

STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigeria Local government administration has undertaken many vicissitudes and restructuring which were solely aimed towards creating a favourable environment for effective service delivery at the local government level. However, notwithstanding these reforms and amendments of Nigeria Constitutions in order to enhance service delivery in our local governments, the local governments still perform below the expectations of the expectant Nigerians. Service delivery at the local government level is still less than satisfactory, even with relatively high capacity and trained personnel at that level. This paper x-rayed the challenges that currently face Nigeria local governments. It identified infrastructure backlog, revenue and cost pressures, unmet community expectations, etc., as pointers to poor service delivery. It is therefore in view of the glitches of poor and ineffective service delivery that this paper tries to suggest some salient strategic options towards ameliorating this menace. Consequent upon the investigation, the paper suggested some strategic options including institutionalization of SWOT analysis, conducting environmental scanning, espousing strategic planning options, establishing short-term objectives and developing an appropriate set of performance measurement in the local government system.

Keywords: Strategy, Strategic Management, Strategic challenges, Strategic Options, SWOT Analysis, Service Delivery, Local Government, Environmental Scanning, Performance Measurement.

Introduction

Local government administration in Nigeria has undergone many changes and restructuring which were solely aimed towards creating a favourable environment for effective service delivery at the local government level, of which the 1976 Reforms and the Constitutions of 1979 and 1999 can be said to be most prominent. Before 1976, there was no uniform system of local government administration in Nigeria. Although, there were spirited attempts made to carry out some reforms in the local government system, these attempts were uncoordinated and haphazard. The 1976 reforms introduced a uniform system of local government administration throughout the country (Oviasuyi, Idada & Isiraojie, 2010).

The reform was a major departure from the previous practice of local government administration in Nigeria. The philosophical basis of the reform lies in the conviction that a strong local authority with clearly defined functional responsibilities in a power-sharing relationship with the states is an institutional safeguard against tyranny. Following the 1976 reforms, local government became recognized as a tier of government entitled to a share of national revenue consequent on its constitutionally allocated functions (Imuetinyan, 2002).

Notwithstanding these reforms and amendments of Nigeria Constitutions in order to enhance service delivery in our local governments, the local governments still perform below the expectations of the expectant Nigeria population. Service delivery at the local government level is still less than satisfactory, even with relatively high capacity and trained personnel at that level. It is therefore in view of the problems of poor and ineffective service delivery that this paper tries to suggest some salient strategic options towards ameliorating this menace, so as to help reposition our local governments as the bedrock of service delivery in Nigeria. Strategic management becomes salient now that the local governments are preparing for much canvassed autonomy.

Concepts and Perspectives

It will be worthwhile if some definitions of the various terms and concepts used are attempted;

a. **Strategy:** Strategy is a broad term used in public sector research to define how organizations relate to their environment and progress purposely into the future by improving services and performance (Boyne & Walker, 2010). A strategy of an organization forms a comprehensive master plan that

states how the organization will achieve its mission and objectives. It maximizes competitive advantage and minimizes competitive disadvantage (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). Wechsler and Backoff (1987), defined strategy from two perspectives: process and content. Process strategy refers to the tools, as well as analyses, used by public managers to make decisions about the direction of the organization. These tools include a wide range of concepts that help managers plan for the future, such as comprehensive planning and strategy formulation (Edwards, 2012). Recent process strategy tools include strategic planning, human resource management strategies, performance management, and the various budgeting strategies of public organizations.

Content refers to the long-term orientation of an organization to internal and external influences. Several typologies of strategy content in public organizations exist in public sector research (Stevens and McGowan, 1983; Wechsler and Backoff, 1986; Rubin, 1988; Nutt and Backoff, 1995; Osborne and Plastrik, 1997). A more recent typology by Boyne and Walker (2004) relies on private sector research on strategic stance (Miles and Snow, 1978) and strategic actions (Porter, 1980) to characterize how public organizations strategize. Strategic stance refers to an organization's enduring relationship with their environment. The strategic stance of public organizations can be characterized as prospector, defender, or reactor. Prospectors are entrepreneurial organizations that tend to try new approaches and management strategies before other organizations (Edwards, 2012). Defenders are more interested in maintaining core operations. Reactors strategize when they are forced to by their environment. Strategic actions, which are similar to the balanced scorecard approach, includes: markets, service, financial viability internal management, and external relationships (Boyne and Walker, 2004).

