipated disruptions in supply chains, fluctuating consumer demands, or global economic shifts. To mitigate these risks, organizations must develop adaptive strategies that include risk assessments, crisis management plans, and diversified revenue streams. By understanding and preparing for such contingencies, companies can build resilience and maintain their competitive edge (Quagini & Tonchia, 2010).

Strategic positioning also involves aligning organizational resources with market opportunities. Through innovative planning, companies can leverage their unique strengths to create sustainable value propositions. This requires integrating resource management strategies, market analysis, and customer-focused approaches to meet evolving demands. The ability to pivot swiftly in response to market shifts underscores the importance of strategic agility in achieving long-term success.

Strategic positioning is a comprehensive framework that combines environmental analysis, resource optimization, and stakeholder engagement to secure corporate survival and success. By addressing the complexities of the modern business environment, organizations can

build a foundation for sustainable growth, ensuring their relevance in a competitive global marketplace.

2. Method

The survival of a company depends on a well-structured, strategic approach that integrates key business areas essential for its growth and longevity. To achieve this, the organization must focus on three critical elements: clearly defined objectives, the identification of alternative courses of action, and the continuous assessment of external factors. These factors serve as the foundation upon which a company's strategy is built, ensuring that it can adapt to changing market conditions while pursuing its goals.

Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART), providing a clear direction for the organization. By setting precise goals, the company ensures that every effort is aligned with its mission and vision. However, achieving these goals requires flexibility and foresight, which is why it's essential to evaluate various alternative courses of action. Having a range of potential strategies allows the organization to adjust its plans as circumstances evolve, ensuring resilience in the face of challenges.

External factors, including market trends, economic shifts, regulatory changes, and technological advancements, can significantly impact the organization's performance. Continuously assessing these factors allows the company to anticipate changes and adjust its strategy accordingly. The business environment is dynamic, and staying proactive in understanding and responding to these factors is crucial for long-term success.

A successful business strategy requires a sharp, concise, and focused plan, clearly defined objectives, adaptable courses of action, and a keen understanding of external influences. This holistic approach ensures that the company remains competitive, resilient, and positioned for sustainable growth.

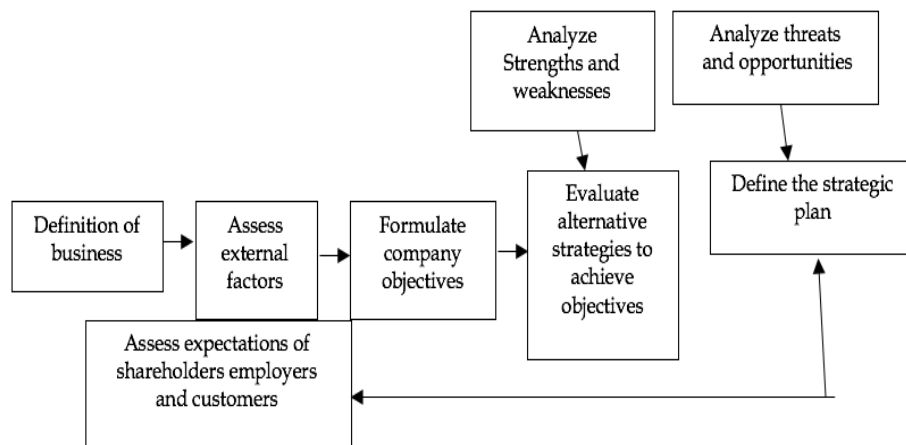


Figure 1 Strategic Alignment Framework

Indeed, the above model is built on a defined business whose functional area must be correlated to the professional background and financial capability of the organization. From this model, other sub-models are produced.

This is an insider concept of proper permu-combination of the departments which make up the company. Here management sits to itemize and analyze the various functional components, marries and inter-marries them for optimal performance. The efficient use of the

factors (within departments) will create a near full capacity utilization level. it is the T_1 (concept) = $f(En, Pr, Cm, Ev, M_1, ei,)$ where

En = Engineering department
Pr = Production Department
Cm = Commercial Unit
Env = Internal Environment
Mi = Management – Labour
ei = Other Stochastic Variables – epsolom.

