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Impact of Executive Support on Organizational Core Competencies Management for Strategic Product Innovation

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ABSTRACT*:Differentiating an organization from the rest of the competitors, identifying the organization challenges, and addressing them with the appropriate tools are the key factors to a winning strategy in the marketplace. These objectives for organizational existence may be easily stated than done. The internal dynamic capabilities, core competencies available to organizations, and the executive support in developing and managing these competencies determine how organizations wade through the competitive matrix to maintain a sustained competitive advantage.In an effort to search for different avenues to determine credible sources to gain this competitive edge, the usual focus has been towards the organization's external opportunities and threats, and the internal strengths and weaknesses. The internal strengths, resources, and capabilities available to the organizations are the core competencies, if properly developed and managed,determine the behavior of any organization to lead in competition. Using the data acquired from the manufacturing segment of an organization, this research examined the influence of executive support on the management and enhancement of organization core competencies. This leads to innovative product development, thus leading to a competitive edge in the marketplace.The research was quantitative in nature, using regression analysis to determine the correlation between the variables. Cronbach's alpha was used in each section of the research to test the inherent reliability of the data. This study concludes that positive behavior and support from corporate executivesand theimplementationsof these mechanisms havesignificant positive effect on the organizational competencies management in manufacturing enterprises.*

Keywords:*Business strategy, innovation management, Likert scale, project portfolio, SPSS, TQM.*

I. INTRODUCTION

At the heart of business strategy are differentiation [1-2], diagnosis of organizational problems, guiding policy and actions [3-5], winning aspiration, where to play and how to win, and a unique declaration of organization mission and executive leadership [6-7]. There are many issues in management of competencies [8]: 1) Competencies do not evolve automatically, development and management of these competencies in organizations are through accelerated learning and it can be structured with tools like total quality management or open-ended dialogue which is a form of pervasive communication. The development of competencies are achieved by creative means and it is the duty of top management to make a decision as to what extent do competencies development and management are left to the fate of unstructured emergent methods or arrays of programs, processes and tools in an organization. Competencies are not easily shared or communicated, practices are not easily reproduced and the only process of deepening competencies in organization is through the process of slow apprenticeship and committed learners in the sense that learning does not happen at the same rate with all manners of learners; some are slow to learn while others are quick to master what is taught. 2) The second issue is for the top management to impose a'tight-loose' competencies diffusion process [8] where workers are given the freedom to experiment with learning but infused commonality that will engender same understanding, sharing and practice in organization. In large organizations with many units performing similar task, the workers should be given the free hand to innovate, learn, make mistakes with new methods, and to develop different ways of doing tasks that may lead to common shared values, unity and knowledge, instead of strict adherence to rules that can be counterproductive. It is this type of normative control, where rules are flexible enough that can encourage learning and innovation. 3) The third issue in competence management is the different levels of aggregation in skill, from small skills that affect the sub-task performed in the organization to the vast integration competencies that coalesce these small competencies into an effective whole. The highly specialized small competencies are not easily coupled together and integrated as organization may be good at in parts but inefficient in whole. The bottom line is that poorly integrated disaggregated small competencies are of

little value to an organization. Integrated competencies that do not play much role in the organization's internal resource are not of vital value and highly specialized small competencies are not easily combined and harmonized, so the task before top management is to encourage competencies aggregation. 4) The fourth issue is enmeshed in competencies leverage as widely and effectively as possible in the organization and this has many economic benefits. The benefits accrued to competencies leverage are in three folds, namely: maximization on the return of competency, acceleration of competency development by the process of constant practice, and provision of different but related applications. Leveraging competencies allows the sharpening of competencies and also its enrichment and aggregation with other organizational competencies will collectively form a bulwark in response to new opportunities and threats in the environment. The difficulties in competencies leverage lie in three areas: appropriate opportunities, mobilization of competencies towards that opportunity, and validation of opportunities/competencies match.5) The fifth issue is that effective top management should concern itself with core competencies renewal. Why should there be mention of competencies renewal when competencies are as a result of continuity and renewal is just a creation of discontinuity? Continuous learning by doing and reflection on the past action are the result of competencies, yet Barton (1992) warns that competencies narrowly honed in a lethargic way will only produce core rigidity.Insights intothe reasonsof renewal competencies being crucial is thatit will decrease the fire-brigade type of competencies development (short to medium term competencies) is suggested in the literature [9], but Barton (1992), Henderson and Clark (1990)also suggest that it will prompt organizations to be less path dependent and to respond elegantly to technology and market variable [10-12].