According to Wheelen & Hunger (2012), a typical business firm usually considers three types of strategy: corporate, business, and functional.

Corporate strategy describes a company's overall direction in terms of its general attitude toward growth and the management of its various businesses and product lines. Corporate strategies typically fit within the three main categories of stability, growth, and retrenchment.

Business strategy usually occurs at the business unit or product level, and it emphasizes improvement of the competitive position of a corporation's

products or services in the specific industry or market segment served by that business unit. Business strategies may fit within the two overall categories, competitive and cooperative strategies.

Functional strategy is the approach taken by a functional area to achieve corporate and business unit objectives and strategies by maximizing resource productivity. It is concerned with developing and nurturing a distinctive competence to provide a company or business unit with a competitive advantage.

b. **Strategic Management:** Strategic management analyses the major initiatives taken by a company's top management on behalf of owners, involving resources and performance in internal and external environments (Nag, Hambrick & Chen; 2007). It entails specifying the organization's mission, vision and objectives, developing policies and plans, often in terms of projects and programs, which are designed to achieve these objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the policies and plans, projects and programs. A balanced scorecard is often used to evaluate the overall performance of the business and its progress towards objectives.

Strategic management was also defined by Bryson *et al.* (2010), as "the appropriate and reasonable integration of strategic planning and implementation across an organization (or other entity) in an ongoing way to enhance the fulfilment of its mission, meeting of mandates, continuous learning, and sustained creation of public value." Strategic management is a way for organizations to be forward-looking so that they can strengthen their position in their environment, both internally and externally (Poister and Streib, 1999).

Wheelen & Hunger (2012), defined strategic management as a set of managerial decisions and actions that determines the long run performance of a corporation. It includes environmental scanning (both external and internal), strategy formulation (strategic or long-range planning), strategy implementation, and evaluation and control. The study of strategic management, therefore, emphasizes the monitoring and evaluating of external opportunities and threats in light of a corporation's strengths and weaknesses.

1. Strategic Challenges

The strategic (tactical) challenges that local governments face in Nigeria are both varied and complex. They include:

❖ Infrastructure Backlog

The most significant and recurring theme for all local government organisations is the lack of sustainability in financing assets, with ageing community infrastructure and the associated infrastructure renewals backlog playing a major role. This problem results in a heavy reliance on state and federal funding simply to maintain the status quo.

❖ Revenue and Cost Pressures

Revenue sources are limited, with some councils reluctant, or unable, to set their rates and other charges at realistic and sustainable levels. The internally generated revenue in some local governments are so little that they can hardly be used to carry out a mini development project.

❖ Increasing Community Expectations

Population increases and growing economies are demanding greater scope of services offered, placing more stress on the ability of councils to meet these ongoing needs of Nigerians. Increased community expectations, public scrutiny, and issues arising from an increasing population all place significant strains on the system.

❖ Rural Issues

Rural councils are under even greater pressure as they often serve large geographical areas with relatively small populations (and corresponding small rates bases), where services must be provided to remote areas. Many of these councils are home to rural farmers, who have higher expectations of service levels (such as demands for long distance construction of access roads for transportation of their products) that are difficult to meet with smaller budgets.

Strategic Options for Effective Service Delivery at the Local Government Level

Current research reveals that government establishments (Local Governments) that engage strategic options in their work activities generally outperform those that do not. The attainment of an appropriate match, or

“fit,” between local government’s environment and its strategy, structure, and processes has positive effects on the organization’s performance and service delivery.

The significant attention drawn to the sustainability of the local government sector is a testimony to the importance of providing a robust strategic management framework for councillors and local government management to apply in delivering the vital infrastructure and services their constituents require. Every council and community is unique and therefore has its own set of community and corporate objectives to meet. Bryson (2004), believes that a vast majority of public and not-for-profit organisations already claim to engage in strategic management, but exactly what they mean is unclear. While financial sustainability is part of the equation, strategic management embraces more than money; it embraces the future and the kind of community you would like your grandchildren to live in.

A fundamental component of a successful strategic management plan is its currency and agility. This means obtaining the most recent information to make sound decisions with continuous feedback loops and identifying where the council can act quickly to optimise its strategic position. Thus, strategic management is defined as encompassing the continuous series of decisions and actions that are taken to achieve a community’s long-term vision and goals of its council to create a sustainable community.

