



**INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF TOURISM
STATUTORY BODIES IN ZAMBIA**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of environmental scanning on the organizational performance of tourism statutory bodies in Zambia. The study was guided by systems theory. The study was conducted using descriptive research design. The target population for the study was 160 top and middle-level managers in five statutory bodies in Zambia. Sampling was probabilistic through Taro Yamane's formula to arrive at a sample of 114 respondents, while data was primarily collected through online questionnaires sent to the email and Whats App platforms of targeted respondents. The analysis was both descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis was done through standard deviation, mean, frequency, and percentages. Furthermore, the inferential analysis was carried out through correlation analysis and regression analysis. Results of the study were presented on tables and figures with narrative for interpretations. The study findings revealed that performance of tourism statutory bodies in Zambia was significantly related with environmental scanning. Environmental scanning had positive influence on performance. The implication of these findings is that in today's turbulent environment, it is more desirable for organizations to conduct environmental scanning activities systematically and regularly. The study recommended that tourism statutory bodies in Zambia should institute an operational office specifically dedicated to strategic execution processes. There is need for more literature review to expose further empirical evidence on this important subject of environmental scanning and its interaction with aspects of organization performance especially social performance. It was recommended that researchers mount studies on this relationship. Top managers should find out how environmental scanning generates strategic management practices to increase organizational performance of tourism statutory bodies in Zambia

Key Words: Environment Scanning, Tourism

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INTRODUCTION

Components of strategic management include creating, executing, and assessing decisions across the hierarchy of an institution; enabling the attainment of the desired goals. In its entirety, it involves the establishment and adoption of plans. As a principle, strategic management focuses on decisions making and securing preventive interventions to attain both short and long-term targets enabling attainment of goals. Universally, strategic management traditions can increase productivity in numerous institutions efficiency in various organizations. Strategic management is the full set of dedications, choices, and roles an entity demands to implement its plan to benefit in a competitive market (Höglund et al., 2018).

Environmental scanning entails the process where information about different activities and their relation to both the external and internal environment of the organization is collected. The main aim of this process is to ensure that the management of the organization can make the right decision concerning the future direction of the organization (Kaburu, 2018). It is a very crucial strategic management practice where organizations regularly monitor the environment in which they operate. An effective environmental scanning program ensures that the policymakers and the management, in general, are aware of the changes that are likely to happen in the external environment of the organization. In addition, the organization can identify issues that are likely to affect the ability of the organization to compete and deal with these issues before they get out of hand (Mutea, 2017).

The dependent variable Organizational performance entails the manner in how an institution productively undertakes its role following its target and vision (Jenatabadi, 2015). Organizational performance remains a critical component of management planning. Despite the development, there still lacks proper profiling and dimensions of institutional success without regard to their relevance and their global utilization

(Santos & Brito, 2009). Organizational performance as a concept entails evaluating the success of a firm by matching the targets against practical results. The performance here relates to the body of processes in a firm, functional productivity and efficiency, their indication, and the desired outcomes are achieved (Dessler, 2012). The approaches used to indicate success remain linked to how the institution works and the critical goals pursued (Akinyi, 2012).

Zambia is not an exception either, Zambia's public sector has adopted strategic management practices in most of its operations. The public sector of Zambia comprises the local government, central government, and other departments and agencies or statutory bodies. The overseeing authorities promote social and economic development in the country. Zambia is a developing country and as such, it faces numerous challenges which require efficient and effective means to manage these challenges through a strong strategic approach. The management of this country has in recent times demonstrated its commitment towards the use of strategic planning (Mwango et al., 2018).

The strategic adjustment program in Zambia entailed the introduction of several reforms that include the Public Sector Reform Programme (PSRP) which was aimed at improving efficiency as well as cost-effectiveness in the public sector (Simumba et al., 2018). The Management Development Division (MDD) is given the responsibility of overseeing the operations of PSRP. The MDD has then provided a framework for Strategic management referred to as Strategic Management Model (SMM). The framework provides guidelines for the implementation of the strategic management plan (Muungo, 2016). It is therefore true to say that Strategic management has been adopted in the Zambian Government (Silungwe et al., 2020).

