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Competitive Strategy and Employee Output of Hospitality Industries in Anambra State

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ABSTRACT: The study examined the competitive strategy and employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State. The researcher developed two objectives which were to: Determine the extent to which cost leadership strategy affects employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State: Evaluate the extent to which differentiation cost strategy affects employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State; This study is anchored on Porter Generic Strategies Model. Data were generated through primary and secondary sources. The method for data collection was the questionnaire which was administered randomly among the staff of the hospitality firms. The population of the study was four hundred and twenty-six (426). Three hundred and seventy-seven (377) (88.49%) copies of questionnaire were retrieved out of the copies of questionnaires distributed. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis method at 0.05% level of significance. Findings from the study revealed that Cost leadership strategy has significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State (t-test, 2.128, p=002), Differentiation cost strategy has significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State, (t-test, 3.041, p=000), The study concludes competitive strategy and employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State. The study recommended that organizations needs to understand cost leadership strategy as a way to improve operations and should take advantage of outsourcing tasks to experts in order to help maintain their course of action and position in the market; Some of the ways in which the hotels are able to achieve differentiation is through maintaining quality of staff, offering a variety of services and using superior products; Hospitality industries employ cost focus strategy effectiveness and swiftness in operations to accommodate a broader range of customer segments along their business growth path.

Keywords: Competitive strategy, Organizational performance, Hospitality industries, Differentiation cost strategy, Cost leadership strategy

INTRODUCTION

Over time, businesses exploit the means to attract customers, display competence, increase profitability, and emerge relevant in their respective industries. The need to procure and retain customers is on the increase and requires business initiatives, approaches, or strategies that attract and deliver optimum value for consumers'

expectations. Hence, organizations develop a business approach, action plan, technique, or skill to create value, gain relevance, and achieve a competitive advantage in the market. A competitive advantage is the leverage they have over their competitors. It is the extent to which an organization generates greater economic value compared to its rivals or competitors in each sector (Maritan & Peteraf, 2016). It is also regarded as the ability gained through attributes and resources to perform at a higher level than others in the same industry or market (Nwafor, Nwankwo, Okeke & Chendo, 2025).

An enterprise that develops a competitive advantage stands a better chance of generating maximum profit in the long term. Any business entity that is focused on achieving organizational growth and success considers its main objective to be the maximization of shareholder's wealth. A firm attains this goal by selecting a competitive strategy that will give it an edge over other players in the industry. This competitive edge is referred to as competitive advantage. According to Dirisu, Iyiola and Ibidunni (2013), a competitive advantage exists when the firm is able to deliver the same benefits as competitors but at a lower cost (cost advantage), or deliver benefits that exceed those of competing products (differentiation advantage). The source of the advantage can be something the business does that is distinctive and difficult to replicate, also known as a core competency (Jabbouri & Zahari, 2014; Eze, Nwakwo & Okeke, 2025).

Competitive strategies are integrated sets of actions that management implements as a model for how the company will best compete, based on the match between its type of competitive advantage and the target market pursued, as the key determinants of choice (Auka, 2014; Okeke, 2025). While making a decision on which competitive strategy to pursue, firms therefore decide between two broad competitive advantages: lower cost than competitors or the ability to differentiate and charge a premium price that covers costs (Hitt, Ireland & Hoskisson, 2015). In the dynamic and growing business environment, it is crucial that management map out their strategic orientation carefully to match their capabilities with existing opportunities.

Competitive strategies are the specific plans of an organization to compete successfully and gain a competitive advantage over rivals in the marketplace (Gregg, 2018). It involves making a series of decisions aimed at maximizing an organization's strengths, supporting its goals and aspirations, and minimizing the strengths of its competitors. Strategy is significant because it involves the implementation of an action plan that enhances an organization's performance and directs the organization's objectives towards potential business outcomes.

An organization implements a competitive strategy in order to satisfy customers, outperform competitors, enhance its market position, and adapt to changing market conditions. This ultimately leads to improved performance and the attainment of a competitive advantage. Every business adopts a distinct competitive strategy to outwit competitors. There are three main competitive strategies a firm may choose to deploy to gain a competitive advantage: cost-leadership strategy, differentiation strategy and focus strategy.

