

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGY AND QUALITY SERVICE
DELIVERY OF PROCESSING FIRMS: EVIDENCE FROM CROSS RIVER STATE,
NIGERIA.**

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Abstract:

Monitoring and evaluation strategies are increasingly recognised as being essential for firms performance. However, the contextual approach for which monitoring and evaluation strategies can be effectively utilized as tools for quality service delivery remain underexplored. This study examines how monitoring and evaluation strategies affects service delivery and firms performance in Cross River State. The paper adopted the quantitative method of analysis, using simple percentages and multiple regression analysis to test the hypothesis using SPSS. The findings revealed that monitoring and evaluation strategies that align with environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback mechanisms positively enhances quality service delivery of processing firms. While monitoring and evaluation enhances firms performance generally, this paper highlights that effective quality service delivery depend on environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback mechanisms. Based on these findings, we propose the development of structurally responsive frameworks that embodies environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback mechanisms across global business contexts.

Keyword: Environmental Scanning, Environmental Analysis, Feedback, Monitoring and Evaluation, Quality Service Delivery.

Introduction

In recent years, substantial changes have been witnessed in the operations of different business entities especially in the processing industry. Most firms and nations globally are moving away from traditional way of focusing on profit maximization and economic aspect of their operations to improve quality delivery services. This is happening because most firms have realized that it is unethical and unsustainable to focus on profit maximization and economic benefit while overlooking the relevance of quality delivery outcome (Yvonne & Reuben, 2020). The essence of quality delivery services is to meet and exceed customer's expectation (Azzam, 2023). This has made most processing firms to deploy different strategies in making sure that their quality delivery services meet the vital organizational effectiveness as pillars of customer needs.

Currently, in Nigeria, most firms have been liquidated (Suliaman & Ahmad, 2017).), the few survivors are either in the verge of collapse or just managing to exist due to poor quality delivery services. It is imperative to note that, the application of quality delivery services is a bundle of value to firm's survival. Many scholars have recognized the importance of quality delivery services. For example (Asif et al, 2022) opined that a greater intensity of research emphasizes operation of strategic managers on sustainable quality delivery services. Specifically, Obi and Oparanam (2018) assert that quality control measure is a potent tool for organizational effectiveness. These views were amplified by William et al (2021) who noted that feature research should explore on corporate initiative as a strategy on firm's performance. Also, Kamau et al (2021) identified the importance of monitoring and evaluation as strategies for quality service delivery.

The adoption of quality delivery services often involves different dimensions which might be long term or short in nature. These actions are driven by effective monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation are a critical tool in ensuring that business entities are able to meet customer current needs devoid of compromise. Unfortunately, 84 per cent of sampled processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria, from (2014-2023), are increasingly faced with challenges of effective quality delivery services as a result of inadequate monitoring and evaluation strategy (Okon, 2024). It is in view of this that this study undertakes a rapid analysis of the utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategy on quality delivery services with a view to ascertain existing gaps between environmental scanning and quality service delivery, between environmental analysis and quality service delivery, between feedback process and quality service delivery for processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to determine the effect of monitoring and evaluation strategy on quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research hypothesis

Utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategy does not significantly affect quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical background

Two theories: The goal setting theory and organizational culture theory were applied in this research to guide into the connection between, environmental scanning and quality service delivery. The goal setting theory by Locke and Luthan (1990) centered on transforming goals into appropriate environmental practice. The theory postulate that goals setting not only depend on the setting interventions but also on the methods and strategies employed during business environmental scanning process. According to Loke and Luthan (1990) opined that

goal setting is shape by existing organizational practices. The relevance of this theory to the study is that quality service delivery of firms is directly or indirectly influenced by the set goals and which has to align with the firms environment and business practices. Therefore, the goals of firms which include the maximization of profit would invariably depend on utilizing monitoring and evaluation strategies that align with environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback mechanisms.

The organizational culture theory is credited to Schein (2004). The theory proves valuable insight on the underlying dynamics that mediate between environment analysis, feedback management and quality delivery services. It aids in recognizing how the prevailing environmental analysis can either facilitate or impede quality delivery in an organization. The relevance of this theory to the study is that monitoring and evaluation strategies measured in terms of environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback mechanisms are the tools that can facilitate quality service delivery of firms, but if not applied may impede quality delivery of services. Thus, environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback mechanisms are the necessary monitoring and evaluation strategies to bring about effective firm performance.