In the same connection, the tourism sector in Zambia has experienced rapid growth over the years given that in 2018 the county spent \$742,000,000 which was a 13.6% increase from the previous year and represented 7.4% of the

country's exports (Sheppard & Fennell, 2019). Strategic management practices are required to ensure that the sector maintains its position in the global market. The strategic goals in the tourism sector are realized through the tourism statutory bodies that include: Hotels Board of Management, Hotels Managers' Registration Council, National Arts Council, National Heritage Conservation Commission, and National Museum Board, Zambia Institute for Tourism and Hospitality Studies, and Zambia Tourism Agency.

The Seventh National Development Plan (SNDP) posited that the tourism sector in Zambia should be in the front line in the realization of social-economic development. For Zambia to become a middle-income economy guided by the vision 2030, it has outlined some measures one of them being the implementation of the Zambian Tourism Master plan for the country to achieve its long-term goals. In the previous decade since 1978, the country had not had a focused master plan to exploit Zambia's vast tourism sector, instead, the tourism sector relied on ad-hoc and unfocused strategies. However, with the formulation of the Zambian Tourism Master Plan, it appears that things are slowly gaining shape for the country to start earning from the tourism sector (Ministry of National Development and Planning, 2017).

The plan focuses on positioning Zambia as a tourism destination of choice in Africa as well as developing leisure facilities that put Zambia in a place where it has a competitive advantage over its rivals in the region. The plan further identifies key attraction sites and also highlights the key strategic issues that need to be addressed so that the Zambians can benefit from the tourism sector through the social and economic goals achieved by the sector. Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism and Arts of Zambia highly relies on the document to enable tourism to contribute to the gross domestic product, create jobs as well as reducing poverty levels in the country (GRZ, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

Strategic Management plays a crucial role in enabling organizations to realize both their objectives and goals. As an enabler, it enhances an organization's capacity to respond to competitive forces, customers' demands as well as technological changes. It takes care of both internal and external environmental forces of an organization by creating an environment that accommodates change when it happens. In itself, therefore, strategic management is future-oriented (Höglund et al., 2018). State organizations in the Scandinavian countries have realized consistent growth and sustainability by applying strategic management practices and tools to enable formulation of strategic goals, implementation, continuous monitoring and control of strategy implementation, and the independence of the evaluation practices of the strategies implemented (Johnsen, 2018).

Zambia is a country highly endowed with unique natural resources such as 20 National Parks and 34 Game Management Areas, beautiful Rivers and Waterfalls, and more than 4000 Heritage Sites with the potential to attract large numbers of tourists. Global tourism trends revealed that emerging economies such as Zambia and other countries in the sub-Saharan region were enjoying about 30% of tourism arrivals in 1980 (Ministry of National Development and Planning, 2017). However, statistics shifted to about 47% market share in advantage of emerging economies by 2011 and it is projected that by 2030 the figures would rise to 57%, with over 1 billion tourist arrivals in the emerging economies annually. Zambia on its end has revealed numerous mechanisms to take advantage of the market by installing tourism statutory bodies which are charged with ensuring that strategic plans are formulated, implemented, and continuously reviewed to enable the country to remain competitive and attract more tourism market share. Konovalova et al. (2018), revealed that institutions in the hospitality and tourism sector in Zambia that are going to embrace methodologies such as competitive practices,

strategic planning, and innovative strategic practices will achieve competitive advantages, as well as increase market share and profitability.

Several studies conducted in Zambia on tourism include Harris-Smith & Palmer (2021) studying Donor Funded Community-Based Tourism Development Projects in Zambia revealed that the majority of projects have failed to kick off whereas others have failed to sustain themselves after donor exists due to lack of transfer of skills and knowledge, and also lack of proper strategic planning practices. Besides, Silungwe, et al. (2020), also revealed that sustainable tourism growth and marketing in Zambia has faced numerous challenges in positioning the country as a preferred tourism destination of choice despite the country being endowed with unique natural resources, therefore, affecting adversely its growth and sustainability.

