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The Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in the Regulatory Management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry.

Michael Chinedu Nwonu
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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Michael Chinedu Nwonu

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Walden University
2022

Abstract

The Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in the Regulatory Management of the Nigerian

Downstream Petroleum Industry

by

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Management/Leadership & Organizational Change

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Abstract

Nigeria is Africa's largest oil and gas producer; however, its petroleum industry has experienced mismanagement and a lack of coherent regulations. The general problem addressed in this study was that leaders and managers of Nigeria's public sector did not have a strong system in place to create and implement regulatory strategies that effectively controlled the management of the petroleum sector. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in developing petroleum regulatory strategies defined by the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, FMPR, in Abuja, Nigeria. The realization concept was applied as a conceptual framework for this study, which focused the investigation on the specific features, functioning, and lived experiences of managers when advancing and executing regulatory agency strategies affecting the Nigeria Downstream Petroleum Industry (NDPI.) A qualitative phenomenological research design was used to obtain data from the senior and middle managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, including data obtained from an interview questionnaire, existing literature, and a set of semi-structured interviews from a sample of 20 participants. Key findings indicated that while all participants were in agreement that self-interest, corruption, mismanagement, and political interference were overwhelming and led to a weak overall regulatory framework, they all agreed that there is a pressing need to improve the process of strategy in the regulatory management of the NDPI .The study may lead to positive social change because it may offer knowledge and best management practices that both private and public institutions could emulate, and improve the operations of the NDPI.

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IRB Approval # 11-23-20-0358786

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July 2022

Dedication

All praises to you: The immortal, invisible, and only wise; the deep that calls unto deep knowledge; the author and meaning of life and all existences; the source of all goodness, the giver of life and perfect blessings; the only truth, hope, and revealer of truth; the fountain of all knowledge, and the ultimate destiny: Almighty God.

You enabled and inspired learning; provided humans with good understanding, sound mind, and virtuous wisdom. You enjoined humans to study and be approved professionals that are worthy of our calling. You further enjoined humans to value and get wisdom and understanding as principal things. Your statutes and precepts are not mere white papers; they are green and blue. You are the God of creations, and the God of my life; I bow before you in reverence and worship. Thank you: My Lord and God.

I also pay tribute to my deceased parents, *Late Mr. Ndulaka David Nwonu* and *Late Mrs. Happiness Akumma Eleweuwa Nwonu* of UmuasonyeUmuariam in Obowo Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria. I thank my mum and dad for giving me a good upbringing, and laying a sound foundation and agenda for my educational, moral and professional development that helped immensely. Rest in peace; mum and dad.

I appreciate my lovely wife, Chioma Immaculate Michael-Nwonu for taking care of my personal needs and supporting me with prayers. I love you: My Real.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The issue of effectiveness and strategy execution top the list of concerns across organizational science among performance management scholars and practitioners who seek long-term organizational viability and desirable outcome (Cameron, 2017; Moses, 2015). Effective strategy execution is the ability of an organization to translate its key strategic and operational decisions into actions that can enable it to deliver on its mandate (Neilson et al., 2008; Patten, 2015). Strategies that are not executed are mere academic exercises and a waste of time (Ramdoska, 2014).

The traditional thinking equates strategy execution with organizational alignment using activity input tools such as balanced scorecard and management by objectives (Kaplan & Norton, 2004; Synnott, 2017). However, the modern concept of strategy execution goes beyond the traditional thinking as it expects managers to demonstrate organizational agility (Sull et al., 2015). In other words, the modern thinking of strategy execution emphasizes the ability of managers to exploit opportunities and align with strategies while progressively coordinating other subsystems such as, culture, structure, and people (Sull et al., 2015).

Today, strategy execution is of increasing importance in regulatory management (Estachi & Wren-Lewis, 2010; Teri University, 2015). The focus of regulation has shifted from the traditional two-way interaction between the regulator and the regulated to a more inclusive framework that reflects the existing dynamics of sustainable development that yields optimal outcome for developing countries (Estachi & Wren-Lewis, 2010; Teri University, 2015). According to Saidu (2018) and Sull et al. (2015), performance-driven

management that delivers on the promise of enabling regulatory oversight is both the essence and the only measure of strategy execution in regulatory management.

Industry experts have emphasized the role of good regulations and strong regulatory institutions, practices, and procedures in harnessing the downstream petroleum investment potentials in an efficient and effective manner (PWC & LCCI, 2016; World Bank Group, 2014). The World Bank Group (2013) report indicated that the economies that ranked highest in ease of doing business were those having strong and efficient regulatory systems based on strong institutions. Therefore, the regulatory management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry (NDPI) must reflect good understanding of global best practices, process efficiency, and goal alignment through strategy execution (Agbaje, 2018; Oke, 2014).

Management has the duty to set the strategy of the organization and coordinate the efforts of its employees to effectively execute the strategy through the use of available resources: (a) financial, (b) natural, (c) technological, and (d) human (Emerald Group, 2016; Hrebaniak, 2013). In every organization, management is at the center of the strategy process; middle management initiates, guides, and coordinates the execution process following the strategies and context created by top management (Winn, 2018).

Whether the problems of strategy execution in regulatory management are external or internal, it is management that experiences, coordinates, and moderates the process and its impact (Adeleke et al., 2018; Shahzadi et al., 2018). Therefore, it is international best practice to have managers who can effectively design and implement a range of regulatory interventions to complement the traditional inspection-based

regulation in a complex social system and through efficient use of resources (Gibson, et al., 2011; Oke, 2014). There is, thus, a need to inquire into the lived experiences of regulatory managers regarding how they execute strategies for the downstream petroleum industry, and the challenges they face.

Literature reveals that many organizations are not executing strategies successfully resulting in their inability to deliver on strategic objectives (Nagayoshi, 2015; Neilson et al., 2008; Strategos Consulting, 2015). The focus of the proposed study is on the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry (NDPI). In Nigeria, the supply and distribution of petroleum products have constantly failed to meet national targets despite regulations, laudable policies, and strategy formulations (Alaba, 2018; Dikwa, 2016). The regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry experiences inefficiency despite constant regulatory reforms undertaken by the Government (Auwal & Mamman, 2012; PPPRA, 2017). Due to persisting inefficiency of the regulatory institutions and procedures, it is crucial that the Nigerian government reform the inability of its existing regulatory framework to provide the desired sustainable development of the petroleum industry (Babayomi, 2014; U & L, 2019; Usman, 2017).

Scholars opined that creating and implementing effective regulatory management system in Nigeria is both difficult and complex (Ekhartor, 2016; Teri University, 2015). It is also scholars' opinion that regulatory models that succeeded in developed countries could prove counter-productive in Nigeria (Ekhartor, 2016; Teri University, 2015). Those opinions suggest the existence of capacity gap and inefficient process of regulatory

strategy execution which are regulatory challenges in the downstream petroleum industry (Abanikanda & Ifenkwe, 2019; Alabi, 2021).

Effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI focused on the capacity, efficient process and procedures with which the relevant regulatory institutions are pursuing the goal of sustainable development of the industry (Agbaje, 2018; Estachi & Wren-Lewis, 2010; Teri University, 2015). The expected long-term organizational viability and desirable outcome for the Nigeria's petroleum industry is that it will facilitate the growth of national economy (Cameron, 2017; Moses, 2015; PIB, 2012). The general institutional framework for realizing this expectation will be through (a) functional and fiscally-sustainable institutions, (b) efficient and effective regulatory oversight, and (c) management of each phase of the oil and gas sector (Luiz de Mello, 2016; Minimah, 2019; U & L, 2019).

In Chapter 1, I discussed the background of the problem, the statement of the problem, the purpose statement, and research questions. I then provided the conceptual framework, the nature of the problem, and the definitions of concepts. In addition, I presented the assumptions, the study scope and delimitations, the study limitations, and the significance of the study. The last section included the summary of Chapter 1 and the transition to Chapter 2.

Background of the Study

I have set the background of this study on (a) the existing regulatory conditions in the NDPI (U & L, 2019) and (b) some relevant literature informing good understanding of the concepts and practice of strategy execution in regulatory management (Walden

University, 2017). The existence of various crises, inefficiency, and inadequate availability of petroleum products in the NDPI (PPPRA, 2017) bear testimony to inadequate regulatory strategy execution and management of the industry (Muresan, 2014; Olaopa et al. 2016). In Nigeria, the petroleum industry is the key driver and revenue base of the economy (Ehinomen & Adeleke, 2012; Habeeb, 2016). This industry makes up 92% of the country's energy consumption mix (Abdulsalam, 2016; Aguegboh & Madueme, 2014). However, stakeholders are dissatisfied with the institutional regulation of the industry that does not yield impressive socio-economic and sustainable development outcomes despite various policy and regulatory reform initiatives (Olaopa et al. 2016; Wahab & Diji, 2017; Wuyo, 2020).

Inadequate supply and distribution of products, monopoly, inefficiency, and under-cost recovery continue to characterize the petroleum market (PIGB, 2015; PPPRA, 2017). In Nigeria, the Federal Government participates and regulates the sector through the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and its agencies (Oshionebo, 2015, 2017). Those agencies include (a) the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC), (b) Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), (c) Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA), (d) the Petroleum Equalization Fund (PEF), and (e) the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF).

The three subsectors, upstream, midstream, and downstream, that make up the Nigerian petroleum sector, were underdeveloped and operated below capacity as indigenous operators were the major players (Aye et al. 2019). The absence of adequate regulatory execution to check market irregularities was the root of crisis in the petroleum

industry (GLG, 2018; Muresan, 2014). Therefore, the Nigerian petroleum industry needed effective regulation and social protection system to reverse systemic market failures and inequalities inherent in a free-market economy (Eichengreen, 2011; Muresan, 2014; PPPRA, 2018).

The Nigerian oil and gas sector has very high development potential and opportunities for the growth of existing investments and attraction of prospective investors (Ekhartor, 2016; Iladare, 2015). However, the Nigerian petroleum industry faced protracted challenges of strategy execution of its regulatory provisions for the downstream subsector which required constant and imminent reforms (Abanikanda & Ifenkwe, 2019). To overcome those regulation challenges in the downstream petroleum industry, the Nigerian government adopted two approaches. The first approach was to develop appropriate, comprehensive, robust, legal, and regulatory framework that defines the roles of various institutions at all stages of the petroleum value-chain (Babayomi, 2014). The second approach was to develop adequate and more implementable strategies for the downstream petroleum industry (Erfando & Herawati, 2017; PIGB, 2015; PPPRA, 2016).

The review of relevant literature and existing regulatory conditions in Nigeria had not revealed scholarly evaluation of the way regulatory institutions were executing their strategies for the downstream petroleum industry (Ekhartor, 2016; Oshionebo, 2015; World Bank Group, 2013). However, expert opinions suggested that the agencies were inefficient and lacked adequate capacity to execute strategies for two main reasons (Ekhartor, 2016; Oshionebo, 2015; World Bank Group, 2014). First, research had shown

that standard regulatory models that succeeded in developed climes did not seem to have succeeded in Nigeria due to (a) low commitment, (b) resource scarcity, (c) poor accountability, and (d) weak fiscal structures (Estachi & Wren-Lewis, 2010; Teri University, 2015). Second, the large population size of Nigeria makes some degree of institutional inefficiency inevitable (Oyewunmi & Olujobi, 2016; Peterson, 2017).

In Nigeria, the relatively weak and non-implementation of regulatory structures and processes had resulted in not much achievement compared to other oil-rich countries (Okafor & Aniche, 2014). Irrespective of their efforts toward deregulation, developing countries, such as Nigeria, have not been advancing in economic regulation since 1988 (Chiu, 2018; Guasch & Spiller, 1999; OECD, 2015; World Bank Group, 2013). The performance and effectiveness of an organization is mainly through successful strategy execution (Emerald Group, 2016; Harrington, 2020; Strikewerda, 2017).

Therefore, managers needed to understand and master the complexity of strategy execution through demonstration of variety of technical knowledge of the systems, processes, and internal governance of the organization in order to achieve the desired economic and developmental goal (Stacey & Mowles, 2016; Strikewerda, 2017). Strategy execution and motivation are the qualities that set leadership apart as the agent of organizational transformation, –leading to increased performance, productivity, and profitability as key benefits (Bourne, 2018; Harrington & Voehl, 2020; Palmer, 2008).

The seminal book written by Bosidy and Charan (2002), discussing execution as the essence of strategy and the bridge between strategy formulation and organizational success, has inspired other scholarly inquiries into the phenomenon. Scholars and

practitioners have recognized strategy execution as the basis of organizational evolution and a premium for competition; –aligning people, process and technology (Kaplan & Norton, 2009; Kathuria, 2012; Sabourin, 2015). Strategy execution requires in-depth studies because both inadequate knowledge and misconceptions about its tools and supporting methods lead to a derailing of the process in most organizations (Huber, 2011; Ramdoska, 2014; Sull et al. 2015).

Strategy execution was the existing gap between the formulation of regulatory strategies and realization of desired outcome in the Nigeria’s downstream petroleum industry (Ating, 2020; Kilic & Aktuna, 2015; Olaopa et al., 2016). Even if there were appropriate institutional and regulatory framework in place, managers of the institution must place high priority and commitment to executing the strategies and meeting the set goals as a basis for success and sustainability in delivering the outcome (Kilic &Aktuna, 2015; Olaopa et al., 2016).The need for this study was to understand the characteristics of executing the regulatory process for the NDPI from the lived experience of the managers, and how that process has produced sector and sustainable development outcomes.

The justification for studying strategy execution is that no organization can evolve without strategy implementation and execution (Leibbrandt & Botha, 2014). In his review of the NDPI, Abdulkarim (2015) set the stage for understanding some of the contending issues against strategy executions in the regulatory management of the industry. The Nigerian market is inefficient; it also has no room for free market or deregulation (Abdulkarim, 2015; Olatunji, 2022).

Doing business successfully requires understanding regulations (Baldvinsdottir, 2013; World Bank, 2013). Evaluating the Nigeria's performance in executing regulatory strategies in the downstream petroleum industry will help in the sustainable development and positive social change (Wang et al. 2018). However, the issue of strategy execution has not attracted the attention of most scholars in Nigeria, –evidencing a clear gap(Wang et al. 2018). Nigerian authors have not focused on the strategy execution of the regulatory management, although few of them have joined the ongoing debate concerning deregulation (Baghebor & Beauty, 2015; Oladepo, 2014).

The most essential determinants of the effectiveness of strategy execution in an organization are the middle level managers (Barton & Ambrosini, 2013; Chuah et al., 2016; Winn, 2018). Thus, the qualitative phenomenological study to elicit the lived experiential accounts of regulatory managers on the strategy execution in the NDPI was relevant. The interest of the study was to explore how regulatory managers experienced the process and challenges of strategy execution in reality, and understand how the lessons they learned from those experiences could be useful to improving the knowledge and practice of the phenomenon.

The choice of qualitative research approach was appropriate as the phenomenon under study is a complex social process that is not amenable to quantification (Liebscher, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The qualitative mode of inquiry allowed one to capture the intricacies of social life, and flowed as a holistic social process rather than isolating a factor for study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Johnson et al., 2008; Payne & Payne, 2011). The next section deals on the problem statement.

Problem Statement

Nigeria is Africa's largest oil and gas producer; however, its petroleum industry has been suffering from serious mismanagement and lack of coherent policies and regulations (Shadow Governance Intel, 2017). The general problem was that leaders and managers of Nigeria's public sector did not have a strong system and efficient procedures in place that can leveraged effective and coherent regulatory strategy execution and management of the petroleum sector (Oyewunmi & Olujobi, 2016; World Bank, 2013). This institutional weakness impinged on the ability of the public sector leaders and managers of the NDPI in successfully executing their organizational strategies (Baghebor & Beauty, 2015; Winn, 2018). This subsector has witnessed significant challenges prompting the government to focus its reforms on liberalizing the sector (Alaba & Agbalajobi, 2014; Backlay & Newbold, 2016).

The specific problem was that the managers of Federal Government regulatory agencies did not know how to promote and implement appropriate institutional capacities and procedures to achieve effective strategy execution and regulatory management outcome for the NDPI (Baghebor & Beauty, 2015; ChintuwaEnyioko, 2017; World Bank Group, 2013). There were calls to develop a legal and regulatory framework to address the persistence of a weak regulatory capacity and the systemic inefficiencies in the NDPI (Kachikwu, 2017; PPPRA, 2016).

The review of relevant literature has not revealed scholarly evaluation of the way Nigerian regulatory institutions were executing their strategies for the NDPI (Ekhartor, 2016; Oshionebo, 2015; World Bank Group, 2014). Therefore, by filling the gap in the

literature on strategies execution in the NDPI, the findings of this study could serve as a basis to recommend best practices in the execution of regulatory strategies for achieving a more efficient downstream petroleum industry.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Abuja. Regulatory strategy execution is the act and discipline of transforming strategies into concrete positive regulations and compliance management actions for desired outcome (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Kramer, 2014; Yan, 2019). This strategy execution is linking three core business processes: the people process, strategy, and operating plan.

The study discoveries provided the opportunity to understand the strategy execution of the regulatory management of the NDPI. Findings from the study have helped the Nigerian government improve the three core business processes that make up the strategy execution: the people process, strategy, and operating plan. I have used a qualitative phenomenological mode of inquiry to answer the overarching research question and the three sub-questions.

Research Questions

There was one overarching research question in the study. There were also three sub-questions in the study. These questions provided a basis to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Nigeria.

The overarching research question (RQ) for the study was:

RQ: What were the lived experiences of managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources for strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria?

The three sub-questions (SQ) are as follow:

SQ1: How did Managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources describe their lived experiences of strategy execution for the downstream petroleum industry?

SQ2: How did the managers of regulatory agencies experience the effective execution of regulatory strategies for the downstream petroleum industry?

SQ3: How could the manager's experience of strategy execution help to improve the prospect of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?

Conceptual Framework

The underlying idea informing this phenomenological study was the *realization concept* based on adequate investigation, description, and communicative response to the phenomena, specific features, and functioning of modern social reality (Kravtsov, 2016). This idea entailed the use of discussive and interactive communication and problem-solving through the aggregation of significant experiences (Bernstein, 2014). The emphasis of this study of strategy execution was the intended and realized strategy rather than the unrealized strategy (Aithal, 2016; Kazmaier, 2016). The realization concept includes interests in wholeness and optimal experience based on a legitimate aspiration and excitement of life as a journey of discovery (Bernstein, 2014).

The research interest in the study was in the practical application of phenomenology rather than the philosophical (Errasti-Ibarondo et al., 2018). This practicality entailed combining the features of Husserl's descriptive (eidetic) and Heidegger's hermeneutic interpretiveness. These ideas informed the content and shape the conceptual framework using key words from the background, problem statement, and purpose of the study statement. Those concepts included (a) effectiveness, (b) strategy execution, (c) regulation, (d) regulatory management, and (e) downstream petroleum industry. I developed these constructs or keywords fully at the literature review (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Certain phenomenological studies have no explicit theoretical orientation because the researcher's interest was to structure the pattern and essence of experience from the participants' perspectives (Englander & Morley, 2021; Green, 2014; Roller & Lavrakas, 2021).

The researcher's role was to develop a comprehensive descriptive account of the central phenomenon following the Moustakas (1994) and Meyer and Ward (2014) guidance on the use of theory in qualitative research. Bosidy and Charan (2002) theory of strategy execution and Stacey & Mowles (2016) strategic management model informed the conceptualization of strategy execution. I reviewed Morgan et al., (2013) strategy execution framework (SEF) based on the big picture and ways forward. I built these ideas from the literature into a conceptual framework for the study, as shown in Figure 1.

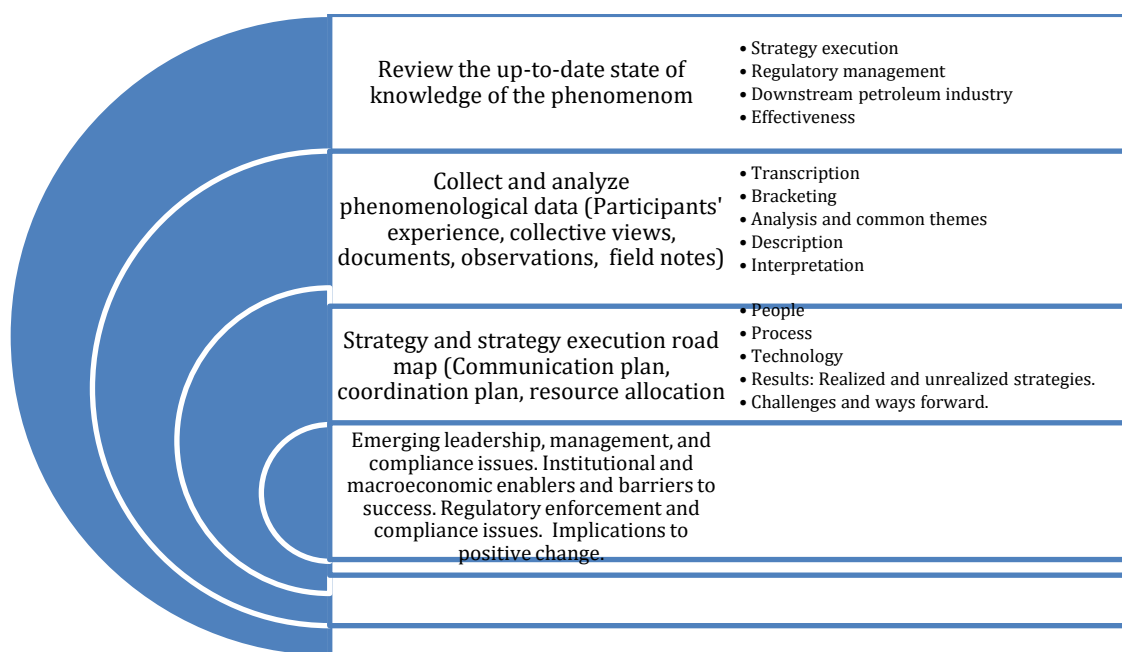


Figure 1: A conceptual framework for the study. **Note:** Researcher's conceptualization.

To make strategy realisable, the organization must have the right people and technology in place to execute and drive it (Srivastava & Sushil, 2017). Proper alignment of people, process, technology, and corporate culture is the essence of a successful strategy execution (Bosidy & Charan, 2002). Management has to translate strategy into actionable road maps leading to communication plans, coordination plans, and resource allocation plans (Kilic & Aktuna, 2015). The implementation of these plans within the organization's reality is the realization of strategy (Kilic & Aktuna, 2015).

Analyzing the effectiveness of public sector regulatory management must take cognizance of the organization's reality, and how the process leads to the realization of strategy (Harpst, 2018; Sobel & Dove, 2016). Husserl's (1931) transcendental phenomenology and Heidegger's (1962) hermeneutic phenomenology implied that the phenomenological researcher should ensure invisible connection between theory and

methodology in the transcendental phenomenology. This invisibility means that the researcher should not allow theory to influence and derail one away from the objectivity of the research process (Finlay, 2013; Pasian, 2018). Furthermore, the transcendental phenomenology makes epoch or bracketing an essential function the researcher should perform in the research process. The hermeneutics possess an interpretive attitude, which enables the researcher to demonstrate informed mindset and intelligible behavior towards humans (Pope & Mays, 2020; Smith & Osborn, 2015; Van-Manem, 2014).

Nature of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study was an attempt to explore the experiences of regulatory managers regarding strategy execution in the NDPI. My interest in describing the essence of shared experience on strategy execution informed the desire to use a phenomenological research tradition (Moustakas, 1994; Vagle, 2014). I used the five steps of phenomenological data collection which included (a) immersion, (b) incubation, (c) illumination, (d) explication, and (e) synthesis (Moustakas, 1994). The entire processes of phenomenological research design were iterative; and the essence was to gather, analyze and interpret relevant data to convey the true-life experiences of the research participants (Dawidowicz, 2019; Moustakas, 1994; Pernecky, 2017).

I deemed the phenomenological design appropriate as it enabled me to give a deep description of strategy execution; drawing from the significant experiential statements of the study participants and the thematic meaning of those statements (McNeil, 2017). I used the purposeful sampling technique to select and interview 20 participants and until data saturation occurred (Moser & Korstjens, 2018; Natasi, n.d.).

The purpose of this sampling method was to identify and contact senior and middle levels managers who, not only have experienced the phenomenon, but also were willing to share their experiences.

The gathering of qualitative data for the proposed study included three steps: setting the study boundaries, gather information, and establishing protocol of recording information. The types and sources of data used in the study included:

- a) Interviews of research participants to elicit experiences, perspectives and their meanings; the interviews required (a) providing informed consent, (b) the use of interview protocol, (c) keeping reflective diaries of the interviews and participant observations, and (d) summarizing the reviewed documents.
- b) Review and textual analysis of relevant documents as sources of supplementary data; enabling source triangulation, convergence of evidence and data credibility.
- c) Searched the relevant databank including the Nigeria's downstream petroleum databank (PPPRA Act, 2003) for up-to-date information on the industry.

Definitions

Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is the capacity of the operational systems and procedures of the organization to allow optimal use of available resources and opportunities to add values to its key performance indicators, and sustain improved realization of desired outcome along goal-oriented functions and activities (Anderson & Adams, 2015; Lee & Norwell, 2014; Matte, 2017). The ultimate determinants of

organizational effectiveness are the choices top management make regarding strategy, strategic objectives, and organizational design (Ali, 2018).

Downstream petroleum industry

The downstream petroleum industry is the subsector of the oil and gas sector that carries out the business of actual processing, marketing, and distribution of oil-based products (Gary & Handwark, 2015; STI Group, 2013). Downstream business includes refining crude oil, processing and purifying natural gas as well as the supply and distribution of refined petroleum products, including liquefied natural gas (Baghebor & Beauty, 2015; FSDH Merchant Bank, 2015; Ifenkwe, 2017; Philip & Peter, 2013; PSAC, 2018). Downstream petroleum industry operators include refineries, petrochemical plants, petroleum products distributors, retail outlets, and natural gas distribution companies (PSAC, 2018).

Phenomenological research

Phenomenology is a qualitative research tradition credited to Husserl (1931) that focuses on understanding the context of the lived experiences of people (research participants) and how they make meaning out of those experiences (Alase, 2017; Smith, Fowlers & Larkin, 2009; Pope & Mays, 2020). One of the two variants of phenomenology is van Manem (1990) hermeneutic phenomenology that seeks understanding of both the lived experience of participants (phenomenology) and the hermeneutics, which is the interpretation of the life they have lived and experienced.

A second variant of phenomenology is Moustakas (1994) transcendental (psychological) phenomenology, which focused on describing lived experiences of

research participants rather than their interpretations. This description includes the bracketing of the researcher's experience from the participants' lived experiences (Alase, 2017). A phenomenological researcher samples research participants based on two criteria: (a) relevant experience of the subject of research and (b) willingness to share the lived experience (Moser, 2018; Polit & Beck, 2017)

Regulation

Regulation is the controlling or incentive-based act of government intervening in the market to influence behaviors of the firms and other operators towards an economic efficiency or other socially desirable outcome through imposing costs or proscribing behaviors (Baldvinsdottir, 2013; Singh, 2015). Three possible justifications for regulations are (a) to prevent market failures, (b) remove or restrict anti-competitive practices, and (c) promote public interests.

Regulatory management

Regulatory management is the application of management principles and practices to the process of regulatory oversight —rule-making, guidelines, compliance monitoring and enforcement of an industry with the purpose of meeting the government's targeted business outcome and other socio-economic impacts (Singh, 2015).

Strategy execution

Strategy execution is a set of interrelated and goal-oriented activities that management uses to translate the organization's strategies into concrete actions that create values to the organization and its stakeholders (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Kilic & Aktuna, 2015). These concrete actions entailed aligning people, process, and technology

in developing and implementing effective programs, projects, plans, and budgets connected to organizational change and impact (Hrebaniak, 2013; Kaplan & Norton, 2009). This set of interrelated activities results in organization-wide integration of strategies.

Assumptions

Assumptions are untested and inexplicable issues in a research that other scholars reading the research work accept as true, which enable the progress of the study as a social practice, and can influence the inferences and conclusions from the study (Barongo, 2018; Simon & Goes, 2013). There were five implicit assumptions in this qualitative phenomenological research.

The first assumption was that the selection of research participants based on the completion and provision of informed consent form from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was to elicit confidence as well as honest and truthful responses to the research questions. The second assumption was that the criteria for selecting the research sample based on possession of lived experiences of strategy execution would be sufficient in producing adequate representative sample size and volume of reliable data to enable in-depth understanding and solutions to the research problem.

The third assumption was that participants would be willing and available to share their experiences of the phenomenon through the interview process, and that the shared experiences of the research participants and data analysis using NVivo-12 software would enable accurate understanding of the reality of the phenomenon under study. The fourth assumption was that strategy formulation and execution was one set of continuing

activity involving both senior and operational management; and that strategy work without execution is worthless (Srivastava & Sushil, 2017; van Ransburg et al., 2014). The proposed study assumes a holistic nature of strategy work as a continuum ranging from strategy formulation to execution including project implementation (Schmidt, 2009; Sull & Homkes, 2015). This integrated understanding reflects the complex and dynamic nature of modern society, and the reality that no two different business settings have the same condition (Kilic & Aktuna, 2015).

The fifth assumption was that, when formulating strategy, top management must have execution, implementation, and context in mind (Winn, 2018). Senior management exhibits exemplary behaviors that influence middle managers towards goal-oriented positive practices and value-innovations along the functions and process of strategy execution (Ou et al., 2017). As an avenue to improve public service, the public sector strategy focuses on adding value to the public service, systems thinking, and stewardship (Johnsen, 2015; Wauters, 2019). Acknowledging these assumptions did not negate the value of the study; instead, it helped to demonstrate the credibility and reliability of the study and supported its successful outcome (Armstrong & Kepler, 2018).

Scope and Delimitations

This study was delimited to scope and to sample size. The study was delimited to industry-specific regulations and regulatory agencies of government for the downstream petroleum industry. The focus was on economic regulations including the setting of benchmark prices and ensuring efficient operation of the market; enabling reasonable rate of return to operators as well as consumers' access to quality services (OECD, 2016).

There were other diverse laws, rules and regulatory guidelines government used to relate with business firms and other citizens that were not within the scope of this study (Mello, 2015).