According to Porter, there are two significant factors that differentiate one competitive strategy from another. The first factor is whether the company's market target is broad or narrow. The second factor is whether the company is pursuing a competitive advantage linked to lower cost or differentiation (Gregg, 2018). A low-cost provider strategy aims to

achieve a lower overall cost than competitors and attract a wide range of customers, typically by offering lower prices than rivals. On the other hand, a broad differentiation strategy aims to distinguish the company's product or service from competitors in ways that will appeal to a wide range of buyers. The essence of this is to offer unique products or services that meet customers' demands.

According to Porter (2008), an organization is considered a low-cost producer if it sells its products at average industry prices but earns a higher profit than its competitors or sells at a price below average to gain significant market share. A low-cost advantage attracts a low-cost leadership strategy, low-cost manufacturing, and core competencies (Marangu, Mwiti & Thoronjo, 2017). However, several businesses in Nigeria lack a distinct or appropriate strategy that enables them to outwit competitors and attract a wide range of customers. Most of their goals and aspirations are unstated and reside within their subconscious.

As time passes, they struggle to formulate a long-term strategy that facilitates business growth. Barclays' study indicates that 47% of small business owners have no formal strategy in place to support their business growth, while 25% have an informal verbal business strategy, and 23% have no strategy whatsoever (Shaw, 2021). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between competitive strategy and employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine competitive strategy and employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State. The specific objectives are to:

i. Determine the extent to which cost leadership strategy affects employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.
ii. Evaluate the extent to which differentiation cost strategy affects employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses will guide the study

Ho_1: Cost leadership strategy has no significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.

Ho_2: Differentiation cost strategy has no significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Competitive Strategies

Strategy involves creating very unique positions that are very valuable to the organization and they are implemented through different activities (Yacoub, 2023). Wittingtine (2015) defines strategy as the direction that an organization sees in long term. The major aim is to achieve organization’s objective while considering the dynamics of the environment. Competitive strategies are the art of creating or exploiting the most significant, long-lasting, and challenging-to-replicate or terminate advantageous aspects (Pulaj, Kume, & Cipi, 2015). It refers to a collection of intentional actions and strategies that a business or organization utilizes to achieve a competitive advantage in its industry or market. A viable strategy for an organization is to intentionally provide exceptional services or valuable products in order to achieve profitability.
Competitive strategies refer to the wider

perspective of the way, use the ability of an organization to create a competitive advantage in relation to other firms in the same industry irrespective of the size of the organization (Herbert and Deresky 2022) Competitive strategy is essential to business success that helps companies differentiate themselves from their competitors and gain a competitive advantage. The impact of competitive strategy on firm performance has been widely studied (Pertusa-Ortega, Molina-Azorin, & Claver-Cortes, 2023; Okeke, 2024). One area of research has focused on aligning the firm's competitive strategy with its internal capabilities and resources.

2.1.2 Efficiency

Organizational efficiency comprises the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives).According to Richard *et al.* (2019), organizational efficiency three specific areas of firm outcomes: financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.); product market performance (sales, market share, etc.); and shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc). Organizational efficiency is the ultimate dependent variable of interest for researchers concerned with just about any area of management (Devinney *et al.,* 2010; Unukpo, Nwankwo, Chendo & Okeke, 2025). This broad construct is essential in allowing researchers and managers to evaluate firms over time and compare them to rivals. In short organizational efficiency is the most important criterion in evaluating organizations, their actions, and environments.

There are several methods that have been put forward for measuring organizational efficiency at employee and organizational level. One group of performance measures which is traditional is financial and accounting based and these were based on the assumption that firm performance is only measured in quantifiable units. These financial measures include income or sales from operations, rate of return on investment and residual income (Warren *et al.,* 2018). Without disregarding the merits of the financial and accounting measures in assessing performance, the fact that they were cost based and backward looking provided little motivation (Manzoni & Islam, 2019). There are now new enhanced metrics to measure performance being adopted by financial specialists and these include measures such as activity based costing and economic value added (Beheshti & Beheshti, 2010; Okeke & Ahaiwe, 2024). Another recent concept to measure performance is that balance scorecard.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Porter Generic Strategies Model

This model was described by Michael Porter in 1980. Porter's generic strategy describes how an organization pursues competitive advantage across its chosen market scope. There are three generic strategies namely; Cost Leadership, differentiation, and focus. A company seeks to pursue one of two types of competitive advantage, either by lowering costs than its competition or by differentiating itself along dimensions and aspects valued by customers to command a higher price. A company also may choose one of the two types of scopes; focus (offering its products to selected segments of the market) or industry-wide (offering its product across many market segments).