Furthermore, recent statistics released by Zambia's Ministry of Tourism and Arts on tourism arrivals for the year 2019 indicated that Zambia was lagging compared to her counterparts and competitors in the region. Zambia received 1,226,000 international tourist arrivals compared to Zimbabwe (2,294,000), Kenya (2,049,000), Tanzania (1,527,000), South Africa (14,797,000) arrivals in the same year (Zambia Statistical Digest, 2019). Available empirical studies however do not point to the direction that strategic management practices have on the performance of tourism statutory bodies, the majority of available studies are on natural resource conservation or sustainability of tourism activities. In addition, it is not clear how strategic management practices influence the organizational performance of tourism statutory bodies in Zambia. The study, therefore, sought to answer the question: what is the influence of environmental scanning on the performance of Tourism Statutory Bodies in Zambia?

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of environmental scanning on

organizational performance of Tourism Statutory Bodies in Zambia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Systems Theory

Systems theory was pioneered in the 1950s by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy and defines the planning and management of an organization in a different approach. The theory proposes that an organization is divided into different components where all these components work together so that the organization can function optimally. According to this theory, these components are employees, workgroups, business units, and departments. However, the most important component in an organization is the employees. This theory further indicates that organizational performance depends on elements such as interdependence, interrelations, and synergy. Managers play a crucial role in the success of an organization given that they are supposed to monitor the trends and patterns of the organization to determine the best management practices. In such a way, they encourage the organization's components in working together as a unit rather than working as isolated units.

In addition, a system comprises of small units that interact to form a whole unit and can either be open or closed. Therefore, a change in one small unit affects the operations of the entire system (Kern, 2020). Similarly, the environment does not affect a closed system but instead affects an open one. Most approaches of the system theory treat an organization as an open system with three main components namely, inputs, outputs, and throughputs. Inputs comprise equipment, natural resources, and labor which are then transformed into throughputs. Throughputs then result in products and services referred to as outputs that are then released into the environment (Systems Approach to Management: Theory & Concepts).

According to this theory, the organization must learn to include all the variables that affect its

performance (Ju, 2019). Strategic management in organizations is a product of subsystems that include practices such as environmental scanning and evaluation, implementation, monitoring, as well as controlling strategies. Based on this theory, the exclusion of one subsystem would result in ineffective strategic management which would result in poor organizational performance. This theory was therefore important in ensuring that different statutory bodies work with both the Government and line Ministries to improve performance.

Empirical Review

In Brazil, Cancellier et al. (2014) analyzed how the environment interacts with the organizational strategy. The primary objective of this analysis was to establish the interaction between organizational performance and the information generated from environmental scanning. A quantitative survey method was used. The major findings revealed that information generated from environmental scanning influences organization strategy and subsequent organizational performance. This information is crucial in helping the organization make decisions when choosing effective strategies.

Tajuddin and Ahmad (2013) conducted a study on the influence of environment scanning on the organizational performance of local authorities in Malaysia. The study adopted a quantitative research approach and data was collected using a mail survey from a sample size of 75 respondents. After the content analysis was carried out the findings of the study revealed that environment scanning is important to the organization given that it helps in aligning the organization's competitive strategies with the changes in the business nature as well as changes in the needs and demands of their consumers. As such, the study found a significant relationship between organizational performance and general environment scanning. The study went ahead to indicate that organizations must have environmental scanning strategies to be able to adopt effective competitive strategies.

In Nigeria, Babatunde and Adebisi (2011) examined the association between organizational performance and strategic environmental scanning, particularly in a competitive environment. Questionnaires were used in gathering data from the respondents, while inferential statistics such as regression and correlation were used in data analysis. The analyzed data revealed that strategic environmental scanning enables management of possible threats in the business environment of which if well managed, organizational performance is ensured. The study further recommends that organizations should ensure that they conduct environmental scanning more often to ensure that they can identify opportunities and threats in the environment. This will help the organizations to seize the available opportunities and avoid threats in the environment.

Agu et al. (2018), conducted a study on how organizational performance is influenced by environmental scanning. This study adopted a case study approach focusing on the Nigerian bottling company in Enugu. In addition to examining the influence of environmental scanning on organizational performance and productivity, the study also sought to determine other factors affecting organizational performance and productivity based on the organization's environment. The findings of this study indicated that there was a significant relationship between organizational performance and environment scanning and that environment scanning had a positive and significant impact on organizational performance in the manufacturing sector. The study further indicated the importance of conducting environment scanning in organizations to improve their productivity and performance levels.