The study was further delimited to a phenomenological sample size. The study was also delimited to the use of a purposeful and criterion-based sampling; only individuals that had lived experiences of the phenomenon and expressed willingness to share their experiences through providing informed consent met the sample selection criteria. It is also in the nature of phenomenological research tradition that the researcher should not make theories so explicit as to derail the emerging nature and objectivity of the research process (Collins & Stockton, 2018; Tavallei & Talib, 2010). Finally, as is inherent in the nature of phenomenological research design; requiring a small sample size, its findings are not generalizable.

Limitations

Limitations encompass possible weaknesses that are not under the researcher's direct control; nevertheless, limitations can potentially influence the conclusions or applications of the study's discoveries. The limitation of the study was in the very nature of qualitative data collection using the mind and training of the researcher as the essential instrument, which makes it difficult to replicate the result. The idea of phenomenology as a subjective and systematic treatment of a phenomenon limited the scope of its application to specific area of the discipline.

The conclusion was not a product of strong academic argument, but flowed from long discursive engagement with the participants in a first-hand study. This iterative

discussion, the longevity, and bracketing the researcher from personal influences helped in the assurance of validity, trustworthiness, and avoidance of bias in the research process, which was to enhance the significance of the study (Wright, 2016). Furthermore, the sample size may limit transferability of the proposed study. However, researchers who provided sufficient descriptions about the inquiry and purposeful sampling facilitated transferability of their inquiry (Anney, 2015). I have provided substantial descriptions of the study sample and research context.

Significance of the Study

This study was significant in many respects to theory, research, practice, and social change.

Significance to Practice

The findings of the study were in the form of a rich description of the participants' lived experiences regarding strategy execution in regulating the downstream petroleum industry and the sense they made of those experiences. This description may help in understanding and communicating the social reality of the practice of strategy execution, which was the essence of the research. This description may serve as a guide to new comers, and great insights to help experienced scholars and practitioners towards improving strategy execution and regulatory management of the NDPI.

Significance to Theory

The study contributed to the scholarly evaluation and understanding of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry within the context of the emerging concept and principles of strategy execution. The study further contributed to advancing

the existing knowledge and research about strategy execution as well as the regulatory management and practice in Nigeria.

Significance to Social Change

The implications for positive social change included improving the effectiveness of public-sector regulations resulting in (a) social protection, (b) safety, (c) fairness to all stakeholders, (d) sound business, (e) virile private sector, and (f) absence of excessive and burdensome regulations. The study findings could enable the intellectual empowerment of the practitioners in the field for improved performance through implementing strategy and realization of organizational effectiveness (Manzoor, 2014).

Summary and Transition

Not only, the inquiry into the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI was germane, it was also in tandem with the government vision of a viable institutional regulatory framework for a seamless supply and distribution of petroleum products. The study was significant to knowledge, research, and practice. The study has contributed to social change.

In Chapter 1, I have provided an overview of the research study designed to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Nigeria. I provided the information regarding the population and the sampling strategy. I discussed the purpose and the significance of the study, and outlined the research questions. I provided a discussion on the conceptual framework, the nature of the study, and the assumptions. In this chapter, I discussed (a) scope and delimitations, (b) limitations, and

(c) significance of the study. The next chapter, titled “Chapter 2”, is a review of the relevant literature on the subject.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Although Nigeria is Africa's largest oil and gas producer, its petroleum industry has been suffering from serious mismanagement and lack of coherent policies and regulations (Shadow Governance Intel, 2017). The Nigerian oil and gas sector had very high development potential and opportunities for the growth of existing investments and attraction of prospective investors. However, there was limited academic research focusing on strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI. The purpose of the qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Nigeria.

The general research problem was that the leaders and managers of Nigeria's public sector lacked a strong system and efficient procedures that could leverage effective and coherent regulatory strategy execution and management of the Nigeria's petroleum sector (Oyewunmi & Olujobi, 2016; World Bank Group, 2013). The specific problem was that the managers of Federal Government regulatory agencies did not understand how to promote and implement appropriate institutional capacities and procedures to achieve effective strategy execution and acceptable regulatory management outcome for the NDPI (Baghebor & Beauty, 2015; ChintuwaEnyioko, 2017; World Bank Group, 2013).

The goal of this literature review was to scan the scholarly landscape to gain the current theoretical understanding and evolution of strategy execution and regulatory management in the petroleum industry in general and in Nigeria in particular. For,

policymaking and regulatory management aspects of the downstream petroleum industry are not only distinct from the commercial aspect, but also essential in eradicating market imperfections and improve performance in the NDPI(Baghebor& Beauty, 2015; Iladare, 2015).

In this chapter, I provided a synthesis of the relevant issues, trend, and concepts that influenced the downstream petroleum industry (Adler & Flihan, 1997; Walden University, 2017). Flowing from the proposal topic and the main research question, the literature review focused on four key concepts, which included (a) effectiveness, (b) strategy execution, (c) regulatory management, and (d) downstream petroleum industry. In the next section, I provided the literature search strategy. Following this section was the exploration of the conceptual framework and the review of relevant literature. Finally, in a section, titled “Summary and Conclusion”, I summarized the literature review and transited to Chapter 3.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search strategy followed the principle of comprehensive search, which included: identify, search, and explore (Walden University, 2018). In addition, the strategy demonstrated scholarly rigor through emphasizing peer-reviewed journal articles (Walden University, 2018). My search strategy consisted of searching for the keywords, and their combinations I defined in Chapter 1, which include (a) phenomenology, (b) organizational effectiveness, (c) strategy execution, (d) regulatory management, and (e) downstream petroleum industry. For the literature search, I used Walden University

Library catalog and its network of data bases, professional journals, and relevant text books.

I limited the search to scholarly articles published within the last five years, from 2015 through 2020. In addition, I retained a few older seminal articles in recognition of their historical and conceptual relevance to the research topic. The peer-reviewed databases in the study included ABI/Inform, Business Source Complete, PROQUEST, and EBCOHOST. Moreover, I used Google Scholar and Google Books through the Google's search engine for locating texts unavailable from the sources mentioned above.

An EBSCO search for “downstream petroleum industry” yielded 20 articles 1989 to 2017; it yields 20 articles for “organizational effectiveness” at the Walden University Library also yielded 20 articles. Those articles were retrieved from a network of business and management databases including (a) Social Science Citation Index, (b) Science Direct, (c) Expanded Academic ASAP, (d) MEDLINE, (e) Business Source Complete, (f) SocINDEX, (g) Academic Search Complete, and (h) Computers and Applied Sciences Complete. PROQUEST and EBCOHOST search at the Walden Library on “regulatory management”, “strategy execution”, and “phenomenology” yields 20, 30 and 15 peer-reviewed articles respectively. The literature search yielded a sufficient number of current peer-reviewed articles for the literature review. The review of these selected scholarly articles helped in developing the conceptual framework for this qualitative study.

Conceptual Framework

The underlying idea informing this phenomenological study was the *realization concept* based on adequate investigation, description, and communicative response to the

phenomena, specific features, and functioning of modern social reality (Kravtsov, 2016). This idea entailed the use of discussive and interactive communication and problem-solving through the aggregation of significant experiences (Bernstein, 2014). The emphasis of the study of strategy execution was the intended and realized strategy rather than the unrealized strategy (Aithal, 2016; Kazmaier, 2016). The realization concept included interests in wholeness and optimal experience based on a legitimate aspiration and excitement of life as a journey of discovery (Bernstein, 2014).

The research interest in this study was in the practical application of phenomenology rather than the philosophical (Errasti-Ibarondo et al., 2018). This practicality entailed combining the features of Husserl's descriptive (eidetic) and Heidegger's hermeneutic interpretiveness. These ideas informed the content and shape the conceptual framework using keywords from the background, problem, and purpose statements. These concepts included (a) effectiveness, (b) strategy execution, (c) regulation, (d) regulatory management, and (e) downstream petroleum industry. I developed these constructs or keywords fully at the literature review (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014).

Certain phenomenological studies have no explicit theoretical orientation because the researcher's interest was to structure the pattern and essence of experience from the participants' perspectives (Green, 2014; Xu et al., 2020). The researcher's role was to develop a comprehensive descriptive account of the central phenomenon following the Moustakas (1994) and Meyer & Ward (2014) guidance on the use of theory in qualitative research. Bosidy and Charan (2002) theory of strategy execution and Stacey and Mowles

(2016) strategic management model informed the conceptualization of strategy execution. I reviewed the Morgan et al., (2013) SEF based on the big picture and ways forward. I built these ideas from the literature into a conceptual framework for the study, as shown in Figure 2.

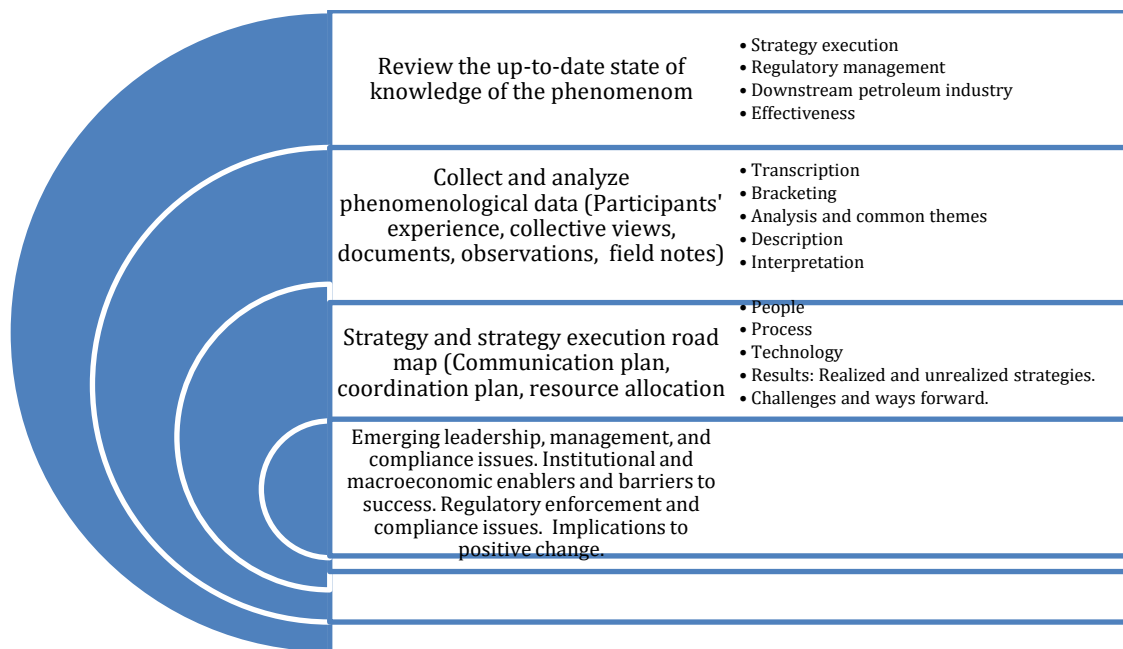


Figure 2: A conceptual framework for the study. **Note:** Researcher's conceptualization.

To make strategy realizable, the organization must have the right people and technology in place to execute and drive it (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Srivastava & Sushil, 2017). Proper alignment of people, process, technology, and corporate culture is the essence of a successful strategy execution (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Kaplan & Norton, 2010). Management has to translate strategy into actionable road maps leading to communication plans, coordination plans, and resource allocation plans; the

implementation of these plans within the organization's reality is the realization of strategy (Kilic & Aktuna, 2015).

Husserl's transcendental phenomenology and Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology imply that the phenomenological researcher should ensure invisible connection between theory and methodology in the transcendental phenomenology (Finlay, 2013). This invisibility means that the researcher should not allow theory to influence and derail one away from the objectivity of the research process (Finlay, 2013). Furthermore, the transcendental phenomenology makes epoch or bracketing an essential function the researcher should perform in the research process. The hermeneutics possess an interpretive attitude, which enabled the researcher to demonstrate informed mindset and intelligible behavior towards humans (Smith & Osborn, 2015; Van-Manem, 2014).

The expected benefits of this conceptual framework to the study included (a) informed the design of a research question, (b) guided the selection and interpretation of relevant data, (c) understanding and description of the causes of the research phenomenon, which is strategy execution including the realized and unrealized strategies, and (d) understanding and describing the emerging leadership and management issues, institutional macroeconomic enablers, challenges and the ways forward with positive implications to social change. The literature review section that followed helped to gain expertise in the study.

Literature Review

The general aim of literature review in this study was to lay a scholarly foundation for the study (Dawidowicz, 2019; Grinnell & Unrau, 2013). In this section, I reviewed the literature to articulate the current theoretical understanding and evolution of strategy execution and regulatory management. A synthesis of relevant issues, trend, and concepts provided understanding of how the concepts influenced practice in the downstream petroleum industry (Adler & Flihan, 1997; Walden University, 2017). The ideas and findings from the literature review informed my line of thought and choice of research methods (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013; Harris, 2019). The literature review focused on the main research question: the lived experiences of managers regarding strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. The essential constructs of interest were: (a) organizational effectiveness, (b) strategy execution, (c) regulatory management, and (d) downstream petroleum industry.

Organizational Effectiveness

There have been scholarly inquiries into organizational effectiveness since 1950s (Raina & Sharnawaz, 2017). However, there was no consensus in the literature about the definition of this construct (Cameron, 2017) due to (a) different notions of the concept (Reimann, n.d.) and (b) the grounding of the construct on the preferences and values of the evaluator (Cameron, 2015). Since 1980s, organizational effectiveness has evolved from being a mere construct to becoming an idea that is issue-based (Ukoha et al., 2017). The consensus is that the level of business performance is a result of the organizational effectiveness model in use (Grabowsky et al., 2015; Right Management, 2010).

The study of the organizational effectiveness was unavoidable because the concept was the ultimate dependent variable in any organizational research project (Cameron, 2017). Moreover, stakeholders' increasing expectations for their organization to demonstrate competitiveness and report on their performances necessitated inquiries into organizational effectiveness (Ristow, 1997; Wood & Ogbonnaya, 2018). In addition, scholars have focused their study interests on (a) conceptualization, (b) measurement, (c) improving organizational effectiveness, and (d) the context and cultural environment (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Emerson, 2018; Faller, de Kinderen & Constantinidis, 2016).

The majority of effectiveness studies were first problem-driven rather than theory-driven; they geared towards providing problem solutions and each researcher adopted specific notion of organizational effectiveness that suited the focus organization (Ashraf & Kadir, 2012; Rahman, 2014; Yan, 2016). Different perspectives of the construct include (a) productivity, (b) profitability, (c) financial market, (d) multi-stakeholder satisfaction, (e) human resources performance, (f) operational performance, and (g) quality of firm's transformation (Chakravathy, 1986; Creasey, 2018; Sani & Ibrahim, 2021). Effective organizations are those that realize both high financial and non-financial results, translated in terms of "high productivity and innovation, customers and employees' satisfaction, strong leadership and high level of employee involvement" (Hijal-Moghrabi, et al., 2017, p. 1347).

Certain ideas about effectiveness border on relationship. Those ideas follow the social construction view of an organization as a convergence of relationships, where each relationship has a notion of effectiveness (Ali, 2018; Carmago-Borges & Rasera, 2013).

Leadership system with stakeholders participation is at the center of this convergence as it integrates, aligns, and balances other essential systems to achieve desired results (Anderson and Adams, 2015; Van Ransburg et al., 2014). The Anderson and Adam's six systems framework contains the elements of organizational effectiveness: (a) leadership, (b) accountability, (c) communication, (d) delivery of products/services, (e) human performance, and (f) metrics/measurements. These elements form the enabling environment for a healthy and high performing organization (Anderson & Adams, 2015).

Leadership addresses the issues of vision and values, strategy and approach, and structure and alignment (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). The role of leadership is to define and translate organization's vision and values into strategy and objectives, processes and practices, actions and accountability, and execution and performance (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). Leadership ensures that the system properly aligns (a) structure and strategy, (b) technology and people, (c) practices and processes, (d) leadership and culture, and (e) measurement and control (Anderson & Adams, 2015). The prevailing reality in the search for organizational effectiveness is to align people, systems, and structure with the strategy of the organization as well as engaging employees with the work and values of the organization (Murray & Muhamed, 2015; Right Management Inc, 2010). This reality required four-phase approaches, which included: discovery, aligning leaders, aligning employees, and measuring performance.

The overarching research questions bordered on the criteria for assessing effectiveness, and the factors that influenced organizational effectiveness (Anderson & Adams, 2015; Baylis et al. 2018; Zheltoukhova, 2017). The general interest underlying

these questions was to identify long-term viability of the organization (Cameron, 2017).

Organizational effectiveness conceptually has the following meanings:

- The ability of an organization to efficiently mobilize and use essential resources to achieve its goal (Federman, 2006; Lee & Norwell, 2014; Pedraza, 2017);
- The criterion of the organization's successful fulfillment of their purposes through core strategies (Alexander, 2015; Ashraf & Kadir, 2012; McCan, 2004);
- A measure of the degree to which the organization is achieving its intended goal or performance outcome through efficient use of people, processes, and technology (Arnett et al., 2018; Etzioni, 2005; Richard et al., 2009);
- The absence of ineffectiveness model (Pedraza, 2017);
- A well-functioning bureaucratic system (Etzioni, 2005; Matte, 2017);
- A set of judgments involving various stakeholders (Ball et al., 2020; Herman & Renz, 2008, 1997).

There are many models of organizational effectiveness in the literature (Cameron, 2015). Although the effectiveness of each model depends on the organization situation or focus (Parhizgari & Gilbert, 2004), the Competency and Value Framework (CVF) is the most viable model of measuring effectiveness across profit and non-profit organizations (Venkataiah, 2014).

The impact of society and complexity on the study of organizational effectiveness reveals the recognition of the multidimensional and comparative nature of this construct; it also makes stakeholder responsiveness a useful measure (Herman & Renz, 2008; Mitchell, 2013). A further implication of social complexity on the phenomenon is the

question of whether to evaluate the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations, such as regulatory agencies of government, on the basis of overhead minimization or outcome accountability (Mitchell, 2013).

An aspect of the reforms in government organizations is a rethinking towards a rational approach based on quantitative and qualitative measurements of input and output in order to make public service more productive and less political (Jones & Riley, 2014; Newcomer & Brass, 2016). The essential performance measurement perspectives include (a) input, (b) output, (c) outcome, (d) public-value added, (e) network and institutional legitimacy, and (f) organizational capacity (Lee & Norwell, 2014).

The use of a logic model was to relate a specific measurable input to a measurable outcome; the inputs result in a set of activities and outputs or services, which produces impacts in the form of specific improved socio-economic benefits (Richard et al., 2009). Organizational performance is a measure of the degree of efficiency and effectiveness of each performance indicator of the key result areas of its mandate (Matte, 2017). The challenge of practically measuring organizational effectiveness is still persisting (Ball et al., 2020; Mitchell, 2013).

Measurements of effectiveness.

Measures of organizational effectiveness are the standards for judging the capability of an intervention to provide adequate solution to a problem; such standards are specifications of the degree of the essential features of the problem solutions (Jaleha & Machuki, 2018; Sproles, 2002). There have been several studies on how to measure or improve organizational effectiveness (Baylis et al., 2018; Mitchell, 2013; Ristow, 1997;

Zheltoukhova, 2017). Scholars have adopted multiple criteria approaches including expert judgment (Baylis et al., 2018; Mitchell, 2013; Ristow, 1997; Zheltoukhova, 2017). Measuring organizational effectiveness requires the use of integrated frameworks (Anderson & Adams, 2015; Petkoska et al. 2020). Prevalent frameworks in the literature include: (a) the balanced scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1992), (b) prosci scorecard (Creasey, 2018), (c) six sigma, competing value framework (Quinn & Cameron, 1983), (d) dynamic capabilities (Einstenhart & Martins, 2000), (e) ambidexterity (Brix, 2019; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2008), and (f) benchmarking (Dembowski, 2013; Riva & Pilotti, 2019).

Those frameworks allowed the integration of a comprehensive measurement strategy into a performance management and reporting system or standard change management framework (Creasey, 2018; Creasey et al., 2018). Those frameworks enabled the organization to measure the effectiveness of its initiatives/activities as well as the value-added and overall outcome of those activities at the levels of the individual, organization, and change management performances (Creasey et al., 2018). The Prosci scorecard combined activity and outcome measures into a single framework (Creasey, 2018).

The CVF has a wide acceptance and application in measuring organizational effectiveness across sector (Venkataiah, 2014; Zeb et al. 2021). The use of CVF enabled the analysis of organizational effectiveness along four dimensions (Grabowsky et al. 2015; Zeb et al. 2021):

- The external-internal dimension is where the organization either focuses on its functions and development within the external environment, or internally looking at the functions and development of people within the organization;
- Under the control-flexibility dimension, the organization might focus on control aiming at structure, predictability, and stability; or it focuses on flexibility through innovation and adaptability;
- The mean-goal dimension of CVF is where the management is either goal-oriented with focus on outcome, deliverables, and productivity; or mean-oriented with emphasis on processes, planning, and goal-setting;
- The fourth dimension to the original three CVF dimension; this fourth one is the head-heart, which is a motivational traits dimension.

Addressing these four dimensions of CVF enabled the analysis of effectiveness to reflect organizational focus, structural preference, managerial concern, and motivational trait respectively (Grabowsky et al., 2015; Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983; Zeb et al. 2021).

A good measurement system for organizational effectiveness must consist of the leading and lagging indicators that are relevant to the functions of the organization and its individual departments within a performance management system that enables continuous review and updates of these indicators (Harpst, 2018). Lagging indicators measure the result of past actions; showing whether the organization has performed or not (Harpst, 2018). Leading indicators, on the other hand, predict actions and performance that will affect organizational effectiveness in the future (Harpst, 2018).

Scholars measure effectiveness in terms of the accomplishment of outcomes, – looking at end results or outputs as well as the achievement of goals or targets (Gabriel & Gutierrez, 2017; Goodman & Pennings, 1977). There is no consensus about universal criteria for measuring organizational effectiveness (Quang & Castro, 2017). Each entity performs a self-assessment to identify areas of priority, and select a list of criteria for effectiveness (Quang & Castro, 2017). Measurement of organizational effectiveness is an assessment aimed at identifying areas of improvement (Venkataiah, 2014). The organization's perspective of measuring effectiveness is to determine the outcome of decisions made internally (Miles & Cameron, 1982; Ristow, 1997). Whereas the public view of measuring effectiveness is the effect of the activities of the organization on the society and the environment (Miles & Cameron, 1982; Vainieri et al. 2021).

Context for organizational effectiveness.

Contextual variables are important when studying the relationship between a particular factor and effectiveness (Doolen et al., 2003). Leadership effectiveness depends on the degree to which situations enable leaders to exert influence (Fiedler, 1967; Rahman, 2014). Scholars have focused on the contextual variables that moderate organizational and leadership effectiveness. These variables include (a) resource allocation, (b) intellectual capital, (c) availability of information, (d) training, (e) feedback and recognition, (f) training, (g) team effectiveness, (h) diversity, and (i) member satisfaction (Rahman, 2014; Varma & Budhwar, 2020; Yan, 2016). These factors shape the context, which consists of the organizational culture, organizational systems, and management processes within an organization (Ashraf & Kadir, 2012).

There were supporting evidences affirming the deep impact of an organization's subcultures on its overall effectiveness (Aichner et al., 2016; Heris, 2014; Sharzad et al., 2012). Faller et al., (2016) conducted a qualitative case study of European Airport Company on how subcultural differences and similarities can lower the effectiveness of enterprise architecture (EA). EA is a set of principles, methods, and models that were used in designing and realization of a firm's organizational structure, business processes, information systems, and infrastructure (Faller et al., 2016). Faller et al. found a linear relationship between information availability and three measures of team effectiveness: (a) team member satisfaction, (b) team leader evaluation of effectiveness, and (c) team leader evaluation of performance.

Scholars recognized that organizational culture and business strategy set the context for evaluating organizational effectiveness (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Ehimare & Ogaga-Oghene, 2011; Yan, 2016). Yan (2016) performed a series of regression analyses to understand the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of Nurses in Taiwan. The result showed that organization culture had positive associations with learning, innovation, and job satisfaction; all of which are subscales of organizational effectiveness (Yan, 2016). Amah and Ahiauzu (2014) collected data from a sample of 388 managers selected from 24 banks in Nigeria for a correlational study to understand the extent to which shared values influenced organizational effectiveness. Those researchers measured shared values using coordination, integration, core values, and agreement; and they measured organizational effectiveness using three indices including profitability, productivity, and market share

(Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014). The result showed a strong positive relation between shared values and organizational effectiveness; implying that increasing shared values in an organization will increase profitability, productivity and market share (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014). Organizational values shared among employees will enable them behave in the best interest of the organization at all time (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Obiezekwem, 2020).

The study of team effectiveness focuses on how to create organizational context where teams can be successful (Dooley, Hacker & Van Aken, 2003). These results highlight the importance of establishing a supportive organizational context across multiple dimensions to enable effective teams (Dooley, Hacker & Van Aken, 2003). Organizational effectiveness is the ability to sustain a balance between strategy and execution over time (Anderson & Adams, 2015). Sustaining organizational effectiveness is not possible without the organization continuously enhancing its capacity to execute adequately to be able to meet its present and future needs. The organization's rate of strategy execution surpassed the rate at which its challenges increased (Harpst, 2018). Performance management practices that lead to achieving organizational goal flowed from strategy execution (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2014; Arnett et al., 2018).

Strategy Execution

There has been a noticeable systematic progress in the scholarly understanding and literature of strategy execution in the 21st century following Bosidy and Charan (2002) notable book on the subject. A review of the underlying theories and current research showed that strategy execution alongside motivational practice was the only way leaders and managers could bring about positive change and organizational success

(Bourne, 2018; Palmer, 2008). Executing strategy is the factor that distinguishes leaders as the agents of transformation in their organizations (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Bourne, 2018). The question of how leaders of organizations achieved optimal performance revolved around their ability to succeed in bringing about desired organizational change through executing strategy (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The roadmap to effective strategy execution is transformational and contextual leadership (Bosidy&Charan, 2002; Bourne, 2018).

A leader who understands the essence of context in driving the vision has the capacity to execute strategy effectively and succeed no matter what the future holds (Bourne, 2018). Bosidy and Charan (2002) understood that context, competencies, skills, and timing distinguish leaders as more of visionaries than administrators because leaders take their followers along to strategic direction and desired results. Execution and motivation especially under trying time distinguish the leader as agent of organizational transformation (Palmer, 2008). Execution was the second step among Palmer's 14 steps of actualizing the basic principles of effective leadership (Bourne, 2018).

Effective leaders master all the principles of leadership and demonstrate understanding of the social context in executing strategy (Bourne, 2018). Top management sets the behavioral and cultural environment for middle management to execute strategy effectively (Ou et al., 2016; Winn, 2018). Top management presents a unified front and communicates organization's strategy coherently for middle management to execute strategy successfully (Ou et al., 2016). Middle management works on job priorities and achieve targets (Ou et al., 2016).

Achieving the desired project outcome depends on (a) the knowledge and skills of the available workforce, and (b) a good and comprehensive strategy (Nair et al., 2016). Nair et al (2016) discussed how their research team implemented a study-based 5-year strategy to guide young people in India towards taking engineering as a career. This strategy implementation involved the use of a master plan and enlisting the collaboration of local government agencies, willing societal contributors as well as recruiting and training volunteers (Nair et al., 2016). The project attracted 84,000 students across the states of India (Nair et al., 2016). Part of the reasons for success was the involvement of the industry at every stage of conceptualization, design of framework, implementation, quality assessment, training, teamwork and motivating stakeholders to provide necessary assistance and support (Gowindasamy & Jantan, 2018; Nair et al., 2016).

When strategies of business organizations are disconnected from their executions, it leads to the inability to realize strategies (Barrows, 2017). The majority of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) expressed their frustrations that organizations hardly executed more than 60% of their strategies because they did not have conceptual knowledge of strategy execution and its practice application (Barrows, 2017). The general interest of scholars on the subject was on how to enhance organizational performance through the connection between strategy and execution (Barrows, 2017). Table 1 depicts how this scholarly interest has evolved from 2002 to 2018.

Table 1.

Scholarly evolution of strategy execution 2002-2018.

Year	Key Focus	Authors
2002	Conceptualization of strategy execution as a three dimensional (people, strategy, and operations) process of getting things done; The performance prism	Bosidy & Charan (2002); Neely et al.(2002)
2004	Strategy maps; connecting organization's intangible assets with value creation. The most critical aspect of strategy is implementing it in a way that sustains value creation based on managing four key internal processes: Operations, customer relations, innovations, and regulatory and social processes.	Kaplan & Norton (2004)
2005	Offered a process model for making strategy work in real world.	Hrebaniak (2005)
2008	Strategy premium, which are six sequential steps toward deriving value from executing strategies. Recognized execution as an overarching principle of leadership irrespective of personal leadership style.	Kaplan & Norton (2008) Palmer (2008)
2009	Critical success factors to executing strategic change	Franken, Edwards & Lambert (2009)
2010	Translating strategy into action in complex organization, implications on managing teams and work groups in complex organizations. Align emergent activities and projects with strategic objectives.	Maclennan (2010)
2012-2016	Improved strategic management leading to better performance; leveraging established concepts and innovative technology solutions. Improving strategic alignment and its application in business context.	Berne (2016, 2012)
2016	Identified conventional business practices that create a gap between strategy and execution and how successful companies forged ahead. Reveal five strategies for connecting the gap between strategy and execution.	Leinwand_&Mainardi (2016)
2018	Decode and develop Management DNA (or elements of management) to build and transform organizational and PMO next-generation capabilities essential for effective strategy execution	Duggal (2018)

Table 1 shows that scholarly efforts at understanding the nature and characteristics effective strategy execution has been ongoing; revealing the concepts, key

elements, step-by-step approaches, and success factors. Bosidy and Charan (2002) described strategy execution as the art and science of getting the job done. Execution has been the missing link between strategy formulation and organizational success (Bosidy & Charan, 2002). There is a growing scholarly understanding that it is execution that makes strategy meaningful and worthwhile (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Martin, 2010). Strategies fail when managers are not able to execute them, and things that are supposed to happen fail to occur (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Kathuria, 2012). This statement is true when relevant organizations are not capable of driving strategy to achieve desired results (Bosidy & Charan, 2002). Strategy execution required in-depth studies because there was not enough knowledge about its tools and supporting methods (Huber, 2011; Ramdoska, 2018).