These form the T_1 , endogenous variables concept. T_1 is necessary to state a T_1 (concept) which could have sub-levels e.g ($Ft, = f(En, \dots, ei)$) then T_1 (SubTC) = $En = f(\text{Assets, human,. Capital, ops. System} + \text{standards})$:

2. The T_2 (Exo) concept. The corporate organization realizes that it cannot live and operate in isolation and therefore must give room for infringement from outside.

Apart from the government and other competitors, the external environment (countries, and individuals at the regional and sub0regional levels) become veritable tools of creation or destruction in the corporate growth process.

Here $T_2 = (T_1, Gx, Cx, Cx/I, Rg)$.

Where T_1 is as shown under Endo Variables

Gx = External governments
Cx = External competitors attracted through consumers products, model s style.
Cx1= External consumers forming a competitive ring with investors.
RG = Regional groupings.

This is further enveloped by the political climate, structure, etc.

Indeed Total SG = $\lambda (T_1 + T_2)$

Where Total SG = Total Corporate Growth and Survival

T_1 and T_2 already defined.

λ = Lambda is functional relationship.

3. Results and Discussion

Diagrammatic analysis

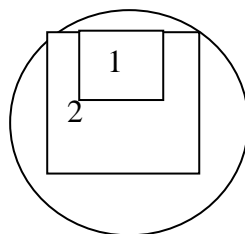


Figure 2
Endogenous concept
(1,2,2) is a narrow grouping

Source: Harrison 1994: London: LSE Centenary sub lecturers

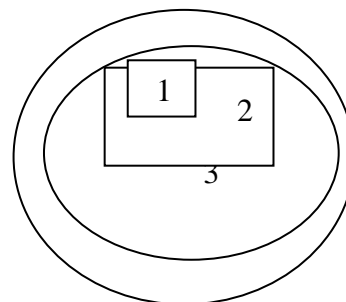


Figure 3
The Exogenous concept is an enlarge Form of the Endo; Concept. (1,2,3,4)

This concept advocates the periodic use of human elements (professionally skilled) to impinge, define, select and adjust a system on a cost-effective basis for the achievement of defined goals (Laufer et al., 1996).

Its background is a dynamic equilibrium that eliminates pathological production edges. Because of its free flow, in design and application, it is sometimes referred to as the FLEXIBILITY APPROACH. The human elements if scientifically and logically selected, as factor inputs, will direct and be directed in their use to determine the various output levels to justify the return on corporate commitments (Considine, 1988). The theory contends an input level that justifies production, an output limit that forestalls rejection through unnecessary surpluses and fills in a revenue mark-up that concretizes risk levels. The present frequent disequilibrium juxtaposed between product and revenue in organizations makes the Human/Resource Base concept (Flexibility Approach), a necessity for today and future looking managers; if their organization must remain afloat (Analoui, 2017).

3.1 What Strength And Weaknesses To Check And Select

The idea of a mission statement is to interpret its aim or vision into reality, tomorrow. The evidence of an achievement enthruses a growth but development is a capacity function. Therefore, mission and vision move intandem, just as growth and its blood factor, development. When capital is generated, it must be preserved and further empowered into a finance factor to consistently lubricate the corporate wheel. As simultaneous as they are, a strategy that is made subject to continuous appraisal ensures success built on strength. Weakness is a pitiful and/or a liability because it is an unselected risk. It is unselected (unsieved) because it is a burden from lack of vision. An organization must there're endeavour to search, select, obtain, even compare and contrast its methods, styles and operations to avoid the dislocation sickness of corporate failure (Rohlen, 1979). Indeed, to determine this suffocating level; the strength and weaknesses are daily monitored and evaluated.

Strength Area Analysis

(a) Marketing product and markets:

A product is a value package that creates utilities to bother producers (through their expectations) and consumers (by their participant experiences) (Moskowitz & Gofman, 2007). The organization should check and determine the products that are market leaders and those which posses very low profit potentials. Even with them are some with good brand images, packages, advertising appeals, and relations (brand loyalties) with supplies, dealer and consumers. Determining these is the necessity laid on the perception of the consuming public.

(b) Production

As mechanical as this is, the human must take cognizance of the output levels and operational strategies, from the raw material stage to the final output level. this is without an oversight on product quality and inspection standards; couple with a reliable schedule for turn-around maintenance and replacement. The background to consistent production are machinery and equipment which become more critical in the utility process at the factory level. Management must create a fluid system, step by step through the synchronization of man and machines within the corporate set ups.