However, some researchers have wondered whether strategic options was another trendy tool that would eventually go the way of other trendy tools, invested heavily in by public organizations without achieving any of the promised results. Kaufman and Jacob (1987), wrote that public managers could view the new practice as a threat, an opportunity, or a fad. They advised in 1987 to take a “wait and see” approach so that managers and public administrators could determine whether strategic options would be around long enough to be worth the investment. Strategic options have withstood the test of time. Indeed, by the third edition of Bryson’s guide to strategic planning in 2004, *‘Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations’*, strategic options was clearly not just a trend, but an accepted, and often encouraged practice in the public sector and government establishments. Strategic management is therefore applicable to the local governments as public institutions which indeed have earned their autonomy. The strategic options include;

(a) Institutionalizing SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis (alternatively SWOT Matrix) is a structured planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a project or in programme implementation. A SWOT analysis can be carried out for a product, place, industry, government parastatals or a person. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving that objective. The technique is credited to Albert Humphrey, who led a convention at the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International) in the 1960s and 1970s using data from Fortune 500 companies (Albert, 2005).

It is a widely used technique through which managers create a quick overview of a company's strategic situation. It is based on the assumption that an effective strategy derives from a sound fit between a firm's internal resources (strengths and weaknesses) and its external situation (opportunities and threats) (Pierce & Robinson, 2003).

At the local government level, SWOT analysis allows the local government leadership to identify areas that needs improvement within its jurisdiction. By implementing the correct methodologies for the analysis, it is possible to ensure that a project or a programme will be completed on time and within budget.

The use of SWOT analysis enables the local government leadership to improve the whole project or individual tasks where better efficiency can be gained. It also mitigates risks associated with the tasks and optimizes the whole process. The team members get to do more with less. Because of the nature of the analysis, it is important to conduct the SWOT analysis during the start-up phase. It can provide a solid backbone to the project plan.

Conducting SWOT Analysis at the Local Government Level

It is vital to have a clear objective during SWOT analysis sessions. That way, each stakeholder understands what is expected of him/her. If the analysis is done during the initial start-up phase, key members of the local government must come together and identify all required tasks and the potential risks to each step of a given project (e.g., construction of a road project in a local community). On the other hand, it is also possible to have a SWOT analysis session in the middle of the project. If this is the case, the main focus is usually to reassess the schedule, the budget, or to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of certain processes. This is done to enhance the

effectiveness of delivering the project within the specified time and also within budget.

While the purpose of the SWOT analysis may be clear on paper, its actual implementation can vary. In addition, it is common for the discussion among stakeholders (Local Government Staff and Contractors) to go off-topic during the session itself. For this reason, it is important to create a set of pre-defined questions. This will serve as the guide for the SWOT analysis session. The project manager may also present his initial set of findings for discussion. Any relevant information will give attendees an opportunity to clear things up. The process results to improved productivity and effective service delivery.

Common Questions in SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Do the local governments have all the necessary talent in-house?
- Is the budget sufficient to complete all the tasks involved?
- What are the benefits of completing the project?
- Has the project manager handled similar projects in the past?
- How experienced are the team members?

Weaknesses:

- Does the local government have the resources to provide contingency funding?
- If the team doesn't have all the necessary skills, what areas need to be outsourced?
- Is the schedule realistic?
- What are the potential drawbacks of the project?