In an effort to survive, an organization will naturally develop some competencies, or else it will go under and disappears from the business landscape. Literature maintains that in a competitive environment, incompetent organizations struggle to survive and they are unlikely to survive in a long run [8]. Competence is "know how" in action and it is the result of constant learning by practice that takes place in organizations. Competence do not evolve without repetition, especially when a collective type of tacit knowledge is involved. Competence grows out of repeated interface between processes, individual skills, and organizational resources. When competition is intense, some companies may be threatened by other organizations with superior and honed competencies. The past struggles of the western industries to survive against the robust developed competencies of the East Asian industries are self-evidence. In these cases, the executives of the western industries had no other option but to use programmatic managed approach to accelerate the development of competencies. For these western industries to rely on emergent repetitive tacit process to develop competencies, which may be too costly, they resort to learning tools for quicker cultivation of core competencies. Most of those tools were developed in USA where they were applied to manage effectively and efficiently the huge industrial build up during the World War II [13-16], but have been carefully applied and perfected in Japan after the war; and later, they have been rediscovered in the west. Among such tools, the quality improvement and quality development methods have been the crust of competencies development [17-18]. These tools give a framework, a language, a systematic approach and matrix of methods for open demonstration and improvement of know-how. Another tool is the root cause analysis, the constant of questioning of deeper "why", which provide a means to evolve from rough heuristics in the design process to more correct scripts that reflect a grounded and detailed understanding of cause and effect correlations. This process allows organization to test, refine and validate its competence development so as to confidently translate them to organizational routines. Companies like Ford, Xerox and Motorola have successfully deployed the competence tools, like problem solving methodologies inherent in Total Quality Management (TQM) as a competitive response to Japanese challenges [8]. Rover learnt a lot from Honda by using this method and this was responsible for Rover's turnaround in the late 1980s and it has also spread to British Aerospace, the parent company of Rover.

When it comes to the idea of sharing and diffusing competencies, it is never an easy task to handle**.** This may appear to be easy, but on practical applications, it is difficult and can only apply to the diffusion of fully package stabilized know-how [8]. Literature gives examples of tightly packaged stabilized competencies, as in the case of McDonald fast food operations, retail operation of highly standardized banks, such as BCP's Nova Rede network in Portugal or BankOne in USA. This diffusion of competencies is easy when creativity is not on play, just routine operations, and when safety may be important and faster deployment of competence in multiple new branches develop faster with untested personnel is paramount than evolutionary learning. This is the case for McDonald, the international spread and BCP after the liberalization of the Portuguese banking business gives the impetus to cover the country faster with new branches. Most organizational competencies are not just like that of McDonald's and BCP's and they cannot be easily packaged, and in some cases, they are not yet mature. In these cases, the priority of the management is further learning to enhance competencies. Competence explication is the process of articulating tacit knowledge or skill into explicit knowledge/skill and this is usually not an easy process. Even tight procedural articulation can be on the way of deepening such competencies [19]. The difficulty lies in concepts like best practices in organizations, and how to createenvironments for improvement for sharing and transfer of competencies without making it different from