There was, however, a continuing scholarly interest and theoretical models, although there were no universally accepted principles, tools, and methods of the subject (Ramdoska, 2014). Bigler and Williams (2013) have discussed strategy execution as an attribute of world-class leaders and also the most prominent challenge of CEOs. The root of this problem appeared to be obvious in the work of Sull et al. (2015) on “how conventional wisdom derails strategy execution.” (p. 1). Sull et al. (2015) stated that large organizations tended to preoccupy themselves with the day-to-day operations and lose sight of executions. Sull et al. (2015) reported their dialogue with some other practitioners on the issue of strategy execution. The myths and the inability of organizations to employ project management disciplines in handling strategic initiatives were the factors responsible for failures of strategic execution (Sull et al., 2015). Strategy

execution entails developing the human capacity for repetitive behaviors that can make the strategy work (Sull et al., 2015). Sull et al. argued that the effective implementation of strategy does not depend on the simplicity or complexity of the plan.

Scholars have recognized strategy execution as one of the key attributes of effective and world-class leaders (Bigler & William, 2013; Ramdoska, 2014). Bigler and Williams (2013) studied the world-class strategy execution as a leadership development approach that organizations are practicing on-the-job training use. CEOs are increasingly recognizing the importance of strategy execution culture in positive organizational performance (Bigler & Williams, 2013). The assumption of the authors is that only world-class leaders can guide an organization towards world-class strategy execution (Bigler & Williams, 2013). The CEOs have, therefore come to recognize the expansion of leadership opportunities as a real option for maintaining and implementing an effective strategy (Bigler & Williams, 2013). Developing competent leadership is one the essential elements of the conceptual development of successful strategy execution and its models (Ramdoska, 2014).

The objective of Ramdoska (2014) model was to identify the factors constraining strategy execution, and the elements that support its implementation. Ramdoska focused on examining the relationships between components of the *eight S models* that affect strategic implementation and the results that organizations achieve. Ramdoska posited that “the execution of different strategies requires various types of organizational structures, systems, management styles, staff, resources and shared values.” (p. 214).

Scholars have discussed the key approaches to strategy execution; looking at the concept as a process and as a system. The CEOs of business organizations have recognized the strategy execution as a major challenge in management because they hardly implemented up to 60% of their annual strategies successfully (Barrows, 2017). However, there is still a lack of understanding of the concept and approaches to strategy execution among managers (Barrows, 2017). Scholars do however recognized that strategies are executed through projects (Rao, 2017).

Benson's notion of strategy execution flowed from H. James Harrington's model of business process improvement, which revolves around Measurement (Harrington, 1995). The thinking is that whatever is measurable is understandable, controllable, and achievable (Harrington, 1995; Harrington & Voehl, 2020). Organizations must develop capacity to manage projects if they are to execute strategies effectively (Rao, 2017).

Three strategies for executing projects successfully include (Rao, 2017):

- Defining specific measurable objectives for the project (timeline, human and material resources needed, costing, key performance indicators and criteria for measurement;
- Recognize and plan for unforeseen events using various scenarios;
- Monitor and assess project performance, and make necessary adjustments along the execution process to ensure that the project is achieving its desired objectives.

The traditional notion of strategy as a plan is related to the thinking that it is middle management that drives execution in an organization (Bartons & Ambrosini, 2013; Chuah et al., 2016). A more pragmatic approach is that strategy is a direction and

agenda for decisions rather than just a plan (Mankins, 2017), which accords a more involving strategy execution roles to leadership (Leinward & Roterling, 2017). In this sense, strategy is the totality of decisions leaders made and successfully execute over time (Leinward & Roterling, 2017; Mankins, 2017). This strategy agenda recognizes the highest value at stake and the most urgent issue leaders must address to achieve the desired strategic outcome (Mankins, 2017).

If leaders have mastery of the entire stages of the strategy-to-execution continuum, they will formulate executable strategy, and apply appropriate tools to close the strategy-to-execution gap (Leinward & Roterling, 2017). The three stages of this continuum include (a) building strategy, (b) translating strategy into day-to-day action, and (c) execute strategy. Leaders who demonstrate the capacity to traverse between the roles of visionaries and operators can succeed at every phase of strategy management up to execution (Leinward & Roterling, 2017; Yan, 2019).

The concerns of current scholars on strategy execution revolve around organizational change rather than mere implementation of projects or programs (Stacey & Mowles, 2016). In this sense, strategy execution is a set of process decisions and actions that supports the realization of the strategy (Hrebianiak, 2013). These scholars look for tools to execute strategy and change effectively drawing inspiration from Bosidy and Charan (2002) ideas on execution within the context of change management (Duggal, 2018; Leinward & Mainardi, 2016). Stacey and Mowles (2016) adopted a strategic phenomenon approach to thinking about strategy and organizational change.

Hrebianiak (2013) offered a systematic roadmap for execution that encompasses every key success factor: (a) organizational structure, (b) coordination, (c) information sharing, (d) incentives, (e) controls, (f) change management, (g) culture, and (h) the role of power and influence in business. Formulation of excellent strategy is necessary in securing competitive positioning for an organization, but only successful execution will sustain that position (Leibbrandt & Botha, 2014). The implication is that strategy execution is a process of value creation along the line of operations, which includes the processes for managing and aligning operations, customer, innovation, regulations, and social relationship (Musty et al., 2015).

The relevance of these strategy execution literatures to the regulatory management of Nigeria's downstream petroleum industry is that scholars have interpreted its regulatory framework as weak in terms of implementation and lack of integration among the various units (Okafor & Aniche, 2014). Understanding strategy execution has helped the regulatory managers achieve necessary alignment and facilitate positive outcome across broad-based interests in the regulatory management of the petroleum sector (Oyewunmi & Olujobi, 2015).

Regulatory Management

Regulation is the most essential tool for achieving the goal of government policy; connecting the roles of public and private sectors in the developmental agenda of the nation (Archbold et al., 2019; CED, 2017). The most recent emphases in the literature were more on the concepts of regulation, regulatory effectiveness, and measuring the

impact assessment of regulations than the management, control and enforcement of the process (IAEA, 2018; World Bank Group 2013).

Regulation originated in Oklahoma in the United States of America (U.S.) in 1909 (Abdulkarim, 2015). Texas and Arkansas followed in 1930 and 1931 respectively making rules that limited oil production resulting in the mandatory oil importation program of 1959 (Abdulkarim, 2015). In 1959, the President Bush's Natural Gas Wellhead Decontrol Act fully deregulated the U.S. gas market (Abdulkarim, 2015). The following four factors resulted in the petroleum products price deregulation in the U.S.: (a) the discovery of new reserve, (b) reduction in demand, (c) shortage in natural gas due to regulated price below the competitive levels, and (d) the oil price shock (Abdulkarim, 2015).

Regulatory effectiveness.

The theories of regulation and regulatory policy in the literature revolved around the positive and normative thinking (Guasch & Spiller, 1999; Vogel, 2018). The positive theories explained the reasons for regulation along three key concepts: (a) market power, (b) capture or stakeholders' interest groups, and (c) government opportunism (Tirole, 2014). The extent to which government intervened in a market depended on the degree of competition (Laffont & Tirole, 1993; Tirole, 2014b). A less competitive industry as in the case of natural monopoly required a wider scope of regulatory interventions that were beneficial to government and the public (Laffont & Tirole, 1993; Tirole, 2015).

There is an inherent trade-off between efficiency and rent extraction in the operation of market power (Tirole, 2015). The policy implication of this trade-off is that a regulator, which is politically and industry independent, carefully monitors quality,

promotes regulatory commitment, and checks the incidence of capture in the industry (Tirole, 2015). As the firm has more information than the regulator, the latter should regulate price level without changing price structure; any attempt at modifying price structure should be the result of in-depth analysis (Tirole, 2015).

Regulators use a variety of tools to detect market power; these tools include looking out for collusion, evaluating barriers to entry, and indexes such as Lerner index and Herfindahl-Hirshman index (HHI) (citation). The HHI and Lerner indexes measure market power/ concentration of an industry to determine its competitiveness or nearness to monopoly (Gioia, 2017; Spierdijk & Zaouras, 2017). The government opportunism theories of regulation are the ideas of restricting government discretions so as to enable operators provide efficient services to customers (Cetin, 2016; Young & Park, 2013). The general view of the positive theories of regulation was that government regulates businesses for the following reasons (Cetin, 2016; Young & Park, 2013):

- To combat the problem of information asymmetries with the operator, and align the interest of operators along government interest;
- To protect customers from market power when competition is either not existing or not effective;
- To protect operators of the industry from other competitors as well as from government opportunism.

The normative theories of regulation were propositions regarding the criteria for determining issues for regulation and how the regulation should operate; this includes the regulatory basis, regulatory instrument and how to apply the instrument (Knieps, 2015).

Normative regulatory theories included the idea that regulators should consider encouraging competition and possibly discourage the existence of information asymmetries (Knieps, 2015). The role of regulators towards this end should include (Knieps, 2015; Tirole, 2014):

- Making relevant information available as well as formulating incentive policies that support operators to improve their performance;
- Providing cost-effective pricing structures that enable operators to improve efficiency, recover costs, and have adequate returns on their investments;
- Establish regulatory framework and procedures that produce good regulations that have legal legitimacy within an environment of autonomy, transparency, and systems creditability.

A proper understanding of how an imperfect competitive market works informs the type of recommendations as to the appropriate regulatory and policy interventions and subsequent guidance on how to operationalize the interventions (Tirole, 2014).

International governmental organizations have been spear-heading research efforts geared towards improving the effectiveness of public-sector regulations of business activities in their member nations; promoting understanding of the concept of regulatory effectiveness (OECD, 2016, 2012; IAEA, 2018; World Bank, 2013). The World Bank Group (2013) has interpreted good regulations and regulatory practices based on the strength of regulatory institutions and procedures, and the extent it enables the spread and balancing of regulatory benefits such as social protection, safety, fairness to all stakeholders, sound business, virile private sector, and absence of excessive and

burdensome regulations. World Bank (2013) and Moosa (2015) viewed that operating a business successfully hinges on good regulations, strong regulatory institutions, and proper understanding of regulations.

The implications of this view were two-fold. The first was the need to improve the quality of regulatory institutions and procedures while the second is that business operators and stakeholders have to understand regulations and structure their operations in alignment with regulatory compliance management (World Bank Group, 2013). All regulations must be specific to the industry (Tirole, 2014). The IAEA(2018) defines regulatory effectiveness in relation to the activities of a regulatory body in (a) ensuring that operators in the market maintain acceptable standard of safety; (b) sustaining improved performance of regulatory functions; and (c) leading to confidence of all stakeholders. Senior regulators from 22 IAEA member nations discussed the components, indicators, and assessment of regulatory effectiveness in order to recommend good practices among the participating organizations and their governments(IAEA, 2018).

The resultant document contained recommendations situating the institutional responsibilities for regulatory effectiveness across two levels of authority: the government/law makers and regulatory body (IAEA, 2018). The implications and commonality of these two levels of responsibilities was that the quality of a regulation and its outcome depended on the quality of the relevant regulatory policies and procedures (Cetin, 2016; Chiu, 2018; OECD, 2012).

Effective management of regulatory strategy and plans do lead to the desired regulatory strategic objectives along the established deliverables, resource requirement,

responsibilities, and timing (Kramer, 2014; Treat, 2018). These objectives are essentially economic developments through positive changes in levels of employment, income, and wealth widely distributed among the citizens of the state (Tannenwald, 1997). Effective regulation will result in behavior changes enabling the achievement of desired outcome as well as limiting or avoiding undesired outcomes (OECD, 2012). Regulations promote economic welfare and correct imperfections in the market such as the practice of monopolies and oligopolies as well as imperfect information and fraud (Gill, 2016, Intal & Gill, 2016; Leautier, 2018). The effective and efficient regulatory management of the market for a particular product or industry requires the adoption of an integrated business structure to link business units under the influence of external and internal factors (Nifatova & Dudko, 2018).

The conceptual discussions of regulatory management is very scanty in the current literature, but scholars recognized the need to have management structures that support linkages and integration of business units under the influence of external and internal development factors (Nifatova & Dudko, 2018). Nifatova and Dudko (2018) posited that regulating integrated business processes requires a combination of “systemic, substrate, and process approaches” (p. 113) to management, which will in turn create strong competitive environment, synergy, and adaptability to changing environment. Regulatory management system refers to “policies, rules, and procedures related to regulation” (OECD, 2012, p.10; Jacobzone et al., 2007).

The OECD (2012) developed a schematic model of this regulatory management system and its impacts a seven-step set of cause-and-effect relationships; stretching from

the regulatory institution through its development and implementation process to the impact, which is the regulatory outcome. Therefore, the regulatory management system consists of the regulatory policies, the regulatory institution, the regulations on interest, implementation and enforcement, behavioral change, intermediate outcomes, and ultimate outcomes (OECD, 2012).

The policy may also spell out the specific types of rules that government ministries and agencies must require prior to legislative enactment or approval (OECD, 2012). Regulation consists of rule-making and realized outcome through its implementation and enforcement within the framework of “a regulatory process carried out by decision makers in a specific regulatory institution who must operate under their own set of rules and practices” (OECD, 2012, p. 10). The implication of this policy framework is that officials of regulatory institutions are under obligations to make and implement good and quality regulations in a systematic, efficient and effective manner.

The best outcome evaluation practice was to use both treatment goals and other values; comparing current performance with one or more of the following benchmarks: (a) treatment goals, (b) acceptable levels, (c) historical benchmarks, and (d) indicators of other jurisdictions (citation). The selected benchmark must relate to the existing problem and reflect both the purpose of the evaluation and availability of relevant data (Agrell & Bogetoft, 2016; OECD, 2012; Roberts & Jian, 2018). Achieving this regulatory alignment requires a regulatory management system that upholds the culture of good regulatory practice of being responsive, transparent, accountable, coordinating, and efficient (Intal et al., 2014; Intal & Gill, 2016). There is still no general consensus as to

the approaches to regulatory effectiveness, the expert judgments and experiential peer-reviews involving senior regulators from member nations (Intal & Gill, 2016).

Developing countries such as Nigeria need to strengthen their policy and regulatory environment and institutional framework to enable them enhance their access to the global market, investment opportunities, and trade participation (UNCTAD, 2014). Scholars have demonstrated that regulatory reform has a positive relationship with improved economic performance; however, adopting the OECD, IAEA, UNCTAD, and other international models of regulation management to developing countries like Nigeria “would amount to inappropriate policy transfer” (Kirkpatrick, 2014, p. 163). The reason is the existing realities of human resource constraints and weak institutions as well as the prevailing political capture and poor governance of regulatory institutions (Kirkpatrick, 2014).

The regulatory management of Nigeria’s downstream petroleum market, with its direction towards deregulation, has controversially been a major economic reform policy of the Federal Government in the last ten years (PPPRA, 2017, 2007). The regulatory structures were weak and unable to attract adequate compliances from the petroleum marketing companies and other stakeholders (Okafor & Aniche, 2014). These weak regulatory institutions and procedures did not meet international standards and global realities in the oil and gas sector (Oyewunmi & Olujobi, 2015). Their weaknesses included infrastructural and systemic failures, lack of written procedures, sabotage and failure to protect public interest, numerous corporate social responsibility issues as well as costly operational and structural challenges (Oyewunmi & Olujobi, 2015).

Issues of leadership, regulation, and the petroleum sector have always been on the front burner of scholarly discusses on the Nigerian national development (Adeshina, 2012). The proper regulatory management of the downstream sector is the best solution to the abnormalities in the industry including the continuous crisis of interruptions and scarcity of petroleum products (Ibrahim, 2009). Apparent operational challenges and attendant regulatory inconsistencies have characterized the Nigeria downstream petroleum industry (Ejiofor, 2014; Soremekun, 2013).

Downstream Petroleum Industry

Effective regulation of the downstream sector is the only remedy to the abnormalities inherent in the industry (Loretta, 2014). The downstream sector is the commercialization aspect of the petroleum industry, where revenue and profits begin to accrue to the investors (Ehinomen & Adeleke, 2012; Habeeb, 2014). The character of this phase has provided the incentives for some organizations to maximize internal and regulatory gaps (Ehinomen & Adeleke, 2012; Habeeb, 2014). Hence, the recurring efforts to fully deregulate the downstream sector to mitigate the effects of negative corporate practices and regulatory lapses (Anyadike, 2013). Regulation of the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria has a wide spectrum, and scholars have emphasized the role of leadership in the effective regulatory management of the industry (Ejiofor, 2014).

Discussing various issues underlying the distribution of petroleum products in Nigeria in their article, Ehinomen and Adeleke (2012) recommended the full deregulation of the downstream activities to allow private sector participation. The authors' concern is that the domestic management of the industry suffers some problems including product

shortages, inefficient distribution of products, and disagreements over the pump price of gasoline or petrol (Ehinomen & Adeleke, 2012; Nweke & Nyewusira, 2017). Ethnic and civil disturbances including the Niger Delta militancy amplify these problems, resulting in a lot of negative social and economic consequences (Ehinomen & Adeleke, 2012).

In his study on the deregulation of the downstream petroleum market in Nigeria, Abdulkarim (2015) defined deregulation as an act of wholly or partially removing the government regulation of a particular industry to create and foster a more efficient marketplace. The creation of efficient market is, therefore, among the reasons the Nigerian Government wants to deregulate the oil sector; Abdulkarim (2015) argued that the Nigeria's downstream petroleum market is not yet ripe for full deregulation. As the advantages of deregulation are not applicable to all kinds of the environment, the Nigerian government should rather focus on providing social security, and leave deregulation to come gradually (Abdulkarim, 2015).

Some articles have either attempted to evaluate the petroleum products marketing (Oladejo, 2014) or overviewed the oil and gas content development act (Odujirin & Adefulu, 2010; Ogunbanjo, 2010). Some regulatory agencies in the energy sector have published their regulations (NERC, 2013). However, the statutory and regulatory framework for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process shows areas of conflicts, shortcomings, misinterpretations of various legislations (Echefu & Akpofure, 2014). The weaknesses of the existing legislations have often been the causes of delays in the execution of EIAs in the Nigerian petroleum industry (Echefu & Akpofure, 2014).

Ayoola (2017) has studied the impact of this policy on the perceived performance of oil companies operating in the country. The author collected and analyzed survey data from 312 employees of five major oil-producing companies in Nigeria to determine the impact of the act on employee and organizational performance. The result showed a positive impact on employee and organizational performance; obviating the need for continued policy support and implementation in the development of a virile petroleum industry. The summary and conclusion section that follows is a succinct communication of the learning outcome of the literature review and the existing gap that makes this proposal germane.

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter, I have reviewed the current peer-reviewed articles and other relevant seminal literature pertaining to the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian petroleum industry. I traced the literature relevant to the key concepts of the study: (a) effectiveness, which includes organizational and regulatory effectiveness, (b) strategy execution, (c) regulatory management, and (d) the downstream petroleum industry. The review of literature shows that while there was no general consensus on the approaches to organizational and regulatory effectiveness, the evaluation of organizational effectiveness required the use of an integrated framework.

It gleaned from the review of the literature that Nigerian authors have not focused on the strategy execution of the regulatory management, although some joined the ongoing debate concerning deregulation. Literature suggested that International and inter-governmental agencies were at the forefront in promoting peer discussions on the

assessment of regulatory effectiveness and regulatory management systems. In the Nigeria's downstream petroleum industry, the government has been making recurrent and unsuccessful reforms to mitigate the effects of negative corporate practices and regulatory lapses, which include the inability to effectively execute regulatory strategies. Often, those efforts have unfortunately resulted in constant changes from the existing legal and regulatory strategies to a set of new ones, while regulatory performance through strategy execution remains in question among stakeholders. In addition, standard regulatory models that succeeded in advanced economies have not succeeded in Nigeria.

Therefore, this qualitative phenomenological research study intended to fill the current gap in the strategy execution and regulatory management in the NDPI. To do so, I analyzed the lived experiences of senior and middle managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources that have experienced strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI. I gathered the data for use in the study through semi-structured open-ended interviews from a purposeful sample of 20 participants. In the next section, titled "Chapter 3", I provided a detailed description of the research method design and rationale.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Abuja. Regulatory strategy execution is the act and discipline of transforming strategies into concrete positive regulations and compliance management actions for desired outcome (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; GLG, 2018; Kramer, 2014). This strategy execution was linking three core business processes: the people process, strategy, and operating plan (Srivastava, 2014).

In this chapter, I explained the choice of research design and the rationale for making such choice. I also explained my role as a researcher. In the section titled “Methodology”, I discussed the issues about (a) the principles underlying the selection of participants and the sample size; (b) the issues of instrumentation; (c) the recruitment procedures, participation, and data collection; and (d) the data analysis plan. I discussed the issue of trustworthiness based on credibility, transferability, dependability, conformability, and ethical procedures. Finally, I summarized the chapter discussions.

Research Design and Rationale

There was one overarching research question in this study. There were also three sub-questions in the study. Those questions provided a basis to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources in Nigeria. Responses of the

research participants to these central research question and other sub-questions broadened and deepened the understanding of the key phenomenon.

The overarching research question (RQ) for the proposed study is:

RQ: What are the lived experiences of managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources regarding strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria?

The three sub-questions (SQ) were as follows:

SQ1: How did the managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources describe their lived experiences of strategy execution for the downstream petroleum industry?

SQ2: How did the managers of regulatory agencies experience the effective execution of regulatory strategies for the downstream petroleum industry?

SQ3: How can the manager's experience of strategy execution help to improve the prospect of regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry?

The central phenomena of this study were the *strategy execution* and *regulatory management*. Completing strategic planning process will only be meaningful and lead to success if there is subsequent execution of the strategy (Musty et al., 2015). The result of literature review has shown that strategy execution or making strategy work is a key driver of organizational performance through a value-creation process (Emerald Group, 2016; Sabourin, 2015). Strategy execution posed a major challenge to business organizations due to its elusiveness to top and middle management (Bosidy & Charan,

2002; Winn, 2018). Scholars were still seeking understanding of the role of top and middle managers in the strategy execution process (Van Ransburg et al. 2014).

Strategy execution is a set of interrelated and goal-oriented activities that management uses to translate the organization's strategies into concrete actions that create values to the organization and its stakeholders (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Kilic & Aktuna, 2015). Effective strategy execution resulted in the proper alignment of (a) organizational systems, which consisted of people, process, and technology (Kaplan & Norton, 2010; Srivastava & Sushil, 2017), and (b) the achievement of organizational effectiveness, which is the formal goal of public sector agencies (Baldvinsdottir, 2013). My major interest was in the realization of strategy through execution rather than abstract formulations. To make strategy realizable entails connecting it to the people process through having the right people in place to execute strategy (Bosidy & Charan, 2002).

Regulatory management is the application of management principles and practices to the process of regulatory oversight of an industry with the purpose of meeting the government's targeted business outcome and other socio-economic impacts (Singh, 2015). The phenomenon of regulatory management is about how managers use a variety of tools and approaches to create and enforce regulations (US EPA, 2018). Regulation is one of the instruments government uses to address market failures based on either public interest principle or capture perspective (Baldvinsdottir, 2013; Leautier, 2018). The purpose of regulation under the public interest thinking is for governments to address the demands of the public against inefficient and inequitable market practices (Posner, 2007).

Thus, inquiring into the effectiveness of regulatory management of a particular industry was a means of achieving a sustainable development of that industry (Wang et al. 2018).

My interest in this study was to understand, through the *lived experience* of research participants, effective strategy execution and regulatory management within the context of the Nigeria's downstream petroleum industry. The idea underlying the concept of lived experience was that only people who have experienced a phenomenon are able to communicate that experience to others (Mapp, 2008; Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). The interest in optimizing lived experience and realization of strategy flowed from the legitimate aspirations and excitement of life as a journey of discovery (Bernstein, 2014).

I used a qualitative research approach and a phenomenological research tradition as the research design (Bottorf, n.d; Church-hill, 2018; Moustakas, 1994; Rossman & Rallis, 2017). Phenomenology is a rich source of useful ideas on how to evaluate and acquire in-depth understanding of lived experiences, and clearly communicate the particular experience to others through thick description of same (Forward, 2019; Patton, 2016; Schwandt, 2015). The meaning a research participant holds regarding their lived experience constitutes the intellectual and emotional connection between work and life (Rossman & Rallis, 2017). The research data, which represented the meaning each research participant held regarding their lived experience, were collected through semi-structured open-ended interviews from a purposeful sample of 20 participants.

The rationales for using the phenomenological research tradition in the study were twofold. First, there was not much existing information about strategy execution within the context of regulatory management of the Nigeria's downstream petroleum industry.

Second, the understanding of a new phenomenon required exploring individual's lived experiences and the personal interpretations of those experiences. This understanding enabled the researcher to identify the common themes and patterns that cut across the participants' accounts of their experiences and capturing a collectively shared social consensus (Karhulahti, 2021; Rossman & Rallis, 2017).

Role of the Researcher

The key role of anyone carrying out a qualitative research is to serve as the research instrument; the primary instrument for data collection (Patton, 2016; Schwandt, 2015). My role as a phenomenological researcher was that of a facilitator-observer; exploring as against directing lived experiences of managers regarding strategy execution in regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry (Moustakas, 1994). In addition, my role was "to gather, organize, and analyze the perceptions of people who have experienced the phenomenon" of interest, which were strategy execution and regulatory management in the Nigeria's downstream petroleum industry (Dawidowicz, 2018, p. 208; Tracy, 2019).

Through data collection and analysis, the phenomenological researcher transforms individuals' lived experiences into words and seeks to understand the pattern of these reflected experiences (Corby, Targat & Cousins, 2015). As individuals often have many different perspectives about a particular subject matter, as a researcher, my role was to listen and gather information from participants to enable me gain understanding of the subject (Pasian, 2015, 2018). My role was also to determine various theme categories, and produce written descriptions of these experiences (Sanjari et al. 2014). My role was

further to develop a comprehensive descriptive account of the central phenomenon following Moustakas (1994) and Meyer and Ward's (2014) guidance on the use of theory in qualitative research.

As a qualitative phenomenological researcher, I took necessary care to avoid biases so as to enhance the authenticity and quality of the study (Van-Manem, 2014). Bias is any error in sampling, interviewing, or testing that results from encouraging or selecting a preferred outcome or answer over some available other ones. Managing bias in qualitative research entailed the researcher stating one's biases overtly upfront to minimize the bias (Patton, 2016). I ensured that there were no biases both from me and from my research assistants in the process of data collection and analysis (Patton, 2016). I avoided asking biased questions. I kept audio-records of the interview and also used reflective journal entries to document my ideas and thoughts regarding the connection between data and participants. I reviewed the participants' responses and my conclusion as the researcher.

Phenomenological researchers understand and practice *bracketing* or *epoche* as a way of preserving the participant's perspective without the researcher's influence (Dawidowicz, 2018; Heinonen, 2015; Schwandt, 2015). Bracketing or epoche, whose origin is traced in the Husserl(1931) phenomenology, is a phenomenological attitude and philosophical acts of pure reflection, in which the researcher suspends, or brackets the convictions, awareness, intentions, and natural attitude (Husserl, 1931; Tracy, 2019). I bracketed personal experiences before conducting the research and during data gathering to enable me keep open attitude(Schwandt, 2015). I recorded this bracketing in a

reflective journal (Schwandt, 2015). Bracketing my experience prior to conducting the study was to avoid influencing the participants' expressions of their experiences and perceptions (Dawidowicz & Zobrek, 2018; Harris, 2019). Bracketing during data analysis enabled me to analyze my experience independent of that of the participants (Dawidowicz, 2018; Dorfler & Stierand, 2020).

I followed ethical guidelines applicable to the use of human subjects in research and addressed ethical issues that I expected to arise in the course of conducting the research. Those ethical issues included the need to debrief the human research participants through explaining the risks and benefits inherent in taking part in the study and receiving an informed consent of the research participants (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022; Kaiser, 2009; Peay & Henderson, 2015). Ethical issues referred also to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the research participants, as well as establishing professional researcher-participant relationship that was devoid of position-power over the participants (Hackett, 2015). To successfully conduct the qualitative research study, I cultivated healthy relationship with the participants to enable comprehensive interviews and detailed interpretations (De Clerk et al., 2011; Gill et al., 2015; Merriam, 2014).

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The population for this study was the senior and middle managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources that have experienced strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigeria downstream petroleum industry. The total number of this senior and middle managers at the time of this study

was 120 persons, which is the population size. The locations from where I recruited this population were in Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Kaduna, which are the major cities and operational centers of the Nigerian oil and gas industry.

Sampling is a process the researcher uses to select a specific number of individual members of the population as participants or respondents (Wilson, 2016). There are probably no hard and fast rules about the use of sample sizes in qualitative research (Nastasi, n.d.). As sampling has implications on interpretation (Emmel, 2013), a reflexive researcher makes adjustments to ensure that the sample is extensive and appropriate or relevant (Gutterman, 2015; Harris, 2019).

Based on the consensus in the literature (Gutterman, 2015; Mason, 2010; Nastasi, n.d.), I used purposive sampling technique to interview a sample size of 20 participants or until I reach data saturation for the phenomenological study of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry. Purposeful sampling helped to align the sample selection with the research questions, purpose, and data (Patton, 2016). The purpose of this sampling method was to describe the lived experiences of persons who have experienced strategy execution within the context of regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry and were willing to share their experiences.

The dispersed locations of the population in four cities entailed the use of snowballing method before and after each interview to select participants until I reach data saturation (Elo et al., 2014; Simon & Goes, 2012). What seemed to be a rule of thumb was that the sample size for a phenomenological study should be a minimum of 5 and a

maximum of 30 participants (Gutterman, 2015; Moustakas, 1994; Nastasi, n.d.). Englander (2012) and Polkinghorne (1989) recommended that researchers are to interview from 5 to 25 individuals that have all experienced the issue under study. The Walden University standard phenomenological research sample size for PhD dissertation is 20 participants, and this standard conforms to Gutterman (2015) and Morse (2015) typical sample size ranges of 10-30 and 5-25 participants, respectively.