In addition, Waiganjo and Njeru (2018) sought to establish the relationship between organizational performance and environmental scanning among the state parastatals. A cross-section survey research design was adopted in this study. A target population of 55 parastatals was used where questionnaires were used to collect data from staff

members of these parastatals. Quantitative and qualitative analysis was carried out in this study and the findings were presented in tables, graphs, and pie charts. The study established that organizational performance is influenced by environmental scanning.

Studying the Influence of environmental scanning on the competitive advantage of EXP Momentum Limited, through a descriptive research design among 133 employees at Momentum Limited Kaburu (2018), revealed that environmental scanning enables the management to identify how certain trends in the environment impact the organization's competitive edge. Kaburu (2018) added that recent times have seen most

organizations begin to look at how they obtained their information and how this information was used to lay down past strategic plans. Such analysis is useful to predict future changes in the environment to prepare in advance. Scanning the organizational environment as well as systems has become increasingly important in the operations of most organizations. The study recommended for an institution to scan the external factors and conditions that affect its development and growth. The analysis of the environment should include among others; technological, economic, social, and political factors. These are key factors that affect the smooth running of an organization and should be monitored regularly to allow the organization to redefine its business (Habwe, 2018).

Conceptual Framework

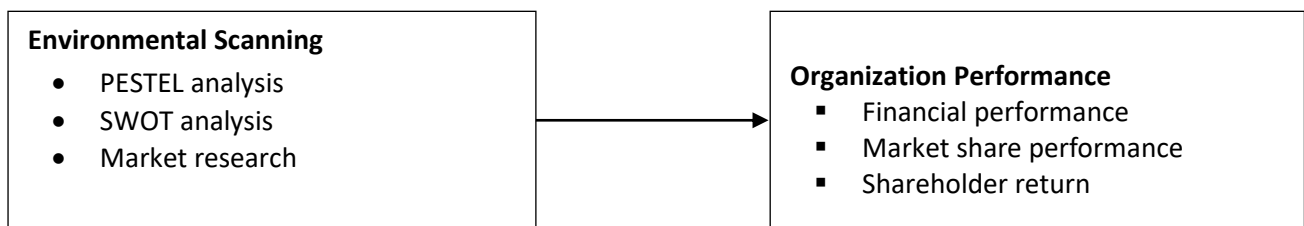


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. It is appropriate for the study because it enables the researcher to obtain precise information on the status of the phenomena, as it exists, and interpreting it without manipulation (Jwan, 2010). The Top and Middle-level management working in these statutory bodies was the target population of interest. According to the Zambian labor force survey (2020), the following list comprises the top and middle-level management staff in the tourism statutory bodies: National Arts Council (33), National Heritage Conservation Commission (49), and National Museum Board (33), Zambia Institute for Tourism and Hospitality Studies (25) and Zambia Tourism Agency (20). The sample size of 114 was determined based on the following Yamane's

Dependent Variable

formula. A combination of stratified random sampling and simple random sampling was used in this study.

Primary data was collected through the use of a semi-structured questionnaire. The data analysis was done through a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 20). Data was cleaned and coded into SPSS. Data from the closed questions were analyzed through the generation of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive analysis

This section presents descriptive analysis findings on the independent (environmental scanning, strategy implementation, strategy control, strategy

evaluation) and dependent variables (Organization performance) of the study.

Organization Performance

The study respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to organization performance. The results were shown in table 1 below;

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Organization Performance

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
There has been increase on the number of employees in the last five years	133	3.42	1.14
We have opened up new branches for our organization to serve customers better	133	2.26	1.12
We have more tourist arrivals	133	2.94	1.10
We have an increase in profits in the past three years	133	2.89	1.02
Our revenues have increased in the past three years	133	2.84	1.09
Our destination image has attracted more clients in the last five years	133	3.63	.66
Valid N (list wise)	133	2.99	1.02

Source: Research Data (2021)

The analysis in table 1 showed that the majority who scored the highest mean of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.66 agreed that their destination image has attracted more clients in the last five years. This was closely followed by those who too agreed that there has been increase on the number of employees in the last five years a mean of (3.42) and a standard deviation of (1.14). Further more respondents agreed they have more tourist arrivals with a mean of (2.94) and a standard deviation of (1.10). We have an increase in profits in the past three years at a mean of (2.89) and a

standard deviation of (1.02), and our revenues have increased in the past three years mean (2.84) and a standard deviation of (1.09).