Porter wrote in 1980 that strategy targets either cost leadership, differentiation, or focus. These are known as Porter's three generic strategies and can be applied to any size or form of business ranging from SMEs to multinationals. Porter posited that a company must only choose one of the three or risk that the business would waste precious resources.

In addition to this Porter postulated that there are forces within the business operating environment that influence competition in an industry. Porter summarized these forces as the rivalry among existing firms, threat of new entrants, substitute products or services, bargaining power of suppliers and bargaining power of buyers. Porter came up with generic competitive strategies to counter these competitive forces which are, cost leadership, differentiation, or focus (Barney, 2007 & Porter, 1998).

Application of the Theory to Study

In business competition, understanding and effectively implementing strategic frameworks are crucial for sustainable competitive advantage. Porter's generic competitive strategy is a framework for planning the strategic direction of your business that assists with gaining an advantage in the marketplace over your competitors. Attaining a competitive edge through cost efficiency stands as a primary objective for firms operating across diverse industries. Familiarizing oneself with Porter's trio of generic strategies furnishes businesses with a structured framework to strategically position themselves within the marketplace. By leveraging Porter's strategies, a company can forge a sustainable competitive advantage by prioritizing either cost leadership, differentiation, or market segmentation. The integration of these strategies equips businesses to select one that resonates with their goals and resources, all while exploring avenues for setting themselves apart from rivals. It's crucial to discern the unique attributes of your offerings compared to others in the market, ensuring sustained profitability over the long term. Utilizing cost-effective practices and innovative methodologies can bolster competitiveness and propel triumph within the marketplace.

2.3 Empirical Review

Karaev, (2023) delved into the impact of competitive strategies on firm performance. The Mediating Role of Market Orientation and Innovation. The study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Smart-PLS with 325 respondents from the beverage industry. By keeping in sight how market orientation and innovation on their own authority yield mediating effects, light can be shed on what matters for a firm to triumph in this demanding industry. The conclusion drawn suggests that companies embracing a realistic market-oriented outlook in their product planning and advertising, combined with centering on novelty, are better placed to stay successful within this fiercely competitive business space.

Daahir **(**2021) examined the impact of cost leadership strategy on organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Mogadishu-Somalia. The second objective was the impact of differentiation strategy on organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Mogadishu-Somalia. The third objective was the impact of focus on strategy on organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Mogadishu-Somalia. The target population was 100 and the sample size was 60 respondents. The study used descriptive method and 20 questionnaires were distributed .Descriptive and correlation analysis was used. The study found that cost leadership strategy, differentiation strategy and focus on strategy have significant positive relationships on organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Mogadishu-Somalia. Finally, the researcher found that the competitive strategy has significant positive relationships on organizational performance of telecommunication companies in Mogadishu-Somalia.

Atueyi, Nkechukwu, Nzotta, & Jacobs (2019) investigated the effect of electronic banking and performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMSE) in Nigeria between the periods of 1981-2018. The data used were resourced from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Statistical Bulletin 2018. The variables were the performance of small and medium scale enterprises as the dependent variable, while Automated Teller Machine,(ATM), Point of Sales (POS) and Mobility of Payment (MOP) as the independent variables. The study employed unit root test, to determine the stationarity of the variables, co-integration approach to determine the long run equilibrium relationship of the variables and Error Correction Model (ECM) to determine the speed of adjustment. Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method of data analysis was adopted. The study found that point of sales has positive significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMSE) in Nigeria, Automated Teller Machine (ATM) has positive significant effect on the performance of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMSE) in Nigeria.