As the goal of qualitative research is not the empirical generalization, rather in-depth understanding, the researcher purposefully includes in the sample only persons that have the particular experience (Nastasi, n.d.). Polkinghorne (2005) has stated that the use of multiple participants deepens the understanding of the phenomenon under study. With qualitative sample estimation based on data collection method, Nastasi has stated that a length of an interview between one and two hours will require ten numbers of interviews or sample size of 10. The smaller the length of each interview, the greater will be the number of interviews needed. A 20-minute to one-hour duration of interview will require 30 interviews or sample size (Nastasi, n.d.). McCaslin and Scott (2003) have described phenomenological data gathering process as “lengthy interviews ...” (p. 449). Englander (2018, 2016, 2012) recommended that a phenomenological interview can take one to two hours with each participant; stating that the alternative to lengthy interview is for the researcher to gather more concise written descriptions from the participants.

Flowing from these discussions so far, I considered a sample size of twenty (20) appropriate for the qualitative phenomenological study irrespective of the method I used in gathering the data. I elicited willing cooperation of participants by building

relationship and trust with the target population early that enabled them discuss topics of mutual interest (De Clerk et al., 2011). As a phenomenological researcher, my essential task was to identify and select participants that have particular experiences I was looking for (Englander, 2018, 2016). I collected data on strategy execution of regulatory management using semi-structured open-ended interviews based on conversations with 20 senior and middle managers of the regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources.

Instrumentation

For the purpose of this study, the instruments were semi-structured interviews based on open-ended questions, and the review of relevant documents. I conducted semi-structured email interviews using 10 open-ended questions in an attempt to elicit the participants' experiential data on strategy execution in regulatory management (Oltmann, 2016). The reason for using open-ended interview questions was to enable the participants to communicate their experiences freely without restricting their choices of response (Alexander et al., 2020; Magnusson & Marecek, 2015). This interview process was "conversational and inquiry-driven." (Castillo-Montoya, 2016, p. 811).

The most efficient way of gathering information from professionals in a particular field is to conduct interviews to elicit their views, opinions, and narration of their experiences (Rubin & Babbie, 2017). The benefits of using the semi-structured interviews were twofold. First, it provided an enabling environment for the participants to tell personal stories and reflect on the meaning of their experiences (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015). Second, it elicited responses which served as the relevant data to the

study topic and research questions (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015). Castillo-Montoya (2016) has developed a four-phase framework for refining and strengthening the reliability of interview protocol in semi-structure and structured interview. The components of the interview protocol refinement (IRP) framework include: (a) aligning interview questions with the research question; (b) developing an inquiry-based conversation; (c) receiving feedback on interview protocol; and (d) piloting the interview protocol (Castillo-Montoya, 2016).

The use of the IRP framework enhanced the quality of data gathered through the interview process; it enabled consistent use and congruency of common terminologies with the purpose of the study and rigor of the interview protocol (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Jones et al., 2014). The IRP framework clearly and transparently communicates the degree of efforts that the researcher has to make and demonstrates the intent to develop effective interview protocol. Castillo-Montoya (2016) recognized that there may be situations where the researcher decides to avoid the fourth phase, which is the piloting of interview protocol. Completing phases (a) to (c) evidences that the researcher has made enough effort at increasing the reliability of the research instrument, which is the interview protocol; it is the researcher and not the pilot study that is the main instrument of qualitative research (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Merriam, 2014).

While recognizing that preceding a qualitative research with a pilot study will enhance the consistency and strengthen interview protocol (Castillo-Montoya, 2016), I did not conduct a pilot study because the nature of a qualitative phenomenological research tradition is that the quality of the interview guide improves as the study

progresses (Harding, 2013; Majid et al., 2017). I prepared semi-structured interview questions and subjected the questions to experts' validation before I started interviewing the participants (Erford, 2014). There were two key questions in phenomenological research: question regarding the participant's lived experience and the context for that experience (McNeil, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). The nature of qualitative phenomenological interview is that besides using the written interview questions as the backbone, derivative questions or prompts do arise along the conversations (Merriam, 2014). Furthermore, researcher can observe and make research note entries of the participant's facial and body expressions as well as other relevant gesticulations (Denzin Lincoln, 2018; Opdenakker, 2014).

The central research question (RQ) for this study is: "What are the lived experiences of managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources regarding strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria?" There were three sub-questions that derived from the central one. The sub questions addressed "*how*" the participants experience, describe, interpret, and derive meanings from their experiences of the phenomenon.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Recruitment.

I adopted the purposeful sampling approach (Babbie, 2016) to recruit 20 participants for the proposed study. Welman and Kruger (2001) have identified purposeful sampling as the most relevant sampling technique to qualitative research. The purpose of the research informed my use of the purposeful sampling method (Babbie,

2016; Rubin & Babbie, 2017). I used the purposeful sampling in the identification of the primary participants. I selected the managers at the senior and middle levels management positions who have hands-on experiential insights into the regulatory management of the Nigeria's downstream petroleum industry and are willing to share their experiences.

Scholars have discussed the need for the researcher to engage the members of the research population in explorative conversations to build relationships and overview the potential participants (De Clerk et al., 2011; Roller & Lavrasker, 2021). This overview of potential participants allowed a number space more than the selected sample size. I first considered this large number of potential participants as they gradually reduced to the selected sample size. Some selected potential participants later turned out to be irrelevant; some did not agree to be interviewed, and some who earlier scheduled appointments for interview failed to keep the appointment. At the end, I had 20 participants to complete the interview; those were my primary participants. I needed to successfully build relationship with those primary participants, who have a broad knowledge of the research setting, topic, and the significance of the study (De Clerk et al., 2011; Karhulahti, 2021).

Participation.

I selected the participants purposefully in recognition of the unique positions they occupied as managers in their regulatory agencies as well as their unique experience of the phenomenon of executing regulatory strategies of downstream petroleum industry (Babbie, 2016). I sent an e-mail to each prospective participant asking them whether they would be interested in participating in a phenomenological study of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI. Before the interview

commenced, I contacted each participant and requested that the person signs an informed consent form; which included a section for relevant background demographic data (Holloway & Galvin, 2017; Kvale, 1996). The participant and I mutually agreed on a convenient date, time, and location for the interview.

Participation in this study was voluntary and free. Each participant was free at any time to continue or exit from the study. Both the informed consent and the invitation letter to the participants were explicit on this liberty as part of measures to ensure ethical research.

Data collection.

Three general steps for collecting qualitative data were (a) setting the boundaries for the study, (b) gather information, and (c) establishing protocol recording information (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013). The techniques of collecting data distinguish the qualitative research approach especially the phenomenological tradition as a craft that aims at three objectives: “transparency, methodic-ness, and adherence to evidence” (Yin, 2016, p. 13). The research question informs the method and types of data collection (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013), and the discussions about the role of the research set the stage. Grinnell and Unrau (2013) have defined data collection method as the procedures specifying the research techniques, measuring instruments in use, and the activities the researcher performs in implementing a positivist or interpretive research study.

All qualitative research methods follow the interpretive tradition of collecting non-numeric data. Yin (2016) identified five features that phenomenological research procedure has in common with all other qualitative research traditions. Those common

features include: (a) is studious inquiry into the meaning of people's life; (b) represent the perspectives of participants; (c) cover contextual conditions; (d) explain social behaviors and thinking; and (f) use multiple sources of data. Qualitative data include specific quotes the researcher takes from the opinions and feelings participants expressed as well as the knowledge they shared (Merriam, 2014; Saunders et al., 2018).

The essential methods of collecting data for qualitative research are observation, document (textual or visual) analysis, and interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Gill et al., 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Merriam, 2014). As a qualitative researcher, I used a semi-structured interview to elicit the views, experiences, values, and motivations of the study participants (Gill et al., 2008). My activities, as a qualitative researcher, included among others: (a) observing events and activities as they occur in natural settings; (b) involving directly with the participants and personally experienced the processes of social life in the field; and (c) gathering experiential viewpoints of the participants while maintaining analytical perspective and a neutral posture of an outsider (Neuman, 2014, 2015).

As I was the person conducting this qualitative research (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013), I was the principal instrument of data collection. I collected data from 20 managers of public sector regulatory agencies in the NDPI, who have experienced strategy executions and have expressed willingness to share their experiences through informed consent agreements. About the frequency of data collection events, there was a 60-minute email interview session for each participant. There were follow-up interviews, through telephone calls and e-mail messages, to seek for more clarifications as issues

emerge in the course of the study. The duration of data collection that was planned to be at least six weeks from the date IRB approval is received lasted for seven months.

The research data were received as email messages, and with some note taking using pencil and paper; there were no need for audio recording using a digital portable recording device. The email interviews did not need be transcribed further, except necessary proof-reading and editing to ensure spelling and grammatical correctness as well as capturing the exact words and expressions used by the study participants. I sent invitation letters to greater number of persons than the 20 participants required to minimize the likeliness of a shortfall in the actual number of participants that responded.

As the qualitative researcher processes the data based on his understanding of the social setting where the event took place (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013), I used email interview in each participant's setting to avoid misinterpreting the data. The use of e-mail interviews were as each participant's situation demanded in compliance with the anti-COVID-19 protocols. One did expect that the anti-COVID-19 measures requiring social distancing between persons were likely to limit the chance of succeeding using face-to-face interviews.

Data collection in phenomenological research.

Phenomenology is an iterative and studious process that tries to identify general patterns of the lived experiences of several individuals concerning a particular phenomenon and the descriptions of the universal implications of that pattern of lived experiences (Alase, 2017; Groenewald, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). The job of the phenomenological researcher is to determine meaningful patterns within the volumes of

data (Englander, 2016; Grinnell & Unrau, 2013; Giorgi, 2018). The procedure is that the researcher identifies a phenomenon and collects data from individuals that have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher describes the general experiences of the people, taking note of their different philosophical arguments (Paley, 2018; Van-Manem, 2014).

I adopted Moustakas (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology that focused on describing the experiences of participants and emphasized the researcher's role in bracketing or epoch. According to Husserl (1931), bracketing means that the researcher sets aside personal experiences to understand the phenomenon from fresh perspectives. This psychological phenomenology differs from the hermeneutic phenomenology where the researcher interprets or defines the meaning of the lived experiences. The four elements of Husserl's methodology are: (a) the principle of principles, (b) epoche, (c) phenomenological reduction, and (d) eidetic variation (Gutland, 2018).

In this study, the interview questions flowed from the research question and consisted of a key question and other derivative questions (Moustakas, 1994). The key question related to how the participant had experienced the phenomenon. The derivative questions bordered on determining the contexts and factors that have influenced the participant's experience in the strategy execution of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry. The research interest in the study was in the practical application of phenomenology rather than the philosophical (Errasti-Ibarondo et al.,

2018). This practicality entailed combining the features of Husserl's descriptive (eidetic) and Heidegger's hermeneutic interpretiveness.

Following Moustakas (1994) guidelines, I conducted semi-structured open-ended interviews, took the interview note, and transcribed it. Furthermore, I reviewed public documents such as official memos, records, archival materials, and reports. I maintained transparency, open mind and creativeness in the data collection process to pave the way for the objective emergence of new concepts (Janesick, 2015; Roller & Lavrakas, 2021). As a researcher, my role was to develop a comprehensive descriptive account of the central phenomenon following Moustakas (1994) and Meyer and Ward (2014) guidance on the use of theory in qualitative research. Besides the use of specific methods of collecting data, it was important that I exhibited phenomenological attitude of immersing myself in the phenomenon in order to elicit, interpret, and understand the participants' experiences (Finlay, 2013). The data collection and analysis were taking place concurrently along the qualitative phenomenological research process (Neal et al.2014).

Data storage.

After gathering the data, the next thing was the data storage. Data storage included field notes and filing of hard copy documentation. Data storage also included the electronic storage of interview transcriptions on multiple hard drives (Groenewald, 2013). I assigned identification code or name label to each interview transcript. Groenewald (2013) recommended recording each interview on a separate cassette and assigning an identification code to each cassette using an alpha numeric character, for

example, "Participant-A, 25 July 2015." I carefully read each interview transcript and took notes, and also transcribed keywords, phrases, and statements.

Field note was another important data storage device. Groenewald (2013) recognized field note as a secondary storage device in qualitative research. I wrote the field notes immediately after an interview or observation to prevent forgetting the data. The field notes enabled the researcher to clarify the interview setting. Another method of data storage was the physical documentation and filing of the hard copies of the interview. I opened a physical file for each informed consent provided, the interview notes, and the field notes that I made after each interview. I also opened files for the information materials such as brochures and other documents I received from the participants during the interview. Furthermore, I filed the draft transcriptions and analysis of interview that the participants were validating.

Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative data collection and analysis were taking place concurrently along the research process (Neal et al., 2014; Qutoshi, 2018). The research question informed the method and types of data collection (Grinnell & Unrau, 2013). The process of analyzing qualitative data consisted of the researcher's activity-set of consolidating, reducing, and interpreting the statements the participants made as well as what the researcher observed and read (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2019; Padilla-Diaz, 2015).

I followed the five phases of qualitative data analysis that Yin (2016) enumerated. First, I organized the data into an orderly and consistent format. Second, I disassembled the data (analytic memos, and coding decisions). Third, I reassembled the data to

determine pattern (using hierarchical, matrix, or narrative arrays; and summarizing the process). Fourth, I interpreted data (describing and explaining) using an overarching theme throughout the study. Fifth, I concluded by making substantive propositions and recommended new research areas, challenging existing practices or values, and taking corresponding actions (Yin, 2016). Although other qualitative research traditions may generate useable data, they were not suitable for exploring phenomenon related to live experience of strategy execution and regulatory management (Crutchfield, 2015; Millay, 2018).

In phenomenological research, the term *explicitation* of data replaces the concept of data analysis (Hycner, 1999; Mouchet et al., 2018; Vermersch, 2012). Data analysis in phenomenological research involves the use of various protocols to perform textual analysis of what each participant has said, as well as structural analysis of interpreting the statement. The protocol consists of (a) identifying common meaning and essences, (b) horizontalization of data, (c) and (d) descriptive, textual and structural analysis (Merriam, 2014; Moustakas, 1994; Padilla-Diaz, 2015).

The concept of explicitation implies looking at the data in a holistic context and interpreting it for meaning. The explicitation is a process of investigating the components of a phenomenon while keeping the context of the whole (Amor, 2015; Hycner, 1999). As a researcher, I identified the essential features of the phenomenon as well as the relationships among these features, and subsequently transformed the data through interpretation (Amor, 2015).

The goal of data analysis in a phenomenological research is for the researcher to develop themes for use in describing lived experience from the perspective of the persons that lived it (Qutoshi, 2018). Data analysis in phenomenological research involves looking at the themes, categories, and patterns including specific quotes from the interview transcripts (Parahoo, 2014; Yates & Leggett, 2016). In this phenomenological research, I immerse myself as a researcher into the mass of qualitative data, and organized it through coding and categorization.

Data coding.

Coding is the process of categorizing data using codes (either word or phrase) to represent a theme or idea (Dudovskiy, 2018). There are three levels or types of coding: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Dudovskiy, 2018). According to Dudovskiy (2018), the open coding is the initial categorization of data to derive its meaning; the axial coding is the grouping of codes into categories; and selective coding is the act of linking various categories of data to form a story.

The qualitative researcher should not wait to collect all the data before commencing preliminary coding (Witt, 2013). Researchers may also choose to do initial code through underlining, highlighting, circling, bolding, or coloring significant participant quotes, and salient passages they deem as striking (Boyatzis, 1988; Parahoo, 2014; Pasian, 2018). Other preliminary coding actions included (a) preliminary jotting of important passages, phrases or words as analytic memos in a research journal for future reference; and (b) ensure to mark the analytic memos distinctly to avoid mixing them

with raw data. The researcher does these preliminary jottings while transcribing interviews, writing field notes, or filing relevant documents.

For this study, I adopted the 5-phase explication process (Groenewald, 2013; Hycner, 1999). The five phases of explication were as follows (Groenewald, 2013; Hycner, 1999):

- a) Bracketing and phenomenological reduction through setting aside the researcher's personal knowledge and experience, but allowing the participant's experience to prevail.
- b) Delineating units of meaning through extracting those statements and phrases that help in understanding the meaning of the research phenomenon.
- c) The clustering of units of meanings to form themes occurs when the researcher carefully examines the list of units of meanings, using informed judgments, to determine significant topics under the phenomenon.
- d) Summarizing each interview, validating it, and modifying it where necessary
- e) Extracting general and unique themes from all the interviews, and making a composite summary.

Data analysis software.

Qualitative data analysis is a complex iterative process and involves a high volume of text data. Researchers increasingly make use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) application packages such as:(a) ATLAS.ti, (b) NVivo, (c) MAXQDA, and (d) N6 to achieve a more efficient and effective research work, and providing better insight into the data-set. While there are some computer

software solutions that can assist in data management, qualitative researchers do not abandon their responsibility for analyzing data to the use of these software packages, which only assist data analysis while the researcher retains control (Zamawe, 2015).

In this study, I used NVivo-12 as it is one of the very popular software for managing non-numeric data (Zamawe, 2015). NVivo-12 is a computer software solution that the QSR International produced for use in qualitative research and in-depth analysis of large volumes of textual and multimedia data or information (Adongo, et al., 2014; QSR International, 2015; Zamawe, 2015). NVivo-12 helps to ease the time-consuming, rigorous, and labor-intensive nature of qualitative data analysis (Ugochukwu et al., 2019; Pope et al, 2000).

The Nvivo-12 contains tools that enable qualitative researchers to organize and analyze unstructured and non-numerical data, and perform a lot of data collection and data management functions (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Dearne, 2008). Using NVivo-12 to carry out these data organization and management functions assists the researcher to have access to relevant information and also answer the research questions (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). In this study, I used NVivo-12 to speed up the research process and allowed sufficient time for data analysis and interpretation, which further enhanced trustworthiness (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; QSR International, 2015).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Both the qualitative and quantitative researchers need to test and demonstrate that their studies are credible and of good quality (Golafshani, 2003; Patton, 2014). The

traditional method of determining the quality or worthiness of a research is the assessment of reliability and validity (Long & Johnson, 2000; Noble & Smith, 2015). The purpose of this assessment was to ascertain the “soundness of the research method, the accuracy of its findings, and the integrity of the researcher’s assumptions or conclusions” (Long & Johnson, 2000, p. 1).

In qualitative research, the judgment on the trustworthiness is the validation process (Emm, 2013; Smith & Noble, 2014). There was, therefore, an ongoing debate among qualitative researchers as to whether the terms reliability and validity are appropriate for qualitative research that is not based on the positivist philosophy (Golafshani, 2003). Corbin and Strauss (2014) advocate the redefinitions of reliability and validity to match the realities of the qualitative research paradigm. Therefore, the quantitative researcher uses the concepts of reliability and validity in referring to a research that is credible. Conversely, “the credibility of a qualitative research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher” (Golafshani, 2003, p.600).

In qualitative research studies, researchers viewed reliability and validity together in terms of credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness. The central argument was that there can be no validity without reliability in a study; and a demonstration of validity was sufficient to establish reliability (Golafshani, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2016). The terms and criteria for determining quality in qualitative research paradigm are credibility, neutrality or conformability, consistency or dependability, and applicability or transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative researchers establish credibility

through triangulation, prolonged contact, member checks, saturation, reflexivity, and peer review (Dezin & Lincoln, 2018; Finlay, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

In this study, I achieved quality through ensuring that the concepts I used were consistent with the literature. In addition, I coded the interview data using the exact words the participants used to avoid bias (Long & Johnson, 2000). Ensuring credibility (internal validity) entails seeking means of evaluating claims to knowledge in terms of their likely truth (Hadi, 2016; Hammersley, 1992). Long and Johnson (2000) interpreted these means to include “considering plausibility of the claim, the credibility of the claim, and the weight of evidence for each of these.” (p. 31). The degree of evidence required depended on nature of the claim and its centrality to the study.

For this study results to be adequate, it was crucial that the analytic interpretations fairly and accurately reflected the phenomenon that I claimed it represented (Long & Johnson, 2000). The essential validity and reliability strategies in the study included: (a) prolonged engagement and persistent observation, (b) clarification, and (c) triangulation. When triangulated data concurred, not only it enhanced credibility, it also enabled the researcher to focus attention to areas of congruence (Long & Johnson, 2000). Other strategies I used in the study included member-checking, rich and thick description, and external audit.

In qualitative research, validity guarantees reliability (Golafshani, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2016). The reliability of qualitative research refers to stability of responses to multiple coders of data set. As the coding process was flexible, the researcher needed to adopt a coding process that was consistent with the available

resources and time (Emmel, 2013). The researcher used the coding agreement based on (a) codes, (b) themes, or (c) both (Emmel, 2013). It is important to recognize that objectivity in phenomenological research constitute a bias; therefore, the researcher cannot validate conclusions objectively (Rawat, 2011). Every phenomenological research step has an inherent measure of validity (Rawat, 2011; Xu et al., 2020). In this study, I proceeded step by step to see the measures of validity, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

Measures of validity in phenomenological research steps

Step of Phenomenological Research	Measure of Validity
Sampling	Used purposeful sampling technique, and drew samples logically. Developed and gained informed consent agreement from the participants.
Data collection	Researcher has to exercise bracketing or epoche during data collection; suspending prior knowledge of the phenomenon and personal bias. Collecting data from three different kinds of informant is a form of triangulation (Grunewald, 2004).
Data analysis	During data analysis, I selected themes as they emerged from data. If I selected theme based on discretion, there were sound logic for doing that.
Eldetic reduction	The researcher should carry out eldetic reduction for determining the essences in an unbiased manner.

Table 2 demonstrates that the phenomenological research can establish the validity in each of the step. In this phenomenological research study, I ensured reliability through clearly outlining and defining the steps used in conducting the study (Rawat, 2011). Additional steps I used to ensure credibility of this study included (a) extended participation, (b) consultation of appropriate documents, (c) peer debriefing, (d) continuous observation, (e) triangulation, (f) thick description of phenomenon, and (g) use of a well-established research method.

Transferability

As criteria for evaluating qualitative research findings for quality or trustworthiness, transferability is similar to the concept of external validity in quantitative research (Trochim, 2016; Universal Teacher, 2016). It refers to the extent to which a qualitative researcher can apply or generalize the research results to other contexts or settings beyond the boundary of the particular study (Trochim, 2016). The onus of judging whether a particular research result is reasonably transferable primarily lies on the person that is proposing to generalize the findings to other settings that have similar parameters, population, and attributes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher has to determine the most appropriate method of doing the transfer (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability of qualitative research result differed from the generalizability in quantitative research because it did not require making broad claims, but enabled the users of the research report to apply the elements of the research results to their particular experiences and situations. A key way a qualitative researcher can achieve transferability is to have a thick description of the phenomenon under study (Trochim, 2016; Universal

Teacher, 2019). In addition, as the researcher, I needed to describe (a) the study context, (b) key assumptions, (c) the nature and number of participants, (d) techniques used in collecting data, (e) the length and number data collection (interview) sessions, and (f) the length of time taken to accumulate data (Trochim, 2016; Universal Teacher, 2019).

Dependability

Dependability is the qualitative research counterpart to reliability, and refers to the consistency of data in leading to the same conclusions if one repeats the study using the same subject matter or within a similar context (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The underlying assumption for establishing dependability was that the procedure for conducting a particular research should be consistent across time, researchers, and techniques of analysis (Forero et al, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Trotter, 2012). In addition, the researcher must make the procedure explicit to allow it to be replicated whenever possible (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

The strategies I used to establish dependability in this study included keeping audit trails and triangulation. Furthermore, I monitored how the research emerged or evolved through keeping chronological record of the research activities and processes. Moreover, I monitored the influence research has on data collection and analysis as well as on theme emergence. I also kept analytic memos and documented the classifications and coding process.

Conformability

Conformability in qualitative research is the qualitative counterpart to objectivity in quantitative research (Halkier, 2012; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Noble & Smith, 2015). It

refers to the degree to which the findings of a qualitative inquiry carried out within a specific location or context could be true of people in different settings and conditions or similar projects using the same technique (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Conformability evidences neutrality, and lack of biasness; attributing the research result only to the informants and study condition (Patton, 2016). Conformability links the integrity of research results to the data and the way the researcher properly aligned the data, analysis and findings; enabling the reader confirm the adequacy of findings (Patton, 2016).

The underlying assumption of conformability is that research findings should reflect the particular situation under study rather than the researcher's beliefs and biases (Miles et al., 2014). It is important to note that different results of distinct assessments of conformability of a particular research finding may not imply that the research is not trustworthy (Miles et al., 2014; Patton, 2016). Such variations can also suggest that the phenomenon under investigation has multiple realities; an understanding of the reason for the variation will be of interest to the reader (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles, et al., 2014). The strategies that I used to establish conformability in this study included reflexivity and following Guba's framework to ensure rigor, and uphold research ethics.

Ethical Procedures

IRB Approval

The selection of research participants was conditioned on the completion and signing of informed consent form from the IRB (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000; Holloway, 2004; Holloway & Galvin, 2017). I waited for the IRB approval before I started interviewing the study participants.

Recruitment and Data Collection

Qualitative research approach has some basic ethical issues that flow from its interview-based and conversational method of data gathering. The essential ethical issues were (a) confidentiality, (b) informed consent, (c) risk assessment, (d) promises and reciprocity, and (e) interviewer mental health (Patton, 2016; Sewell, n.d.). As a qualitative researcher, I had an obligation to ensure they satisfactorily adhere to institutional and professional guidelines and laws as well as moral principles that altogether provide a coherent ethical context for achieving the goal of social research (Farrimond, 2013; Wiles, Heath, Crow & Charles, 2005).

The key ethical principles common in the ethical codes of most institutions include (a) informed and voluntary consent, (b) confidentiality of shared information, (c) beneficence or no harm to participants, and (d) reciprocity (Halai, 2006). The moral principles include autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice (Wiles et al., 2005). The principle of autonomy is that of allowing people to exercise their freedom of choosing to participate or not to participate in a research. Non-maleficence is the principle that research must not cause injury to the participant. Beneficence is a principle that research must benefit others. The principle of justice is an emphasis on equal treatment of people in the research process.

I updated myself with the informed consent requirement of Walden University, and complied with any existing relevant legal framework. These ethical considerations included a demonstration of commitments to the rights of each participant, and respecting and protecting the participants from injury (Alderson, 2004). I ensured that there was a

proper balance between achieving the purpose of the study and other competing issues that were in the best interest of research participants. This phenomenological study of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI did not pose any risk to the participants.

I preserved the ethics standards and recognized the relevance of their wellbeing to the study. Without overwhelming participants with information, I provided the participants with sufficient information to enable them make informed decision whether to participate or not. I informed the participants of the nature, scope, and purpose of the study. Prior to the interviews, I obtained the informed consent of the participants that I have selected to ensure the observance of good research ethics (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000; Holloway, 2004; Holloway & Galvin, 2017). The content of the informed consent agreement (Groenewald, 2013) included explicit statements that:

- The participant has accepted to participate in the research;
- Stated the purpose and procedures of the research, and its risks and benefits;
- The risks and benefits of the research;
- The voluntary nature of the research participation;
- The right of the informant or subject to stop participating in the study at any time;
- An assurance of protecting confidentiality.

I kept the participants' contributions confidential and destroyed all recordings after analyzing the data as a guaranty of their privacy (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013). To further guaranty the privacy of the participants that stopped participating in the study at any time, I discarded all the records I gathered about them. I am prepared to keep

any promises I made to the participants including communicating the findings of the research to them. I cultivated open mind to the aspect of not allowing the volume of information from the participant to overwhelm and cause ill-health.

Summary

In this chapter, I proposed to adopt a qualitative research approach using the phenomenological design to study the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry (NDPI). I described the nature and procedure of the phenomenological research tradition combining the features of Husserl (1931) transcendental or psychological phenomenology and the alternative hermeneutic or interpretive phenomenology. The reason for combining the two types of phenomenological inquiries was to optimize the meaning-making of the participants' accounts of their experiences as there can be no description without interpretation.

I discussed the appropriateness of qualitative research approach with a phenomenological design as the nature of the study and the research questions required discursive and conversational process of eliciting qualitative responses on people's experiences of the phenomenon under study. I used purposive sampling to recruit 20 participants from the consenting middle and senior managers of the regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources who have experienced strategy execution and regulatory management for the downstream petroleum industry.

The primary research tool was email interviews based on semi-structured, open-ended interview questions, and with follow-up. I provided the data analysis plan, which

involved coding and the use of NVivo-12 for qualitative data analysis. Furthermore, I have discussed the issue of trustworthiness regarding how I ensured that the research was of good quality, which consisted of the steps I have taken to ensure the credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the research findings and results. I have further discussed the ethical procedures; demonstrated a commitment to protect participant confidentiality, complied with the professional, moral, and institutional ethical issues involved in conducting the study.

In Chapter 4 that follows, I provided the results of data collection. I discussed the analysis of data and the research results in detail. I communicated the evidence of trustworthiness.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Abuja. Regulatory strategy execution is the act and discipline of transforming strategies into concrete positive regulations and compliance management actions for desired outcome (Bosidy&Charan, 2002; Englander, 2018; Kramer, 2014; Kramer & Stoicescu, 2021). The expectation is that the findings from the study and its outcome will inform proper understanding of strategy execution and regulatory management in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry (NDPI). Further expectation is that the study outcome will help to improve the three core business processes that make up the strategy execution: the people process, strategy, and operating plan (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Macko, 2021; Rollinson & Haughtby-Haddon, 2021).

The problem I addressed in this study was on how to promote and implement appropriate institutional capacities and procedures to achieve effective strategy execution and regulatory management outcome for the NDPI (Baghebor & Beauty, 2015; ChintuwaEnyioko, 2017; World Bank, 2013). There have been calls to develop a legal and regulatory framework to address the persistence of a weak regulatory capacity and the systemic inefficiencies in the NDPI (Kachikwu, 2017; PPPRA, 2016).

The research questions for the study consisted of an overarching research question (RQ) and three sub-questions (SQ); all of which I translated into ten (10) semi-structured

open-ended interview questions. The overarching research question in a phenomenological study is two dimensional; it is about describing experience (universal essence), and the context for that experience (McNeil, 2015; Moustakas, 1994). The overarching research question (RQ) for the study is: How do managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources describe their lived experiences of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria?