Influence of Environmental Scanning on Organization Performance

The respondents were requested to show their level of agreement with the statements in relation to influence of environmental scanning on organization performance. The results are as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Influence of Environmental Scanning on Organization Performance

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
We regularly conduct competitor's analysis in the tourism industry	133	3.05	1.15
Our market research is focused on entering new markets	133	3.21	1.00
We regularly assess internal strengths e.g. Financial, employees' skills	133	3.15	1.04
We regularly assess internal weaknesses	133	3.21	1.10
We normally carry out assessment on effect of political and legal policies	133	3.26	1.02
We normally carry out assessment on the effect of economic policies such as rate of forex exchange, interest rates and inflation	133	3.31	1.17
		3.38	1.08

Source: Research Data (2021)

Environmental scanning has been acknowledged to be one of the factors that influence organization performance of Tourism Statutory Bodies in Zambia. The study wanted to establish the claim. The respondents were therefore required to rate

their responses on a likert scale of 1-5 where: 5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Undecided; 2= Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree. The analysis in table 4.8 shows that the majority who scored the highest mean of (4.05) and a standard deviation of (1.10) agreed

that competitive intensity affects tourism industry performance. This was closely followed by they normally carry out assessment on the effect of economic policies such as rate of forex exchange, interest rates and inflation with a mean of (3.31) and a standard deviation of (1.17), and we normally carry out assessment on effect of political and legal policies at a mean of (3.26) and a standard deviation of (1.02). Our market research is focused on entering new markets at a mean of (3.21) and a standard deviation of (1.00) same as We regularly assess internal weaknesses at a mean of (3.21) and a standard deviation of (1.10).

This finding agreed with Cancellier et al. (2014) information generated from environmental scanning influences organization strategy and subsequent organizational performance. This information is crucial in helping the organization make decisions when choosing effective strategies. Tajuddin and Ahmad (2013) found a significant relationship between organizational performance and general environment scanning. The study went ahead to indicate that organizations must have environmental scanning strategies to be able to adopt effective competitive strategies. In Nigeria, Babatunde and Adebisi (2011) revealed that strategic environmental scanning enables management of possible threats in the business environment of which if well managed, organizational performance is ensured. The study further recommended that organizations should ensure that they conduct environmental scanning more often to ensure that they can identify opportunities and threats in the environment. This would help the organizations to seize the available opportunities and avoid threats in the environment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of the study was to establish influence of environmental scanning on the

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organizational performance of tourism statutory bodies in Zambia. The study established that environmental scanning affects the organization performance to a large extent and therefore study concludes that environmental scanning is significant determinant in the organization performance.

On recommendation, environmental scanning could provide early warning signals for organizations, emerging from environmental uncertainties, risks, threats and opportunities. It could help companies develop and modify business strategies to meet changing external circumstances and hence improve their competitiveness and performance. In today's turbulent environment, it is more desirable for organizations to conduct environmental scanning activities systematically and regularly. The majority of previous studies had investigated environmental scanning activities using quantitative methods such as questionnaire surveys or survey-based interviews. Only limited qualitative studies had used interviews, and these interviews were limited to the top management level. The proposed research design expects to enrich this set of information by obtaining inputs across the hierarchy of the organisation thereby providing a richer and more accurate picture of environment scanning by the various stakeholders involved in this process.

Suggestion for Further Studies

Based on the findings of this study, the conclusion and subsequent recommendation, there is need for a further study on others variables other than environmental scanning that are not covered in this study to validate the actual factors that affects organizational performance of tourism statutory bodies in Zambia, whereby the study should seek to provide more insights on the current study findings and validate these findings.

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