Nwangwu, Ohanyere, Nwangwu, & Atueyi, (2025) examined the effect of artificial intelligent (AI) on decision-making in supply chain management of lubricant firms in Anambra state, Nigeria. The study was anchored on Technology Acceptance Theory (TAT). A structure questionnaire was developed for data collection. The population of the study comprised of 281 management staff from thirteen (13) lubricant firms in Anambra State. Two hundred and sixty-nine (269) were duly filled and returned data was analysed using correlation analysis with the aid of statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 23. Findings from the study show that. Machine learning has significant effect on decision support system on supply chain management of lubricant firms in Anambra state (T=2.244, P=0.006). Neural networks has significant effect on creative decision skill on supply chain management of lubricant firms in Anambra state (T=9.790, P=0.009). The study concludes that AI-powered predictive analytics improved decision-making in supply chain management in lubricant firms in Anambra state, Nigerian.

Ohanyere, Arinze, & Atueyi (2025). investigated the digital cyberspace cost on firm performance of deposit money bank using data for the period of 2012-2023. Panel least squared (PLS) method of data analysis was adopted because of its Best Linear Unbiased Estimators (BLUE) properties. The data for the variables used was sourced from annual report of the selected deposit money bank in Nigeria. The variables were on cyber security maintenance cost and cyber security acquisition cost. The study adopted the descriptive statistics, correlation approach, as well as panel least square. E- View software was used for the analysis. The study found that Cyber security maintenance cost has significant effect on performance of deposit money bank in Nigeria. (t-test 3.491757, p=0.0008). Cyber security acquisition cost has no significant effect on performance of deposit money bank in Nigeria. (t-test 0.959399, p=0.3405).

Ifechukwu-Jacobs & Atueyi, (2024). Material management and productivity of Nigeria bottling appraised the material management and productivity of Nigerian Bottling Company. The study adopted survey method of research. Data were generated through primary and secondary sources. The method for data collection was questionnaire which was administered randomly among the staff of Nigerian Bottling Company. The population of the study was 288 staff. while two hundred and seventy (270) questionnaires were retrieved. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis method at 0.05% level of

significance. The findings of the study revealed, Planning has a significant effect on productivity in Bottling Companies in Onitsha given its F-value of 14.027. Material procurement has a significant effect on productivity in Bottling Companies in Onitsha given its F-value of 33.048. Logistic has a significant effect on productivity in Bottling Companies in Onitsha given its F-value of 9.418. Stock and waste control has a significant effect on productivity in Bottling Companies in Onitsha.

Ifechukwu-Jacobs, Arinze, Nwangwu & Atueyi, (2025) The study analyzed the financial literacy and its impact on youth entrepreneurship in South East Nigeria. The objective of the study was to; ascertain the effect of financial knowledge, financial behaviour and financial expertise on youth entrepreneurship in South East Nigeria. Three research hypotheses are formulated in line with the above objectives of the study. Descriptive survey design method was used; Structured questionnaire were use to gather information from the population. The population of the study is made of youths from age 20-39 in South East zone of Nigeria, which is 50,222,32 target population. It comprises of all the youths in South East Nigeria, while the sample size is 399 were gotten through taro yamane formular. The researcher distributes three hundred and ninety-nine (399) questionnaires but only three hundred and seventy-three (373) copies of questionnaire were retrieved. Correlation and t-test method of data analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The finding of the study shows that; Financial knowledge has significant positive effect on youth entrepreneurship in South East Nigeria. Financial behaviour has significant positive effect on youth entrepreneurship in South East Nigeria. The study recommends that Banks should develop a mechanism (expansion of financial knowledge facilities) to educate and expand the financial knowledge of the youths who are entrepreneurs. Banks in Southeast should conduct account opening programme specifically for young entrepreneurs to expand their experience of financial behavior.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design where data concerning competitive strategy were collected. The primary source of data that was used in this study was from questionnaire (structured questionnaire). This is because of the nature of the variables that were used. The study focus on classifications of hotels described as 'hospitality house' within the Central Business District of Anambra state. The available information from the hospitality association of Anambra state chapter is 213 hotels of this category. In each hotel, the study targeted either the manager or deputy manger. The target population therefore was 426 persons.

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and percentages. Inferential statistics such as t-tests were also used. The significance level was set at $p< 0.01$ for every statistical set. The specific effect of independent variables vis-à-vis the dependent variable was tested through the multiple regression analysis.