The three sub-questions (SQ) are as follows:

SQ1: How do Managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources describe their lived experiences of strategy execution for the downstream petroleum industry?

SQ2: How can the manager's experience of strategy execution help to improve the prospect of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?

SQ3: How can the Government and downstream petroleum market operators improve the prospect of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the industry?

I have organized this chapter into six (6) sections (a-f); beginning with (a) the research setting, (b) the participants' demographics, (c) the data collection method, (d) the data analysis, (e) evidence of trustworthiness, and (f) the results of the findings. The section concludes with a summary transitioning into Chapter 5.

Research Setting

Qualitative research takes place at the participant's natural settings (physical, social or cultural) sites, and it is essential for researcher to accurately describe the

research setting on which the results, interpretation and meaning-making of the participant's experience depend.

I conducted this qualitative phenomenological study of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry in a natural setting, which is the Nigerian downstream petroleum regulatory environment. This regulatory environment is also a national and industry setting where there is interplay of diverse socio-political and cultural interest groups; resulting in frequent militancy actions, community agitations and assertiveness, socio-political and labor resistances to government reform policies and initiatives for the industry.

Inherent insecurity and threats to security of lives and property often resulted from pipeline vandalism, Niger Delta militancy, and scarcity of petroleum products as well as market imperfection, which leads to information asymmetry and instability in the supply and distribution of products. Research using actual national/industry setting will contribute to deep understanding and construction of theories of the phenomenon of interest based on local data; situating it within its historical and sociocultural context of use and meaning-making (Barton, Hamilton & Ivandic, 2000; Dabrowska, 2019).

A number of personal and organizational conditions influenced the participants in sharing their experience, but there were no personal conditions that influenced the interpretation of the study results. Elements of this setting include the use of information technology, real-time data capture/reporting, inter-agency relations, stakeholder engagement, regulatory monitoring of downstream facilities/ operators. The participants appeared not to be familiar with qualitative research and its potential to facilitate

improved practice (Kajamaa & Kumpulainen, 2019). Some of the participants expressed familiarity with the use of quantitative research instrument that only requires them to tick one answer from among a number of optional responses, which makes it easy to respond. Some participants' preference to quantitative questionnaire made them to procrastinate responding to the interview questions; they described the qualitative discursive interview questions used for this study as time wasting and stressful; resulting in prolonged data collection period.

I collected data over a period of seven months from the consenting participants who are senior and middle levels managers that have experienced strategy execution; sharing their experience enabled them become active agents of change and social transformation (Catarina, 2013; Kajamaa, 2019). Gathering and analyzing interview data from participants at senior and middle levels of management, and from databank search/review of public documents (see Appendix H) enabled source triangulation and understanding of the complexity of the research context. This understanding helped in minimizing chances of arriving at inaccurate assumptions, results and their implications, and leads to valid findings.

The participants work in different regions and operational zones of the organizations across the six geo-political zones of the country. One of the respondents had retired from service, and demonstrated deep experience of the industry at top executive level. Other participants were still in service and occupied the ranks of Chief Officers, Assistant directors, deputy directors or their equivalents.

To close any existing gap between knowledge and practice or facilitate positive change in this natural setting requires the adoption of a qualitative research approach and immersion of the researcher through discursive engagements within the local context in the practice environment (Kajamaa & Kumpulainen, 2019; McNeil et al., 2016). I conducted 20 email interviews, which corresponds with the data collection method I described in Chapter 3 and approved by the Walden University URR and IRB. The use of email interview for data collection also conformed to the social distancing rule as an anti-measure against the spread of corona virus disease that broke-out in 2019 (COVID-19) and spread across the globe in 2020.

Demographics

I had email interviews with 20 participants respectively, and each of these participants had a minimum academic qualification of a university degree, and has occupied leadership position for a period between five and 15 years as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Demographic Information

Demographic	Classification	Participants
Gender	Male	13
	Female	7
Educational background	Bachelor's degree	2
	Master's degree	15
	Doctorate degree	3
Years served with the organization	5-10	2
	11-15	5
	16-20	12
	21-30	0
	Above 30	1
Ethnicity	African	20
	White	0

Note: *Research data collection. I avoided reporting data on participants' age range to further protect the participant.*

Seven of the participants were female and 13 were male, although and as an attempt to hide their identities, their sex were not taken into consideration when selecting participants for the study. One of the male participants had retired from service haven worked for 35 years, the rest are still working.

Each of the participants belonged to at least one professional association where they have either attained full member status or has advanced further to become a Fellow. Each participant had worked at the head office and field/regional offices of the organizations, which enabled them to acquire regulatory management experiences relevant to the study; serving as reliable sources of relevant data.

Data Collection

Obtaining CITI Program Completion Report and IRB Approval

I did not commence data collection until I had received the Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (Approval # 11-23-20-0358786) for me to proceed to the final stage of the study completion (see Appendix A). I had earlier received the Citi Completion Report # 8659735 with a Record I.D. #34205696 in 19th November, 2019 from the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) as a certification for completing the CITI Program. The CITI program is an online training course on research ethics and protecting human research participants in line with the Walden University requirement.

Collecting Electronic (Email) Interview Data Using Interview Protocol as a Guide

I collected data on strategy execution in regulatory management through conducting 20 email-interview conversations (Appendix E, F, and G) with the consenting participants (see Invitation letter and consent form in Appendix B and C, respectively). The research participants were senior and middle managers from the two relevant downstream petroleum industry regulatory agencies under the Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources (FMPR).

I used interview protocol (Appendix D) containing 10 semi-formal open-ended questions to guide the email conversations with individual research participants; elicited experiences, perspectives, motivations, and their meanings (Appendix E, F, and G). Besides using the written interview questions as the backbone, I asked some derivative questions or prompts that arose along the conversations (Fritz & Vandermause, 2017; Merriam, 2014).

The geographical spread of the participants across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria, and the anti-COVID-19 measures requiring social distancing between persons informed the choice of optimising the use of email interviews. Scholars have recognized that the use of email interview is a reliable and effective way of collecting qualitative data for the purpose of describing an experience; enabling the researcher to elicit deeply reflective responses regarding the experiences of targeted participants from a geographically diverse sample (Fritz & Vandermause, 2017).

There was no variation in data collection from the plan in Chapter 3; which was to use telephone interview or email interview. Conducting the interview through email

allowed each participant to be in a convenient and comfortable office or home environment that can fit the interview into their work schedules.

Data Collection Period

I collected email interview data over a period of seven months; from November 2020 to June, 2021, and the apologies from some of the participants for their delay revealed similar reasons, and enabled complementary information regarding the beehive and pressing nature of their work. They strived to meet the dateline, daily timeline and targets for data collection, collation and reporting; also implying the need for them to regularly go for medical checks on their body temperature and pressure to avoid health breakdown. Each email interview lasted for an average of 60 minutes. I also conducted a follow-up interview to elicit more clarifications of issues from each participant in the course of the study (Arieli & Tamir, 2018).

Bracketing Researcher's Personal Experience

I set aside (bracketed) my personal experience in order not to over-shadow the participant; I allowed the participant's experience to prevail so that I can understand the phenomenon from a fresh perspectives (Dorfler & Stierand, 2020; Husserl, 1931). A special feature of phenomenological research design is that the use of probing questions and bracketing (*epoche*) during interview facilitate the attainment of data saturation (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Attainment of Data Saturation

I reached the point of saturation after the 17th interview as the data began to be repetitive. This figure conforms to Hagaman & Wutich (2017) that less than 16

interviews were sufficient to reach data saturation using homogenous sources/group of participants while a sample of 20 to 40 interviews will be adequate to reach saturation using multiple sources of information or heterogeneous group of participants. The saturation is the point at which any additional interview will not generate any new idea or information, but repeats the earlier generated data (Bernard, 2012; Faulkner & Trotter, 2017; Saunders et al., 2018).

The saturation point determines the sample size in a qualitative inquiry, and failure to reach saturation point in a qualitative research negatively affects its quality and content validity (Bernard, 2012; Fusch & Ness, 2015). Conversely, there is no universal saturation point across research methods, rather scholars agreed to the following implications of reaching a saturation point in a study: “no new data, no new theme, no new coding, and ability to replicate the study” (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p.1409; Faulkner & Trotter, 2017; Guest, et al, 2020).

Attaining saturation point signals that the researcher has collected enough data to achieve the purpose of the study, and collecting additional data will be unnecessary because there is enough data to replicate the study if required (Faulkner & Trotter, 2017; Saunders et al., 2018). I however, proceeded with data collection, transcribing and analysis to further increase the robustness of the study, and to complete the 20 interviews that Walden University requires in a phenomenological doctoral study.

Data Recording and Transcribing

The use of email interview for data collection does not require audio recording and transcribing to capture participant’s exact word and expressions in the sense used for

face-to-face and telephone interviews because the participants constructed their responses to the email interview questions in form of texts on the email pages of their computers and emailed to the researcher. I however followed a modified version of Fritz and Vandermause (2017) approach to transcribing email interview responses, which include:

- a) Transferring the whole email conversations to a word document
- b) Rereading the transcripts for typing and grammatical errors and gaps in responding to the questions
- c) Removing repetitive texts and correcting errors
- d) Merging and consolidating each participant's responses to initial interview and subsequent follow-up interviews into one major transcript
- e) Emailing the final transcript back to the participant for further review (member-checking) and validation.
- f) Received the validated transcript from the participant
- g) Assigned pseudonym name to de-identify the transcript, assure confidentiality, and protect the identity of each participant.

Only one of the participants added more information to the transcript before validating and emailing back to the researcher. Other participants went straight to validate and email the validated transcripts to me. At the end of each email interview, I transferred the entire email conversations to a word document in the chronological order of the conversations (Fritz & Vandermause, 2017)

Databank Search and Review of Public Documents

Adhering to the plan in Chapter 3, I reviewed and performed textual analysis of relevant documents (Bahishti, 2021; Palmatier et al., 2018), various versions of the petroleum industry bill and the Nigerian downstream petroleum policy and strategy papers as sources of supplementary data; enabling source triangulation, convergence of evidence and data credibility. However, none of the research participants provided any document to support their responses to the interview.

Furthermore, I searched the Nigerian downstream petroleum databank domiciled in Abuja and elicited some current information on the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. I kept reflective diaries of the interviews; keeping journal commentaries on emerging issues, and summarized the information I collected from the databank and reviewed public documents (Appendix H), saved them as Microsoft documents in my computer.

Data Storage

I stored the collected data for this study in a home personal computer and saved it in a pass-word protected file and backed up on an external USB flash drive, which I provided for this study alone. I secured the external USB drive in a locked safe, and I will preserve the data for five (5) years in compliance with the Walden University dissertation guideline. Another reason for storing the collected data is to subject it to analysis.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the collected and transcribed qualitative interview data through organizing the data via coding and categorization for theme emergence (Vaismoradi et al., 2016). Themes are patterns across data sets that are useful in describing a

phenomenon and relates to a specific research question (Manyam & Panjwani, 2019).

Thematic analysis is a coding process to create meaningful patterns (Robinson, 2021; Spencer et al., 2021), and it involves six phases towards establishing meaningful patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2019). These phases include:

- Familiarizing with data
- Generating initial codes
- Searching for themes among codes
- Reviewing themes
- Defining and naming themes, and
- Producing final reports

I performed preliminary coding through reading the transcribed data of participants' responses and summary of the document review; underlining, highlighting, circling, bolding, or coloring significant participant quotes, and salient and striking passages (Boyatzis, 1998; Parahoo, 2014; Robinson, 2021). I used Nvivo-12 to organize and manage the data; categorizing and coding it into themes to form the basis of describing the experiences of the participants in aggregate; taking note of their different philosophical arguments (Moustakas, 1994; Van-Manem, 2014). I followed five explication stages of qualitative data analysis (Groenewald, 2013):

- f) Bracketing and phenomenological reduction through setting aside the researcher's personal knowledge and experience, but allowing the participant's experience to prevail.

- g) Delineating units of meaning through extracting those statements and phrases that help in understanding the meaning of the research phenomenon.
- h) The clustering of units of meanings to form themes occurs when the researcher carefully examines the list of units of meanings, using informed judgments, to determine significant topics under the phenomenon.
- i) Summarizing each interview, validating it, and modifying it where necessary
- j) Extracting general and unique themes from all the interviews, and making a composite summary.

Following these explicitation stages informed the process of applying Nvivo-12 software, which included:

- i. Listed and grouped data collected that involved transcribing the data and listing all expression relevant to the study.
- ii. Clustered data into categories by grouping the invariant constituents that involved putting together the themes that were relevant to the study.
- iii. Identified invariant constituents and themes that involved utilizing research protocols to organize categories from the transcribed interviews.
- iv. Constructed textural-structural description for each participant's interview for the meanings and essences of the experience, incorporating the invariant constituents and themes.
- v. Used the themes to determine the meaning of the lived experiences that involved the key findings and recommendations for the study. (Van-Manem, 2014. p.121).

I coded each transcript separately and completed it before moving to another one, which conforms to the tradition of interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). The IPA is participant-oriented; the focus of IPA is to understand the participant's experience from the participant's perspective in order to learn new things about the psychological world of the research participant (Alase, 2017; Smith & Osborn, 2015; Spencer et al., 2021). I considered only themes that emerged from more than one interview responses rather than from a single participant in order to ensure robustness.

The first coding produced 180 specific codes that were the initial sub themes, which, on further categorization, yielded 52 emerging themes as in Table 4.

Specific Codes and Emerging Themes

Table 4

Emerging Themes and Sub Themes

Initial Sub Themes	Emerging Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize Human resource capability • Growth of personnel • Actualize organization objective • Fulfill value of each personnel • Personal values (Skills, Past experience, steadfastness, composure, disposition) • have direct impact in terms of extent delivery on my job • Educational background and training received • Conferences and seminars attended • Inter-agency interaction • Adherence to work ethics • Information dissemination • The issues of trust, integrity, commitment and professionalism • Planning, implementation and performance assessment • Application of Strategy mix • Ascertain impact and outcome. • Organizational change • Strategy realization • Organizational effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resource capability and growth • Personal values, worldview and experiences • Achieve organizational objectives, impact, and job delivery • Education and training • Inter-agency cooperation • Use of information technology • Planning and implementation with performance assessment • Strategy execution and time management • Assessment of impact/outcome

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy executed according to timelines • Micro-managing the regulatory strategy execution, • 6-17 years' experience (awesome, worthwhile, wonderful, interesting, quite interesting, amazing, pleasant) • Insightful, enriching and target-driven • Industry has been on the rise • Mixed feelings • challenging • Opportunity to acquire further skills • Industry has been on the rise • Downstream operation has been dynamic • Good number of players know their onions • Change process • Strategy execution process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and Experience of regulatory strategy execution, • Operational dynamism and opportunities in the industry. • Strategy execution and change process • Challenging experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Strategic management process ✚ No big picture ✚ Involved Stakeholder approach ✚ Corporate planning ✚ Full deregulation process ✚ Identify strategic models ✚ Petroleum Support Fund (PSF) period ✚ Strategy Management Process ✚ Petroleum Products Commercial Framework (PPCF) ✚ Obtaining Quantity Notification (QN) ✚ Importing Petroleum Products ✚ Notice of Readiness (NOR) ✚ Vessel Arrival ✚ Vessel Ullage ✚ Shore Receipt/discharge ✚ Management/Leadership Styles ✚ Strategy Implementation Team ✚ Leveraging on Technology ✚ Documentation ✚ Security of organization's data ✚ Product selling ✚ Forces of demand and supply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Strategy Management Process ❖ Importing Petroleum Products ❖ Documentation and Data security ❖ Full Deregulation Process ❖ Leveraging on Technology ❖ Management and Leadership Styles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Non-passage of PIB ❖ Dilapidated road infrastructure ❖ Labor Union resistance to best practices ❖ Policy and legal framework summersault ❖ Regulatory institutions lost sight of their visions and missions ❖ No properly defined strategies ❖ Weak autonomy of regulator ❖ Right kind of leadership in these organizations ❖ Resistance to change ❖ Employee ❖ Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Policy and legal framework ❖ Infrastructure ❖ Strength and autonomy of regulatory institutions ❖ Kind of leadership ❖ Corruption ❖ Price volatility ❖ Government funding ❖ Refining capacity utilization ❖ Behaviors and relationships in the market ❖ Price mechanisms

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Relationship imbalance between OMCs and consumers ❖ International Market Price of petroleum Products ❖ Upward landing cost and open market price (OMP) ❖ Inability of refinery to work at full capacity ❖ Corruption ❖ Lack of Government funding ❖ Obsolete laws and regulations ❖ Pipeline vandalism ❖ Volatility of oil prices ❖ Limited expert knowledge ❖ Government Policy direction ❖ Effective Communication of strategies ❖ Product adulteration ❖ Stakeholder management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Resistances to change. ❖ Insecurity/pipeline vandalism ❖ Expertise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Determine, articulate and implement policies ✚ Support policy formulation ✚ Regulate supply and distribution ✚ Role evolved ✚ Ensure product availability ✚ Design and communicate strategy ✚ Performance management ✚ Managing resistance to change ✚ Creating enabling environment for operators ✚ Application of business and economic models ✚ Achieving organizational goal ✚ Pricing: Develop pricing template and price bands for markets ✚ Operational area management ✚ Depot representative ✚ Admin division management ✚ Process monitoring ✚ Project management ✚ Handling conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Role evolution along dynamics of activities ❖ Policy formulation ❖ Regulation ❖ Strategy development and communication ❖ Performance management ❖ Enabling environment ❖ Use of business models ❖ Managing change ❖ Monitoring ❖ Conflict management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Too many regulators <input type="checkbox"/> Overlapping functions <input type="checkbox"/> Lessons from the experience of strategy execution <input type="checkbox"/> Not effective strategy execution <input type="checkbox"/> Operator resistance and agitations <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability/success factors <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of political will <input type="checkbox"/> Input to/implementation of strategy execution <input type="checkbox"/> Weak regulatory governance Framework <input type="checkbox"/> Transport system <input type="checkbox"/> Monopoly of NNPC <input type="checkbox"/> Growth enablement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Effectiveness and sustainability of Strategy execution ❖ Regulatory Governance Framework and growth enablement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work role performance ➤ Skills deployment ➤ Acquire varying degrees of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Implications of participants' experience of strategy execution

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social exposure and collaborative management ➤ Staff appraisal, need identification and training ➤ Teamwork/Group performance ➤ Aspire for technical/professional/social skills acquisition and improvement 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Emerging Leadership/ Organizational development opportunities ❖ Good leadership practices ❖ Excellence, creativity and innovation ❖ Executive (C-) Level Opportunities ❖ Knowing yourself ❖ Having a well-communicated vision ❖ Achieve organizational goal/objective ❖ Lead others by example ❖ Formulating policies and procedures ❖ Structured approach to managing strategy ❖ Developing high value capabilities ❖ Making investment that optimize values ❖ Leadership will to collaborate ❖ Need identification and strategy articulation. ❖ Politics ❖ Working with people from various organizations ❖ Leadership and organizational change ❖ Job improvement ❖ Organizational development ❖ Resource availability ❖ Time management ❖ Situational leadership ❖ Periodic review of strategies ❖ Strategic Planning and forecasting ❖ Emerging new legislation (PIB) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership practices 2. The strategy process: Structured approach to managing strategy 3. Managing people 4. Emerging issues, opportunities and innovations 5. Optimizing organizational values
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Government should make good policies ✚ Allow implementation without interference ✚ Provide enabling environment ✚ Training and retraining staff of regulatory agencies ✚ Invest in technology ✚ PIB to address 90% of the problem ✚ Having square peg in a square hole ✚ Engage communication experts ✚ Develop all-inclusive strategy ✚ Effective supervision of line managers ✚ Research methods to keep abreast with changes ✚ Stakeholder engagement ✚ Proactive response to market dynamics ✚ More accountable and transparent government ✚ Agencies to collaborate ✚ Institute feedback mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Making strategy work: Improving strategy execution.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Benchmarking other countries in implementation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledgeable: The organization and strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a clear strategic direction <input type="checkbox"/> Implement strategic priorities/objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Provide opportunities to adapt to changing realities <input type="checkbox"/> Experienced and reliable <input type="checkbox"/> They walk the talk <input type="checkbox"/> Stay organized <input type="checkbox"/> Delegate <input type="checkbox"/> Time management <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate Effective listening <input type="checkbox"/> Provide contingency for risk management <input type="checkbox"/> Confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy <input type="checkbox"/> Respect <input type="checkbox"/> Clarity of goals and objectives. <input type="checkbox"/> Team players <input type="checkbox"/> High performance skills <input type="checkbox"/> Fulfill organizational objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Motivate subordinates <input type="checkbox"/> Recognize and reward hard work <input type="checkbox"/> They are leaders, not bosses; they welcome ideas from subordinates. <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching and mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Performance management

The final coding through the further categorization of the 52 emerging themes yielded the following 15 final thematic areas that emerged as in Table 5 and were analyzed in the study.

Table 5

Emerging Themes

Final Themes
1. Personal values, worldview and experiences
2. Use of information technology
3. Tenure of service and strategy execution
4. Challenging experience
5. Weaknesses in the regulatory framework
6. Effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management
7. Operational dynamism and opportunities in the industry

-
8. Change management and resistance to change
 9. Importing petroleum products
 10. Management and leadership styles
 11. Policy and legal framework
 12. Corruption
 13. Infrastructure
 14. Performance management
 15. The need to improve strategy execution
-

The emergence of these themes leads to the thematic map as in Fig. 3:

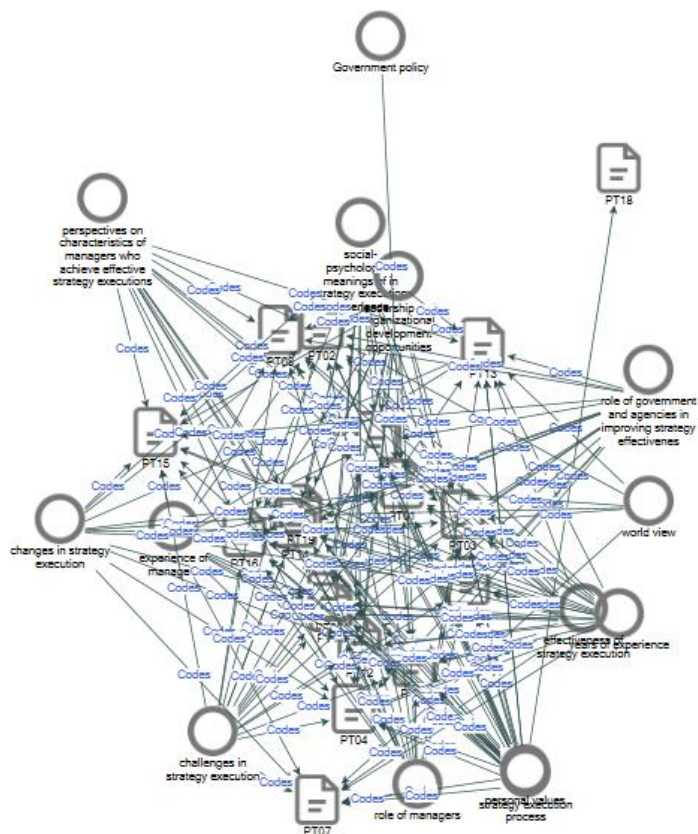


Fig. 3:

*Theme map showing the pattern of the final themes emergence from the Nvivo-12 data analyses (n=20). **Note:** Research data analysis.*

Evidence of Trustworthiness

To ensure good quality result from this study, I adhered to the issues of trustworthiness I described at the proposal stage in Chapter three, and implemented the procedures of rigor and methodical manner recommended in the relevant literature (Cypress, 2021; Norwell et al. 2017). The evidence of the trustworthiness of this study is a four dimension criteria (FDC): Credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability of the research findings and results (Guba & Lincoln, 2018, 1985).

I understood from the literature that every phenomenological research step has an inherent measure of validity (Rawat, 2014). I therefore outlined the steps I used for this study, and subsequently proceeded step-by-step to ensure evidences of credibility in each of these phenomenological research steps (Rawat, 2014).

Credibility

The credibility strategies I used for this study included: (a) prolonged engagement and persistent observation, (b) clarification, (c) triangulation, and (d) member-checking, as well as (e) thick description, and (f) external audit. I understood from the literature that every phenomenological research step has an inherent measure of validity/credibility (Rawat, 2014). I therefore outlined and described the steps I used for this study, and proceeded step-by-step to ensure evidences of credibility in each of these phenomenological research steps (Rawat, 2014; Tracy, 2019).

At the sampling stage, I used purposeful sampling technique, and drew samples in a logical manner, which included informed consent from each of the participants. I recruited participants from across the key regulatory agencies in the downstream

petroleum industry, which are located across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria; enable the researcher to remain impartial and enhance credibility of the research findings and results. I provided the participants with enough time to review the study information before deciding to participate. The characteristics of the sample reflected that of the population implying a reduction in sampling bias and increased credibility. The credibility increased because the sample consisted of experienced regulation professionals at senior and middle management levels.

At the data collection stage, I bracketed personal knowledge and experience of the phenomenon of strategy execution and regulatory management in the downstream petroleum industry and avoided personal bias. The nature of the interview questions could not allow biased responses. I provided a written declaration that the researcher is a planning officer in one of the regulatory agencies in the downstream petroleum industry, which is a different role from this study and the professional roles of the research participants. This declaration is an acceptable and good practice approach to managing any potential conflict of interest in a study; elicit trust without compromising integrity and trustworthiness of the study (Dorfler & Stierand, 2020).

I used interview protocol to collect data from the research participants based on informed consent obtained either through telephone or email exchanges with each of the participants. I exercised data triangulation through collecting experiential interview data from the senior and middle management across two regulatory agencies located across six geopolitical, as well as databank and publication reviews. I used member-checking to validate transcribed interview, which was a sure protection against conflict of interest and

relationship risk; leading to an enhanced credibility of research results. At the stage of data analysis, I selected themes as they emerged from the data using the exact words or expressions the participants used in their responses rather than exercising personal discretion. The analysis of participants' responses revealed patterns of perceptions about strategy execution and regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, and the inherent overriding politics. The data transcriptions used the exact words or expressions the participants have used. I carried out eidetic reduction to determine the essences of the study in an unbiased manner.

Additional steps I took to ensure credibility of the study results include (a) extended participation, (b) consultation of appropriate documents, (c) peer debriefing, (d) continuous observation, (e) triangulation, (f) thick description of phenomenon, and (g) use of a well-established research method.

Transferability

To ensure the transferability of this study, I described the context and the underlying assumptions for the study so as to facilitate informed judgment in generalizing and transferring the results to other contexts and settings. The users of the study result will be able to apply the result of this study to their particular circumstances and situations. I ensured transferability through thick description of the phenomenon under study (Trochim, 2016; Universal Teacher, 2019). I described (a) the study context, (b) key assumptions, (c) the nature and number of participants, (d) techniques used in collecting data, (e) the length and number data collection (interview) sessions, and (f) the length of time taken to accumulate data (Universal Teacher, 2019).

Dependability

To ensure dependability, I implemented the consistency strategies I described in Chapter three with some necessary adjustments to eliminate doubt. Dependability is the qualitative research counterpart to reliability, and refers to the consistency of data in leading to the same conclusions if one repeats the study using the same subject matter or within a similar context (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The need to establish dependability is that the procedure for conducting a particular research should be consistent across time, researchers, and techniques of analysis (Forero et al. 2018). This consistency factor implies that the researcher must make the procedure explicit to allow it to be replicated whenever possible (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

I kept audit trails and used source triangulation of data. I monitored how the research evolved and kept chronological record of the research activities and processes. I also kept analytic memos and documented the classifications and coding process. I am keeping the collected data in a safe custody for a period of five years after which I will destroy all the data. I will store documents in a locked file cabinet in my home. I stored the electronic files on a password-protected computer and backed up on a password-protected hard drive. The implication of storing and preserving the data for five years is that it will be available for use in verifying the consistency of data with the research method in future.

Conformability

Conformability is to a qualitative inquiry what objectivity is to a quantitative research. Scholars have acknowledged that researchers are likely to have some

background, opinion, and professional experiences of the research phenomenon that will result in personal values and biases affecting the data collection and interpretation of the study if not properly checked (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The thinking behind the emphasis on conformability is that the quality of data informs the integrity of the research findings. This thinking implies that the research must properly align the data collection, data analysis, and research findings so that the users of the research report will confirm the study as adequate (Halkier, 2012).

To implement conformability of the findings of this study, I maintained a neutral and an open mindset throughout the data collection (email interview) and analysis stages, which helped to eliminate preconceived ideas and minimized bias (Patton, 2016). Some participants commented that the data collection instrument I used based on 10-point semi-structured open-ended questions, and research participants drawn from across the two regulatory agencies under the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry were adequate for the study.

I applied the principles of reflexivity, epoch and bracketing, and thick descriptions to maintain consistent strategies for each of the interviews, and situated my interpretation of data within participants' perspectives, experiences, and context of the study. I provided enough information at the report writing stage for the use and better understanding of the research audience. I returned the transcript to each participant for review, accuracy and adequacy check as well as information sharing on the meaning and essences of strategy execution and regulatory management as the phenomenon under

study. The reflective nature of a phenomenological inquiry yields the essence of conformability of the research results (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Moustakas, 1994).

Study Results

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Abuja, Nigeria. The overarching research question (RQ) for this study was: “how do managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources describe their lived experiences of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria?” There were three sub-questions (SQ) as follows:

- ***SQ1***: How do Managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources describe their lived experiences of strategy execution for the downstream petroleum industry?
- ***SQ2***: How can the manager’s experience of strategy execution help to improve the prospect of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?
- ***SQ3***: How can the Government and downstream petroleum market operators improve the prospect of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the industry?

I broke down the three research questions into ten (10) semi-formal open-ended interview questions to guide the email conversations with individual research participants; elicited data in form of experiences, perspectives, motivations, and their meanings. In this section, I have addressed the overarching research question through

each of the sub-questions (SQ1-SQ3), and the interview questions. I discussed the 15 final themes along the sub questions (Table 6) as relevant to the purpose of the study.