department to department proves impossible [8]. To make this happen, a careful differentiation by the management is crucial as what to leave for evolvement and what is to be made uniform. In this case, differentiation of culture and freedom of content give room for innovative practices and evolution selection while uniformity of process guarantees easy connection between various parts of the organization in diffusion of competencies. For less packaged competencies and dynamic in nature, the process of codification, articulation and transfer become problematic and since many organizations depend on strategic consulting companies, such as McKinsey or Arthur D. Little also struggle with this issue. The evolvement of competencies starts with the learning of these consultants, who consequently share their learning during their consulting engagements, but what is to be shared and how to share it, is very vague and, in this process, competencies are under-shared [8]. An example of these R&D competencies in which what is to be shared is fleeting and always enriched [20]. In a situation like this, informal emergent networking and web of processes may be the linchpin instead of explicit platform transfers [8]. This network has to be supported by easy and pervasive communication, deliberate learning across the organization, and face-to-face meeting through internal conferences, well documented efforts and motivation for collaboration. Most competencies are possessed by individuals in the organizations and such formalized explicit competence is diffused by formal training of others and period of apprenticeship, co-practice and predicated on professional norms. Individual tacit competence is difficult to share except in master-apprenticeship relationship .Competence can also be enhanced with teams; units in the organization or in the intermediate level that are not the custody of a particular person nor is diffused throughout the organization and, competencies may also emerge around a unit or core process of the organization [8]. Competence diffusion and institutionalization are possible in any organization as long as the individuals, who possess these skills, have interest to share and the beneficiaries are willing to stay in the organization to propagate these competencies [21].

Goold et al [22], have analyzed diversified and decentralized companies, the most commonly used business model in the western hemisphere. This model can leverage competencies, so as to manage the organization's skill-base efficiently and effectively. The authors note that, beginning in the 1980s, some organizations reduced, and even stripped off, corporate functions and shifted those responsibilities to business units. This restructuring unequivocally changed the functions of the corporate center in managing competencies, so the authors give a framework to help the headquarters' managers to understand different methods. The research projects of these authors [22] at Mars, Shell, Unilever and 3M provide an impetus to the advice to managers, and they used the phrase 'core skills', 'key business skills' instead of 'competence' or 'capability', but literature agrees that the concepts are same [23-25]. Core competencies are the bedrock of delivering chosen strategy and being successful in competitive markets. Key business competencies are those that have utility across the arrays of organizational business endeavors, and the job of the top management is to decide which particular competencies can be applicable and be a key to a business success. The authors argue that skills such as marketing or coating technology are too generic to be useful, but breaking down each business skill into components and subcomponents can be helpful.The corporate center should have a deeper understanding of this process, in order to help the business develop and distribute pervasively its competitive know-how that is important.Goold and Campbell [22] write that when the center has identified key skills and components, the next step is how best to encourage the development and the transfer of these skills across business units. There are five generic methods to share these developed competencies: stimulating the network, promoting central developments, co-ordination of common solutions, imposing best practice, and creating a company culture that reflects its commercial imperatives. In decentralized business units, where freedom, entrepreneurial spirit, and innovation are valued, the most important process of sharing the competencies is through stimulation of network, and to make sure that all mangers, no matter where they are,would benefit from the available opportunity. When standardizing of routines is important and the norm, the center will be deeply involved to impose the best practices on the business units. Despite the fact that many firms have their own different processes of managing different competencies, it is suggested that the corporate center should lead the way in managing competencies across the business units.

The essence of developing and managing organizational competencies is in its usage to be innovative in developing new products; and invariably to be a market leader in the industry. It is usually agreed that innovation gives flip to market share and unequivocally contributes to comparative and an absolute advantages of companies [26-27]. Literature also supports that innovation gives a firm a competitive advantage and growth through initiative of product development [28-31]. The survival of a firm depends on innovation and innovation helps a firm seize market shares [32]. What matters in the industry is constant creation of value for the consumers as Apple has been doing in the iPhone business space. Innovation and creativity are used interchangeably by some researchers and practitioners, but there exist a fundamental difference between the two [33]. Creativity is the building block for innovation, but creativity, which is an attempt to come up with ideas, is not enough. In order to reap the benefits of creativity, one needs to turn it into product innovations and gain

