

Understanding the Correlation between Organizational Image and Performances of Government Higher Institutions in Nigeria. A Study of Selected Higher Institutions in Niger Delta

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Abstract: - This study examines the relationship between organizational image and performances of government higher institutions in Nigeria. A study of selected higher institutions in Niger delta region .The study made use of a structured questionnaire to obtain data from 222 employees of the selected tertiary institution in Niger delta region. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was used for data analysis. The study also made use of description analysis to analyze the demographic characteristics of the respondents while Pearson Moment Coefficient was used to analyze the hypotheses earlier stated. The result of the study indicates that organizational image has significant effect on institutional performances sustainability and survival in government higher institutions in Nigeria. The four dependent measures (performance, excellence, competitive advantage and global perception) were found to be influenced by organizational image. Institutions can be sustained and survive economically, socially and environmentally by ensuring they top prioritize good image both internally and externally and integrate it into organizational policy and mission.

The study concludes that that concludes that organizational image maintenance is an absolute factor that can be used by management to ensure sustainability and survival in their business operations as this, has the capacity to control, influence, and impact and affect organizational performance survival and sustainability. The study recommended among others that institutions should constantly evaluate their performance from the stakeholder's point of view

I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Generally there has been an ongoing competition among academic institutions in the country, to restore the lost value, culture and discipline in colleges, universities, polytechnics and mono-technics etc, this sudden development was prompted by the need to restructure the deteriorating institutional image which has truncated and affected the school system in the country. There is ample of evidence to verify this claim as it has been discussed wildly in many

research work. Organizational image, which can be viewed as the totality of stakeholder's views and perception of an institutional activities, value and culture over a given period of time. Organizational images, especially that of higher institutions in Nigeria has attracted and engaged many scholars in thinking of what will be of these institutions in the future given its present state. While some social researchers have frown at the ill activities that are inherent in most of this institutions, it is worth noting that activities such as the following are destroying the academic environment of most tertiary institutions in Nigeria, such as ill recruitment ,running of uncertified programs, the use of unqualified staff to run a department , undue extorting by management from students , cultism and lecturers involvement, bribery among academic staff, sorting, delay of staff salary, reluctant to staff promotion and confirmation, non encouragement of scholarly research by institutions, tribalism ,prostitution among students, high school fees, un-conducive learning environment , undue delay of students graduation time etc. These among others have contributed to the de-marketing and tarnishing the reputation of majority of the institutions in the state. Organizational image is very import to maintain given the changes this factor has on the institutions. Every organization exist to achieve a goal which serves as reason for existence, however this goal cannot be achieve without a proper consideration by the organization of its position in the environment. The opinion of all stakeholders is a factor of consideration in ensuring institutional success and survival .Hence the need to cultivate, maintain and possibly, efficiently manage societal perception of their operation. Ethically responsible is a key to image management. As a good moral conduct is wholesome to the functionality of any institution in the world.

lately in the business world, there has been a fierce competition between firms, especially those in the same industry due to the changes in the business environment

(Mohammed & Shahid, 2014). The survival of organization in this dynamic environment solely depend not only on the resources they possess but also on the image they portray and which the markets holds of them. (Aswini, 2013).

The industrial environment this day is fast changing and becoming more competitive, hence the need for institutions to position their selves competitively in the environment. Having positive image is a key factor in surviving the fierce competition. Organizational image can be said to be as the perception, opinion and value stakeholders and others form on the organization and how the organization wishes to be viewed. This could be internal or external perception that people form of the organization. Building a competitive image is quite difficult; but the ability of an institution to maintain the built positive image is the key to success and sustainability as bad image is capable of dragging the institutions to mud. Developing solid image is very imperative factor that could contribute towards building a long-term sustainable success of any higher institution. An organizational image aims to position the organization and stand out in the industry.

Normally, positive corporate image of an organization aid it in securing customer loyalty, increased sales, earnings, societal acceptance, attract good employees, ability to obtain loans and increase stakeholders' trust in the company as noted by (Virvilaite & Daubaraitė 2011). Hence the reason why some schools, project an effective corporate image by building strong and supportive relationships with their stakeholders. The image of an institution goes a long way in communicating the organization's mission, the professionalism of its leadership, the caliber of its employees and its role within the environment (Robert, 2002). This, is one of the most basic factor. Before anybody will agree to do business with any institution, he/she will first of all asses the image of the company vis-à-vis its general perception by members of the public. As a concept, corporate image is based on the recognition that customers prefer one firm or buy products not only because of their inherent qualities but also because of a bias, a disposition towards product of selected companies (Balmer, 2001). The corporate image of an organization affects people's selection or rejection of its services and products. Since an organization's corporate image affects stakeholder's behavior, they therefore strive to build, develop and manage positive images.

