



STRATEGIC ALLIANCE AND ITS EFFECT ON ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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Article History

Received: 01/01/2025

Accepted: 06/01/2025

Published: 08/01/2025

Vol – 4 Issue –1

PP: - 05-12

Abstract

The study examined the effect of strategic alliance on organizational effectiveness of manufacturing firms in Benue and Plateau State Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to examine the effect of strategic alliance proxies by technology, marketing and structural alliance on the organizational effectiveness proxies by productivity. The study also mediated the effect of environmental dynamism of the relationship between strategic alliance and organization effectiveness. A survey research design was adopted for the study, the population consisted of 1119 employees of the 15 manufacturing companies in Benue and Plateau State. A sample size of 294 was arrived at using Taro Yamane formula. A purposive sampling technique was used in selection of companies involved in processing and also the departments involved in alliance while a stratified sampling was used in selecting employees in various companies, multiple regression was used in analysis. Findings from the study revealed that technology alliance and marketing alliance had significant effect of organizational effectiveness while there was no significant effect of structural alliance on organizational effectiveness. Environmental dynamism had significant effect between strategic alliance and organizational effectiveness. The study concludes that strategic alliance has significant effect on organizational effectiveness and recommended amongst other things, that manufacturing companies should encourage partnership in areas of technology, innovation and research to boost effectiveness, this could be achieved through collaborations in terms of training of personnel, joint sponsorship in research.

Key words: Strategic Alliance, technological alliance, marketing alliance structural alliance organizational effectiveness.

1.0 Introduction

The manufacturing industry all over the globe is considered the engine of development (MaCausland & Theodossiou, 2012; Attiah, 2019; Lectard, 2023). The sector serves as a conduit for the production of goods and services, creation of massive employment and increase revenue generation (Olorunfemi *et al*, 2013) and is seen as part of the solution of the traumatic effect caused by global financial crises (Olorunfemi *et al* 2013). This is evident in developed countries of the world such as America, Russia, Germany and China. Today, these countries are considered 'Great Nations' through the instrumentality of their manufacturing industries.

In Africa and Nigeria in particular over half of the gross domestic product (GDP) is accounted for by the primary sector, with agriculture playing a significant role and of course, the oil and gas sector as a major driver of the economy

accounting for 95% of export earnings in Nigeria (Chete *et al.*, 2012; MaCausland & Theodossiou, 2012; Attiah 2019, Lectard, 2023)

The breakdown of statistics from (Bureau of statistics, 2023) revealed that the manufacturing sector grew by 30.93% in 2023 compared 6.93% in 2022 while the contribution of manufacturing to Nominal GDP in the fourth quarter of 2023 was 16.04% , although the figure seems higher than the corresponding period in 2022 which was at 13.49% marginal increase has little impact of the economy. As at the third quarter of 2023, the manufacturing industry witness an increase of about 2.43% rise in GDP (National Bureau of statistics 2023). The implication of the statistics above indicates that, though manufacturing capacity utilization increased steadily, the growth rate of the contribution of manufacturing sector to GDP is negligible compared to the growth of manufacturing capacity utilization in the economy

in order words, the manufacturing industry has not been effective enough to support any meaningful economic growth (Adayi, 2016). The sector is faced with several challenges to include; poor infrastructural facilities such as epileptic power supply, bad roads and with most raw materials and equipments acquired abroad. In recent times the crumbling economic indices also revealed that the sector is worst hit due to high exchange rates and interest rates which greatly hamper growth and expansion

To address the alarming state of ineffectiveness in the manufacturing sector, solutions have been proposed by government which includes; National development plan, Structural adjustment plan (SAP) and Central bank of Nigeria (CBN) interventions such as the Anchor Borrowers Fund all of which are aimed at stimulating effectiveness but the situation has not improved resulting to high levels of unemployment, low income for government and poor standard of living. Aside government interventions, academic interests have also been aroused to understand the antecedents of the poor state of the manufacturing sector. Earlier research studies have focused on understanding how specific aspects of management such as leadership (Karauri & Kyongo, 2024) employee motivation (Singh, 2015; Olufade, 2019), organizational design (Hemwani & Husaini, 2023). Lately, studies have suggested that strategic alliance stands a better chance in addressing the problems in the manufacturing sector especially given the present situation of the sector where the sector is confronted with competition from foreign goods, swift technological change and changing marketing dynamics. Leveraging on this position, this study proposes strategic alliance as an antecedent of organizational effectiveness.