financial benefits in the marketplace. There are many inventors, who were not able to reap the benefits of their hard work and others capitalized on them to be rich and known. History documents X-ray scanner, invented by EMI but commercialized successfully by General Electric; VCR invented by Ampex/Sony but turned into money making machine by Matsushita and finally, the vacuum cleaner invented by Spengler but turned into commercial success by Hoover. Innovation is not complete until creativity and implementation components are added to it for commercial purposes [33]. Implementation is putting ideas into work, which is composed of three important components, idea selection, development and commercialization. The missing ingredients for organizations to achieve implementation are procedures, processes and structures to effect execution of projects. This is a team effort. Creativity is coming up with ideas and implementation is putting ideas in to practice, so creativity is the starting point of any innovative endeavors. Usually the problem facing organizations is the generation of ideas that adds value to the bottom line. Organizations have to be creative to come up with better ideas. To come up with a better idea, someone has to accumulate experience through long practice in that area; ideas are not something that comes up in just a flash out of the blue. Creative people spend years and years of acquiring and refining a knowledge base, it is a concept related to a certain body of existing knowledge [33].

In this study, the research questions and analysis were correlation-based. The purpose was to investigate how executive support impacts organizational core competencies management leading to strategic product innovations, thus helping the organization to become a market leader. In this quantitative research, the authors propose an independent variable, corporate executives support, and a dependent variable, core competencies management and product innovation. The relation and the interdependency of these variables is presented in thispaper.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

What is the relationship between the behaviors and support of the corporate executives and organizational competencies management?The purpose of this work was to conduct a quantitative research to study the impact of executive support on leveraging strategic core competencies,leading to innovations through new product development offerings to the consumers to become a leader in the market. The building and management of core competencies, encouraging individual development of competence, and strengthening competency framework to enhance organization's fortune were evaluated. Their contributions regarding organizational market leadership were the focus of this study. The resultsindicate that sustained competitive advantage can be achieved by focusing on the internal strengths and weaknesses of organizations. This includes directing organizational energies to the right competency and managing theseimportant competencies and knowledge that will be diffused into the whole organization. Organizational Competencies take time to build and they are not easily imitated [34]. Through survey, this study uncovered how an organization needs to deploy its strategic intents and how it should focus on the development and management of core competencies. This supports their drive to develop new products to compete in the market with a push to leadership through innovation and creativity.

This research was conducted at Transcorp International Plc., located at Victoria Island in Lagos, Nigeria, in the western hemisphere of the African continent. The process used a survey method. The purpose of the survey was to extrapolate from sample to population using inferential statistics to make some assumptions about characteristic, attitude, or behavior of the population under investigation.The population at Transcorp International Plc was the rank and file of all workers in the organization. The targeted population was the sampled workers, male and female drawn from the larger population, who have university education and those that have, at least,Ordinary National Diploma (OND) and West African Examination Certificates (WAEC). These comprised executives, middle level managers, supervisors, and workers below the supervisors. They also include staff members, such as engineers, accountants, technicians and administrative supporting staff, who are deeply involved in the day-to-day activities in the organization to create values for the consumers. This was a good sample of the population as they are involved in making strategic decisions and planning for the organization, and carrying out the supervision and implementation of the formulated strategies for the smooth running of the overall organizational machineries. This study involved stratification of the population. Creswell [35] states that when selecting people randomly from the population, these characteristics may or may not be present in the sample to a certain degree as in the population; so stratification allows their representation.The sample design for this study used the simple-stage sampling procedure which, according to [35],is a procedure where the investigator has access to the population and can sample the people directly. Sampling is the process of taking part of a targeted population to represent the entire population for survey research [36]. The author suggest that the alternative to this method of sampling is enumeration, which is counting the entire population. In this research, the intent was to distribute the survey questionnaires among executives, middle level managers, supervisors and the rest of the workers, to know how strategic organizational core competencies are managed to initiate product innovation that help the organization become a leader in the industry in the African market

landscape. Due to limited resources and financial support, it was decided that the best method to use was the random sampling method and then extrapolate the result to the entire population.According to [37], sampling technique is a method of selecting a group of subjects, called the sample, for study from an entire group, termed the population. Each individual is chosen entirely by chance and each member of the population has a possible equal chance of being included in the sample. There are benefits of using random sampling, and one of it is the likelihood of bias being reduced. Every subject here has equal chance of being chosen from the large population to form the sample size.