Organizational Corporate image management is a major key to maintain public trust (Deephouse, 2000). It include all those actions undertaken solely for maintaining and regaining a required image in the eyes of the stakeholders. While every institution may have its corporate image, it is worth saying that image differ from one institution to the others especially in this region. Institution may have both positive and negative, depending on public or stakeholders perception. Thus, an institutions well-managed and developed image could transcend or reflect its level of commitment to quality, excellence, customers satisfaction, good relationship with its stakeholders governing bodies and the general public at large

as noted by (Deephouse, 2000). Managing an institutions image involves not only discipline by the management but it also requires a continues practice and processes. This is because a one-time practice cannot guarantee sustainability but a systematic and continuous one, enables an image to be built. Aswini, (2013) suggested that firms should engage in continuous management of their image as this decreases the possibility of organizational failure.

Problems of research

Tertiary institution is one of the major forces in nations building due to its pivotal function in human capacity development. Its significant role in economic, social-cultural and technological advancement is second to none. However, despite its tremendous impact to the society, the rate of institutional deterioration and fall- in- standard has continually rising. The wearing and tearing of the institutional values and code of conduct have raised much issues in contemporary research as no permanent solution has been proffer to the declining nature of this institutions especially in Niger delta region which has de-marketed and affect their performance. While most of its challenges has been attributed to the fall in societal value, corruption, favoritism, nepotism, tribalism, bribery and administrative malpractices have constituted to the fall-out of good corporate image of institutions in the Niger delta region, it is worth noting that this has reduced their stakeholder perception of them, thus, affected their performances.

However, work has been done by scholars in the area of competitive advantage without much emphasis on corporate image management as a tool for optimizing and achieving organizational strategic goals in government tertiary institutions in Niger delta. It is in this light of the above that the study intends to understand the relationship between corporate organizational image and performance of government higher institutions in Nigeria.

Objective of study

The study's specific objectives include:

1. To determine the impact of corporate image on performance of government higher institutions in Niger delta
2. To determine the impact of corporate image on academic excellence of students in government higher institutions in Niger delta
3. To determine the impact of corporate image on competitive advantage of government higher institutions in Niger delta.
4. To determine the impact of corporate image on global view of government higher institutions in Niger delta

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between organizational image and performance of government higher institutions in Niger delta .
2. There is no significant relationship between organizational image and academic excellence of students in government higher institutions in Niger delta.
3. There is no significant relationship between organizational image and competitive advantage of government higher institutions in Niger delta.
4. There is no significant relationship between organizational image and global perception of government higher institutions in Niger delta.

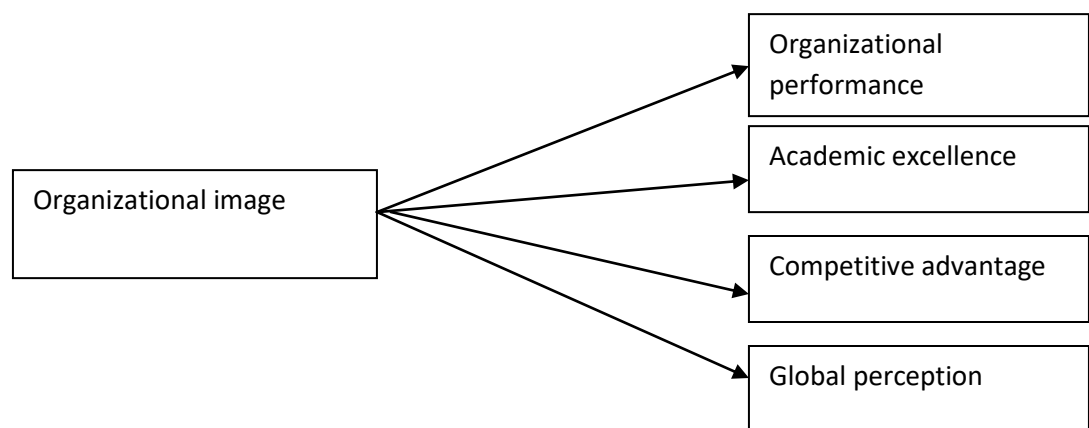
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of organizational image