Conceptual framework

The effect of monitoring and evaluation strategy has been research upon by various scholars such as (Regan, 2020; Ngumbela *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, the conceptual framework addresses gap in monitoring and evaluation strategy by using environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback. Therefore, the figure 1 shows the framework for monitoring and evaluation strategy and quality service delivery in selected processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria.

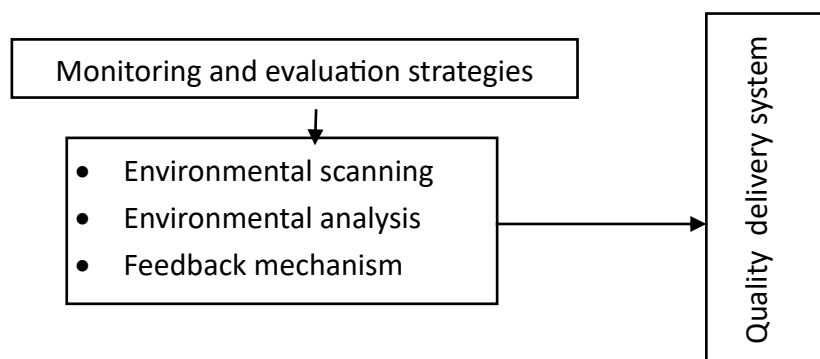


Figure 1: Monitoring and evaluation strategy and quality service delivery
Source: Author, 2025.

Concept of monitoring and evaluation strategy

The concept of monitoring and evaluation strategy has been elucidated by recent authors and scholars, offering contemporary, yet effective perspective. For instance, Akpan (2024) posits that monitoring and evaluation strategy involves top management activities of tracking policy implementation and initiative on behalf of its owners, while considering and assessing the internal and external environments in which the business operates. Therefore, within organizations, monitoring and evaluation plays a critical role in ensuring that policies are track and evaluated towards achieving set business objectives. Ngumbela *et al* (2024) opined that monitoring and evaluation is an intervention strategy use by management to track organizational inputs, actions to ensure that organization policies achieve its objectives. In similar vein Isaac and Kennedy (2023) argued that the essence of monitoring and evaluation is to provide effective feedback that propel business entities towards satisfactory profit, service delivery and sustainable growth.

In alignment with this perspective Chen and Kim (2020) elaborated that the process of monitoring and evaluation strategy is a systematic and well defined collective top management process within an organization. Recent scholars have provided insight into the concept of monitoring and evaluation strategy. For instance, Regan (2020) opine that the process of monitoring and evaluation strategy encompasses certain essential components which include transformation of business plan into tangible outcomes. These components consist of monitoring and evaluating strategic choices, and strategic implementation. The strategic choices centers on evaluating and choosing the optimal path among various alternative with the understanding of the business environment. Olwenyi et al. (2025) elaborated that the process of monitoring and evaluation strategy represent a systematic and well-defined collective effort within the corporate organization. this comprehensive view fosters effective coordination and control of business activities, ensuring that implemented plans align with business goals and objective.

Environmental scanning

Enhancing quality service delivery in both public and private firm's Craig et al (2021) contend that appropriate business environmental scanning is essential. Most scholars and experts see environmental scanning as complex task. Jael and Njeri (2021) environmental scanning process decide if business flourish thrives, or fail, in unstable conditions, a firm ability to swiftly and successfully execute new approaches might distinguish between achieving its objectives or failing (Bryson et al, 2018). Achieving organizational objectives, which are primarily driven by intrinsic needs, is in the end dependent on turning aspiration into actuality, which takes more than just anticipation (David & Simpson, 2017). According to previous practical exposure and scientific studies, environmental scanning has a considerable effect on organizations success (Okerenu & Odiri 2024), especially in sectors where distinctive approaches are challenging to replicates (Chimusoro et al., 2017). Because organizations differ in terms of culture and context (Chang & Lin, 2015: Valentina et al, 2020), it is reasonable to surmise that implementing the same environmental scanning approach in different organizational setting may yield different result such as service delivery system.

Environmental analysis

The capacity to monitor and evaluate quality service delivery is dependent on the quality of environmental analysis (Suliaman & Ahmad, 2017), Francesco et al. (2023) avers that having access to environmental data is what really pushes quality service delivery in an organization. The goal of environmental analysis is to determine the best option to carry out and deliver quality services, so that organizational goals can be achieved. Tao et al (2017) contend that of all the resources of an organization needed to function properly, environmental analysis is considered as pivotal to obtain maximum performance. Environmental analysis add value to management strategies and are essential for effective deployment of operational agility and quality service delivery (Fireman et al., 2023; Shima & Samaneh, 2023; Sofyan & Ina, 2015). Therefore, environmental analysis is an important factor in the productivity function of an organization (Oksana, 2019; Usende, 2023; Teddy, 2021)

Feedback

Feedback defines work procedures and how organizations accomplish its objectives. (Nejjari, 2025), within an organization core beliefs and assumptions, which are inherently linked to its culture. This feedback approach facilitates efficient service delivery in an organization (Weilin & Shangfeng, 2023: Febrina et al 2024; Samridhi et al 2024) Idoko (2018) extended this idea by emphasizing that feedback serves as the foundation that link job schedules,

systems, operating procedures aimed at achieving the organization's strategic goals through efficient coordination of operations.