Table 6

Emerging Final Themes along the Research Questions

Code	Final Themes	Research Questions (SQ1-SQ3)	Participants Percentage (%)
001	Personal values, worldview and experiences	SQ1	100
002	Use of information technology	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
003	Tenure of service and strategy execution	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
004	Challenging experience	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
005	Weaknesses in the regulatory framework	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
006	Effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
007	Operational dynamism and opportunities in the industry	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
008	Change process and resistance to change	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
009	Importing petroleum products	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
010	Management and leadership styles	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
011	Policy and legal framework	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
012	Corruption	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100
013	Infrastructure	SQ3,	100
014	Performance management	SQ3, SQ2, SQ3	100
015	The need to improve strategy execution Process	SQ1, SQ2, SQ3	100

Note: *Researcher's Nvivo-12 thematic analysis of interview transcripts*

The pattern of these theme emergences is as shown in the relevant theme map in Fig. 4.

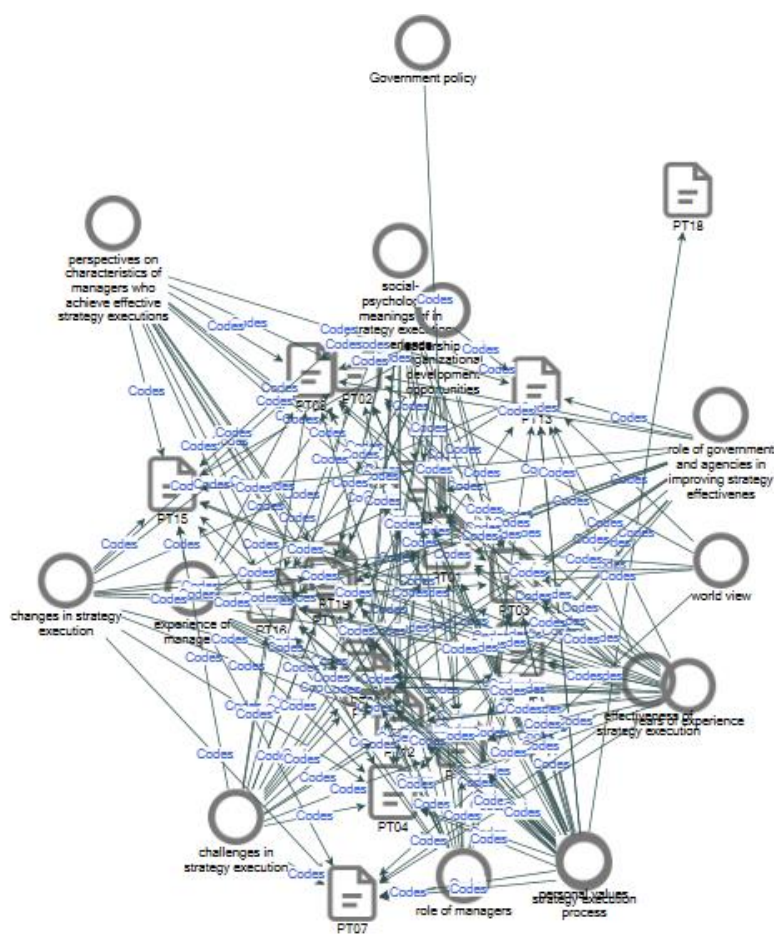


Fig. 4: Theme map showing the pattern of the final themes emergence from the Nvivo-12 data analyses of the collected interview transcripts ($n=20$) for the qualitative phenomenological study of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI.
Note: Research data analysis.

The thematic map clearly outlines the interrelationships among the thematic nodes captured from the interview transcripts of various participants. In this regard, a high number of lines emerging from a given thematic node are indicative of the relevance of that theme to the strategy execution environment in the Nigerian petroleum industry. The 15 final emerging themes were used for the data analysis.

Theme 001: Personal values, worldview, and experiences

The personal values, worldview and experiences emerged as one critical aspect relating to successful strategy execution and realization of organizational effectiveness in regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry (NDPI). The thematic analysis of data revealed that the participants' personal values with regard to their skills, past experiences, professional relationship, and training they received played a significant role in the effective execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry; enabling better understanding, discipline/ethical behavior and control in the execution process. The data analysis showed that the research participants were value-driven, goal-oriented, and committed to a disciplined understanding of strategy execution and organizational effectiveness in the regulatory management of the NDPI. Their goals were to make the desired administrative and development impact through executing strategies to achieve the expected regulatory management output leading to outcome. The participants appeared to have drawn intrinsic motivations or inspirations from the following specific personal values and worldviews:

- ❖ Good education at local and international levels (PT02)
- ❖ Human resources development (knowledge and skills update through training and retraining) (PT08, PT18)
- ❖ Optimal use of human resources and dignity of every personnel (PT08, PT18)
- ❖ Customer/stakeholder focus
- ❖ Quality products and services (PT08)
- ❖ Making good use of technology (PT08)
- ❖ Adherence to work ethics (PT04)

- ❖ Application of strategy mix (PT09)
- ❖ Strategic thinking, planning and implementation with control (PT01, PT03)
- ❖ Information retrieval and use of information resources
- ❖ Integrity, honesty, and transparency (PT19)
- ❖ Disciplined commitment to task and timeline (PT12, PT11, PT19)
- ❖ Acceptance of innovations and enterprise (PT10)
- ❖ Professionalism
- ❖ Excellence (PT17)
- ❖ Open-mind (PT10)

The manager's personal values, worldview and experience connected control and execution to realize strategies in the downstream petroleum industry as revealed in the following responses:

PT02: "With regards to my personal value toward the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness is my Educational background and retraining received within and outside of my organization overtime while on worldview is the seminars, conferences and sister Agencies interactions."

PT08: "Organizational effectiveness is a business strategy designed to improve the efficiency of the company without reducing the quality of the products or services. The key to organizational effectiveness is using the right tools and strategies to accomplish a specific goal. From my own perspective, organizational strategy and effectiveness can be realized by making use of human resources,

focusing on education and growth, keeping the customers in mind, working on quality products and services, and making good use of technology.”

PT04: “Adherence to work ethics in the day-to-day discharge of duties, study updates, and media for information dissemination.”

PT05: “My personal values and world-view perspective on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness is such that I have been able to blend my personal principles with organizational work ethics by ensuring that my personal interest is subsumed in that of the organization and also ensure no conflict of interest or running at variance with the goals of the organization.”

PT09: “Through the application of strategy mix. That is, constant appraisal of set strategy with a view to ascertain its impact and outcome.”

PT17: “My personal values are hinged on the saying that ‘if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail’, which is in tandem with my world-view on the importance of strategy in achievement of excellence. Most countries over the world attribute the success of programs to proper strategy execution.”

PT12: “My personal value is that the right things need to be done at all times. In view of that, I believe that organizational strategies need to be clearly spelt out, communicated to the managers responsible for ensuring that the strategies are strictly executed according to stipulated timelines.”

PT13: “My personal values are hinged on the saying that ‘if you fail to plan, you are planning to fail’, which is in tandem with my world-view on the importance of strategy in achievement of excellence. Most countries over the world attribute the success of programs to proper strategy execution.”

PT18: “Human resources ‘capabilities must be maximized by being mindful of the dignity of every personnel. The growth of the personnel involved in the actualization of the objectives of the organization is key to organizational effectiveness; growth that fulfills the value of each personnel.”

PT19: “My personal view has an objection impact on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness in that, values like integrity, honesty,

transparency and disciplined commitment to task and schedules affect one's attitude towards the goal of the organization.”

PT11: “The issues of trust, integrity, commitment and professionalism as part of my personal values help in organizational strategy with a view to ascertain its impact and outcome.”

PT10: “Being an open-minded person willing to accept innovations and enterprise. I open my arms to organizational strategies. I understand that the end most times justifies the means. There must be focus and commitment in the pursuit of organizational goal.”

These views underline the significance of the managers' personal values and their experiences with regard to successful execution of organizational strategies within the context of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The managers' personal values and worldviews had huge influences on their understanding of strategy execution and organizational effectiveness. Some of these personal values included the following:

Participants personal value for education and training, professional knowledge-sharing enabled a learning and ethical environment that supported strategic thinking, planning and implementation of plan. “Thus, personal values and world view help in the process of strategic thinking, planning and implementations.” (**PT01**). Highly successful organizations plan and study their markets, they formulate strategies, they communicate, they implement, they measure and they re-assess. There's no other prescription for success (**PT03**). Conversely, the history of the Nigerian petroleum industry, especially the downstream, included a negative experience of a long period of inadequate strategic thinking and limited resource value addition (**PT01**), which made the policy makers to

accord higher recognition and regard to foreign experts; leading to loss of national income (PT01).

Findings 1:

- a) Managers need to hold and promote personal values and worldviews that support the realization of organizational goals and Improvement in organizational productivity and performance.
- b) Training received helped in shaping their personal values and worldviews, aligning it with the organizational deliverable priority goals.
- c) The elements of personal values and worldviews of the research participants were among the key priority goals or performance pillars of government for the industry.
- d) Personal values and worldviews informed the perspectives and understanding regarding strategy execution and regulatory effectiveness in the downstream petroleum industry. The analysis showed that the participants' personal values, worldviews and experiences informed their strategic thinking, planning, and strategy execution.
- e) On the aggregate, participants have blended their personal principles with the values and goals of their organizations to achieve effective strategy execution in regulatory management.

Theme 002: Use of Information Technology

Another thematic area with regard to strategy execution in the regulatory management of NDPI was the use of information technology. The participants

experienced that the use of information technology has led to improvement in the areas of documentation, process scheduling, efficiency, and time management leading to cost-saving as revealed in the following comments:

PT16: “Regarding the operators, I have collaborated with other people in the department to improve the documentation and vessel scheduling process by encouraging the use of technology to transmit information, rather than the hard copies used many years ago. This has significantly reduced the process time and improved efficiency in the operations of the agency.”

PT02: “The process changes over the last three years due to introduction of process automation system.”

PT08: “They should also invest in technology. Technological tools play an essential role in the efficiency and effectiveness of a company both as office tools or regulatory tools.”

PT15: “The use of improved technology intervention with the data analysis software – Allegro Data processor. This has enabled data analysis and data processing procedures.”

PT06: “Leveraging on technology to improve efficiency and save cost... There is need for robust research data gathering for effective strategy formulation... Leveraging on the impact of technology cannot be over-emphasized.”

PT15: “The agency maintains a computerized electronic data bank using an in-house developed electronic data management system (EDMS) called *data analyzer*. The analyzer is used to capture relevant vessel receipt data for policy-making, record-keeping and administrative purposes. The EDMS essentially

consists of the following elements: Vessel information, product/inspection information, company details, and price information (Naira/litre). The Agency also uses a third party EDMS called Allegro EDMS to capture product distribution and truck-out data; its elements are: Truck-out date, product, source depot, mother vessel, refinery, meter ticket number, waybill number, quantity loaded, price, truck number, transporter, customer, destination, retail outlet, location, product supply, and truck-out distribution. Allegro EDMS gives a one-page view of petroleum products distribution across the length and breadth of Nigeria. A diligent analysis of both databases would present a clear picture of petroleum product supply and distribution at any time.”

The implication of these shared experiences is that the managers of regulatory agencies do leverage on the use of technology in the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry; it appears that the use of information technology has progressively replaced manual operations in the industry.

Another participant (**PT06**) shared an experience of evaluating the Nigerian petroleum downstream data supply chain, which included evaluating and identifying sources of human and systemic errors in the organization’s data, highlight methods that can be adapted to mitigate the inaccuracies in data collation, and propose solution on how data collation and management can be enhanced to increase attached to the organization’s data. The report of the evaluation showed that the Nigerian downstream petroleum has a 7-stage data life cycle as follows:

- ❖ Stage 1: Data generation and collection. Here, data is a set of values (qualitative or quantitative variables) collected through monitoring and observation
- ❖ Stage 2: Processing in a table format using Microsoft Excel, and cloud-EDMS (for data cleaning and validation of columns)
- ❖ Stage 3: Storage; using hard drive (internal and external), cloud-based enterprise data management system EDMS, digital archiving server, and data analyzer server
- ❖ Stage 4: Data management; using Microsoft excel and cloud-based EDMS
- ❖ Stage 5: Analysis in a descriptive format
- ❖ Stage 6: Visualization; using Microsoft excel tools (Graphs, charts, and tables)
- ❖ Stage 7: Interpretation; Stock monitoring, product redistribution, policy formulation, planning, day sufficiency, and decision-making

The participant identified the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Nigerian downstream petroleum data management system:

- a. **Strengths:** The strengths include a robust database that covers most of the critical areas of the Nigerian downstream subsector of the petroleum industry; staff strength that covers the totality of downstream reception facilities; reliable historical data; primary data source; and well trained and motivated staff.

- b. **Weaknesses:** Underutilization of available IT and analytic tool for data gathering, analysis and reporting; inadequate data integrity check mechanism; insufficient data recovery plan; and absence of remote back up service for disaster recovery.
- c. **Opportunities:** Improved revenue generation; research and development; improved industry/sectorial data hub; improved business decision-making for stake holders; establishment of data portal/software applications; and predictive and prescriptive data analysis
- d. **Threats:** Competition from sister agencies; trust challenge, and data pilfering.

The participant reported the findings of the evaluation as follows:

- ✚ Absence of integrated end-to-end data management platform
- ✚ Fragmented storage system
- ✚ Manual data capturing
- ✚ Inadequate data governance structure
- ✚ Partial column validation and weak quality checks
- ✚ Limited data analysis, KPIs and visualization
- ✚ No identified data model.

The participant made the following recommendations:

- ❖ Expand the metadata in the cloud-based EDMS to include stocks, Jetties, pipeline, refinery production, marine data, and product pricing.
- ❖ Develop detailed data governance
- ❖ Increase the validation of columns at the depot and on EDMS

- ❖ Develop agreed KPI reporting dashboard for depots, area and zonal offices.
Establish all-encompassing KPI reporting for different levels and views
- ❖ Improve data analysis to include descriptive, predictive, and prescriptive at the depot, area and zonal offices.
- ❖ Develop data portal with embedded business intelligence tools
- ❖ Synergy of operations within the area, zones, and head office as well as amongst the sister agencies
- ❖ Periodic staff capacity building on data analysis with excel power Bi and Azure Machine learning
- ❖ Commence the storage of data on one-drive cloud facility
- ❖ Remote data back-up for disaster recovery and business continuity.

Findings 2:

- The participants experienced that the use of information technology in the regulatory management of the NDPI has led to improvement in process scheduling and documentation as well as time management; resulting in cost-saving, operational efficiency and effectiveness
- Based on these remarks, information technology is one of the key drivers of successful execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. Strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry is information technology driven based on the use of in-house and external electronic data management systems for data capture on product import and distribution respectively.

- The data storage system is fragmented due to inadequate data governance structure, and lack of integrated end-to-end data management platform, and all-encompassing KPI dashboard reporting for different levels of users
- There is need to ensure proper data backup for disaster recovery and business continuity
- There is the need to improve staff capacity building and ensure synergy of operations among sister agencies.

Theme 003: Tenure of Service and Experience of Strategy Execution

The analysis showed that participants' length of experiences in the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry were the same as their tenure of service /period of employment in the relevant regulatory agencies. The length of experiences ranged from 15 to 33 years, and the longer the tenure of service, the deeper the experience. The manager's tenure of service measured in terms of years of experience was one of the key factors that informed the execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. Some excerpts from the interview suggested how the tenure of service was instrumental in understanding strategy execution; pinpointing various points of nexus between tenure of service and strategy execution as noted below:

PT01: "The perspective is personal based on regulatory functions and expectations within my 32 years' experience; it is my own thinking. Let us go back to Government policy in the oil and gas industry; whatever regulatory strategy adopted would aim at effectively realizing government policies. Going back to the history of oil in Nigeria, Government was initially docile. Later, government realized it was giving out too much wealth. In the 1970s government interest was in establishing policies and collecting royalties. However, in late 70s government showed more interest and established NNPC, and other Subsidiaries. The Petroleum Inspectorate (PI) was set up as the statutory monitoring agency for the petroleum industry. Perceptively, a mistake was made: A regulatory body,

Petroleum inspectorate was placed under a player, NNPC. The core function of the Petroleum Inspectorate was to see to the accurate implementation of government policies by all operators in the industry including NNPC, map out policies, goals and strategies to collect government revenue. The NNPC, on the other hand, was an operating arm of government. People started seeing the loophole, and advised Government to excise the Petroleum Inspectorate from NNPC. Government heeded this advice, but unfortunately placed the Petroleum Inspectorate under the supervising Ministry instead of being on its own as an autonomous regulatory institution. Since 1988, the name of Petroleum Inspectorate was changed to Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR).”

PT07: “For about 15years I have been involved directly or indirectly in managing the Strategy execution process in PPPRA. Change is a process that brings about situations and conditions that are different from already existing ones. Change is the process of moving from a rather seemingly unpleasant state to a more desirable position.”

PT04: “The strategy is yielding success via eradication of product scarcity and other vices such as delivery of off spec products. More need to be done to improve and develop other areas of transport systems (such as rail and pipe line) to enable consumers assess products easier. Its success factor is the availability of products nationwide.”

PT19: “I have been a regulator for 17 years. The experience can only be peculiar to Nigeria where results are hardly achieved. Most projects are jettisoned underway due to socio-political interests. This is the reason why full liberalization of petroleum products is yet to be achieved.”

PT16: “About six years thereabout and I must tell you the experience has been one of mixed feelings. There are times you feel so good you have everything under control and by the next minute, you become so overwhelmed with goals that seem insurmountable. The downstream operation is very dynamic and with a

good number of players who know their onions and a few more that operate in the sector at short intervals during the course of the year. Because of the different information and knowledge these groups of people have, you have to always deploy strategies that help them understand their obligations in the sector.”

PT03: “8years. Not very progressive even in the achievement of seemingly low hanging fruits. There’s a huge misunderstanding of what strategy is and its use to the organization.”

These and other similar views from the respondents provided evidence of why their shared experiences of working in the downstream petroleum industry can serve as a reliable basis to understand the reality and evaluate the practice and effectiveness of strategy execution in the industry. The data analysis revealed both the positive/interesting experience of the participants and their negative/unpleasant experiences.

Finding No. 3:

- ❖ Senior and middle managers interviewed shared their positive and negative experiences of the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry. Negative experiences were notable errors or mistakes in policy and strategy formulation and implementation actions. Examples of negative experiences include: Abandonment of projects leading to inability to realize policy objectives, and Government placed the petroleum inspectorate (which was an industry regulator) under the NNPC, an operator in the industry, instead of allowing institutional autonomy to the regulator. Conversely, positive experiences are policy and strategy formulation and implementation actions that aimed at

effectively realizing government objectives or moving from an unpleasant to desirable state.

- ❖ Regulatory institutions for the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry was not allowed to operate as autonomous agencies; leading to political interferences.
- ❖ There are different levels of knowledge and awareness among stakeholders and operators in spite of the huge volume of information available in the industry and this has implications on the strategy execution including the development of education and public awareness programs.

Theme 004: Challenges of Strategy execution

Challenges associated with strategy execution in the regulatory environment of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry emerged as yet another thematic area relating to the study, and these challenges are many. The following excerpts from the participants' responses were evidences of the challenges:

PT04: "Government intervention and policies, non-compliance of some stakeholders with the norms setting up the industry, Forex non accessibility to marketers, etc."

PT18: "Strategy execution teams in Government Agencies are often plagued with the bureaucratic processes and procedures which cripples the efforts of Managers and members of the team."

PT02: "The main challenge for effective strategy execution is the frequent change of leadership at all level (Ministerial/head of MDA's/Departmental head/supervisor)."

PT08: "In most developed countries of the world, the petroleum industry is regulated by a single regulator... But this is not the case for the petroleum industry. There are so many regulators with overlapping functions. Marketers and

consumers of petroleum products are sometimes confused as to whom to channel their complaints. There is no good customer/consumer feedback mechanism for them to report a problem and even if there are, they are not effective, that is why consumers sometimes don't have confidence in any of the regulators. They hardly get justice when they are cheated. There are usually lots of agitation between the marketers and regulatory agencies.

PT09: "External factor has been a major challenge to my organization in area of policy inconsistent by government which has weakened our autonomy as a regulator. Secondly, the non-passage of the nation's oil and gas legal framework known as the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) into law by the Nigerian National Assembly for about two decades has huge negative impact to downstream petroleum subsector operations."

PT020: "Challenges are: (a) Social Resistances, (b) Unstable Global Pricing Environment, (c) Socio-political and economic resistance (d) Welfare concerns, (e) Political instability (e) Macro and micro economic indicators, (f) Forex rates, and (h) Inadequate local refining capacity."

PT11: "The challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry is the non-passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), a functional law that needs to meet international best practices relating to the oil and gas industry. Furthermore, the labor unions have mounted a strong opposition to transiting to the best practices as enumerated above as a result of dilapidated road infrastructure... The prevalence of the imbalance in relationship between the Oil Marketing Companies and consumers has led to exploitations with cases of adulterated products, under discharge at

retail outlets, payment above regulated pump prices, products diversion by marketers, hidden charges by depot operators to off-takers etc.”

PT08: “The inability of our refinery to work at full capacity has been another challenge of the downstream petroleum industry. This has resulted to importation of petroleum products at the international market price thereby pushing up the landing cost as well as the expected open market price (OMP) at the filling station. There are lots of other challenges which include volatility of oil prices, obsolete laws and regulation, pipeline vandalism, corruption and lack of government funding. Also, lack of government will to pass the PIB.”

PT16: “Like I said earlier during the interview, the Nigerian downstream petroleum sector is a dynamic one with players of diverse interests. Managing all these challenges in a country where the external forces (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) have significant impact on policies of the Agency as well as the investment plans of the players is not an easy job. For example, the deregulation of the sector has been impacted by the dwindling price of crude oil and as a consequence, refined products in the last two years as a result of global political tensions and more recently in the last year, the pandemic caused by Covid-19. Despite all efforts of government to make the sector self-sustaining, it has been impossible to convince operators to invest in the importation of petroleum products; also, the uncertainty in the foreign exchange market in

Nigeria which is unpredictable has had a negative effect in the execution of strategies by the Agency.”

PT13: “There are several challenges, which include but not limited to:

- a. Interference from government; lack of autonomy even with a valid mandate as enshrined in the establishment Act
- b. Market fundamentals/market forces influenced by the international market
- c. Lack of definite strategic consistent policies guiding the downstream.”

PT05: “The challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry have been that of thinly veiled policy summersault, especially in area of partial/complete subsidy removal by the Federal Government of Nigeria.”

PT06: “Stakeholder Management for ownership of the strategic initiatives; inadequate funding; bottlenecks in the extant laws; and Limited expert knowledge matter.”

PT03: “Strategy execution is not well defined as there’s no big picture drawn. Departments and sub department/units plan and achieve certain goals without recourse to how it can fully support the system. The measurements of these goals are flawed and seem to focus on getting through routine functions as achievements ... Institutions in the downstream regulatory space have lost sight of their mission and vision. Hence, there are no properly defined strategies to get the organization to where it needs to be. While this may not be unique to the

downstream, the right kind of leadership in these organizations can have a turnaround effect towards recalibration of the organization's goal or purpose."

PT04: "Near mission impossible sometimes resulted from: Resistance in upward review of charges and levies resulting to union unrest through industrial action; incessant community agitation as result of acclaimed suffered negligence on the side of the Government; non harmonization and adherence to government approved bench mark products prices by marketers; marketers agitation over forex inaccessibility; perennial artificial product scarcity, etc."

PT20: "The strategies were quite adequate, but the implementations were lacking."

These comments were clear indicators that, among other challenges experienced in the strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry included inconsistencies and inadequacies in government policies, non-compliance of some stakeholders as well as foreign exchange variability and non-accessibility to foreign markets. This therefore implies that stakeholders such as the government of Nigeria need to put in place measures aimed at providing a more conducive working environment to enable successful strategy execution.

Findings 4:

- ✚ There are lots of challenges from the government, operators and other stakeholders facing strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry

- ✚ There seems to be no consistent/enduring strategic policies guiding the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry due to constant policy summersaults
- ✚ The Federal government of Nigeria has seemingly not taken a firm stand on the removal of subsidies and full deregulation of the downstream petroleum market in spite of legislations; it appears to be dilating between partial and complete removal of subsidy
- ✚ Trends in the global economy and international oil and gas market including the cost of crude oil and covid-19 pandemic affect the market fundamentals and the supply and distribution of petroleum products in Nigeria
- ✚ The Nigerian business environments appear not to be conducive for local and foreign investments in the downstream petroleum market.
- ✚ Inadequate regulatory compliance
- ✚ The strategy does not adequately support the system; Lack of well-defined strategy that focuses on the big-picture rather than routine functions
- ✚ Strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry does often attract social and political resistances.

Theme 005: Weaknesses in the Regulatory Framework

Analysis of the findings revealed a number of inherent weaknesses with regards to regulatory framework. This is in accordance with various responses from the interviewees including:

PT12: “Government’s quest to be politically correct at all times affects effective strategy execution in regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. This is not sustainable as it comes at a very high cost.”

PT18: “The downstream petroleum industry is governed by a weak regulatory framework so much so that strategic implementation of organizational inputs is lopsided and hence has not been enough to furnish the needs of Nigerians. The monopoly status of NNPC is a major loophole that will not enable strategic growth in the sector... Strategy execution teams in government agencies are often plagued with the bureaucratic processes and procedures which cripple the efforts of managers and members of the team.”

PT18: “Weak legislation due to the interference of personal interests of legislators. Lack of proper job alignment to strategy is also a major challenge. Personnel’s’ skills must match the project in question; poor communication skills and information dissemination amongst the work force.”

Moreover, the participants gave additional misgivings with regard to the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the downstream.

This is evidenced in the following remarks given by one of the respondents:

PT13: “Strategy execution in the regulatory management of the downstream has not been very effective because of some of the factors listed in No. 4 (response to the Interview question No. 4). In order to achieve any level of sustainable success, these inimical factors must be addressed.”

Finding 5:

- ❖ There are a number of inherent weaknesses in the regulatory framework that are affecting strategy execution and organizational effectiveness in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.
- ❖ These inimical factors must be addressed before strategy execution in regulatory management can be effective.

Theme 006: Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in Regulatory Management

The effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management emerged as yet another thematic area during the analysis of the codes captured from the interview transcripts. In this regard, some of the participants provided positive responses with regard to how effective strategy execution and the regulatory management have been as evidenced in the following excerpts:

PT13: “Strategy execution in the regulatory management of the downstream has not been very effective because of some of the factors listed in No. 4 above. In order to achieve any level of sustainable success, these inimical factors must be addressed.”

PT03: “Institutions in the downstream regulatory space have lost sight of their mission and vision. Hence, there are no properly defined strategies to get the organization to where it needs to be. While this may not be unique to the downstream, the right kind of leadership in these organizations can have a turnaround effect towards recalibration of the organization’s goal or purpose.”

PT03: “Strategy execution is not well defined as there’s no big picture drawn. Departments and sub department/units plan and achieve certain goals without recourse to how it can fully support the system. The measurements of these goals are flawed and seem to focus on getting through routine functions as achievements...To a small extent, stakeholders needs have lent to the success of strategy execution in the downstream. In this case, the Nigerian populace as well as market operators. The availability of access to leaders- through social media has meant that the complaints of the populace with regards to their expectations of the downstream has somewhat played a part.”

PT05: “The challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry have been that of thinly veiled policy summersault, especially in area of partial/complete subsidy removal by the Federal Government of Nigeria.”

PT14: My perception of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry is that it is effective, though there are certain things the government ought to put in place. It is sustainable if, and only if, the government stops politicizing issues relating to the execution. The success will depend largely on all the stakeholders in the industry.

PT03: “Major successes to strategy execution in the regulation of the Nigerian downstream have been largely leadership oriented. The progress or regression

was mostly due to the people at the helms of affair. Their knowledge and drive or lack of it defined the changes with regards to strategy execution in the sector.”

PT08: “There has not been an effective regulation in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. Firstly, there are too many regulators performing overlapping functions. The regulators themselves are also not well equipped with the authority to perform their functions. Secondly, the major players in the industry like the NNPC, Major Marketers, MOMAN etc. don’t want anyone to dictate to them how to do their operation. This leads to a lot of agitation between the regulators and the marketers. Inability to effectively regulate the downstream has given room to lots of sharp practices. Sharp practices are engagement activities by depots and retail outlet workers to make abnormal profits to the detriment of consumers, such as under-measuring of products, collecting extra money before sales, and pumping air into vehicles instead of fuel products.”

On the other hand, some participants expressed lack of confidence in terms of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory environment as evidenced in the following remarks:

PT18: “The downstream petroleum industry is governed by a weak regulatory framework so much so that strategic implementation of organizational inputs is lopsided and hence has not been enough to furnish the needs of Nigerians. The Monopoly status of NNPC is a major loophole that will not enable strategic growth in the sector.”

Based on these lived experiences in strategy execution, it is evident that the regulatory management is faced with challenges in the execution of strategies hence providing justification for additional mechanisms aimed at ensuring a smooth working environment towards successful execution of strategies.

Finding 6:

- ✚ The Nigerian downstream petroleum industry is facing challenges in the execution of regulatory strategies
- ✚ This qualitative phenomenological data analysis has revealed that carrying out strategy execution within a weak and inappropriate regulatory framework can hinder the capacity of regulatory agencies to ensure that regulations and regulatory management are efficient and effective (IP3, 2018).

Theme 007: Operational dynamism and opportunities in the industry.

The question of operational dynamism and opportunities in the oil industry emerged during data analysis of the interview transcripts, and with the participants recognizing the industry as very dynamic. The following remarks portray this theme:

PT16: “The downstream operation is very dynamic and with a good number of players who know their onions and a few more that operate in the sector at short intervals during the course of the year. Because of the different information and knowledge these groups of people have, you have to always deploy strategies that help them understand their obligations in the sector.”

PT01: “In the petroleum industry, you talk of putting value to activity and this value is calculated in dollars. The industry is dynamic; the government strategy should be dynamic in line with the global reality.”

PT05: “The leadership and organizational development opportunities I see emerging from my experience of strategy execution is enormous, that is if the authority is willing to collaborate with/and tap from my experience which no one can buy in the market/industry. No doubt, I have a lot to give back to the industry in particular and the country as a whole in general.”