Institutional image can be perceived as the sum-total of internal and external perception, belief, value ,opinions , thought by stakeholders etc towards university (Landrum et al., 1998). What stake holders says and believes has a long way of positioning an institution in an environment and society at large. An ill perception bay a given stakeholder has

a tendency of passing a wrong information to others. Most tertiary institution are constantly enhancing their image through different policies and mechanism so as to be globally competitive in their ever-changing environment (Parameswaran and Glowacka 1995) .image building becomes one of the top priority in most organization today as it has the capacity of increasing both individual and institutions image (Köktürk et al., 2008) . An institution’s image port the total image of that institution. According to Whetten and Markey (2002), organizational image portrays an important bridge between internal and external customers. As noted by (Köktürk et al., 2008), several studies have reported that institutional image increases the achievement of the firm . A school image is that unique attribute that distinguishes it from other institutions. An organization’s identity is its personality; what makes it unique. van Riel and Balmer (1997), has noted that “identity of an institution is the unique characteristic which are rooted in the behavior of members of the organization. Thus, sustaining an organizational mage becomes an on-going process. Successful and effective maintenance of image entail ensuring constant feedback from stakeholders and making necessary adjustment to its general activities base on the stakeholders responses .

Fig.1 Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher’s Conceptualization, 2020.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework of organizational image on organizational performance

Academic Excellence

Building a strong and competitive graduates has been a core mandate of every institutions globally .The performance and achievement of students has been one of top priority among tertiary institute as this is not only a pointer but a major determinant of the future of youths and national development .

According to Adeyemo (2001), who suggested that the primary concern and goal of any institution , is to develop and

ensure policies and programmes that facilitates the attainment of student academic excellence .

Furthermore, environment which promotes and encourages hard work and excellence is welcomed in any society. Thus, removal of any form of act that may mar the image of the institutions should be encouraged as this weakens academic exercise and development of any society.

As noted by Adeyemo (2001), while other concerns must be given attention, a top priority should be on the achievement of

sound scholarship. Further, as noted by (Osiki, 2001) society driven by education sustainability this days places premium on academic achievement; excellent academic achievement of students is often the expectation of both government and parents. Institutional action and activities both positive and negative, to a large extent affect her students.

Competitive Advantage

As noted by (Wang 2014) competitive advantage is only achieved and acquired by an institution through the operations and attributes it possess which enables it to outperform its competitors in the industry. It is a unique strategy that makes an organization stand firm among others. Those attributes, values, norms, process, policies and programs gives the institution an edge over its competitors. This was further explained and agreed by (Huff et al 2009) when they revealed that, anytime the activity of a given enterprise are more profitable in contrast to other competitors activities in the market and outperforms them, a firm is said to have a competitive advantage in the market.

Similarly, schools who are able to put-up policies that negate student extortion, awarding of fake certificate and programs, using incompetent staff for sensitive academic positions, recruitment base on favoritisms and tribalism, cultism as is the case in Nigeria, prostitution, sorting (collecting money, sleeping with student and awarding grades to them) etc stand the chance to be more competitive than others, as this have been discovered as most of the factors depreciating the ethos of institutions especially in the Niger delta.

As noted by (Porter 1958) competitive advantages grows fundamentally out of the value a firm is able to create. The task of every organization should be on creating values that outweigh the cost of creating the value so as to be competitive in the market.

Global Perception

Generally, education is a basic tool for any nations human development and a key factor to societal peace sustainability. Thus, how it is programmed and run becomes a major concern to all stakeholders. Its activities, values, culture, image etc have been a major concern and interest to both national and international stakeholders. Thus, governments and society have a vested interest in ensuring a constant flow of students in higher education. Both corporate organizations and government have places more emphases on human development as can be seen by numerous academic elevating programs sponsored by both government, Individual, corporate bodies both local and international.

As suggested by (Briukhanov, Kiselev, Timchenko, & Vdovin, 2010), an in-depth understanding of the need to develop and maintaining of quality attractive image in the organization is very important so as to encourage and attract more customer who are loyal. furthermore, a quality educational practices increase market share of an institution.