Studies have revealed that feedback helps to delineates how various roles, responsibilities and operational activities are organized and coordinated within an organization, including service delivery to respond more swiftly to customer's needs, thereby enhancing overall customers satisfaction (Gomaa et al, 2023). However, Gagan (2023) contends that feedback strategy which encompasses decentralization of decision-making approaches has so far played critical role in enhancing effective service delivery system.

Feedback serves as a framework that defines operational functions and specifies tasks and responsibilities as well as directions for coordination and communication within the firm. It serves as a valuable communication tool that govern how individual coordinates their actions and use resources to achieve organizational objectives

Study gap

There has been surge in research exploring the effect of monitoring and evaluation strategies on firm performance but existing studies lack the contextual approach to examine how monitoring and evaluation strategies are utilized as a tool for quality service delivery in processing firms in Cross River state, Nigeria. It is this gap that this study tends to fill.

Methods

This study adopts cross sectional research survey design to obtain relevant information and with a population of 8,024 which comprises management staff and major stakeholders of Lafarge Africa plc, Corzea Meals, Huge Resources Ltd, Serenity Nig Ltd, AA Universal Agro industries Ltd, Novel express tasty foods Ltd and Niger Mills plc in Cross River State, Nigeria. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane formula, stratified sampling method. and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient to test the reliability of the instrument. Four-point scale was used in developing the questionnaire for data collection. A total of 381 copies of questionnaire were distributed, 375 were retrieved and this shows the response rate of 98.4 per cent. Descriptive statistics was used in summarizing data and the hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis with the use of SPSS version 28.

The stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select participants for the study. The stratified was adopted to ensure all the firms used for the study were adequately represented and because it helps to reduce sampling bias. Consequently, the study was carried out in stages as follows: The first stratum was Lafarge Africa plc; second stratum was Corzea Meals' third stratum was Huge Resources Ltd; fourth stratum was Serenity Nig Ltd; fifth stratum was AA Universal Agro industries Ltd; sixth stratum was Novel express tasty foods Ltd and the seventh stratum was Niger Mills plc. Each of this firms (stratum) produced participants for the study through simple random sampling. Here, pieces of papers were folded and put in a basket, thoroughly mixed together containing YES and NO to be administered to respondents who then picked the paper balls indicating YES. Only those who picked YES were qualified for the study. Sample by sample distribution of respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Population and sample distribution by firm categories

S/N	Firms	Population	Sample
1	Lafarge Africa plc	2,020	96
2	Corzea Meals	945	45
3	Huge Resources Ltd	1,132	54
4	Serenity Nig Ltd	897	43
5	AA Universal Agro industries Ltd,	577	27
6	Novel express tasty foods Ltd	1,162	55
7	Niger Mills plc	1,291	61
	Total	8024	381

The Taro Yamane (1967) statistical method was used to arrive at the sample size. This is a simplified formula for calculating sample sizes at 95 percent confidence level with P=0.05.

This is expressed as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

- n = Sample size
- N = Population size
- e = level of precision
- n = $\frac{8,024}{1 + 8,024(0.05)^2}$
- n = $\frac{8,024}{1 + 8,024(0.0025)}$
- n = $\frac{8,024}{1 + 20.06}$
- n = $\frac{8,024}{21.06}$
- n = 381.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was done, using twenty-five (20) respondents drawn from firms in the study area, that were not ear-marked for the main study. The research instrument was administered twice to the subject in a test-retest procedure. An interval of one week was allowed between the two tests administered. The questionnaire was given identification marks for ease in pairing and matching the first administration with the second. The scores of the subjects on the two tests were obtained and subjected to the test-retest field testing, using Pearson product moment correlation. The result shows a test result of .89 indicating that the research instrument has internal stability and suitable for use in the study.