Opportunities

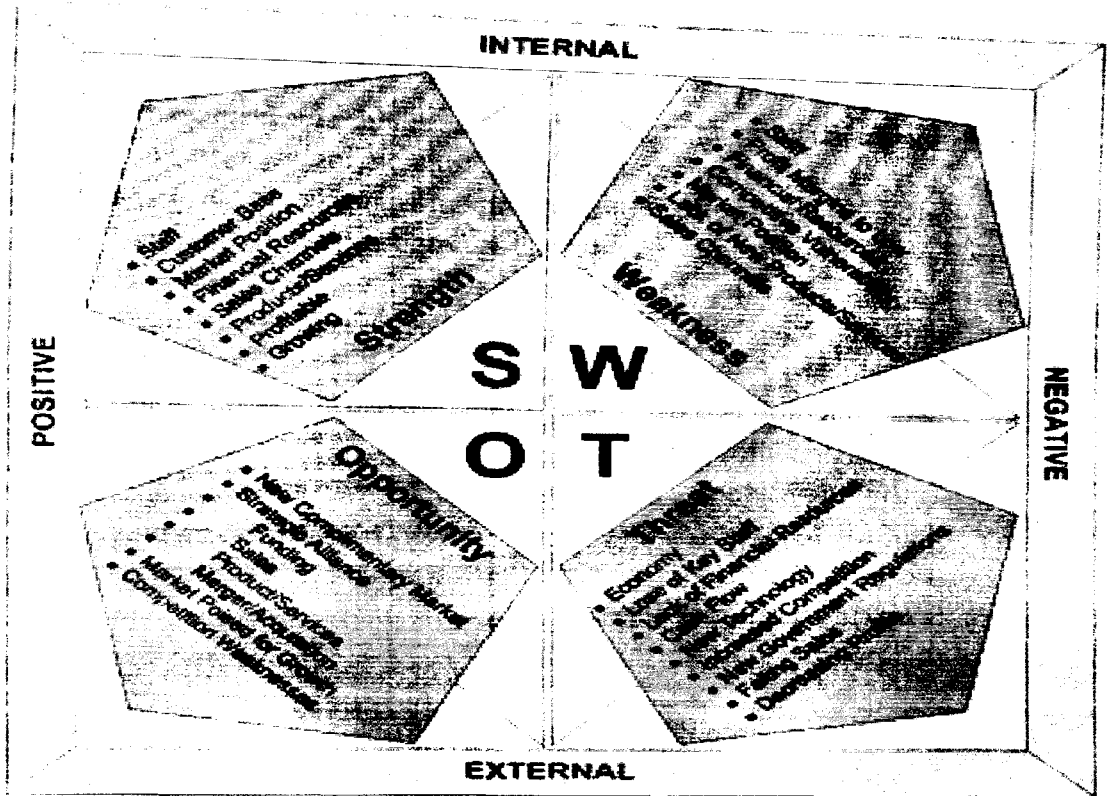
- Will this project take advantage of competitor weaknesses?
- What are the latest trends in the industry?
- Are there new technologies that the organization should be aware of?
- Can this project help in different areas of the business?

Threats:

- Are the team members difficult to replace?
- Has the new technology (if it will be applied) been tested?
- Could changing trends affect the project?
- Can the capability be copied by competitors?

The questions outlined above are just some examples you may have to consider. Obviously, projects are a lot more complex. Your actual list will be a lot longer as it digs deeper into the specifics (Lim, 2012).

Fig 1: SWOT Analysis Template



Source: Lim Rosanne (2012) in Project Management Articles.

(b) **Conducting Environmental scanning**

Environmental scanning is the monitoring, evaluating, and disseminating of information from the external and internal environments to key people within the organization. Its main purpose is to identify strategic factors; those external and internal elements that will determine the future of the organization. The simplest way to conduct environmental scanning is through SWOT analysis. As discussed previously, SWOT is an acronym used to describe the particular Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats that are strategic factors for a specific organization. The external

environment consists of variables (**Opportunities and Threats**) that are outside the organization and not typically within the short-run control of top management. These variables form the context within which the organization exists (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012).

Identifying External Environmental Variables: In undertaking environmental scanning, strategic managers must first be aware of the many variables within a corporation's natural, societal, and task environments. Natural environment includes physical resources, wildlife, and climate that are an inherent part of existence on Earth. These factors form an ecological system of interrelated life. The societal environment is mankind's social system that includes general forces that do not directly touch on the short-run activities of the organization that can, and often do, influence its long-run decisions. According to Wheelen & Hunger (2012), these factors affect multiple industries and are as follows:

- **Economic forces** that regulate the exchange of materials, money, energy, and information.
- **Technological forces** that generate problem-solving inventions.
- **Political–legal forces** that allocate power and provide constraining and protecting laws and regulations.
- **Sociocultural forces** that regulate the values, mores, and customs of society.