Decision rule: We accept Ho, if p-value is greater than 5% level of significance; otherwise we reject Ho, to accept Hi

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression result was employed to test the effect of independent or explanatory variables on the dependent variables. The result of the multiple regression analysis is presented in the tables below:

Table 4.1.1 Summary of the Regression Result

The result of the multiple regressions formulated in chapter three is presented in the tables below:

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.175[a]	.031	.025	1.42675	.031	5.885	2	374	.003	1.617

a. Predictors: (Constant), DCS, CLS

b. Dependent Variable: EPO

Table 4.1.1 shows that R^2 which measures the strength of the effect of independent variable on the dependent variable have the value of 0.31%. This implies that 31% of the variation on competitive strategy is explained by variations in cost leadership strategy (CLS) and differentiation cost strategy (DCS). This was supported by adjusted R^2 of 0.25%.

Test for autocorrelation: This is used test whether errors corresponding to different observation are uncorrelated. If the value of the durbin-watson from the regression result is close to 2 no autocorrelation in that regression result, but if it deviates significantly then there is autocorrelation. The Durbin-Watson statistic (D.W) of 1.6 reveals no autocorrelation in the models. Hence, the result is good for business analysis because the Durbin Watson result is 1.617

4.1.2 ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.959	2	11.979	5.885	.003[b]
	Residual	761.325	374	2.036		
	Total	785.284	376			

a. Dependent Variable: EPO

b. Predictors: (Constant), DCS, CLS

The f-statistics value of 5.885 in table 4.1.2 with f-statistics probability of 0.000 shows that the independent variables has significant effect on independent variables such as cost leadership strategy (CLS) and differentiation cost strategy (DCS) can collectively explain the variations in employee output.

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4.1.3 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.582	.176		9.005	.000	1.237	1.927
	CLS	.302	.142	.177	2.128	.002	.023	.581
	DCS	.227	.162	.003	3.041	.000	.326	.312

a. Dependent Variable: EPO

A'priori Criteria: This is determined by the existing business theories; it also indicates the signs and magnitude of the business parameter under review. In table above, we found out that cost leadership strategy has a positive sign given its value as .302; this implies that a unit increase in cost leadership strategy increases the employee output by 30%, this conform to the a' priori expectation. Differentiation cost strategy has a positive sign given its value as .22%.; this implies that a unit increase in Differentiation cost strategy increases the employee output by 22%, this conform to the a' priori expectation.

T- Statistics**:** The t-test is used to measure the individual statistical significance of our explanatory parameter in the model. From table Coefficients above cost differentiation strategy is 2.128, this is statistically significant, this suggest that it contribute significantly to employee output**.** Differentiation cost strategy is 3.041 this is statistically significant, this suggest that it contribute significantly to employee output at 5% level of significant**.**

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

4.2.1 Test of Hypothesis One

Ho_1: Cost leadership strategy has no significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.

Cost leadership strategy has a t-statistics of 2.128 and a probability value of 0.002 which is statistically significant. Therefore, we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypotheses which state Cost leadership strategy has significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State

4.2.2 Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho_2: Differentiation cost strategy has no significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State.

In testing this hypothesis, the t-statistics and probability value in table above is used. Differentiation cost strategy variables have a t-statistics of 3.041 and a probability value of .000 which is statistically significant. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypotheses which state that Differentiation cost strategy has significant effect on employee output of hospitality industries in Anambra State

CONCLUSION

The competitive strategy analysis effect the improvement of employee output. The theories that already exist about management and organization make more emphasized linkages, that the influence the competitive

strategy analysis to increase employee output. The results of the theoretical evidence from this study can be used to solve problems that occurs the competitive strategy analysis and improvement of employee output. Improvement of employee output can be improved through increases in the competitive strategy analysis. For an organization, the performance is the result of cooperation activities among member or component of the organization in order to realize the goals of the organization. Manager in an organization responsible for managing existing resources with efficient and effective manner. employee output based on the idea that the organization is a voluntary association of productive assets, including human, physical resources and capital, for the purpose of achieving common goals. Organisations needs to understand cost leadership strategy as a way to improve operations and should take advantage of outsourcing tasks to experts in order to help maintain their course of action and position in the market. Some of the ways in which the hotels are able to achieve differentiation is through maintaining quality of staff, offering a variety of services and using superior products

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