PT12: Strategy execution of regulatory management has improved my ability to face and surmount challenges in areas of coordination of human and material resources to achieve organizational goals. I am now a more confident person both in and out of the office. I now aspire to develop more capacity to handle more daunting tasks... Having understood the essence of strategy execution, I can now articulate effective strategies as the need arises.”

PT01: “There are a lot of opportunities emerging; things that will benefit all and sundry: the economy, government, individuals, etc., but there are challenges. For instance, Enugu Depot and it’s environ was a beehive of activities when the depot was set up. There was a lot of trickling down effects to informal sector activities such as food hawkers, pure water sellers, and so on; leading to economic and social growth, things were happening.”

PT01: “Indigenous companies are still less than major Operators; Multinational Companies still have domination in terms of volume of production. However, indigenes are also making a lot of investments and progress in the industry. Indigenes have a lot of prospects; they need to pull resources together, partnership with foreign financiers etc.”

PT08: “From the experience of strategy execution, I should be able to lead others by example by formulating policies and procedures; a process that provides a structured approach to clarifying, communicating, implementing and managing strategy. The goal here is to ensure the organization focuses on developing high value capabilities and making investment that optimize values.”

These and other similar remarks provide evidence of the opportunities inherent in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria.

Finding 7:

- ❖ There are a lot of investment and capacity building opportunities to the Nigerian economy, and with trickling down effect to the informal sector, emerging through the strategy execution in the regulatory management of NDPI.
- ❖ Indigenous companies in the NDPI are making progress, and have a lot of prospects including partnership opportunities with foreign financiers.
- ❖ Strategy execution in NDPI has promoted a goal-oriented and structured approach to managing strategies with a view to developing high value capabilities and making investments that optimize values.

Theme 008: Change Process and Resistance to Change.

The process of managing change was yet another critical aspect that was revealed from the interviews in regard to execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. The participants shared their experiences of how they are managing change process and resistance to change as regulators in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry with the purpose of taking the industry from a less desirable to a more desirable state. The following remarks from the participants substantiate their experience and understanding of change process:

PT07: “Strategic management is a continuous process that appraises the business and industries in which the organization is involved, its competitors; and fixes goals to meet all the present and future potential competitors and then reassesses each strategy. The process of change we adopted is in three phases

Phase 1: .Change management planning (Unfreezing Phase)

Phase 2: Manage the actual change (implementation

Forming a Guiding Coalition

Active communication

Empowering Employees

Phase 3: Reinforce the change (Refreezing change)

In the refreezing phase, old habits, values, traditions, attitudes and mindsets are permanently replaced. New behavior, values and attitudes are instilled. This phase involves institutionalizing the new changes”.

Resistance to change is yet another impediment in the execution of strategy in the Nigerian downstream oil industry. This is in agreement with remarks such as: “resistance to change.”(PT07). Moreover, another manager gave the following remarks:

PT07: “Change is a process that brings about situation and conditions that are different from already existing ones Change is the process of moving from a rather seemingly unpleasant state to a more desirable position... My role is managing resistance to change. There are six approaches for dealing with management resistance:

- A, Education and Communication
- B, Participation and Involvement
- C, Negotiation and Agreement
- D, Facilitation and Support
- E, Manipulation and Cooptation
- F, Explicit and Implicit Coercion.”

PT08: “There has not been an effective regulation in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. Firstly, there are too many regulators performing overlapping functions. The regulators themselves are also not well equipped with the authority to perform their functions. Secondly, the major players in the industry like the NNPC, Major Marketers, and MOMAN don’t want anyone to dictate to them how

to do their operation. This led to a lot of agitations between the regulators and the marketers.”

These comments provide evidence of why there has been slow uptake of change in organizations and overall strategy execution owing to resistance to the change management process in the oil industry. These remarks therefore provide justifications as to why there needs to be proper change management process that aims to successfully execute the strategies in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria.

Finding 8: The resistance to change (regulatory initiatives, innovations and guidelines). The resistance to change posed a great impediment to the execution of strategy, and justifies the need for proper change management process in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

Theme 009: Importing Petroleum Products

Yet another important romantic area during the analysis of the interview transcripts was the importation of petroleum Products as revealed in the following comments:

PT08: “Any petroleum marketer that wants to import petroleum products must be duly registered with the Department of Petroleum Resources and PPPRA. Such a marketer must obtain an import permit from PPPRA before products can be imported. When the products arrive on the shore of Nigeria waters, the marketer notifies (Notice of readiness) our office and also submits the vessel documents to us.”

PT08: “After discharge to depot tank farms, shore dip-off and calculations are done, confirm and signed by all parties represented. Based on the shore receipt figures, the agency advised the government to pay subsidy to the marketer so that the products can be sold to the public at the subsidized price. Over the last few years, things have changed. Government no longer pay subsidy as a result of deregulating the industry. Marketers bring in products by first obtaining Quantity Notification (QN), and sell the products based on the forces of demand and supply in line with the price band approved by the agency. Due to scarcity of foreign exchange, NNPC is now the major importer of petroleum products in Nigeria.”

PT08: “Over the last three years. Some of these roles have change due to the fact that we have moved from the era of Petroleum Support Fund (PSF) to partial and complete deregulation of the petroleum industry where the prices of petroleum products are being determine by the market forces of demand and supply.”

PT02: “The process was the establishments of “Standard Operating procedures” where by templates are designed and distributed to field officers with guidelines on how to generate the information needed from various Depot and operational offices. The process changes over the last three years due to introduction of process automation system.”

PT08: “The inability of our refinery to work at full capacity has been another challenge of the downstream petroleum industry. This has resulted in importation of petroleum products at the international market price thereby pushing up the

landing cost as well as the expected open market price (OMP) at the filling station.”

PT04: “Receiving of vessels and monitoring of truck outs. Time management in circulation of information on vessel arrival, request for nomination, prompt sending of arrival and shore tank certificates, engagement of certified quantity surveyors, request for Port Health clearance and use of platforms and software.”

PT16: “... it is my responsibility to supervise cargo importation and products discharges/receipts into tanks at the various depots in the Lagos Zone, monitor the distribution of the products across the country as well as collate reports on these operations sent in by field officers deployed to the jetties and depots within the zone. Ensuring that laid down processes and procedures are followed in accordance with international best practices. In the last couple of years, my role even though has not changed significantly, I have however continued to help my team members achieve their optimum by being a charismatic team lead. Regarding the operators, I have collaborated with other people in the department to improve the documentation and vessel scheduling process by encouraging the use of technology to transmit information, rather than the hard copies used many years ago. This has significantly reduced the process time and improved efficiency in the operations of the Agency.”

PT04: “The strategies being put in place now that yield result include: the use of certified cargo surveyors to superintend over vessel arrival and shore tank operations (in adherence to the best international standard practice in the

petroleum industry); marketers expression of interest to the Agency to be part of petroleum products importers in Nigeria; Agency's allocation of quarterly QN to eligible Marketers for petroleum product importation; marketers annual registration renewal with the Agency, thus indicating their commitment and interest to continue; employment of administrative follow up on all received products (from request for surveyors' nomination, vessel arrival and shore tank operations to completion truck out) and, of course, deployment of staff to all the oil and gas installations nationwide for proper monitoring of other activities.”

Finding 9:

- ✚ Importation of petroleum products follows laid down processes and procedures, and adheres to the international standard practice/procedures in the petroleum industry.
- ✚ Regulatory managers collaborate to supervise cargo importation and products discharges/receipts into shore tanks at the various depots in the Lagos Zone, monitor the distribution of the products across the country as well as collate reports on these operations sent in by field officers deployed to the jetties and depots within the zone.
- ✚ Employ the services of independent cargo inspectors
- ✚ There are two subsidy regimes: The PSF and the NNPC over recovery.

Theme 010: Management and Leadership Styles

The thematic analysis of data has revealed that leadership was at the center of strategy execution; attributing the successful execution of strategies to the management and leadership styles. The following extracts from some of the participants' shared experiences revealed this theme:

PT11: "Leadership has a significant impact on the strategic management process. Everything rises and falls on leadership. Leadership helps to determine the vision and mission of an organization and facilitates the organization to execute effective strategies to achieve that vision."

PT16: "My experience of strategy execution has reiterated the importance of leadership, which must be situational at every single time. Leaders should be dynamic and use appropriate tools and techniques needed for different situations. Leadership styles for short-term goals may not necessarily be same as those of long-term goals."

PT15: "These are some of the leadership opportunities in my experience as part of a strategic execution team: it provides room for creativity and innovation, develop a value of excellence on the job, and good leadership practices."

PT04: "Based on experience: The success being recorded now, time-to-time review of strategies, team work spirit, training and forecasts will be the tools to achieve them."

PT08: "Leadership is a function of knowing yourself and having a vision that is well communicated in order to achieve organizational goal or objective... From

the experience of strategy execution, I should be able to lead others by example by formulating policies and procedures. A process that provide a structured approach to clarifying, communicating, implementing and managing strategy. The goal here is to ensure the organization focuses on developing high value capabilities and making investment that optimize values.”

PT13: “Strategy execution, if fully committed to, can lead to emergence of more budding leaders who will be given the right tools and footings they need and a solid foundation. This will ultimately cascade to others under them and inwardly a win-win for the organizational enhanced productivity. It will further ginger them to put in their best; knowing that their inputs, suggestions and efforts would be utilized and not be discarded as was the case.”

PT16: “The execution of strategy helps to measure individual abilities and competencies as well as collectively as a team on the job. This in turn helps to identify gaps and training needs arising from individual appraisals. Furthermore, it has helped to properly focus the initiative of the team towards achieving a common goal as defined by the strategy. Personally, it has helped me to understand individual differences and how to relate to team members based on their individual situations and needs.”

PT16: “Government and leaders of the regulatory Agencies need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events

draws from other countries experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria for likely and unforeseen circumstances. The fire brigade approach of responding to situations as they arise should be abolished because it is counterproductive.”

These comments from the research participants presented evidence of how the style of leadership the manager used seemed to have meaningful outcomes with regard to strategy execution in the NDPI. The implication of these shared experiences is that the adoption of a situational leadership style guaranties effective strategy execution.

Finding 10:

- ❖ Leadership and management is at the center of strategy execution, which is the essence of leadership
- ❖ The effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI depended on the leadership situation
- ❖ Some of the senior and middle managers interviewed have expressed faith in situational leadership as the best style for effective strategy execution.

Theme 011: Policy and Legal Framework

Data analysis shows that policy and legal framework were important determinants of successful strategy execution within the context of the Nigerian downstream oil sector. Policy formulation is a key determinant towards implementation of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. This theme flows from the following remark:

PT17: “The policy and legal framework alteration and summersault have been the major challenges exemplified by the prolonged non passage of the petroleum industry governing Bill (PIGB).”

PT15: “The downstream petroleum industry is governed by a weak regulatory framework so much so that strategy implementation of organizational inputs is lopsided and hence has not been enough to furnish the needs of Nigerians. The Monopoly status of NNPC is a major loophole that will not enable strategic growth in the sector.”

PT15: “Weak legislation due to the interference of personal interests of Legislators.”

PT01: “The policy is from the Government; one’s role is to dissect the policy and put it in phases: Short term, medium term, and long term.”

PT01: “Let us go back to Government policy in the oil and gas industry; whatever regulatory strategy adopted would aim at effectively realizing government policies. Going back to the history of oil in Nigeria, Government was initially docile. Later, government realized it was giving out too much wealth. In the 1970s government interest was in establishing policies and collecting royalties. However, in late 70s government showed more interest and established NNPC, and other Subsidiaries.”

PT01: “There are bottlenecks; The Petroleum industry bill (PIB) has for over 10 years been in the legislative system. It would have addressed some of the lapses in the industry.”

PT16: “The Nigerian downstream petroleum sector is a dynamic one with players of diverse interests. Managing all these challenges in a country where the external forces (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) have significant impact on policies of the Agency as well as the investment plans of the players is not an easy job. For example, the deregulation of the sector has been impacted by the dwindling price of crude oil and as a consequence, refined products in the last two years as a result of global political tensions and more recently in the last year, the pandemic caused by Covid-19. Despite all efforts of government to make the sector self-sustaining, it has been impossible to convince operators to invest in the importation of petroleum products; also, the uncertainty in the foreign exchange market in Nigeria which is unpredictable has had a negative effect in the execution of strategies by the Agency.”

On the basis of the foregoing remarks, policy framework therefore is an important determinant in the successful execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. The significance of policy framework in this context imply that the institutions tasked with drafting a policy framework need to come up with ways and means towards ensuring successful strategic execution in this industry. These and many other similar views provide evidence of why there needs to be proper policy and legal framework that provides an enabling

environment for the players in the oil industry in Nigeria to successfully execute strategies in the sector.

Finding 11:

- a) The Nigerian downstream petroleum industry has suffered a long history of misplaced government interests and priorities in the process of policy formulation and implementation for the sector; leading to loss of national income, and lack of institutional autonomy to regulatory agencies.
- b) The downstream petroleum industry has been operating under an inadequate and weak legal and regulatory framework while the process policy formulation and reform has been very slow and unstable; delaying progress in the industry.
- c) The role of senior and middle levels managers in the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry include the translation of government policies and institutional strategies into plans (short, medium, and long term) and operational guidelines/regulations for purpose of implementation/execution and compliance.

Theme 012: Corruption

Corruption is one of the barriers that hinder successful execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. This is substantiated by the following remarks from one of the managers:

PT20: “Like previously stated, Nigerian experience is marred by interests, political pressure and corruption. It leaves you with a sour experience. It is so sad

that after investing so much effort and strategy on a seemingly good course, some pressure groups will prevail on the government to step down the course.”

PT03: “Current trends leave me with the belief that not much would improve with regards to leadership and organizational development. People/staff have been formed on a non-existent strategy culture or a as- we- go-along type of survival.”

PT08: “Inability to effectively regulate the downstream has given room to lots of sharp practices. Sharp practices are engagement activities by depots and retail outlet workers to make abnormal profits to the detriment of consumers, such as under-measuring of products, collecting extra money before sales, and pumping air into vehicles instead of fuel products.”

Yet some other participants commented as follows:

PT20: “The experience can only expose you to understanding how to politic in a developing and corrupt society. Such leadership quality may not be viable in advanced society.”

PT01: “The issue here is that it is not all the policies that succeeded; the multinationals do things that favor them. Government operates 40:60 ratios. They go about these finances; the idea is that they always want to inflate. International market for oil and gas is a global thing. The question is do they keep to standard?”

PT01: “Suddenly, a lot of unpatriotic attitudes including pipeline vandals and crime rate increased, and many people could no longer make a living. There was a case of adulteration in 2013, and the truck was intercepted. We took and analyzed

the product sample and found it was not good for consumption. The Nigerian Civil Defense took up the case, and the case is still in court up to today. This has a lot of chain reactions including waste of time, money and other resources. There was no reason for such a case to linger in court for seven years.”

These comments provide evidence of how corruption has been one of the barriers to successful execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The corruption manifested in the form of delay or denial of justice, activities of cartel or dominant pressure groups against laudable government policies.

Finding 12: Corruption is one of the barriers to effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. This corruption flows from the individual’s self-interest, delay or outright denial of justice, and the activities of cartel or dominant pressure groups against laudable government policies.

Theme 013: Infrastructure

Infrastructure plays an important role in the successful execution of strategies within the context of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The concern of the managers interviewed included improving existing infrastructure and developing new ones such as the rail transport and pipeline systems; addressing the issues of dilapidated downstream petroleum infrastructure as well as advocacy for making infrastructure to operate on cost-reflective tariffs. The following comments from some of the participants were expressions of their concern on infrastructure development:

PT11: “Furthermore, the labor unions have mounted a strong opposition to transiting to the best practices as enumerated above as a result of dilapidated road infrastructure.”

PT04: “More need to be done to improve and develop other areas of transport systems (such as rail and pipe line) to enable consumers access products easier... deployment of staff to all the oil and gas installations nationwide for proper monitoring of other activities.”

PT01:“... educational facilities, hospitals roads etc should be established for the benefit of the host communities because whichever way you look at it, there are social and psychological aspects.”

PT: “Development of cost-reflective Tariffs for downstream infrastructures.”

PT01: “Vandalism of pipelines: Pipelines are vandalized because they are isolated in remote places. In some countries pipelines are in locations that have roads by the sides. Agencies can easily pass through the constructed roads and monitor the pipelines. Even in water ways, the navy can patrol. In Nigeria, nobody goes to the remote isolated locations to monitor the pipeline. Government can construct roads along the pipe line (not on the pipeline). Refinery: When Nigeria was planning for the refinery to be built, the car (Beetle) and Peugeot were mainly what we had. Today our roads are congested with cars that mean more consumption of PMS.

Government should have planned for the future; there were limited strategy or foresight in those days.”

These and other similar remarks on infrastructure justify the need for proper infrastructural development that aims to promote successful execution of strategies in the Nigerian petroleum industry.

Finding 13: The Nigerian downstream petroleum infrastructure is in a dilapidated state, and needs to be addressed. Improved standard of infrastructural development in the downstream petroleum subsector will help to improve strategy execution in the regulatory management of the industry.

Theme 014: Performance Management

The analysis of the research participants’ responses shows that performance management is an important factor in the achievement of successful strategy execution in the Nigerian downstream oil industry. Performance management, in the view of the participants, focused on improving the strategy execution process. The following remarks from some of the research participants evidenced the need to enhance performances in execution of strategy in the petroleum industry:

PT03: “My role has evolved from identifying trends to support strategy formulation to designing and communicating strategy and eventually to performance management.”

PT16: “It therefore makes it germane to recruit the right kind of people for the job, inspire and motivate them along their personal and collective needs and

measure their performance based on their abilities... To achieve effective strategic execution, managers should walk their talk to enlist trust and effective performance in their team members. Managers who show empathy on the job are many times more likely to inspire performance in their teams than those who are autocratic always, regardless of the situation. Coaching and mentoring by managers also helps to inspire confidence in team members.”

PT01: “They put in a lot of leadership, dedication, patriotism, and intellectual ability. Over the years, the Finance has been the greatest challenge but this has improved as well. Today leadership roles are assigned in Sections, Divisions, field offices and Zonal offices. Emphasis is now placed on Accountability, Responsibility, Ownership and performance. The policy of agency has been that the staff should be responsible and claim ownership. A lot of ownership and accountability is bestowed on the workers; they put in their best, knowing fully well that there are a ton and consequences.”

PT16: Planning and management are veritable tools to the achievement of goals and objectives of every organization. Executing strategies to fit the plans at achieving the goals therefore becomes very imperative. It is however very important that manager and their teams do not loose focus and therefore must be reminded constantly of the big picture through means adopted by the organization (pictures, meetings, symbols etc). Realistic, simple and relatable goals are very important so as to clear grey

areas and ambiguities. Managers must remember that the greatest resources are the employees, without which goals and strategies would remain as paper work.”

Based on the above comments, it is clear that managing performances is one of the key drivers of strategy execution and organizational effectiveness in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. Some of the managers interviewed underscored the need for improvement in the strategy execution process through the following recommendations:

PT06: “Improved and continuous stakeholders’ engagement, holistic scientific research methodology to enhance decision making, leveraging on technology to improve efficiency and save cost, engagement of seasoned communication experts to develop all-inclusive strategy, and proactive response to market dynamics.”

PT02: “The government and leaders of regulatory agencies can improve the effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management of the sector through drawing realistic strategic Planning of long term, medium term and short-term strategy with strong financial backing.”

PT13: “Harness their thoughts and position to the government on the need for the sector to be run like it is in units devoid of interference. Passage of the PIB where roles of all regulatory bodies are distinct with no overlapping functions for proper synergy.”

PT01: “The regulatory body started looking at how revenue can be generated from her activities. These necessitated to series of reviews, increase in revenue and effective and efficient performance that has characterized the regulatory agency up to date. The experience has been wonderful, informative, enriching, educative, responsive and satisfactory for being part of the Team that added value to the industry... Every strategy implementation involves both the operator and the regulatory agency in line with lay down guidelines and procedures. Finance and mapping strategy for regulating the industry have to be stepped up.”

PT16: “Government and leaders of the regulatory Agencies need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events draws from other countries experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria for likely and unforeseen circumstances. The fire brigade approach of responding to situations as they arise should be abolished because it is counterproductive.”

These and other similar views from the participants justify the need for a performance management culture to improve the process of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. The participants recognized that performance management involve the following activities: Responsibility and stewardship/accountability, exemplary leadership, effective communication and feedback mechanism, use of planning and implementation including case simulations and benchmarking, and focusing on the big picture as tools for achieving organizational goals

and objectives. Other performance management actions include working effectively with people, empathic communication, constant performance review, revenue generation, autonomy of regulatory institutions, and value addition to the industry, amongst others.

Finding 14:

- i. The research participants/managers identified the need to improve the process of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry
- ii. The research participants identified the roles of government and management of the regulatory agencies towards improving the strategy execution process, which include :
 - a. Strategy formulation and communication;
 - b. Recruit the right people for the job and motivate them;
 - c. Measure and reward performance using appropriate criteria;
 - d. Improved and continuous engagement with stakeholders;
 - e. Carry out research and development to enhance decision making;
 - f. Leveraging on technology to improve efficiency and save cost;
 - g. Proactive response to issues and changes at the market;
 - h. Produce realistic plans (short term, medium term, and long term) with adequate funding; and
 - i. Assign distinct roles to each institution without overlapping functions, but with cooperation and synergy.

- iii. Some of the research participants were fulfilled that their experiences in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry has added value to the industry.

Theme 015: The Need to Improve Strategy Execution Process

Managers/participants interviewed reviewed the strategy execution process in their organizations, and underscored the need to improve the process. The participants perceived in the areas of planning, which should be more realistic with fund back up. Furthermore, government should improve the quality of decision making through a proactive response to the market, research and development, leveraging technology, and the services of hands-on experts and consultants. To this end, the participants/managers made the following among other recommendations:

“Improved and continuous stakeholders’ engagement, holistic scientific research methodology to enhance decision making, leveraging on technology to improve efficiency and save cost, engagement of seasoned communication experts to develop all-inclusive strategy, and proactive response to market dynamics.”

“The government and leaders of regulatory agencies can improve the effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management of the sector through drawing realistic strategic Planning of long term, medium term and short-term strategy with strong financial backing”

“Harness their thoughts and position to the government on the need for the sector to be run like it is in units devoid of interference. Passage of the PIB where roles of all regulatory bodies are distinct with no overlapping functions for proper synergy.”

These and other similar views from the respondents justify the need for an improvement in the process of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. The strategy execution process borders around planning and implementation of plans using a blend of in-house team and external consultants, and leveraging on information and communication technology (ICT). The participants substantiated this with the following statements:

- ❖ **PT09:** “The process of executing strategy in my organization is to identify better strategic models for planning, visualize its implementation in conformity with its culture/values and monitor its various stages of implementation and outcome. Furthermore, we have been able to Measure various emerging processes or regime in the last three years. These are: a period Petroleum supply Fund (PSF) era. This period witness the subsidization of petroleum pricing products at pump price by government as a palliative measure for the commercial sector to keep inflation down; the second era was Appropriate Pricing Framework (APF), and the third era is Petroleum Products Commercial Framework (PPCF) which came to be in 2020. This is to allow market economic indicators to determine petroleum products prices (full deregulation). Through these eras, strategy process management aided the Agency to fit into the dynamics inherent in the petroleum industry to keep operators afloat.”
- ❖ **PT09:** “Through the application of strategic business and economic models around supply, distribution, and pricing while creating enabling environment for investment and return on investment for operators.”

- ❖ **PT06:** “The process of strategy execution resolves around blending of external consultants with in-house expert team to form strategy implementation team in the last three years. Though at the early stage the execution tend towards more external consultant.”
- ❖ **PT06:** “Good planning, prototyping execution, continuous improvement (Design Thinking methodology)...Improved and continuous stakeholders’ engagement
Holistic scientific research methodology to enhance decision making
Leveraging on technology to improve efficiency and save cost
Engagement of season communication expert to develop all-inclusive strategy
Proactive response to market dynamics
Build in-house expertise.”
- PT16:** “The Agency reviews its Strategic Management Plan yearly which is aligned with the vision and mission of the Agency. This summarily is to ensure effective and efficient distribution of petroleum products across the country, while ensuring that the operators in the sector enjoy reasonable returns on their investments. Strategy execution in the Agency in the last three years in the Agency has been quite intentional. There has been increased investment in the people (Staff of the Agency), particularly managers who are saddled with the responsibility of cascading the adopted strategies to their teams. Training and retraining of these managers have afforded them with the knowledge and exposure to effectively utilize resources (both man and material) at their disposal. There seems to be more devolution of powers from the centre to the various heads

of departments and zones to allow for quick intervention to arising situations which has yielded many positive results.”

PT16: “Planning and management are veritable tools to the achievement of goals and objectives of every organization. Executing strategies to fit the plans at achieving the goals therefore becomes very imperative. It is however very important that manager and their teams do not lose focus and therefore must be reminded constantly of the big picture through means adopted by the organization (pictures, meetings, symbols etc). Realistic, simple and relatable goals are very important so as to clear grey areas and ambiguities. Managers must remember that the greatest resources are the employees, without them goals and strategies would remain as paper work. It therefore makes it germane to recruit the right kind of people for the job, inspire and motivate them along their personal and collective needs and measure their performance based on their abilities.”

PT16: “Government and leaders of the regulatory Agencies need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events draws from other countries experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria for likely and unforeseen circumstances. The fire brigade approach of responding to situations as they arise should be abolished because it is counterproductive.”

PT18: “The use of improved technology intervention with the data analysis software – Allegro Data processor. This has enabled data analysis and data processing procedures.”

❖ **PT01:** “When Nigeria was planning for the refinery to be built, the car (Beetle) and Peugeot were mainly what we had. Today our roads are congested with cars; that means more consumption of PMS. Government should have planned for the future; there were limited strategy or foresight in those days. Rural Electrification Boards (R.E.Bs) was springing up here and there, and the Nigerian Electricity Power Authority (NEPA) was more effective then generating sets were rare. Today every family source of electricity is mainly generating set; another increase in PMS consumption. Government thinking should be proactive. Refinery capacity was built based on limited thinking or plan of those days.”

❖ **PT01:** “We have not been effective in planning for the future, product availability, and managing safety/security. I do not know what government will lose if they totally deregulated the downstream sector especially premium motor spirit (PMS). Market forces should be allowed to drive price, thus empowering the public to buy from most competitive and cost effective seller. Looking at it critically, there is something why government is still holding on. We now have a regime of lower and upper limits; monitored deregulation does not help.”

Finding 15: In the Nigerian downstream petroleum subsector, the country has not been effective in planning for the future: Refining capacity, product availability, managing

safety and security, and market regulatory framework. There was inadequate strategic thinking during the time government decided on the capacity of the refinery.

Summary

So far in Chapter 4 of this study, I have discussed the qualitative phenomenological data collection and analysis methods I used to explore the concept of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry (NDPI). I collected email interview data on the participants' lived experiences from a sample of 20 consenting senior and middle managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources (FMPR), Abuja using a 10-point semi-structured open-ended interview questions. I used the Nvivo-12 application software for analyzing data, and generated 15 final themes that are related to the research questions and conceptual framework.

The first research question sought to establish how managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources described their lived experiences of strategy execution for the downstream petroleum industry. One of the key areas of priority for the managers is to resolve challenges experienced during execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum industry. The managers were also emphatic on how their tenure of service at the industry has been useful and during the implementation of strategies. Furthermore, addressing weaknesses in the regulatory framework in the downstream petroleum industry is an important step towards realization of successful strategy execution in this context.

The question of effectiveness of strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry emerged as yet another important thematic area during the analysis of the interview transcripts; confirming the view that “it is not all policies that succeeded.” (PT01); leading to realized and unrealized strategies.

The second research question sought to establish how the managers of regulatory agencies experienced the effective execution of regulatory strategies for the downstream petroleum industry. The result of data analysis shows that the managers worked with their organizations’ in-house team of experts as well as external consultants. The key roles of the managers included the translation of government policies and organizational strategies into plans (long term, medium term, and short term), and cascading the same to subordinates for implementation; which include performance monitoring, communication, and reporting for feedback and information as well as for policy formulation.

Regarding their experiences, the participants presented a wide range of views in regards to the effective strategy execution in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry; generally dismissing it as not effective. Most of the managers expressed misgivings with regard to effectiveness of strategy execution; stating that the process has produced “low hanging fruits” and limited value-added to the economy; having failed to meet the developmental needs of the Nigerian citizens. A significant number of the participants emphasized the need to improve the regulatory framework to effectively deliver strategies within these regulatory agencies.

The third research question of the study was aimed at finding out how managers' experience of strategy execution could help improve the prospect of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry. Analysis of the findings revealed that years of experience lead to a better change management process at the institution. Business development and expansion particularly in the form of more jetties, depots, and refineries were also attributed to the years of experience of the managers at the helm of the oil industry. Additionally, years of experience in the management positions in the oil industry has been useful in terms of improving on the skills of the managers, which the participants also deemed necessary in terms of improving competencies for an effective strategy execution.

The fourth research question sought to establish how the government and downstream petroleum market operators could improve the prospect of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the industry. Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that the government had a significant role in ensuring successful strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry especially from the regulatory perspective. These roles include drawing realistic strategic plans of long-term, medium-term and short-term strategies with the strong financial backing. The government also has a responsibility towards ensuring a conducive working environment for managers in the industry through minimizing interference in the roles and responsibilities of the managers in this industry.

Subsequently, the next chapter focuses on discussing the findings alongside conclusions and recommendations based on the research questions of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Abuja. I applied a qualitative phenomenological analysis in exploring the participants' (n=20) lived experiences of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI. The first research question focused on eliciting the participants' lived experiences and the way they described same; where analyses of the findings reveal the significance of tenure of service in execution of strategies.

The managers were also emphatic on the need to address challenges inherent in the downstream petroleum industry to ensure effective execution of strategies. Most of the managers were not convinced of the effectiveness of strategy execution with some managers calling for the government to improve the regulatory framework in order to ensure effective execution of strategies in this industry.