The task environment includes those elements or groups that directly affect a corporation and, in turn, are affected by it. These are governments, local communities, suppliers, competitors, customers, creditors, employees/labour unions, special-interest groups, and trade associations (eg. NULGE). A corporation's task environment is typically the industry within which the firm operates. Industry analysis (popularized by Michael Porter) refers to an in-depth examination of key factors within a corporation's task environment. The natural, societal, and task environments must be monitored to detect the strategic factors that are likely in the future to have a strong impact on corporate success or failure. Changes in the natural environment usually affect a business corporation first through its impact on the societal environment in terms of resource availability and costs and then upon the task environment in terms of the growth or decline of particular industries.

Local governments can begin strategy formulation but must scan the external environment to identify possible opportunities and threats and its internal environment for strengths and weaknesses. Since environmental scanning is the monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination of information from the external and internal environments to key people within the local government, this tool can be used to avoid strategic surprise and to ensure its long-term health and survival. Staff in the local governments can generate information concerning the needs and yearnings of the local populace from the external environments and effectively communicate such to the management of the local government. This will ensure that services rendered by the local governments are targeted towards the specific needs of its local populace.

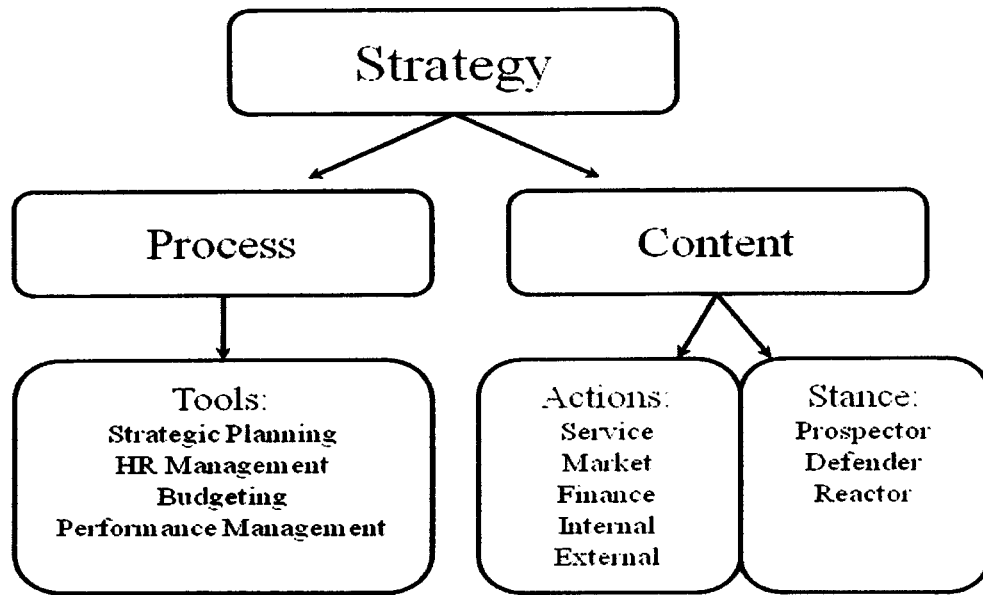
(c) Espousing Strategic Planning Options

Strategic planning or long-range planning, is concerned with developing a corporation's mission, objectives, strategies, and policies. It begins with situation analysis: the process of finding a strategic fit between external opportunities and internal strengths while working around external threats and internal weaknesses.

Strategic planning can also be seen as a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that define what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and how it does it (Bryson and Roering, 1988). The strategic planning process helps to unify the organization around a common mission, goals, and objectives based upon appropriate internal and external analyses.

Figure 2 demonstrates the relationship between strategy, strategic management, and strategic planning. Strategy encompasses the processes and content of an organization. Strategic management integrates the tools that an organization uses to pursue their process strategies, including strategic planning.

Fig. 2: Strategy Framework



Source: Edwards, Lauren M., (2012) "Strategic Planning in Local Government: Is the Promise of Performance a Reality?" Public Management and Policy Dissertations. Paper 36.

At the local government level, strategic planning involves the definition of development objectives, identification, prioritisation and quantification of projects which represent the vital needs of the people, relating the available resources to the prioritised projects, identification and designing of strategies to be employed, elaboration of definite step- by- step courses of action to be followed, which includes what should be done, how, when and where, and then systemization (Ogunna, 1996). Strategic planning, according to Ogunna (1996), should be realistic and should take full account of the available and potential human, financial and material resources, the national (political, social and economic) objectives, the priority needs of the people of the area, the population and territorial size of the area and the mobilization and involvement of the people.