Previous studies (Muthoka & Odur, 2014; Aun, 2014; Kambiez, Jahangir & Hamideh, 2017) have explored the influence of strategic alliance on performance but have failed to take into consideration the context within which organizations function. This study creates a point of departure by extending the strategic alliance model to include environmental dynamism as a mediator in the strategic alliance-organizational effectiveness nexus. Studies on strategic alliance tend to focus on the technological, marketing aspects of partnership, this study incorporated structural alliance as a variable to examine if the control and reporting system could affect effectiveness of the manufacturing sector. Thus, the study explores the effect of strategic alliance on organizational effectiveness, proposing environmental dynamism as the likely mechanism through which the link between strategic alliance and organizational effectiveness is sustained. This model is was tested using a sample of 8 manufacturing companies in Benue and Plateau states in Nigeria. The study is structured as follows: the introduction, the theoretical foundation, conceptual and empirical review, methodology, analysis and conclusion.

2.0 HEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The study was anchored on the transaction cost theory propounded by Ronald Cosase (1937) who revealed how firms make choices about the most ideal governance structure.

The theory stipulates that transaction cost arise due to bounded rationality, opportunistic behaviors as well as asset specificity. By bounded rationality, which is mainly as a result of complexity and environmental uncertainty which is not within the control of the organization, (Cesarani, 2014). In order words, these are uncontrollable externalities in the environment that cannot accurately be predicted but have the ability of affecting the smooth running of the organization.

Opportunistic behavior as defined by Williamsson (1981) is regarded as a behavior that is self interest seeking and accompanied with guile. It simply means that individual parties to strategic alliance are likely to pursue their personal goals at the expense of the general interest of parties to the alliance and this has the potential of increases cost. Lastly, asset specificity is investment made for supporting a particular transaction which does not create value outside of it. The theory addresses the main and contending issues in alliance such as opportunistic behaviors exhibited by alliance partners which could lead to increases cost and the theory also acknowledges the dynamism of the environment which the study mediated hence the usefulness of the theory to the study.

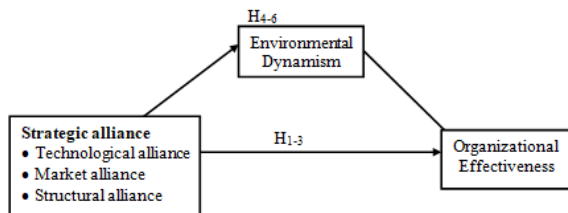
Strategic alliance

Alliance is partnership or agreement which could be formal or informal between two or more /persons or business units with the aim of achieving an objective. Alliances are regarded as strategic because they are carried out by top management team of the organization and are usually long-term in nature and it is capable of affecting the structure, control as well as ownership of the new organization formed. Amitat, *et al* (2011) defined strategic alliance as an agreement between two or more companies to which the jointly contribute capabilities, resources or expertise, and which individual companies remain distinct with each firm giving up total control in return for the ability to participate in and benefit from joint venture relationships. The study defined strategic alliance as an intentional agreement by top managers of two or more organization to take advantage of opportunities within and outside the environment to achieve their desired goals. Muthoka (2013) operationalized SA in terms of technological alliance, product alliances and market alliances. The current study adopted and modified (Muthoka, 2013) model, the reason for the adoption of Muthoka's model is the fact that the model clearly spelt out some of the alliances that are common and feasible in the manufacturing industry in Nigeria

Strategic alliance if well executed should lead to organizational effectiveness (Emami *et al*, 2022). Organizational effectiveness is a complex yet contentious concept; there are conflicting arguments as to what constitute organizational effectiveness or on how it is measured. Mott (2007) viewed organizational effectiveness in terms of organizations that produce more and higher quality output and adapt effectively to environmental and internal problems than their competitors. Richard *et al* (2009) posits that organizational effectiveness captures organizational performance together with the myriad internal performance outcomes normally associated with more efficient or effective

operations and other external measures that relate to considerations which are encompassing and simply associated with economic valuation by shareholders, managers and customers.

In this study, organizational effectiveness has been viewed and operationalized specifically in terms of productivity (Georgopoulos & Tannenbaum, 2016). Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum (2016) noted that the concept of effectiveness subsumes the following general criteria of organizational productivity.