For this to be achieved it entails a quality assurance of both the programs, policies and activities.

Also, higher education institutions need to assure a standard quality of service to the public, to sustain in the market environment they operate. Since people buys value, an attempt to create a product and service that is satisfying should be a core strategy in other to stay in the industry.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in tertiary institution in Niger Delta area of Nigeria. The study used a well structured questionnaire to obtain data from two hundred and sixty seven (267) staff of the selected tertiary institution in the region which was determined using the Taro Yamane formula from total population of eight hundred (800) staff of the selected institutions, out of which, only two hundred and twenty two (222) were found useful for further analysis. The questionnaire was structured in five (5) sections (Section A – E). Section A captured the demographical characteristics of the respondents, Section B contains eight (8) relevant questions on organizational image, Section C contains relevant questions on organizational performance, Section D contains relevant questions on academic excellence and competitive advantage and Section E contains relevant questions on global perception. Data was analyzed with the help of statistical software SPSS 23.0. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the demographical characteristics of the respondents while Pearson Moment Coefficient Correlation was employed to test the three hypotheses that were raised in the study.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Demographical Characteristic of Respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	134	60.4
	Female	88	39.6
	Total	222	100
Age	25 -30	42	18.9
	31-38	44	19.8
	39 – 45	54	24.3
	Above 45	82	36.9
	Total	222	100
Marital	Single	79	35.6
	Married	141	63.5
	Divorced	2	0.9
	Total	222	100
Educational Qualification	SSCE	23	10.4

	OND/NCE	37	16.7
	B.Sc/HND	106	47.7
	M.Sc/MBA	56	28.0
	Total	222	100
Duration	1 – 5 Years	83	37.4
	6 – 10 Years	110	49.5
	Above 10 Years	29	13.1
	Total	222	100

Source: Field Survey, 2020.

Table 1 above shows the demographical characteristics of the respondents. Out of 222 respondents 134(60.%) are male while the remaining 88 (39.6%) are female which implies that majority of the employees in the selected firm are male. We can conclude that male dominate most of the institution. Regarding respondents' age 42(18.9%) of the respondents are between age 25 and 30, 44(19.8%) of the respondents are between age 31 – 38, 54(24.3%) of the respondents are between age 39 and 45 while the remaining 82(36.9%) of the respondents are above 45 years of age. This implies that majority of the staff in the selected institution are above 47 years of age. This connotes that matured employees dominate majority of the institution in the region. Furthermore, 79(35.6%) of the respondents are unmarried, 141(63.5%) of the respondents are married while the remaining 2(0.9%) have lost their partner. This implies that majority of the respondents are married. This suggested that majority of the staff in the institutions are responsible and have people to cater for. Also Academically, 23(10.4%) of the respondents are SSCE certificate holder and have no higher institution certificate. 37(16.7%) of the respondents have Ordinary National Diploma (OND)/National Certificate in Education (NCE) certificate, 106(47.7%) of the respondents have Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)/Higher National Diploma (HND) certificate while the remaining 56(28.0%) of the respondents have Masters of Science (M.Sc.)/Masters of Business Administration (MBA) certificate. This implies that majority of the respondents are B.Sc/M.Sc certificate holder. This also suggest that the institution are dominated by elite people. Based on the number of years each respondent has spend in the organization, 83(37.4%) of the respondents have working in the case organization between a year and 5 years, 110(49.5%) of the respondents have been working in the organization between 6 years and 10 years while 29(13.1%) of the respondents have been working in the institutions over 10 years ago. This implies that majority of the respondents have spent between 6 years and 10 years in the organization. This connotes that experienced people and those that know more about the organization dominate the organization.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between corporate image and performance of government higher institutions in Niger delta region.

		Corporate Image	Organizational Performance
Corporate Image	Pearson Correlation	1	.599**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	222	222
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.599**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	222	222

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

Pearson correlation Value of hypothesis is 0.599 (59.9%). It shows that there is strong and positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables with r value of 0.599 (59.9%) with significant level of 0.000 which is greater than 0.05 (5%). Hence, it is concluded there is a significant relationship between Organizational image and Performance. As this, helps in boasting the performance of the organization through its values, policies and programs that the institution carries out. Therefore, the decision would be to a reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that, there is no significant relationship between organizational image and its performance in government higher institutions in Niger delta .and accept the alternative hypothesis. This finding implies that the higher the effort an organization make to promote its image in terms of values , discipline and programs , in the institution , the higher level of performance in such organization.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between corporate image and academic excellence of students in government higher institutions in Niger delta region.