Prospects of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning options for the local government have very robust advantages;

- (i) Proponents claim that strategic planning has the potential to improve management, decision-making, stakeholder involvement in public organizations, and performance. As far as helping improve internal management, strategic planning can help unify various parts of an the local government through better communication (Denhardt 1985, Pindur 1992, Berry and Wechsler 1995, and Boyne 2001) and an enhanced ability to respond to the organizations' environment, in terms of responding to crisis or to take advantage of new opportunities.
- (ii) Strategic planning can also help local government administration make better decisions due to a clearer direction (Denhardt 1985) and a unified vision (Pindur 1992). Improved decision-making applies to better choices regarding the budget, policies, programs, and goals.
- (iii) The strategic planning process can help to bring various stakeholders together, including citizens, business leaders, employees of the city, and politicians (Denhardt 1985, Gabris 1993, and Berry and Wechsler 1995). Because strategic planning can increase the communication between stakeholders (Kissler et al. 1998) and educate external stakeholders about the goals and purposes of a public organization (Pindur 1992), strategic planning can facilitate consensus building between all stakeholders with an interest in the organization (Pindur 1992 and Gibson 1993).
- (iv) It results in rational and efficient utilization of scarce resources for developmental purposes.
- (v) With efficient planning, projects are completed on schedule without abandonment of projects syndrome.
- (vi) Projects are evenly distributed among various communities in the area which leads to even development, as projects are cited at appropriate places.
- (vii) Through continuous strategic planning, experiences of past plans will be gainfully utilised to improve upon the future plans. In effect, good planning that is efficiently implemented serves as a powerful strategy for rapid development.
- (viii) Finally, strategic planning can lead to the accomplishment of stated objectives (Pindur 1992) and improved performance and efficiency (Pindur 1992 and Bryson 2004).

(d) Establishing Short-Term Objectives

Short-term objectives are designed to break down an annual goal into a sequence of smaller parts. This step is designed to offer additional clarity to the annual goals. This is accomplished by first describing the company's current level of functioning related to the annual goal so that objectives can be set at an appropriate level of difficulty. Next, the intent of the objectives must be considered such as increasing tolerance, acquiring core skills, tempo/rate, generalization, quality, duration, etc.

Once corporate and business strategies have been agreed upon and long-term objectives set, the strategic management moves into critical new phase; translating strategic thought into organizational action. Short term objectives translate long-range aspirations into this year's targets for action. If well developed, these objectives provide clarity, powerful motivation and facilitator of effective strategy implementation for efficient service delivery.

At the local government level, short term objectives will enhance project implementation in the three ways;

- (i) It will help operationalize long term objectives. It will clearly state the activities involved in ensuring the success of long term objectives and plans. Local governments in Nigeria usually make long term plans which ends up not being implemented.
- (ii) Secondly, discussions and agreement on short-term objectives help raise issues on potential conflicts within the local government that usually require coordination to avoid otherwise dysfunctional consequences. This include execution of capital projects by the local government.
- (iii) It will help identify measurable outcome of action plans or functional activities which can be used to make feedback, correction and evaluation more relevant and acceptable (Pearce & Robinson, 2003).

Developing an Appropriate set of Performance Measurement in the Local Governments

As the service responsibilities of local governments continue to grow, so does public insistence that services be provided efficiently and effectively, and that local government programmes produce their intended results. Most people depend on local governments' services (such as provision of rural access roads, community markets, primary schools, etc) and increasingly insisting that they not only be produced in sufficient quantity and with adequate timeliness to satisfy public needs, but also that they meet

reasonable standards of quality. Resource constraints demand that they be provided efficiently.

Those local governments that have been most aggressive in their pursuit of service quality and efficiency tend also to be ones that have been most interested in measuring their performance. For them, performance measurement is a useful tool that confirms their successes and alerts them to programmes in need of greater scrutiny.

Good sets of performance measures include measures that are valid, reliable, understandable, timely, and resistant to undesired behaviour, sensitive to data collection costs, and focused on important facets of performance. A good set of performance measures reports not only how much service is provided but also how well and how efficiently. Even more important to local government's intent on truly managing their performance, a good set inspires managerial thinking by providing crucial performance data that cannot be ignored.