(c) While taking cognizance of the obsolescence of the inanimate fixed assets and the provision for their continuous application over time, basic human labour must be developed, and trained to become more effective and efficient. This should be complemented with timely order placement and that ensures continuous supply; and inventory control.

(d) Finance

The basic decisions that confront the managers are investment, finance, dividend and proper information management and control decisions. The overall relationship with Banks and other financial institutions should be subjected to periodic monitoring to ensure proper internal control of financial resources. Other sources of funds must be evaluated and realigned back into the treasury for continuous lubrication of the system.

(e) Management/Staff:

The strength of an organization is the triangular existence of its staffing. But for continuous success, emphasis must be placed on high skills in performance, strategic posting and fairness in administration, smooth industrial and labour relations and alignment. Between production and

administration there arises a need to ensure proper cohesion and spirit de corps. If the management realizes that what is good for the goose is also good for the gander, then less frictional scenes (seen/unseen) will be observed and/or recorded. And because the cost of repairs during periods of total breakdown far outstrips the cost of maintenance, it will be more prudent to apply financial wisdom by reducing these ugly frictions.

3.2 Possible Weaknesses In Corporate Organization

(1) Marketing/Image Building

The organization should endeavor to identify products that do not contribute to profit or are declining in sales. Obviously, the lack of attention to implement (drive oriented) supplement, (support pieces), and compliment (building blocks) products or any new products can lead to a loss; and so a source of weakness to the organization.

(2) Research And Development

A company gains reputation from exploiting and creating new things, but the inability to generate new products or acquire to increase its products range makes for the recipe of a deep fall. Also the lack of control of the R & D budget or to fully tap or utilize R & D staff skills or even lack of foresight are all organizational death traps. The ability to generate ideas and revolutionising them into concrete business blocks is the foundation for subsiding your worst enemy: fear and failure.

(3) Production

Certain factors or questions must be considered here; What is the age of the factory use or capacity? What new developments threaten competitive short falls? What is the ability to forecast by the use of EOQ? What measures are taken for preventing plant shut down through depreciation, power, human factor or fluctuation? What is the level of safety awareness?

(4) Management/Staff:

A pitfall that can lead to a corporate knock down is poor labour relations. The result is deep conflicts which (though studies) have been confirmed to be related to poor performance in production. These need to be reviewed through the units that have been created to cater for them. Performance have also been found to be related to age, sex, charisma, qualifications, experience, etc. the management must exhibit no oversight in knowing, seeing and tackling these factors. Turning them into an advantage creates more cost absorbing turn around than when left for the system for a solution.

3.3 The Positioning Questions

The attitude and posture adopted by an organization are based on security, risk and return. These are placed face up with the potential social and economic consequences of the corporate product. To effect acceptance, proper (strategic) positioning must be made; based on certain on-line questions that require straight answers.

What is our product or service?

What do we want it to become?

What kind of image do we want to project?

What kind of clients segment do we want to serve?

What goals, should be set for our asset and liability growth, market share and profitability?

What marketing action must we take to get there? What can we do to reposition our organization?

To answer these questions, there must be a pluralistic level of sub-positions such as:

- (a) Institutional positioning: - Whether the company's market is local, regional, national, international or global.
- (b) Is product/service line positioning done to cover: personal consumer product orientation.
A corporate product orientation.
A niche production orientation
An investor (investors) production orientation.
- (c) What happens to Distribution/Delivery System and Staff positioning.
Effective address.
Price Positioning

Segment Positioning

Profitability Positioning

These positioning strategies can now lead to 4 basic concepts of:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------|
| High Technology | - | High People |
| High Technology | - | Low People |
| Low Technology | - | High people |
| Low Technology | - | Low people |

Depending on what strategy a corporate body may adopt, supplementary techniques may be applied such as:

Specific customer, all needs, all levels.

All customer, specific needs, specific levels.

Specific customer, specific needs, some levels.

These may now fully expose the existing potentials or a succinct application in achieving set goals; as explained further by the diagram.