		Corporate Image	Academic Excellence
Corporate Image	Pearson Correlation	1	.520**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	222	222
Academic Excellence	Pearson Correlation	.520**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	222	222

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation Value of hypothesis is 0.520 (52.0%). It shows that there is strong and positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables with r value of 0.520 (52.0%) with significant level of 0.000 which is greater than 0.05 (5%). Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between Organizational image and academic

excellence of students in government higher institutions in Niger delta region .

Therefore, the decision would be to a reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that, there is no significant relationship between organizational image and students academic excellence in government higher institutions in Niger delta and accept the alternative hypothesis.

The findings implies that student tends to achieve more when the school system is less corrupt ,where there is a good value system, a conducive learning environment with learning aides etc and the higher the effort an institution make to promote its image in terms of being student oriented , good academic policies and programs in the institution , the higher their level of academic performance .

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between corporate image and competitive advantage of government higher institutions in Niger delta region.

Table		Correlations	
		Corporate Image	Competitive Advantage
Corporate Image	Pearson Correlation	1	.467**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	222	222
Competitive Advantage	Pearson Correlation	.467**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	222	222

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation Value of hypothesis is 0.467 (46.7%). It reviewed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables with r value of 0.467 (46.7%) with significant level of 0.000 which is greater than 0.05 (5%). Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between Organizational image and institutional competitive advantages in government higher institutions in Niger delta region.

Therefore, the decision would be to a reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that, there is no significant relationship between organizational image and competitive advantages in government higher institutions in Niger delta and accept the alternative hypothesis.

The findings suggest that these institutions have a possibility of being competitive in their environment among others when they have an excellent image or perception in the eyes of their stakeholders , and have a unique quality in terms of their academic programs, socially responsible to their stakeholders ,early student graduation ,good staffing ,conducive learning environment etc the higher the effort these institution make to promote its image , the higher the likely chances of being competitive in the academic environment .

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between organizational image and global perception of government higher institutions in Niger delta

Table		Correlations	
		Corporate Image	Global perception
Corporate Image	Pearson Correlation	1	.407**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	222	222
Global perception	Pearson Correlation	.407**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	222	222

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation Value of hypothesis is 0.407 (40.7%). It shows that there is moderate and positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables with r value of 0.407 (40.7%) with significant level of 0.000 which is greater than 0.05 (5%). Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between Organizational image and global perception .

Therefore, the decision would be to a reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that, there is no significant relationship between organizational image and global perception in government higher institutions in Niger delta and accept the alternative hypothesis.

. The finding shows that these institutions have a lot work to do in terms of both their activities and standard they maintain . Since it has shown that the societal perception of the institutions has a role to play in the institutions survival and sustainability, it then entail that building a good image should be among the top goal of tertiary institutions .The higher the effort these institutions make in promoting its image, the more acceptable it becomes to the stakeholders as this is a determinant factor in the academia.

V. CONCLUSION

The study examined the impact of organizational image on institutions performance in government higher institutions in Niger delta. Having reviewed some of related literatures and test some hypotheses that were raised in the study. The findings from the analysis all revealed that organizational image has a significant effect on institutional performances in the region. The variables (academic excellence, competitive advantage, global perception) that were used in the study have both moderate and strong significant impact on organizational performance . Institutions can be sustained and survive economically, socially and environmentally by ensuring they top prioritize good image both internally and externally and integrate it into organizational policy and mission , as this has capability to determine business survival and sustainability. On this premise, the study thereby

concludes that organizational image maintenance is an absolute factor that can be used by management to ensure sustainability in their business operations. Organizational image has the capacity to control, influence, and impact and affect organizational performance survival and sustainability.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore, recommended that:

1. Institutions should constantly evaluate their performance from the stakeholders view
2. Reviewing of policies which are not in line with the institutions mission. This is to check deviations and make necessary adjustment where applicable
3. There should be need to re-emphasize the importance of discipline, value and standard to both academic and non-academic staff. This will serve as a guide to action to the staff
4. Administrative mal-practices should be looked into by independent bodies of government . This will help in serving penalties to corrupt tertiary institutions staff .

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