Survey technique was applied via the questionnaire and the statistical significance of relationships between survey itemswere determined. Most of the questionnaires were filled in and returned.Number of participants in each group was large, a total of 200 employees made up of the executives, middle level managers, supervisors, and lower level employees in different divisions of Transcorp Plc. The questionnaires were distributed to all of the subjects or participants by mail and it was anonymous. They were collected at the end of the process within one week by express mail depending on the work schedules of the participants. The researchers were not involved during the process, to avoid the possibility of bias. The survey containedquestions regardingexecutive support, core competencies management, and product innovations. The measureswere based on Likert scale. This was a quantitative research project via survey process with empirical evidence that used the sample data to extrapolate to the larger population with near precision. Each employees got three of the sets of the questionnaires to clearly get the overall picture of what was happening in the organization regarding executive support and core competencies management. Information was summarized on how this organization managed its intangible assets to become a market leader through product innovation. The aim of the survey was to understand whether the organization understood core competencies, its development, management and utilization for the organizational to achieve competitive advantage during times of evolving technology. Additionally, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used for analysis in this research to determine the degree of relationship between the independent and the dependent variables.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Executive support to enhance organizational core competencies is an important segment of business planning and the strategic process.The application of this process in the industry is based on the management and executives' support of the internal resources of the organization that results in innovative product development to gain a competitive edgein the marketplace. This study was designed to answer the research questions: What is the impact of executive and management support on enhancing themanagement of core competencies of organizations, which, in turn, influence strategic product innovations?The model was the relationship between the executive support in an organization as the independent variable,and management of core competencies of the organization as the dependent variable. Two hundred people completed the survey which was a reasonably good response to draw conclusions from. The participants were selected randomly based on the roles they play in product innovation in a typical manufacturing industry. They were mainly the executives, the production engineers, the marketing workforces and the customer service and information technology personnel. Sample distributions of participants are given in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 - ***Sample Distribution of Respondents in Various Departments***

	Department/ Sample					**Total**
Department	Executives	Production Engineers	Marketing Personnel	Customer Service	Technology Personnel	**5**
Sample	10	32	20	20	18	**100**

Table 2 - *Sample Distribution of Respondents by Rank/Position*

Respondent	Ranking	Sample	Total Sample
Executive	CEO	1	10
	Deputy CEO	1	
	Executive Director	8	
Production Engineers	Manager	4	32
	Supervisor	12	
	Below Supervisor	16	
Marketing Personnel	Manager	2	20
	Supervisor	4	
	Below Supervisor	14	
Customer Service Personnel	Manager	2	20
	Supervisor	3	
	Below Supervisor	15	
Information Technology Personnel	Manager	2	18
	Supervisor	2	
	Below Supervisor	14	

A regression analysis was performed on the data with the executive behavior as the independent variable, and the management of core competencies as the dependent variable. The results of this study is shown in Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6. This research concludes the executive support has positive impact on the management of core competencies of the organization.

Table 3 - *Descriptive Statistics of the Variables in the Regression Analysis*

	M	***SD***	***N***
Management of Core Competencies	4.443333333333335	1.080689599849719	100
Corporate Executives Behavior	4.146666666666669	.708201116596706	100

Table 4 - *Summary of the Regression Model*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.978[a]	.956	.955	.228669858934653

a. Predictors: (Constant), corporate executives behavior
b. Dependent Variable: management of core competencies

Table 5 - *Significance of the Regression Model*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	110.497	1	110.497	2113.156	.000[b]
	Residual	5.124	98	.052		
	Total	115.621	99			

a. Dependent Variable: management of core competencies
b. Predictors: (Constant), corporate executives behavior