Technological alliance and organizational effectiveness

Technological alliance involves the total number of SA that a firm has developed in terms of R&D, innovation as well as staff training in new and relevant technology over a period of time (Nishimiyimana & Kule, 2018). Technological alliances can be defined as a formal collaboration between independent organizations in which technology developments is a strategic objective at least for one alliance partner (Sadowski & Duysters, 2008). Muthok & Oduar’s (2014) study focused on the effect of strategic alliance on organizational performance supermarket and their alliances in Kenya. Result revealed that there was a strong, negative correlation between technological alliances and performance. In a related study, Vrand *et al*, (2007) conducted a study on external technology sourcing: the effect of uncertainty on governance mode choice. Result indicated that non-equity alliances are the preferred mechanism to deal with unforeseen contingencies whereas joint ventures are the least favorable.

H₁: Technology alliance has no effect on organizational performance.

Marketing alliance and organizational effectiveness

Marketing alliance are formalized collaborative arrangements between two or more organizations focused on downstream value chain (Das *et al.*, 1998; Rindfleisch & Moorman, 2001). Alliance marketing occurs when two or more companies jointly cooperate for the purpose of promoting, selling a product or service (Palmatier, 2008). Alliance marketing is often employed by business interested in mutually beneficial corporation.

Swaminathan and Moorman (2009) conducted a study on marketing alliance, firm network and firm value creation. Result showed that marketing alliance create value for the firm in announcement period event window. Similarly, Salimi *et al* (2011) explored on cooperative marketing alliances for new products commercialization as an entrepreneurial strategy. Result indicated that cooperation marketing may offer an entrepreneurial approach to new product commercialization and well promote the marketing abilities of

football clubs. In a related study, Dai and Kauffman (2006) carried out a study on the understanding B2B E-market alliance strategies. Findings revealed that B2B e-marketing tend to set up cooperative relations more frequently.

H₂: Marketing alliance has no effect on organization effectiveness.

Structural Alliance and Organizational Effectiveness

Alliance structure connects groups of individuals of partnering organizations across organizational boundaries (Bouty, 2000; Davis and Eisenhardt, 2011). In order words, structure connect decision makers and contributors from different positions within partnering organizations and further assign responsibilities for the formulation of alliance strategy and for the operation of alliance.

Li, Yu and Wu (2014) conducted a study on the effect of alliance structure on knowledge innovation and performance in R&D alliances, the mediating effect of organizational learning. Findings from the study revealed that alliance structure is positively associated with STI learning also DUI learning is positively associated with knowledge innovation performance. A similar study was carried out by Gulati (1995) who investigated social structure and alliance formation: A longitudinal analysis. Findings revealed that there is a relationship between strategic interdependence and social structural as explained in alliance formation. Das and Tang (2008) carried out a study on governance structure choice in strategic alliance: Result showed that the roles of alliance management objectives, alliance management experience and international partners are demonstrated as being significant as determinants of governance choice in alliance, hence, the study proposed the third hypothesis

H₃: Structural alliance has no effect on organizational effectiveness

Mediating effect of environmental dynamism on strategic alliance and organizational effectiveness

An environment is said to be dynamic if it is characterized by changes in various market elements such as customer preferences, technology, economic instability and competitive structure. Zahra and Covin (2005) assert that business firms that operate under a turbulent environment need to perpetually renew products/services so as to align to environmental changes. Thus in highly dynamic environment, frequent changes in customer demand, technology and business practices require firms to frequently modify their product or services to remain competitive. Environmental dynamism is often considered as a determinant of performance (Adebisi, 1987; Adeoye & Elegunde, 2012). However, macro environmental factors exert greater impact on almost all organizations (Baruch, 1999). Cool and Schendel (1988) carried out a study on foreign entry strategy and firm performance in public SMEs in USA. Findings indicated that accuracy in aligning strategies and environment is necessary to maximize the achievement of company’s performance. Ellitain (2017) explored on manufacturing strategy, environmental dynamism and performance relationship: an empirical amongst Indonesian large manufacturers, Findings

revealed that large manufacturing companies in Indonesia are found to practice manufacturing strategies to compete in the Indonesian manufacturing companies.. Similarly, Cooper and Schindler (2003) explored the impact of external business environment on organizational performance in food and beverages industry in Nigeria, These studies found unanimous support for the moderating effect of environment on the strategy- performance relationship. This leads us to the fourth, fifth and sixth hypotheses which states that;

H₄: Environmental dynamism does not mediate the relationship between technology alliance and organizational effectiveness

H₅: Environmental dynamism does not mediate the relationship between market alliance and organizational effectiveness.