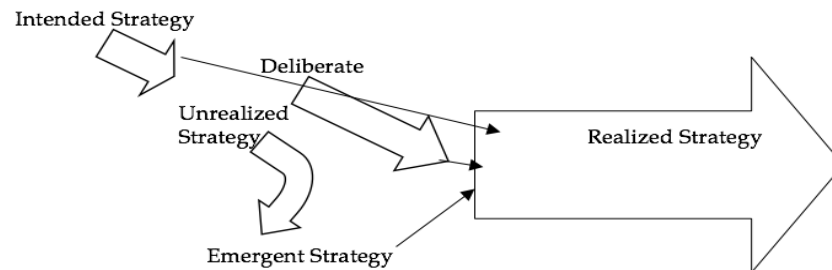


Figure 4 *Strategy Forms* (Mintzberg, 1993)

Realized strategy is a conglomeration of (a) Intended Strategy (b) deliberate Strategy (c) Unrealized Strategy (d) Emergent strategy.

The management must endeavor to recognize at what stage one strategy turns into another and to be able to effect necessary changes for corporate growth and survival. These seen (anticipated) and unseen (unanticipated) strategies are recognized and fully covered through corporate positioning. The various departments align amongst themselves to create the coordinated problem recognition and solution approach (strategic positioning) which becomes a realized cost-effective strategy, albeit result. Strategic positioning therefore becomes a systematic holistic method of factor analysis for corporate goal achievement that even when the desired target is reached; efforts are now geared up the more, to maintain precarious positions to remain afloat.

4. Conclusion

Strategic positioning plays a pivotal role in a company's ability to achieve and maintain market leadership. It is not merely a tactical decision but a holistic approach that requires ongoing efforts to define, refine, and align the company's objectives with its internal capabilities and the external environment. A well-executed strategic positioning framework involves a consistent articulation of the organization's mission, goals, and values, ensuring that every part of the business works cohesively toward a common vision. By clearly defining these aims and objectives, companies can ensure that all efforts are aligned with their overarching strategy, reducing the risk of misdirection and inefficiencies.

At its core, strategic positioning is about managing risks—both systematic and unsystematic—that could hinder the achievement of corporate goals. This process is not limited

to avoiding threats but extends to proactively defining, selecting, and managing potential risks across various operational areas. Whether these risks stem from production challenges, market volatility, or regulatory changes, effective strategic positioning ensures that an organization is well-equipped to handle these uncertainties. By adopting a structured methodology for risk management, businesses can minimize the impact of potential setbacks while optimizing opportunities for growth and success.

Moreover, strategic positioning provides a framework for evaluating a company's internal strengths and weaknesses, facilitating continuous improvement. It serves as a tool to identify areas where the company excels and areas where it needs to improve. Through this process, organizations can create more ambitious goals and identify new opportunities to explore. It encourages innovation, fosters adaptability, and drives the company toward greater achievements. Strategic positioning thus functions as both a mirror and a roadmap: reflecting where the company stands today and guiding where it needs to go in the future.

Effective strategic positioning requires the organization to model the behaviours and qualities it expects from others within its ecosystem. This means that leaders must first embody the values, commitment, and vision they wish to instil in their teams. By demonstrating these principles through their actions, they set the tone for the entire organization, ensuring that everyone is aligned in their efforts. It becomes a culture of accountability, where each individual understands their role in the broader success of the organization. This internalization of strategy enables employees to become more responsible, team-oriented, and focused on achieving tangible results. The company then becomes more than just a workplace; it becomes a unified force working toward a common goal.

One of the most important aspects of strategic positioning is that it fosters a sense of collaboration and unity among all stakeholders. The survival of an organization is not an isolated endeavour but a collective effort that involves cooperation and synergy across all departments. By integrating people into the decision-making process and making them accountable for outcomes, companies create an environment of trust, mutual respect, and shared purpose. When individuals feel that their contributions matter and that they are part of a larger mission, it enhances motivation and drives performance.

In addition, strategic positioning helps eliminate unnecessary internal conflicts, such as bitterness, contentiousness, and personality clashes, that can derail progress. When the focus shifts from individual accomplishments to collective goals, it minimizes distractions and fosters a more harmonious work environment. The result is an “event” in the workplace—a smooth, enjoyable process where challenges are met with a shared sense of purpose, and success becomes a collective achievement.

Ultimately, strategic positioning is not just about “doing one's part” but about fully engaging in a unified effort toward corporate success. It is a dynamic, all-encompassing process that demands the involvement of every sector and every individual within the organization. By adopting this comprehensive approach, companies position themselves not only for survival but for long-term growth and sustainability. Strategic positioning is thus an essential practice that must be embraced and integrated into the fabric of the organization for continued success and market leadership.

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