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USES OF BALANCE SCORE CARD (BSC) FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIAN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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Abstract
Performance measurement and evaluation is important in every sector. There is need to track and evaluate performance to enhance productivity in sectors including education. There is continuous need for libraries to constantly evaluate performance as libraries are faced with several situations challenging their existence and essence. Libraries have been challenged by stakeholders ranging from their parent institutions, sponsors and some levels of government to justify their existence and budgetary allocation. Researchers have however explored several performance evaluation models and discovered that Balance Score Card (BSC) is an effective and result oriented model that has been explored by several institutions and libraries in developing worlds. Studies have likewise shown that, majority of libraries in Nigeria are yet to explore the benefits of the performance model to their fullest advantage considering the level of innovation and technological advancement. Libraries perform several activities and function which technology and other innovations can help facilitate and ease. Strategies have been suggested based on studies for Nigerian libraries to enable them perform to the fullest using the performance model. This study therefore describes and suggests that libraries especially academic libraries in Nigeria should try to explore and integrate the Balance Score Card (BSC) model in their operations and service delivery. It is important to note that BSC has been put to test by several institutions and libraries and discovered to be worthwhile model for library growth.

Keywords: Performance Evaluation; Balance Score Card; Productivity Measurement; Service Delivery; Academic Libraries

Introduction

Industries, organisation even institutions including libraries are continuously evolving and are being reshaped as they continue to embrace Information Technologies (ICT) (Ameen and Haider, 2007). The introduction of ICT has no doubt led to improved performance and rapid changes in methods, performance, activities and service delivery. Organisations in different sectors including educational sector

whether profit oriented or not have clearly been faced with the pressing needs and pressures for survival especially during this era of COVID-19. Libraries have been confronted by their own sponsors, stakeholders, parent institutions and some levels of government to justify their existence and budgetary allocations.

It is therefore important for institutions including libraries to search for effective approaches and evaluation system that will serve as a means to boost their efficiency, productivity and at the same time serve as criteria and mechanism for evaluation and measurement of performance as well as enhance feedbacks. Organisations (Small, medium and large) and institutions in the past have embraced various models to enhance their productivity and measure performance. For many organizations, the main objective is to maximize profits and its overall performance. Library is clearly not a profit-making organisation though in need of performance measurement and resources to perform optimally in the faces of these apparent pressure. This can be achieved using various performance measures mechanism, which normally assist organizations in evaluation of the available resources and their allocation for optimal organizational goal (Njehu, 2017).

Performance is a multidimensional construct and could be considered to include concepts such as time, quality, productivity, flexibility, financial efficiency, customer satisfaction and a host of other variables based on the mission and vision of the organisation. As library and based on the Raganathan laws of library science, quality, timeliness, efficiency and productivity are embedded in their service delivery. These dimensions of performance are likewise consistent with those set by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia as reported by Lee, in 2013 to include efficiency, effectiveness, quality of service, students' academic achievement, student discipline, student participation in sports and extra curricula activities as main constituents of performance measurement in institutions. It is therefore important for libraries to further explore and embrace effective performance model to enhance their performance and productivity evaluation.

One of the most widespread tools discovered for performance measurement and evaluation as suggested in the study of Awadallah and Allam, 2015 is the Balanced Scorecard (BSC). BSC provides a framework for concentrating on numbers of carefully selected measurements and indices. These measures are closely aligned with organisational mission and strategies and they provide quick visualisation of organisational performance (Self, 2003). The balanced scorecard has been widely applied and accepted that an editorial in the Harvard Business Review referred to it as one of the most influential management ideas of the twentieth century (Alshammari, 2011).

Several organisations are thriving in their performance and service delivery with the adoption and growing implementation of modern and evolving technologies. The use of technology has led to disruption in product and services delivery away from the usual traditional model to a user driven one (Praveenkumar, 2013).Libraries in several countries have leveraged on technology to help provide optimum services delivery to their patrons and communities(Deng, 2021). Studies have however shown that majority of institutions especially libraries in Nigeria are yet to explore the benefits of innovation and technological advancement to their fullest advantage. Libraries perform several activities and function which technology and other innovations can help facilitate and ease. Studies have suggested some strategies to assist Nigerian libraries measure productivity and perform to the fullest.

However, the suggested strategies for improvement seems to be yielding fewer positive results considering the present state of most of the libraries. This study is

therefore envisioned at describing, exploring, signifying and beaming light on the prospects for Nigerian libraries to leverage on opportunities in the embrace of innovation using the Balance Score Card as a model.