Model Specification

The study developed one model for examining monitoring and evaluation and quality service delivery of processing firms. As shown below

$$Y = a_0 + a_1X + a_2X + a_3 X + \mu \text{-----equation (1)}$$

Where:

- Y = Quality Service Delivery
- a = Intercept
- a₁ to a_n = regression parameters
- μ = stochastic error term

The above model is further represented in the following econometric model
 QSD = a₀ + a₁ES + a₂EA + a₃F + μ ----- equation (2)

Where:

QSD = Quality service delivery

ES = Environmental scanning

EA = Environmental analysis

F = Feedback

μ = stochastic error terms that takes care of other possible factors not considered in the model

Result

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses to monitoring evaluation strategies and processing firm's quality delivery system in Cross River State, Nigeria items. Item 1 shows that out of 375 respondents surveyed, 215 representing 57.3 per cent strongly agreed that monitoring and evaluation strategies eases the processing of firm's quality service delivery; 110 representing 29.3 per cent agreed; 36 representing 9.6 per cent disagreed; and 10 representing 2.7 per cent strongly disagreed while 4 representing 1.1 per cent were undecided. Item 2 shows that out of 375 respondents surveyed, 220 representing 58.7 per cent strongly agreed that environmental scanning linked to monitoring and evaluation strategies enhances firm's quality service delivery; 109 representing 29.1 per cent agreed; 35 representing 9.3 per cent strongly disagreed; and 8 representing 2.1 per cent strongly disagreed, while 3 representing 0.8 per cent were undecided. Item 3 shows that out of 375 respondents surveyed, 222 representing 59.2 per cent strongly agreed that to monitor and evaluate environmental analysis will enhance firm's quality service delivery; 125 representing 33.3 per cent agreed; 15 representing 4.0 per cent disagreed; and 8 representing 2.1 per cent strongly disagreed, while 5 representing 1.3 per cent were undecided. Item 4 shows that out of 375 respondents surveyed, 204 representing 54.4 per cent strongly agreed that the feedbacks of organization is essential in activating firm's quality service delivery; 130 representing 34.6 per cent agreed; 28 representing 7.5 per cent disagreed; and 7 representing 1.9 per cent strongly disagreed, while 6 representing 1.6 per cent were undecided. Item 5 shows that out of 375 respondents surveyed, 201 representing 53.6 per cent strongly agreed that firm's quality service delivery cannot be achieved without monitoring and evaluation strategies; 135 representing 36.0 per cent agreed; 18 representing 4.8 per cent disagreed; and 12 representing 3.2 per cent strongly disagreed, while 9 representing 2.4 per cent were undecided.

Table 1: Distribution of responses to monitoring evaluation strategies and quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria (n=375)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	UD
1	Monitoring and evaluation strategies eases the processing of firm's quality service delivery	215 (57.3%)	110 (29.3%)	36 (9.6%)	10 (2.7%)	4 (1.1%)
2	The environmental scanning linked to monitoring and evaluation strategies enhances firm's quality service delivery	220 (58.7%)	109 (29.1%)	35 (9.3%)	8 (2.1%)	3 (0.8%)
3	To monitor and evaluate environmental analysis will enhance firm's quality service delivery	222 (59.2%)	125 (33.3%)	15 (4.0%)	8 (2.1%)	5 (1.3%)

4	Feedbacks is essential in activating firm's quality service delivery	204 (54.4%)	130 (34.6%)	28 (7.5%)	7 (1.9%)	6 (1.6%)
5	Firm's quality service delivery cannot be achieved without monitoring and evaluation strategies	201 (53.6%)	135 (36%)	18 (4.8%)	12 (3.2%)	9 (2.4%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Hypothesis

H₀: Monitoring and evaluation strategies does not significantly affect quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria.

H₁: Monitoring and evaluation strategies significantly affect quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State, Nigeria.

In this hypothesis the independent variables are monitoring and evaluation strategies in terms of environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedbacks which are continuous variables. The dependent variable is firm's quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State which is also continuous. To test this hypothesis, the multiple regression analysis is adopted.

Table 2: Summary of multiple regression analysis on the prediction of monitoring and evaluation strategies (environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedbacks) and firm's quality service delivery of processing firms in Cross River State

Source of variance	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	358.65	3	119.55	7.738	.000
Residual	5,731.95	371	15.45		
Total	6,090.6	374			
Variable	Regression weight (β)	Standard error	t-value	Sig of t.	
Constant	4.85		5.935	.000	
Environmental scanning	2.25	5.191	3.225	.441	
Environmental analysis	2.17	4.440	2.253	.409	
Feedback	2.88	3.248	2.424	.316	

*Significant at .05 > .05

Table 2, shows that the regression weights for the independent variables (environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback) at .05 level of significance just as the t-value is significant at the .05 level of significance.