Table 6 –*Coefficients[a] in the Regression Model*

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-1.743	.136		-12.766	.000
	Corporate Executives Behavior	1.492	.032	.978	45.969	.000

a. Dependent Variable: management of core competencies

In order to test the research, each variable cited was evaluated by averaging the answers to the questions posed for measuring that variable. Probability of type I error, α, in testing all hypotheses was 0.05. The result of reliability analysis, based on the acquired data, was analyzed. The Cronbach alpha measure for this survey turned out to be 0.798, which is moderate strong. All reliability and data analysis in this research utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).Normal P-P plot, as shown in Figure 1, of the residuals resembles the straight line connecting (0,0) and (1,1) fairly well, indicating that normality assumption of residuals is met. The p value of the F statistic of the test is almost 0, indicating significance of regression. The right tailed p value of coefficient of executives' behavior in the regression model is almost 0, indicating that executives' behavior positively influences the dependent variable. Furthermore, the adjusted R^2 of the test indicates that 95% of variations of management of core competencies are explained by executives' behavior. This is very high explanation of variations of the dependent variable by the independent variable in a regression model.

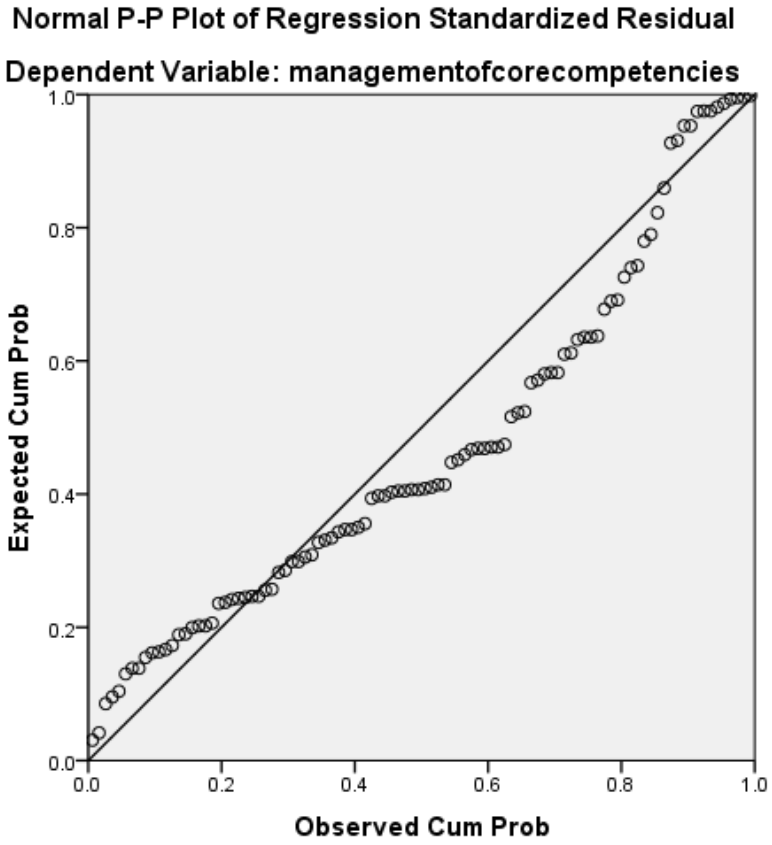

Figure 1 – ***Normal P-P Plot of Standard Residual in the Regression Analysis***

Dependence of executives' behavior on core competencies management is represented by the following equation.