Review of Related Literature

Balanced Scorecard

Balance Score Card (BSC) model is a strategy focused approach to performance management that includes performance measures derived from the organization's vision and strategy. The measurement tool is no doubt widely adopted in corporate and industry, administration and non-profit establishments worldwide to match business actions to the plan and vision of organization, to improve communication both externally and internally and monitor the performance of the organization against the strategic goals (Fooladvand, Yarmohammadian and Shahtalebi, 2015; Njehu, 2017). BSC would integrate all relevant stakeholders and allow the library and likewise the universities as a whole develop, allocate and monitor resources in a strategically coherent manner. In turn, this can be translated into effective reorganization of activities, product and services delivery.

Balanced Score Card (BSC) as a concept was initiated by both Kaplan and Norton. It was established that the initiation was towards the second half of the twentieth century (Awadallah & Allam, 2015; Perkins, Grey, & Remmers, 2014). The motive behind the initiation of Balance Sore Card (BSC) was to improve on the inadequacies in the then existing traditional financial-based performance measurement tools. BSC was first created by Kaplan and Norton in 1992 and numerous other authors have contributed to the idea, leading to the evolution of the BSC concept from a performance measurement tool to a performance management system (PMS) (Perkins et al., 2014).

BSC unlike other traditional performance measurement tools couples the financial and non-financial measures. Financial measures dwell on organisational or institutional past performance and, thus, gave little account to non-financial measures that contribute to organizational performance. They focus on past performance relating to profit, return on investment, sales growth, cash flows etc. as the case maybe. On the other hand, the non- financial measures likewise focus on intangible assets that contribute to the achievement of long- term organizational objectives (Seth & Oyugi, 2013). BSC originated as a form of performance measurement tool but later went through consecutive improvements, realized for planning, communicating and implementing strategic plans (Kaplan, 2010).

Balanced Score Card (BSC) is measurement model that gives the top management accurate dashboard view of their organisational performance majorly using four perspectives. The perspectives include financial, customer, internal, innovation and learning (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). BSC precisely defined and time-scaled targets that need to be achieved by combining the organisational objectives, measures, and planning periods.

BSC emerged as a framework for organisations to aid the translation of their strategic objectives into a set of performance indicators. This is imperative rather than focusing on operational performance and the use of quantitative financial measures (Brown, 2012). The core objective of the BSC was to measure and integrate intangible assets into organisational performance measurement. The concept BSC according to Kaplan, 2010, is an indicative assumption that states that "if you cannot measure it, you cannot understand it." BSC is an all-inclusive framework that translates the organisational strategic objectives into a coherent set of performance measures

(Kiragu, 2005). BSC allows organisations to take their mission and strategy; then translate them into a set of performance measures that provide the foundation for a strategic management system

The key feature of the BSC is that the model is a holistic and balanced approach to the performance measurement. It guards organisation against sub-optimization, by demonstrating targets and results from several perspectives. BSC forces executives to see the organisation as a systemic whole and helps them to achieve goals in one area without disturbing efforts in another area (Pietrzak, Paliszkiewicz, & Klepacki, 2015).

BSC model as being subject to frequent modification to seek for improvements in the performance measurement tool. BSC has four mutually inclusive perspectives: learning and growth, internal business processes, finance and the customer. Each perspective of BSC addresses unique, but inherently connected issues. The customer perspective for instance addresses issues relating to how organizations or institutions respond and satisfy their customer's needs.

Libraries are clearly in their transitional periods as they are continuously moving towards digital and virtual environment. Librarians are no doubt of high importance in library operations. The new library environment however requires librarians to improve on their existing professional core competence in order to cope with the impact of information environment, social environment and satisfy their customers never-ending needs. Present library environment and collections are continuously facing transformation in tandem with the evolution happening to the libraries as a result of information technology (Yusuf and Abdullah, 2020). Acquiring appropriate collection is one of the vital responsibilities of every library, including the academic ones. The pivotal objective of collection acquisition is to enable individual libraries procure relevant resources with the purpose of providing information access to suit patrons' information needs.

Balance Score Card Dimensions

BSC has gained worldwide popularity and has been adopted in more than half of all major firms (Pietrzak, Paliszkiewicz and Klepacki, 2015). The balanced scorecard (BSC) has been described as one of the most important innovations in strategic management in the twentieth century. It is a strategic management approach to performance measurement and evaluation which is primarily derived from an organisation's vision and strategy (Wahba, 2016). Studies have linked the widespread adoption of the BSC to its multi-dimensional approach to performance measurement. In comparing BSC to the traditional performance measurement tools, it is clear that the traditional performance tool focused more on the financial metrics.