Thus, given that the calculated t-values of 3.225; 2.253; 2.424 and 2.910 are all greater than the critical value of 2.132 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategies does not significantly affect processing firm's quality service delivery in Cross River State, Nigeria is rejected. Hence, the alternate hypothesis stating that monitoring and evaluation strategies in terms of environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback significantly, collectively and relatively predict processing firm's quality service delivery in Cross River State, Nigeria is accepted

In other words, since the regression weights indicate the relative strengths of the prediction, it follows that processing firm's quality service delivery in Cross River State, Nigeria is significantly predicted by environmental scanning ($t = 3.225$; $p = .941$; $\beta = 2.25$), environmental analysis and ($t = 2.253$; $p = .409$; $\beta = 2.17$), feedback ($t = 2.424$; $p = .316$; $\beta = 2.88$).

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that monitoring and evaluation strategies in terms of environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback significantly, collectively and relatively predict processing firm's quality service delivery in Cross River State, Nigeria. This is in line with the study of Craig et al (2021) who reported that environmental scanning and environmental analysis had significant contribution to quality service delivery in an organization. This finding is also consistent with the study of Jael and Njeri (2021) who reported that effective environmental scanning and environmental analysis has a considerable effect on organizations success especially in sectors where distinctive approaches are challenging to replicates. This finding also supports Okerenu and Odiri (2024) and Bryson et al (2018) who reported that environmental scanning and environmental analysis have played salient roles in changing the narratives of delivery services to a more proactive, qualitative and productive service delivery system.

This current finding also conforms to the study by Oliver and Amy (2020) who explored the barriers on the use of monitoring and evaluation framework in determining quality service delivery in organizations and found that 45 per cent of monitoring and evaluations in organizations are done by employees with less experience and the technical know-how and this resulted to the poor delivery system. The current finding further support Gagan (2023) who discovered that feedback significantly plays a critical role in enhancing quality service delivery.

In Cross River State, most of the processing firms such as Lafarge Africa, Corzea Meals and Niger Mills Plc. to mention but a few utilizes monitoring and evaluation strategies to enhance quality service delivery. In fact, some of these firm's quality delivery system were either tangible or intangible depending on the services rendered. More noticeable was that most of the firms in the state measured their service delivery in terms of profit maximization, rate of turnover, market accessibility, technical support, use of technology and availability of manpower among others. In-spite of all these, the utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategies were seen to be most critical in determining whether a firm delivery system is of high or low quality.

For instance, a processing firm like Huge Resources Ltd. utilizes environmental scanning strategy to enhance her quality service delivery. Consequently, some staff of the firm were trained on how to scan the firm environment with regard to monitoring and evaluating the operations of employees. Serenity Nig. Ltd. developed a policy framework that guides monitoring and evaluation activities in the organization. As for AA Universal Agro industries Ltd, is into ago-allied, it utilizes environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback strategies in its monitoring and evaluation operations to enhance quality service delivery of the firm. Novel express tasty foods Ltd. was able to combined the strategies which thus help to reduce losses in the firm. Most importantly, 78 per cent of the firms investigated used a combination of monitoring and evaluation strategies to enhance their quality delivery system. Because of the use of monitoring and evaluation strategies such as environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback, it was easy for most of these processing firms strengthened their service delivery system more effectively.

The ability for firms to use two or more monitoring and evaluation strategies for enhanced quality service delivery, made the firms to break-even in their businesses. More so, use of multiple monitoring and evaluation strategies resulted to high rate of quality service delivery, compared to firms that adopted only one strategy. Similarly, the use of multiple monitoring and evaluation strategies helped minimize the phenomena of liquidations and losses

Conclusion

In view of study findings, the utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategies indicated by environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback has made unique contributions to quality service delivery. Through such strategies, the delivery system of most firms changed for better. By the utilization of monitoring and evaluation strategies, processing firms in Cross River State, tend to be improving in their quality service delivery system. The study demonstrated that monitoring and evaluation strategies of environmental scanning, environmental analysis and feedback were found to be practicable means of improving quality service delivery in processing firms in Cross River State. Indeed, with the use monitoring and evaluation strategies for enhanced quality service delivery, losses or liquidations in firms will be minimal.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Management of organization should put in place feedback mechanism that create smooth communication that can track various operations within and outside the firm.
2. Since utilizing monitoring and evaluation strategies can enhance service delivery system, firms should without hesitation institutionalize them into sustainable structures.
3. Employees of firms should be reoriented and fully trained on the use of monitoring and evaluation strategies for enhanced service delivery system. This can be achieved through periodic workshops, seminars and conferences.

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