A good set of performance measures is a vital tool for building accountability throughout an organization. By compiling key indicators of performance, the local government administration can confirm that work crews are meeting expectations and delivering quality services. Periodic reporting of selected measures allows supervisors to be accountable for their work to department management, department management to be accountable to central administration, and central administration to be accountable to the local government management. In turn, the periodic publication of key performance indicators allows elected local government top officials to be accountable to the citizenry for local government operations as a whole.

Good performance measures support a variety of management functions. A good set of measures allows the local government management to identify operating strengths and weaknesses, target areas for improvement, and recognize improvements when they occur. A good set of measures also helps them defend good operations against unwarranted criticism. A good measurement system can enhance a talented local government management's ability to develop the skills of workers, to instruct them in their tasks, to plan and schedule their work, to draw upon the pride and commitment of a work unit, and to motivate greater performance. With the benefit of reliable measures, instructions to subordinates can be more focused, planning more precise, and feedback more objective. In this way, a systematic gauge of program efficiency and effectiveness can augment the

value of on-site supervision, with greater value provided not only to upper management but also to the workforce in general.

5. Challenges of Strategic Options and the Way Forward

Although strategic options promise some good tidings on how to ensure efficiency in service delivery at the local government level, it however, as with all management strategies, possess some barriers. Implementing strategic options efficiently connotes costs that can potentially outweigh any benefits gained, if not professionally handled (Eadie and Steinbacher, 1985).

Strategic options require some complex techniques in complex environments and the techniques from the private sector are not always readily applicable in the public sector. Strategic options also require more resources, in terms of time, money, and trained human resources, than any other development technique. Resources are needed for analysis, meetings, administration of the planning effort, and, later in the process, for writing report and disseminating results.

The financial cost of adopting strategic options can be difficult for cash-strapped local governments that need to focus on its day-to-day operations. Also, the decision-making process in local governments can prove to be a difficult issue, due to complexity. Citizens tend to be more directly involved in state-wide decision-making than other levels of government (local governments). This can make consensus building on what goals the local government should be pursuing very difficult.

These costs often lead researchers to conclude that strategic options are not worth the investment of the resources required in public sector organizations. Boyne (2001) summarizes the arguments against strategic options. First, institutionalising strategic options seems to be too difficult to actually accomplish in public organizations because collecting data for analysis are often difficult to obtain and even more difficult to analyse.

Politically, strategic option and planning is also difficult, because of the short period of stay in office of elected officials on the strategic issues. Secondly, the author points to research in the public sector that says strategic planning can have a negative impact on performance because planning becomes more of a burden on organizations than a benefit (Mintzberg, 1994). Essentially, organizations feel as if they are spending more time planning on how to adopt these options rather than actually accomplishing anything. Furthermore, strategic options and planning can create uncertainty

and conflict that can potentially destabilize rather than unify an organization (Mintzberg, 1994).

Furthermore, local governments are relying more and more on cooperation and networking with other governmental, non-profit, and private organizations (private-public partnership) to carry out their operations. This interdependence of local governments can make it difficult for the implementation of strategic options because of the need to include all relevant stakeholders.

However, local governments can overcome these challenges by implementing strategic options. Strategic options can help identify important issues in a community and also how resources should be used. The planning process can also help educate citizen participants about the functions and goals of the municipality. The process can also assist local governments in bringing together various stakeholders (citizens, business owners, and staff of all levels) through consensus building.

Strategic options can also help in refocussing the missions, goals, and priorities of the local governments, such as focusing the local councils and employees towards important issues and organizational goals. A majority of researchers also found that strategic options improve communication with external stakeholders, management and decision-making, and employee development.

Finally, and most important for this paper, local governments employees' performance can be better improved with the adoption of strategic options, so as to enable them deliver high-quality services. Strategic options can improve organizational performance and the ability of the government to reach stated objectives because the local government staff and citizens are working toward the same mission.

Conclusion

The above expositions x-rayed the importance and need for Nigeria local government administration to adopt strategic options in their work activities. Strategic options provides a cooperative, integrated and enthusiastic approach to tackling problems and opportunities also enables the local government to be proactive, instead of just responding to threats in their environment. It is instructive to note that if these options are employed by the local government management, it will, to a large extent, enhance the effectiveness of service delivery at the local government level.

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