Therefore, to embrace BSC for performance measurement will definitely focus on four rather than one of the performance metrics– financial, customer, internal process, as well as learning and growth metrics unlike the traditional performance measuring tools that focuses only on finance (Kaplan and Norton, 2002). By measuring the four metrics, the BSC assists firms to track all the important aspects of a firm's strategy as well as achieve continuous improvement of partnership and teamwork. The BSC actually retained the financial metrics as the ultimate measure of a firm's performance. Measuring financial metrics is important to determine whether a firm's strategy and execution are supporting the overall mission of the organisation (Murby and Gould, 2005; Madsen and Stenheim, 2014).

For profit-oriented business, financial metrics focus on profit and market share (business growth) while for public and not for profit organisation, financial metrics

focus on some projected result-oriented measures. BSC also measures customer perception of the organisation since customers provide direct revenues through patronage and engagement (Casey and Peck, 2004). Under customer perspective, the BSC measures – time, quality, performance, and cost (Kaplan and Norton, 1992). The BSC also measures internal process to focus on the activities that enhance customer satisfaction, and innovation and learning to improve the skills of employees and to achieve superior internal business process (Bose and Thomas, 2007).

Financial perspective in the BSC defines financial vision, strategic objectives and financial performance measures that provide evidence of whether or not the company's financial strategy is yielding increased profitability and decreased costs. This view also captures how the organization must look at customers in order to succeed and achieve the organization's mission; thus, achieving financial strategic objectives is the primary means to realize the company's mission. To achieve this, however, the other three perspectives are very crucial.

Just like the financial perspectives, the customer perspective of the BSC ensures and strategically places relevant stakeholders and include lead times, quality, attributes of product and quality, image and relationship. These will be achievable with the right choice of customers with highest value propositions. This can be related to services provided and delivered to library patrons. These values, can be achieved in any of the following three ways: (i) operational excellence that concentrates on effective and efficient response, (ii) there are turn around innovate driven by product leadership towards improving both product and service qualities of the organisation, (iii) creating an enabling customer intimacy based on long-term relationship due to vivid understanding of customer needs (Al-Hosaini & Sofian, 2015).

The internal process can be referred to as a supply chain which develops services to customers. The institution should keep on adding value to the processes in order to offer better service. Institution should conduct some operations to enable overhaul their service delivery. The processes include innovation process, quality service process, customer management process, and regulatory and social processes.

Learning and growth perspective of BSC's important features should be integrated into every organisation's strategy. There are varieties of leading indicators and intangible assets that can help upskill and boost the organisation reputation. These according to Chuang (2007) include information, and organisation capital, culture, alignment, service delivery, staff upskill and development and teamwork. Thus, the organization must adopt a measurement method that they want as opposed to what they can. In Kaplan and Norton (2004), the importance of this perspective in measured through the ability of organisational capital, employees, and knowledge systems on one hand, as well as their importance in communicating value creations to the organisations on the other.

Each particular elements of the scorecard depend on the organisation considering its objectives, vision and mission. For instance, as related to HEI that is the focus of this study, the customers in academic institution are academic staff that is made up of professors, lecturers, faculty staffs, and the non-academic counterparts, student and other stakeholders as related to the sector.

Libraries are embracing innovation as it is perceived as an important aspect to drive the growth and development of present library economy. Likewise, the demands by library users are continuously growing and changing thereby leading to evolution of offerings, particularly in this digital environment (Ayolugbe, Jidere and Ogwo, 2021). Library resources change in forms and scopes over time and can be amazingly multifarious. Therefore, libraries cannot afford to procure the unlimited growing

available resources and at the same time cannot stand still in the face of the recent growth and on-going technological advancement and changes. The integration and application of digital technologies in library operations and services holds a lot of potentials, transformation and innovative opportunities.

The success of every academic library in the present digital environment largely depends on the quality of information service delivery offered to meet the changing and dynamic information needs of library users. Academic libraries need to strive to survive this age of exponential growth in information resources due to technology (Sanni, 2014). The roles of libraries especially in higher education have shown the need to change libraries objectives and model of resources procurement, modes and methods of service delivery, library education and host of other services rendered and perhaps introduce new services. This is to cater for patrons and particularly the non-traditional patron that are not accommodated in the past models of service delivery.