Management of Core Competencies = -1.743 + 1.492 * (Executive Behavior) + $\mathcal{E}$ **(Error)**

Based on the above regression analysis results this study concludes that executive behavior and management support has positive effect on core competencies management for product development in manufacturing enterprises. Furthermore, in this research, the reliability of the survey was validated by the analysis of the Cronbach's alpha, which is the index of reliability. The Cronbach's alpha Coefficient was 0.862, indicating robust reliability. This demonstrates the internal consistencies and academic rigor of the questionnaires used in this research. In all the hypothesis testing, the probability of type 1 error, α is 0.05 (p. value). Regression analysis was done to test the hypothesis for all questions. It is usually assumed thatthe error term $\mathcal{E}$ in the liner regression model is independent of x, and is normally distributed, with zero mean and constant variance. Here, it can be decidedif there is any significant relationship between the independent variable x and dependent variable y by testing the hypothesis that β = 0.From the statistical analysis, the evidence gathered through the testing concluded that the executive behavior and support has positive effect on organizational core competencies management leading to strategic product innovations in manufacturing enterprises. The adjusted R^2unbiased estimator was used to understanding the standard error of the regression. These are the deviations from the regression line where n is the number of sample size and k is the number of independent variables. Adjusted R^2 bears the same relation to the standard of error of the regression that R^2 bears to the standard deviation of the errors [38].In the analysis testing of this study, the normality of the assumption of the residuals is met, the p value of the f statistic almost 0, showing significant regression and the right tailed p value of core competencies in the regression was almost 0, indicating executive support positively influences the dependent variable,core competencies and product innovation. Furthermore, the adjusted R^2 of the test shows 98% of variations of product innovation which is explained by management support and organizational core competencies.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research links the discrete aspects of the effect of executive support on organizational core competencies management in a new way as to the degree of its impacts on product innovation and sustained competitive advantage, necessary for product leadership in the global, continental or regional market places. Corporate executive's behaviors measure the support given to sharpening organizational strategy and the care towards the employees as one of the valuable assets any organizational can possess. The behaviors of the corporate executives can support or hinder the progress and prosperity of any organization. The reason for the executive's high salary is usually performance; their knowledge, skills, leadership and political savvies, all contribute to the success or failure of the organization. A leader who fails to coach and mentor a successor is not a good leader as was posed in a question in the survey. In a successful organization, managers not only possess the technical skills but possession of people skills is a paramount criteria as stated in the survey. All opinions count and employees should be treated as important stakeholders. A good manager should know what motivates his or her workers to be happy and performoptimally. Employees should work in the most enabling environment without fear of intimidation to be most productive. Management of organizational core competencies measures the nurturing and maintenance of organizational competencies. It is not uncommon for someone to work hard to create enormous wealth but lose it eventually. If core competencies are developed but not supported and managed carefully, they can become obsolete or becomes irrelevant. Core competencies do not just evolve, they have to be developed, nurtured and maintained. Highly trained employees should be treated fairly so that they do not leave the organization abruptly.Organization has to make sure that it is competitive in terms of salaries and welfare package, and that it allows its employees to explore their potentials, and to enablethem enhance competencies.Well-managed competencies will enable the organization to branch into other lines of businesses; General Electric (GE) is an example. In management of organizational core competencies, tacit knowledge like technical areas has to be attached to the master skill possessor, so as to spread such knowledge in the organization.The corporate executive's support positively and significantlyinfluences organizational core competencies management.

The main focus of this researchwas tounderstand the influence of executive support on organizational core competencies management. Organizational core competencies, as these results show,have component in its development, management, organizational learning and executives' support which will help an organization to launch itself, renews itself in terms of product offerings to the consumers; capturing opportunities and facing challenges squarely in the competitive horizon. Organizational competencies are reflections of the whole resources organization can muster in any given time and space. The master of all the resources in any organization is the organizational personnel, they are the ones to manipulate the machines, processes and technology to give an organization the unique competencies. In this light, corporate leaders and managers should evaluate the following:

- The organizational mission and vision must be clear to all members of the staff. The mission is the reason why the organization exists and the vision is what the organization desires to be in the future. This is important so that all the members of the organization work and move in the same direction.
- The organization's strategy must be communicated to all and strategic decision must be participative. In all successful organizations, everybody is a strategist.
- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the chief strategist and he or she should not shy away from this important duty. His or her support is very essential to the success of any strategic initiatives.
- Organizations should see the strategy as an action oriented concept, a tool kit to solve the problems and challenges facing the organization.
- Trust building and respect for one another are necessary and it is only then that co-operation and understanding can gain strong foothold in the organization.
- Coaching and mentorship, veritable instruments to develop others, should be a welcome culture in any organization. A CEO who is to leave office without nurturing a successor did not do a good job. This should be done sincerely and conscientiously in the interest of the organization.
- Smart and well qualified employees should be hired from the onset and managers should delegate responsibilities to these people to do their job.
- Training and retraining are important ways to enhance staff skills and apprenticeship to the master skill possessor should be encouraged, especially in technical fields. Management should try hard to retain employees that have special skills which can be used by the whole organization.
- Risk taking and honest and sincere mistakes should not be punished because it is through these trails and errors that innovative products emerge.
- Work environments should be created to encourage and promote creativity and diversity should be encouraged.

- Positive changes should be promoted and encouraged. Changes that will affect the workers should be announced well in advance and workers who are the recipients of any change effort should be consulted, supported and encouraged.
- Information should be pervasive in flow and all staffs should be encouraged to ask questions.
- The welfare of the workers should be taken seriously as it is to the advantage of the organization if everybody is made to feel as equal stakeholders.
- Every employee should understand the competencies of the organization that makes it stands out from the pack in the marketplace.
- Finally, the views of the customers are high priority and should be taken seriously.

The analysis of the Cronbach's alpha showed strong and robust reliability and the implication was that the survey questionnaires were constructed with internal consistency. They were reliable and valid. The adjusted R^2 of the test showed 98% of variations of product innovation are explained by management support and organizational core competencies, meaning that executive supports have an influence on product innovation. The explanation of this phenomenon is that when the corporate leaders show support to their members of staff, the organizational core competencies management will proceed without a hitch and the whole organization stands to gain.The adjusted R^2 measured in the regression model in this research was high, in proximity of 95%. This does not occur very often in regression analyses that incorporate data which is based on real events. The reason for high explanation of the dependent variable by the independent variable in this work may be due to mainly perceptual nature of the variables. Strategy that does not call for diagnosis, guiding policy and action, may be lacking some modicum of substance[3-5]. Strategy is all about action, but organization has to find out the problems in order to direct the needed actions, and there must be rules and policies on ground to follow in tackling the problem confronting the organization. The findings of this study confirm the importance of organizational core competencies in organizational prosperity and progress.The highpoints as a summation are that data analysis and results support 1) the positive effect of executive support on strategic product innovation; 2) lends robust credence to the positive outcome of this research objective that management support positively influences core competencies development and management and strategic product innovation in a manufacturing organization; 3) this study is conclusive with SWOT analysis as a strategic tool; 4) organizational core competenciesare the intangible assets of any organization that can truly give a sustained competitive advantage and differentiation of firms that any executive can put in place in the long run by management support; and 5) a well-crafted purpose or mission is essential for defining a strategic intent and promoting management support, which is an articulated diagnosis of organizational challenges, with a guiding policy to tackle the organizational problems.

In conclusion, organizational core competencies are the intangible assets of an organization, and productinnovationscreate the competitive advantage for any organization. This research concludes that executive support positively influencesorganizational core competencies management for strategic product innovation; hence, these intangible assets of an organization have enhancing influence on organizational competitive advantage.

V. FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

This research was performed in a relatively small manufacturing organization. This needs to be studied further and it is suggested that additional researchbe undertaken in an advanced economy where competition and customer behaviors are more deterministic. A research may be designedthat incorporates quantitative and qualitative interview parameters, to determineinnovation. This can be taken further to research the correlation between the theoretical results and the practical evidence of the products produced. Another possible area of research is to determine the correlation between other organizational parameters (organization structure, hierarchy, management style, etc.)and organizational core competencies development and management. Studies could also be conducted in public enterprises in developed nation'sspecialized niche markets to understand the impact ofexecutive support on core competencies management and its effect on product innovations.

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