H₆: Environmental dynamism does not mediate the relationship between structural alliance and organizational effectiveness.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research work adopted a survey research design since the aim is to obtain information which can be analyzed, and patterns extracted. The study population consisted of (1119) employees of the 15 manufacturing companies who are into processing in Plateau and Benue State as indicated by members of Nigeria Association of Small and Medium Scale industrialist (NASSI) and Plateau State ministry of Commerce and Industries, Mines and Agriculture. Taro Yamane formula was used to arrived at the sample size of (294). A purposive

and a stratified sampling procedure was adopted. A purposive sampling technique was used to select companies based on their scale of operations, technological involvement and alliance formed. In adopting a stratified sampling technique, the entire population under study was divided into three (3) strata; administrative, technical and marketing departments of the various manufacturing companies this is because these departments are involved in alliance with other companies. However, after exclusion of wrongly filled questionnaires and those with incomplete data, a final number of 292 questionnaires were used for data analysis, with regression as the data analytic technique.

A five-point likert-type scale was used in the measurement of the variables used in the study unless otherwise stated. The dependent variable was measured using modified measures validated by Spangenberg and Theron (2004) with sample questions covering ‘productivity etc. The dimensions of strategic alliance proxies as technological, marketing and structural were measured using modified version of the validated measures by (Muthoka, 2013). Lastly organizational effectiveness was measured using a modified validated measures developed by (Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum, 2016) while environmental dynamism mediated the relationship.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses the analysis of the result of both the descriptive and inferential statistics of the study. First, the descriptive statistics of the study variables are discussed.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
TA	415	3.00	5.00	4.4627	.55858	-.395	.120	-.867	.239
MA	415	3.00	5.00	4.7060	.56921	-1.805	.120	2.209	.239
SA	415	3.00	5.00	4.5687	.53341	-.660	.120	-.784	.239
ED	415	4.00	5.00	4.6265	.48432	-.525	.120	-1.733	.239
OE	415	2.00	5.00	4.6747	.62763	-2.450	.120	4.055	.239
Valid N (listwise)	415								

SOURCE: SPSS Output, 2024.

Table 1 shows the result of the descriptive statistics of the study variables. It shows that technological alliance has a mean score of 4.46 implying that majority of the respondents agreed that technological alliance is a component of strategic alliance, this implies that organizations can explore to gain competitiveness and remain afloat in business. The table also shows that marketing alliance has a mean score of 4.71 implying that majority of the respondents agreed that marketing alliance is a component of strategic alliance that organizations can use to implement future plans of the business. The table also revealed that structural alliance has a mean agreement score of 4.57 implying that structural alliance is agreed to be a component of strategic alliance that organizations use for future benefits. For environmental dynamism, the respondents strongly agreed (mean of 4.63) with the question. Meanwhile, productivity has a response mean of 4.68 inferring that productivity is a yardstick for measuring organizational effectiveness. Thus, the minimum

and maximum scores stood at between 2 and 5 respectively while the standard deviation stood at between 0.48432 and 0.62763. This implies that there are no wide variations among the responses of the respondents.

Table 2 Correlation Matrix

Correlations

		TA	MA	SA	ED	OE
TA	Pearson Correlation	1				
MA	Pearson Correlation	.148**	1			
SA	Pearson Correlation	.031	-.212**	1		
ED	Pearson Correlation	.149**	.223**	-.101*	1	
OE	Pearson Correlation	.334**	.448**	-.132**	.028	1
	N	415	415	415	415	415

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

The correlation matrix above shows that the coefficients are all less than 0.70 which indicates the absence of collinearity among the independent variables of the study and by extension the absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables.

Table 3 Model Summary

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	.727 ^a	.529	.512	.53552	.529	52.559	3	411	.000	2.327

a. Predictors: (Constant), SA, TA, MA

b. Dependent Variable: OE

The goodness of fit results is as displayed in Table 3. The regression model provided an R² value of 0.529. This implies that the strategic alliance variables used in this model can explain 52.9% of variation in organizational effectiveness. The remaining percentage (47.1%) can be accounted by other variables other than those used in this study.

Table 4: Coefficients of the Variable

Table 5: Coefficients of the Variable

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.535	.389		3.943	.000
TA	.311	.048	.277	6.524	.000
TAED	.379	.053	.337	7.180	.000
MA	.436	.048	.395	9.101	.000
MAED	.513	.050	.465	10.331	.000
SA	-.066	.051	-.056	-1.310	.191
SAED	-.153	.058	-.130	-2.648	.008

a. Dependent Variable: OE

Result From table 4 revealed that technological alliance has a positive effect on the organizations' effectiveness with a coefficient value of 0.311. Similarly, marketing alliance has positive effect on the organizational effectiveness with a coefficient value of .436. However, structural alliance has a negative effect on the effectiveness of the organization with a coefficient values of -.066. When strategic alliance is mediated by environmental dynamism, technological alliance, marketing alliance and structural alliance increased in coefficients to 0.379, 0.513 and -0.153. It can be deduced from this analysis that environmental dynamism had the potentials of mediating the relationship between strategic alliance and organizational effectiveness.