Libraries in higher institutions especially in the developed countries have spared some time to enable and enhance careful selection of complex collections that will provide and enhance high-level instructional and research activities. The application of advance technology in libraries has reasonably eased library functions such as acquisition of the usual sophisticated collection acquisition process. This may be due to increasing users' information needs and continuous growth in information resources available. The recent swiftly growing world of electronic resources and the essentially different economics of e-books are universally changing the mode of collection and its acquisition. The transformation brought about by information technology has gone a long way to improve and support instruction and research.

Kaplan and Norton (1992) as quoted in (Maponga, Mutasa, Thusabantu and Mutasa, 2017) suggests that balanced scorecard is premised on four viewpoints, firstly on customer perspective (which attempts to address the problem: how to make customers in this case patron see the entity (library)? and is concerned with quality, performance, service and cost. The author further states that balanced scorecard provides a framework of integrating the organisation`s objective of maximising the shareholders' gains through the four perspectives. However, according to Kaplan and Norton, 1999, Africa has its own unique-socio-cultural settings, which has impact on people centre systems. Balance Score Card incorporates both internal and process measures which give insight into where changes should be affected within an organisation. Fruitful implementation of BSC by foreign university libraries demonstrated its effectiveness and commendation of its correctness as a basis for the implementation of the strategic management in libraries.

Application of Balance Score Card in Education and Libraries

Studies have been conducted to investigate the effectives of the BSC in organisations. It is observed that many organisations adopt different perspectives of the BSC as suitable for their functions in line with their vison, mission and strategic themes. Some researchers have likewise highlighted the relevance of BSC to Higher Education institutions (Al-Hosaini & Sofian, 2015; Binden, Mziu, & Suhaimi, 2014). The review of literature provides introduction to the developments in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and libraries likewise examines management practices in the field. Library is no doubt one of the backbones of educational development hence the need for its application.

Development and investment in higher education and libraries is an enormous investment that runs to billions of dollars (Moulds, 2012). Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) are involved in routine processes of providing tertiary education

in both undergraduate and postgraduate levels with varied programmes, vocational and education training. HEIs are considered factory shouldered with the responsibility to produce outputs (graduates) and that would in the future build the country economy. It is therefore required that government and individual universities invest in the management of libraries that will effectively serve graduates that are qualified to meet job market requirement. Like other non-profit organizations, libraries are under pressure to provide both their internal and external stakeholders such as patrons within the universities and outside communities, alumni, existing and prospective students with services which reflect the overall value and excellence of the institution (Brown, 2012).

Libraries therefore need a form of performance management and measurement model to ensure continuous excellence (Yu, Hamid, Ijab, & Soo, 2009). Libraries no doubt play significant role in the growth and development of the society. Libraries are non-profit organisations though as a non-profit organisations libraries can learn from the businesses sector the art of effective management (Binden et al., 2014; Wahba, 2016). Libraries should establish some form of management systems that can monitor their service delivery, performance, growth and enable them to adjust to accordingly to the continuous growth and emerging challenges that come as result of implementing key changes.

BSC has been widely adopted in the business sector but the education sector has not fully embraced the BSC concept widely as indicated by the dearth of published research on this topic (Karathanos and Karathanos, 2005). Bearing in mind the status of HEIs as non- profit organisations and have been monitored, protected and restricted by government. It is therefore important for management of HEI to employ tool for proper evaluation of productivity. This will no doubt enable educational providers become very conservative, and faculty performances become quite efficient (Wahba, 2016).

Conclusion

BSC has been put to test by several institutions and libraries and discovered to be worthwhile model for other institutions and library growth. Balance Score Card (BSC) is a focused model that monitor and manage performance derived from the organisation's vision and strategy. The measurement tool is no doubt widely adopted in corporate and industry, administration and non-profit establishments worldwide to match business actions to the plan and vision of organization, to improve communication both externally and internally and monitor the performance. BSC is a Performance multidimensional model that integrates concepts such as time, quality, productivity, flexibility, financial efficiency and customer satisfaction which are important consideration for service delivery and performance assessment of libraries. BSC explores the basic elements of libraries and likewise consider relevant stakeholders in libraries.

Suggested Way Forward

Libraries especially academic libraries should explore and integrate the Balance Score Card (BSC)model in their operations and service delivery. Studies could be conducted to explore the applicability of individual perspective of the BSC and also assess the knowledge and perception of librarians especially the academic librarians on the existing performance and evaluation model. This will create a leverage to understand and basis for training needs on productivity, performance evaluation and measurement as the case may be and also the implementation of BSC in libraries.

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