Discussion of Findings

From the test of hypotheses, it was found that technological alliance has positive significant effect on organizational effectiveness. This implies that technological alliance has the ability to improve organizational effectiveness. This is supported by studies such as Camison *et al.*, (2007) and Muthok and Oduar's (2014) which also found that technological alliance has positive significant effect on organizational effectiveness. This implies that increase alliances in terms of innovation, R&D would increase effectiveness in the organization. Marketing alliance had significant positive effect on organizational effectiveness as supported by the works of (Swaminathan and Moorman, 2009; Salimi *et al.* 2011). The result of the findings implies that collaborations in areas of marketing organizations goods will significantly improve the effectiveness of the organizations. More so, structural alliance was found to be negatively significant to organizational effectiveness. This result has support of Casciaro (2003) study whose findings revealed that none of the firm characteristics had significant effect on the choice of governance form but against the findings of Gulati (1995) who found a positive relationship with structural alliance and performance. The result of mediation effect of environmental dynamism on the three strategic alliance variables of technology alliance, marketing alliance and structural alliance indicates that environmental dynamism fully mediated the relationship between strategic alliance and organizational effectiveness. The findings of the study was supported by (Ellitain, 2017; Cooper and Schindler, 2003) who findings revealed environment moderated between variables.

The result of this study also corresponds with the transaction cost theory which emphasizes the need for managers to avoid indulging in opportunistic behaviors that may cripple the general purpose of the alliance especially when operating within the externalities of environmental uncertainties and their unknown consequences. This study has findings that may differ with those of prior ones due to regulatory, administrative and legal frameworks of different countries where those researches were conducted as well as the methodological differences between such studies and the current study. However, it is hoped that the outcome of this study will help policy makers to explore better ways of

handling strategic alliance components as a failure of one component may jeopardize the whole essence of that alliance.

Conclusion

The study concludes based on the findings that strategies alliance has effect on the effectiveness of manufacturing companies and environmental dynamism affects the relationship between strategic alliance and effectiveness of manufacturing companies in Benue and Plateau State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the study findings

1. Since technology alliance has significant effect on organizational effectiveness, the study recommends that manufacturing companies should encourage partnership in areas of technology, innovation and research to boost effectiveness, this could be achieved through collaborations in terms of training of personnel, joint sponsorship in research.
2. Manufacturing companies can also enter into agreement with other organizations to expand their market niche and potential since marketing alliance has significant effect on organizational effectiveness, this can be through giving exclusive marketing rights to partnering companies to promote and sale products.
3. Structural alliance was found not to have any significant effect on organizational effectiveness, therefore, the study recommends that manufacturing companies should deemphasized prioritizing structures as necessary components of alliance formation and concentrate on other aspects that could result in effectiveness.
4. Since environmental dynamism has significant effect on technological alliance, therefore, manufacturing companies should adopt proactive measurement that will predict accurately changes in the environment particularly as it relates to technology. One way to achieve this is investment in training of employees, creating a technology hub or lab within the organization to enhance its competitiveness.
5. Environmental dynamism mediated the effect between marketing alliance and organizational effectiveness, hence the study recommends that manufacturing companies should adopt aggressive marketing techniques together with alliance partners to accommodate the turbulence in the market. This could be through intensifying their promotional mix, improve product quality and adopt competitive pricing strategies.
6. Since environmental dynamism mediated between structural alliance and organizational effectiveness, the study recommends the adoption of flexible structures that will allow for effective decision making and dissemination of information, to achieve this, flat structures could be adopted by manufacturing companies.

Contribution to Knowledge/ Suggestion for further studies.

The study deliberately mediated environmental dynamism to the strategic alliance model which is a clear departure from existing studies. The study introduce structural alliance to see if it has effect on alliance formation between companies. The study findings has further added to the body of literature and will serve as a guide for intending researchers. However further studies could be carried out in other sectors other than the manufacturing sector. The study was domicile in the north central region of Nigeria, further studies could explore other regions see if there are discrepancies.

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