The focus of the second research question of the study was finding out how managers' experience of strategy execution could improve the prospects of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry. Thematic analysis of the findings revealed that management in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry led to an improved way of managing change in this industry. Improvement in the managerial knowledge and skills; alongside implementation of expansion strategy in the industry was associated with experience gained at the helm of management in the oil industry.

The role of the Nigerian government and other downstream petroleum market operators in improving the prospects of strategy execution in the downstream petroleum

industry formed the third research question of the study. The government has a role to provide a regulatory framework aimed at improving strategy execution processes in the downstream petroleum industry. This role can be in form of drawing long-term, medium-term and short-term strategies with a proper financial backing. The government can also ensure minimal interference in the management of the downstream petroleum industry, which provides a conducive environment for successful execution of strategies in the industry.

However, government and its regulatory agencies in the NDPI have not been effective in planning for the future in terms of the development of the legal and regulatory framework, product availability, and managing safety/security. Government plans for the NDPI were based on inadequate strategic thinking, and limited foresight; leading to their inability to harness and optimize revenue potentials of multinational joint ventures and other projects.

Interpretation of Findings

The ideas, constructs, and process underlying the development of the conceptual framework in Chapter 2 have guided this study. The participants' shared experiences have reflected the focus of the conceptual framework on the realized and unrealized strategies. Furthermore, the research process and the pattern of emergence of the final themes from the Nvivo-12 analysis of the participants' interview transcripts have reflected the components of the conceptual framework I used for the study.

The Conceptual Framework, the Research Process, and Emerging Themes

The research process followed the underlying thinking for the conceptual framework, which is the *realization concept* based on adequate investigation, description, and communicative response to the phenomena, specific features, and functioning of modern social reality (Kravtsov, 2016). This idea entails the use of discussive and interactive communication and problem-solving through the aggregation of significant experiences (Bernstein, 2014).

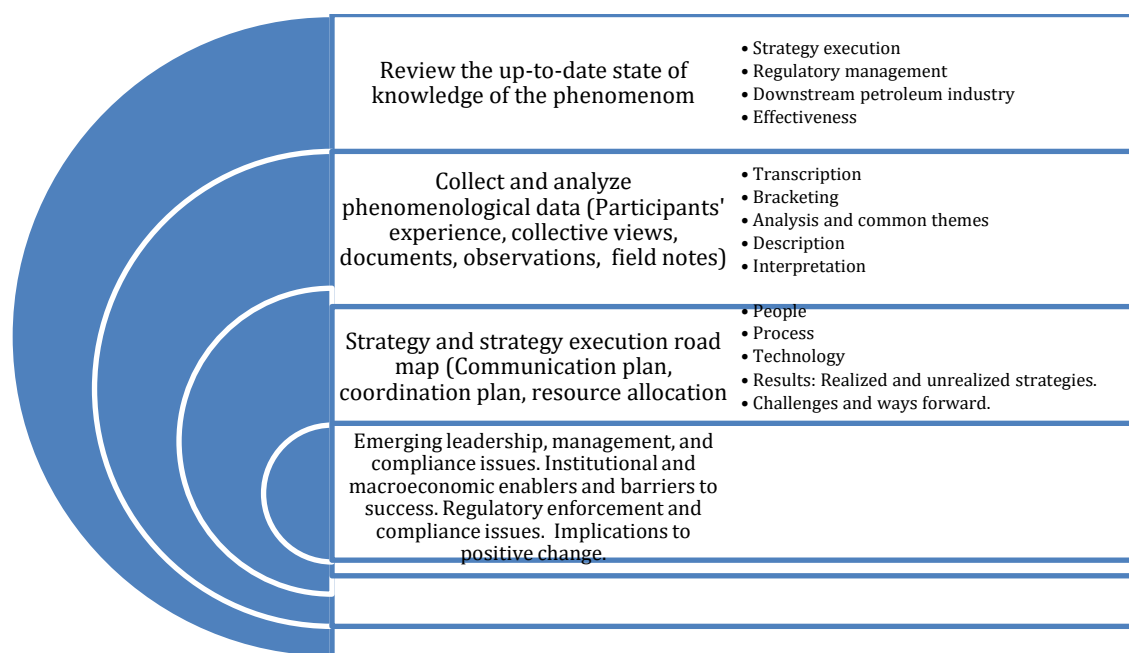


Figure 5: *The conceptual framework for the study aligning with the theme map. Note: Research process and theme alignment.*

Four important stages underpinned the conceptual framework in the quest to conduct a phenomenological qualitative study that aimed at eliciting manager's experience in strategy execution in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry the in Nigeria. The first step therefore comprised conducting a review of the up-to-date state of

knowledge of the phenomenon under study. In this regard, the researcher reviewed the construct of strategy execution from the global, regional to local perspectives in order to identify the existing knowledge gap.

Some important topical issues that I reflected upon in the review of studies included regulatory management, especially the strengths and weakness, and how to ensure successful execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. In addition, I extensively reviewed the downstream petroleum industry to identify some of the inherent challenges and opportunities from the perspective of strategy execution. The idea of realization of effectiveness in the execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum industry was an important thematic area relating to the study, and the thematic map that I generated from the Nvivo-12 analysis of data particularly captured the idea.

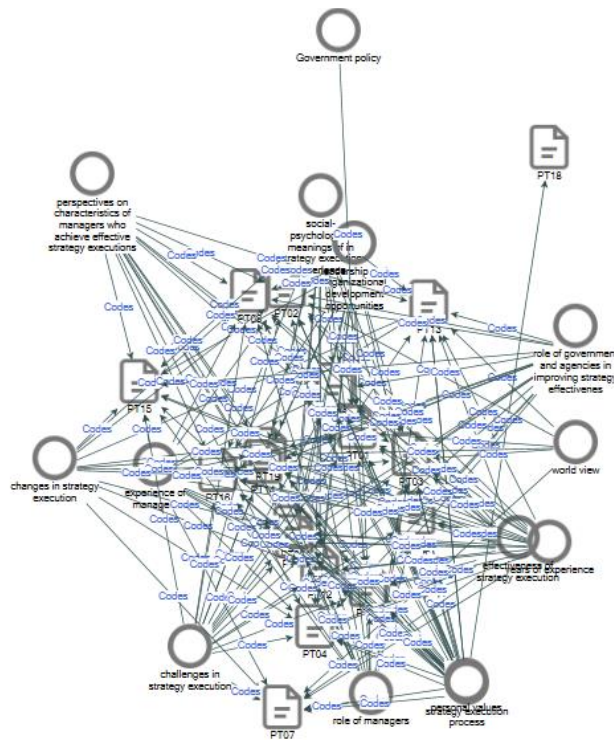


Figure 6: *The theme map: Aligned theme emergence with the conceptual framework.*

The Participants' Personal Experience and Strategy Execution Environment.

The second issue the researcher considered in the construction of the conceptual framework was to collect and analyze a set of phenomenological data relating to the participants' personal experiences, and collective views relating to strategy execution in the industry. I synergized this approach incorporating documents, observations, and field notes; all of which aimed at capturing the strategy execution environment and the managers' experiences in implementing strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

The software for data analysis captured the participants' interview transcripts relating to the managers' experience for further analysis, and the bracketing of the interview transcripts followed in order to facilitate analysis of the findings. The subsequent conduct of data analysis resulted in identifying common themes surrounding execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

In summary, the analysis and identification of important themes relating to the strategy execution were in line with the conceptual framework that envisaged an analytical framework which aim was to identify common themes in order to draw meaningful conclusions from the study findings. Vivid descriptions relating to the lived experiences were among the key features of phenomenological studies, and are also among the features of the conceptual framework.

I analyzed some important themes relating to strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry; drawing on various verbatim transcripts and quotations from the participants to give a voice to the lived experiences of the sampled managers.

Interpretation of the study findings is one of the key components of the conceptual framework. Qualitative phenomenological analysis provided a basis to conduct interpretation of the findings particularly by drawing a comparison between the lived experiences of managers in the downstream petroleum industry, and what was earlier reported in the peer-reviewed scholarly articles.

The Managers' Positive and Negative Experiences

Senior and middle managers interviewed shared their positive and negative experiences of the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry. The shared experiences of the 20 participants consisted of pleasant or positive, and unpleasant or negative experiences, which respectively reflected the concepts of realized and unrealized strategies that featured in the conceptual framework for the study (Aithal, 2016; Kazmaier, 2016). This negative and positive experience confirmed one of the manager's expression that not all policies were successful.

Negative experiences were notable errors or mistakes in policy and strategy formulation and implementation actions. Examples of negative experiences include: Abandonment of projects leading to inability to realize policy objectives, and Government placed the petroleum inspectorate (which was an industry regulator) under the NNPC, an operator in the industry, instead of allowing institutional autonomy to the regulator. Conversely, positive experiences are policy and strategy formulation and implementation actions that aimed at effectively realizing government objectives or moving from an unpleasant to desirable state.

The aggregate experiences of the managers was a mix of pleasant and unpleasant or frustrating experiences, which reflected the notion of realized and unrealized strategies that were the focus of the conceptual framework for this study. In this regard, some of the research participants were fulfilled that their experiences in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry have added value to the industry.

The Strategy Execution Roadmap and Effective Communication

An aspect of the conceptual framework that addressed the question of strategy and strategy execution roadmap incorporates communication plan, coordination plan as well as the allocation of resources. The question of communication stood out as critical in the process of execution of strategies in the context of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The participants exemplified this perception in their comments expressing the need for “better communication”, and “effective communication of strategies.”

Generally, the findings provide evidence of the need for managers to come up with the communication channels as well as effective ways of coordination aimed at ensuring successful execution of strategies, which aligns with the thematic map which illustrates the significance of the role of managers in successful execution of strategies.

Coordination of Strategy Execution

Coordination is another critical component of the conceptualized framework. The need to involve people in coordination, as well as improve the processes and technology aimed at realizing this was yet another important theme that emerged during the interviews. For instance, effective execution of strategies in the downstream petroleum

industry is always a result of effective mobilization of human resources; which stands out in the thematic map captured from the analysis.

In general, the involvement of the people, alongside adjustment of business processes and incorporating technology are important precursors for successful execution of our strategy in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The question of realized and unrealized strategies emanate from the efforts of the strategy implementation team towards successful implementation of strategies. The need to address challenges that hinder effective execution of strategies is an important way forward with regard to realization of effective strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. These issues are of critical importance in the conceptual framework, and reflected in the thematic nodes identified during the analysis of the interview transcripts.

Emerging Leadership and Compliance Management Issues

The last part of the conceptual framework was on the question of emerging leadership and management, and compliance issues. Moreover, the conceptual framework also envisaged the institutional and macroeconomic, the plus and barriers to success. Furthermore, the conceptual framework captured the regulatory enforcement and compliance issues alongside the implications to positive change.

The findings also revealed that leadership and management style is a critical component towards effective execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The findings also underscored the significance of use of technology in the realization of effective strategy execution in the NPDI. Furthermore, the need to address barriers such as weak regulatory framework, and unfavorable government policy

are important lessons going forward. Subsequently, the need to provide an enabling regulatory and enforcement environment as well as ensuring adherence to the compliance is critical in terms of providing an enabling environment for effective strategy execution in the NDPI.

The Need to Realize Positive Change

The need to realize positive change in regard to execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry is an important component of the conceptual framework. In this regard, managers have an important role to play in ensuring successful implementation of strategies in the industry. The thematic map also captured the manager's role in ensuring effective execution of strategies. This implies that going forward; there is a need for the managers in this industry to stamp their authority in ensuring all mechanisms are put in place with the aim of enabling effective execution of organizational strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. Moreover, use of appropriate technology can be useful in improving chances of effective strategy execution in the industry.

The Policy and Legal Framework, Leadership Styles, and Effective Strategy Execution

The shared experiences of the interviewed managers provided evidence of the need to have management and leadership styles that can facilitate successful execution of strategies. These comments reaffirm Bosidy and Charan (2002) and Bourne (2018) earlier understanding of the significance of leadership in successful execution of strategies in organizations. Bosidy and Charan (2002) specifically outlined the significance of the

competencies and skills as critical towards strategy execution; a position which the participants reiterated in their comments; revealing the nexus between effective strategy execution and possession of relevant core competencies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

Strategy Execution Mechanisms: Connecting Strategy Formulation and Execution

For effective strategy management, leaders should have execution in mind when formulating strategies to ensure a proper connects between the two stages of strategy work. Most of the managers and research participants viewed that the use situational leadership style is most suitable for effective execution of strategies. Barrows (2017) argued that when the strategies of business organizations are disconnected from their executions, it leads to the inability to realize strategies. This implies that there is the need to develop mechanisms that ensure the effective implementation of strategies, which can be in form of conducive policy framework, and this reflects the participants' comments in favor of providing a policy framework that enables effective execution of strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

To enhancing organizational performance, there must be connection between strategy and execution (Barrows, 2017). This obviously is about the effectiveness of strategy execution, which the interviewed managers highlighted in their remarks. The managers' comments were particularly on what needs to be improved upon to successfully executestrategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The managers essentially called for improvements in the areas of formulation of policy and

legal framework, planning and implementation of plans, development of downstream petroleum infrastructure, and leveraging on information technology.

Planning and Implementation

The strategy execution process borders around planning and implementation of plans using a blend of in-house team and external consultants, and leveraging on information and communication technology (ICT). The managers who were the research participants had experienced that in the Nigerian downstream petroleum subsector; the government has not been effective in planning for the future, which included determining the refinery capacities, product availability, managing safety and security, and developing the regulatory framework.

The managers further perceived that government policies and plans for the industry have been based on inadequate strategic thinking and lack of foresight; leading to their inability to harness and optimize the revenue potentials and future possibilities inherent in joint ventures with multi-nationals and other projects. The implementation of plans within the organization's reality is the realization of strategy (Kilic & Aktuna, 2017).

Leveraging on Technology and Infrastructural Development

The managers further experienced that the Nigerian downstream petroleum infrastructures are in dilapidated states, and need to be addressed. The participants perceived that an improved standard of infrastructural development in the downstream petroleum subsector will help to improve strategy execution in the regulatory management of the industry.

In the area of leveraging on technology, the managers experienced that the data storage system is fragmented due to inadequate data governance structure, and a lack of integrated end-to-end data management platform. There was no all-encompassing key performance indicator (KPI) dashboard reporting for different levels of users. The managers therefore expressed the need to ensure proper data backup for disaster recovery and business continuity, and the need to improve staff capacity building as well as ensure synergy of operations among sister agencies.

The Role of Government and the Management of the Regulatory Agencies.

The research participants identified the roles of government and management of the regulatory agencies towards improving strategy execution process in the regulatory management of the NDPI, which include:

- i. Strategy formulation and communication;
- ii. Recruit the right people for the job and motivate them
- iii. Measure and reward performance using appropriate criteria
- iv. Improved and continuous engagement with stakeholders
- v. Carry out research and development to enhance decision making
- vi. Leveraging on technology to improve efficiency and save cost
- vii. Proactive response to issues and changes at the market
- viii. Produce realistic plans (short term, medium term, and long term) with adequate funding
- ix. Assign distinct roles to each institution without overlapping functions, but with cooperation and synergy; and

- x. Develop and improve downstream petroleum infrastructure
- xi. Create enabling environment for an improved strategy execution and regulatory management.

Resource Alignment for Effective Strategy Execution

The essence of an effective strategy execution is the proper alignment of people, process, technology, and corporate culture (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Hnedina, 2019; Kaplan & Norton, 2010). Achieving the desired project outcome depends on (a) the knowledge and skills of the available workforce, and (b) a good and comprehensive strategy (Nair et al., 2016). The research participants' levels of education, their training and professional exposures at local and international levels informed their personal values and worldview, which at the aggregate level aligned with the strategic goal choices of their organizations.

In this regard, possession of relevant knowledge and skills played out significantly from the content of the managers' shared experiences especially with regards to how successful strategy execution has been attributed to the availability of relevant knowledge and skills for implementation of strategies in organizations. The literature review and the conceptual framework for this study revealed that to make strategy realizable, the organization must have the right people and technology in place to execute and drive it (Bosidy & Charan, 2002; Srivastava & Sushil, 2017).

These and other similar views from the respondents justify the need for an improvement in the process of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. Some of the research participants were

fulfilled that their experiences in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry have added values to the industry, while some have expressed their frustrations; aligning with the interest of the study on realized and unrealized strategies in the conceptual framework. The strategy execution process borders around planning and implementation of plans using a blend of in-house team and external consultants, and leveraging on information and communication technology (ICT) based on the use of in-house and external electronic data management systems for data capture on product import and distribution, respectively.

The research participants/managers have identified the need to improve the process of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, and the roles of government and management of the regulatory agencies towards that end. This qualitative phenomenological data analysis has revealed that carrying out strategy execution within a weak and inappropriate regulatory framework can hinder the capacity of regulatory agencies to ensure that regulatory management of NDPI are efficient and effective (IP3, 2018).

Leadership Development, Value Innovation, and Goal Orientation

This study has shown that the elements of personal values and worldviews of the managers conformed to the key developmental priority goals or performance pillars of government for the industry. This value alignment implies that managers need to hold and promote personal values and worldviews that support the realization of organizational goals, and improvement in organizational productivity and performance. This value integration further implies that self-interest, corruption, and political

interference that the managers have been experiencing their overwhelming neurotic influences against the realization of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI, should be thoroughly checked and combatted.

Leadership development and management training programs in the NDPI need to include the issues of cultivating positive mindsets for leadership through personal values and worldviews that are developmental, and supportive to realizing the mandate and goals of the organization.

Limitations of the Study

The genuineness of the information the research participants provided through their responses to an interview question is always in doubt whenever conducting qualitative studies. From the strategy execution perspective, some participants could give positive appraisals by pointing out the strength of the strategy execution process in the execution, but may not necessarily reflect the reality on the ground.

On the contrary, the study findings and conclusions were neither abstract thinking nor a product of strong academic argument, but flowed from long discursive engagements with the participants in a first-hand study of the phenomenon within its reality; through this way, establishing the genuineness and reality of the shared experience.

Furthermore, qualitative studies always face challenges of replication of the study results. This challenge is in view of the fact that even individual perceptions keep on changing; the same response could have a different opinion on the same subject matter when interviewed at different times. In some cases, misleading conclusions can be drawn

from qualitative studies and therefore care must be exercised while making conclusions about the findings from such studies.

Conversely, in this study, the thick descriptions of the participants' shared experiences using aggregate experiences of 20 participants rather than individual experience renders it amenable to replication. The iterative discussions, the longevity, and bracketing the researcher from personal influences help in the assurance of validity, trustworthiness, and avoidance of bias in the research process, which enhanced the significance of the study (Wright, 2016).

Furthermore, the sample size may limit transferability of the proposed study. However, researchers who provide sufficient descriptions about the inquiry and purposeful sampling facilitate transferability of their inquiry (Anney, 2015). I have provided substantial descriptions of the proposed study sample and research context; enabling its transferability.

Recommendations

Qualitative phenomenological studies provide opportunities to draw on the lived experiences of the participants to make informed decisions with regard to the overarching research questions. The lived experiences which the managers shared incorporated a human experience, which provides a pathway to understand the attitudes of the participant with regards to the phenomenon of under study.

Qualitative phenomenological approach provides a basis to understand the lived experiences, attitudes and perceptions of the research participants with regards to a given subject matter. Moreover, this type of study is recommended considering the cost

effectiveness associated with it. This is owing to the fact that the qualitative research process uses a small sample size as compared to quantitative research techniques.

The flexibility, iterative, and issue emergence nature of the qualitative phenomenological inquiry imply that researchers can make follow-ups on the shared experiences if they wish to elicit more in-depth understanding within the complexity of the data being collected. This approach to acquiring knowledge will be appropriate in overcoming the problem of inadequate strategic thinking during planning, and the inability of the Nigerian government to foresee and optimize the revenue potentials and opportunities inherent in multinational joint ventures that the participants experienced in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

Effective strategy execution predicated on the values and behaviors of leaders and people in the organization (Macko, 2021). Engaging stakeholders of the NDPI in a discursive will enable more in-depth evaluation and estimation of existing situations and future possibilities on the downstream petroleum related issues. These issues may include determining refining capacity, product availability, and appropriate regulatory management and strategy execution framework, among others. Leadership must consciously develop communication plan and coordination plan to sell the resource allocation and overall strategy plan to the stakeholders in an effective manner.

Government and leaders of the regulatory agencies under the NDPI need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events drawn from

other countries' experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria proactively for any likely and unforeseen circumstances.

The managers' personal values and worldview informed their understanding and perspectives on strategy execution and organizational effectiveness; and their aggregate personal values and worldview reflected the choice of a set of developmental goal priorities for the industry. This finding reflects the position in the literature that strategy execution and organizational effectiveness must be issue and value-based (Ukoha et al., 2017); they must be grounded on the values of the evaluator (Cameron, 2017). The implication is that leadership development initiatives of government and agencies should focus on developing peoples' mindset for leadership, value innovation, and goal reorientation.

There are different levels of knowledge and awareness among stakeholders and operators in spite of the huge volume of information available in the industry and this has implications on the strategy execution including the development of education and public awareness programs.

On the flip side, qualitative phenomenological research has always been associated with a number of drawbacks. For example, this approach does not provide statistical representation and therefore provides textual data from the perspectives only. Moreover, responses from this type of enquiry cannot usually be measured. In addition, the approach only facilitates comparisons and tends to create duplicates of data over a period of time.

One further recommends that this phenomenological research approach is always triangulated with a quantitative research methodology to provide relevant synergies when drawing conclusions from such studies. The benefits of such a methodological mixing of a qualitative phenomenology with a quantitative statistical inquiry, such as survey or case study methods, go beyond in-depth understanding of the phenomenon to bring about discoveries.

The data analysis of this study has revealed that the managers' personal values and worldviews informed their perspectives and understanding regarding strategy execution and organizational effectiveness; and also influenced their strategic thinking, planning, and execution in the downstream petroleum industry. On the aggregate, participants have blended their personal principles with the values and goals of their organizations to achieve effective strategy execution in regulatory management.

The managers perceived that the training, professional and social exposures they received helped in shaping their personal values and worldviews; aligning it with the choice of organizational deliverable priority goals; implying the need to create an up-to-date information and knowledge resources environment for the effective management of Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, which will guaranty an informed workforce with all its benefits.

These benefits will include elevating the regulatory agencies to the status of information and knowledge-driven organizations, capacity building, information search and retrieval, and the use of research tools in decision-making. These benefits will inform better understanding and practice of strategy execution using acceptable criteria or

evaluation template that is grounded on issues and values, and is also effective (Cameron, 2017; Ukoha et al., 2017). The managers must develop a keen sense of political awareness and other relevant skillset to manage political agenda and risks, and ensure strong and effective organizational capabilities to mitigate the challenges of strategy execution in each regulatory agency and the public sector.

Implications

The study of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry has a wide range of implications to positive social change at the individual, family, organization, and society/policy levels. The study also has implications to research (methodological, theoretical, and empirical) as well as in the area of making recommendations for practice.

Positive Social Change at the Individual Level

The present study focused on how managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources described their lived experiences of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. Phenomenological analyses of the findings provide a wealth of information regarding how the managers acquired lived experiences of strategy execution in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

Some of the research participants were fulfilled that their experiences in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry have added value to the industry. The individual managers who expressed frustrating experiences have

further learned from those experiences, and recognized the roles they have to play to improve the understanding and practice of strategy execution.

The managers are aware that it is part of their professional duty as individual managers to harbor improved personal values and worldviews that will support a culture of value-innovation, goal orientation, and realization of strategy for their organizations. The managers further recognize that it is their role to translate government policies and institutional strategies into plans (short, medium, and long term) and operational guidelines/regulations for purpose of implementation/execution and compliance.

One of the managers who were the research participants has opined that the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness will, among other things, enhance the growth that will fulfill the value of each personnel (PT18). The realization of strategy implies that the personnel must have acquired capabilities across the key drivers of strategy execution that are subject to influence. These key drivers include political, risks and uncertainty, leadership, communication, people, culture, agility, and measure (Macko, 2021; Robillson & Houghtby-Haddon, 2021).

Positive Social Change at the Family Level

The study of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry has many advantages and implications to positive social change on the family level. The key implication is that the interviewed managers have cultivated healthy personal values, which were useful to running their organizations, and as an implication will also be useful in running their families. The managers recognized that the level of education they attained, Training they received, and

their social and professional exposures helped in shaping their personal values and worldviews.

At the family level, this understanding will inform their planning, decisions, and investments on the general upbringing of their children and other members of the family. The personal values that the managers have cultivated have implications on their work-life balance; benefiting both their organization and family. At the family level, the managers will ensure proper cognitive development, character development, and good education across gender.

Positive Social Change at the Organization Level

Ensuring successful planning of organizational resources as well as developing relevant knowledge and skills aimed at improving organizational performance. Successful execution of strategies also provides a chance for corporate executives to improve their overall performance in terms of resource allocation and revenue projections. The organization will be able to execute strategies within the stipulated timeline.

The managers have recognized that self-interest, corruption, and politics were overwhelming interferences; leading to a lack of institutional autonomy and weak regulatory framework. The managers have already imbibed personal values that are supportive to their organizational values and goals including adhering to international standard of professional practice; they will be able assert professional standard of ethics to counter the eroding effects of corruption and political interferences on the realization of strategy in their organizations.

The managers have recognized that in the Nigerian downstream petroleum subsector, the country has not been effective in planning for the future including the areas of refining capacity, product availability, managing safety and security, and market regulatory framework. They have recognized that the strategy execution process borders around planning and implementation of plans using a blend of in-house team and external consultants, and leveraging on information and communication technology (ICT). The managers have therefore justified the need to improve the process of strategy execution, and address the shortfalls in planning including inadequate thinking and limited foresight.

Positive Social Change at the Society/Policy Level

The implications for positive social change include improving the effectiveness of public-sector regulations resulting in (a) social protection, (b) safety, (c) fairness to all stakeholders, (d) sound business, (e) virile private sector, and (f) absence of excessive and burdensome regulations. This qualitative phenomenological data analysis has revealed that carrying out strategy execution within a weak and inappropriate regulatory framework can hinder the capacity of regulatory agencies to ensure that regulations and regulatory management are efficient and effective (IP3, 2018).

The interviewed managers have justified the need to improve the process of strategy execution in the regulatory management of downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. The strategy execution process borders around planning and implementation of plans using a blend of in-house team and external consultants, and leveraging on information and communication technology (ICT).

The result of the study has revealed that there are a lot of investment and capacity building opportunities to the Nigerian economy, and with trickling down effect to the informal sector, emerging through the strategy execution in the regulatory management of NDPI. Indigenous companies in the NDPI are making progress, and have a lot of prospects including partnership opportunities with foreign financiers.

Methodological, theoretical, and empirical Implications

The key methodological and theoretical implication is that findings of this study were consistent with the conceptual framework and background of the study, which formed the basis of their interpretations. Considering the weaknesses and limitations inherent in qualitative research approaches, future similar studies need to consider a rigorous methodology of selecting the study participants, generating the sample, data analysis and presentation of the findings, as well as ensuring trustworthiness of the findings.

The study could contribute to the scholarly evaluation and understanding of regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry within the context of the emerging concept and principles of strategy execution. The result of the study has further contributed to advancing the existing knowledge and research about strategy execution as well as the regulatory management and practice in Nigeria.

Government and leaders of the regulatory agencies need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events drawn from other countries'

experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria for likely and unforeseen circumstances.

The information from this study has expanded to the scope of the existing knowledge and understanding of the concept of strategy execution through adding to the existing literature, new ideas, fresh areas of inquiry, and deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

Recommendations for Practice

The study findings and recommendations enable the intellectual empowerment of the practitioners in the field for improved performance through implementing strategy and realization of organizational effectiveness (Manzoor, 2014). The study also recommends adoption of various approaches that can be useful in the quest to achieve effective strategy execution in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

This could be from the perspective of ensuring that the latest technologies are applied in strategy execution, alongside a favorable legal and policy framework that supports the operations of the downstream petroleum industry. Boosting infrastructure and combating corruption can also be viewed as a recipe to order effective execution of strategies in this context.

The findings of this study were in the form of a rich description of the participants' lived experiences regarding strategy execution in regulating the downstream petroleum industry and the sense they make of those experiences. This description may help in understanding and communicating the social reality of the practice of strategy execution, which is the essence of the research.

This description may serve as a guide to new comers, and great insights to help experienced scholars and practitioners towards improving strategy execution and regulatory management of the NDPI. The study finding reflects the position in the literature that strategy execution and organizational effectiveness must be issue and value-based (Ukoha et al., 2017); they must be grounded on the values of the evaluator (Cameron, 2017). This understanding will lead to improved practice of strategy execution.

Government and leaders of the regulatory agencies need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events drawn from other countries experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria for likely and unforeseen circumstances.

The practice of Importation of petroleum products following laid down processes and procedures, and adhering to the international standard practice/procedures in the petroleum industry will continue to improve as the industry norm. Furthermore, regulatory managers collaborate to supervise cargo importation and products discharges/receipts into shore tanks at the various depots, monitor the distribution of the products across the country as well as collate reports on these operations sent in by field officers deployed to the jetties and depots within the zone. Employment of the services of independent cargo inspectors has come to stay as an international standard practice.

There are different levels of knowledge and awareness among stakeholders and operators in spite of the huge volume of information available in the industry, and this

has implications on the strategy execution including the development of education and public awareness programs. Furthermore, the Managers have recognized how important it is to execute strategies, and acknowledged the challenges they faced in the field of practice, they are on the right path to improved practice, problem solutions, quality, cost effectiveness, and desired outcome. The findings of the study has revealed that strategy execution in NDPI has promoted a goal-oriented and structured approach to managing strategies with a view to developing high value capabilities and making investments that optimize values.

Conclusions

The aim of conducting this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the concept of strategy execution in regulatory management through the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies of agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, Abuja. Qualitative Phenomenological analysis of the interview transcripts revealed important activity areas relating to strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria.

The finding showed that leadership and management is at the center of strategy execution. The interviewed managers perceived that the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the NDPI depended on the leadership situation; expressed faith in situational leadership as the best leadership style for effective strategy execution. Personal values, worldview and experiences are useful attributes that informed strategy execution in the downstream petroleum industry. The managers'

aggregate experiences of strategy execution in the NDPI were a mix of pleasant or realized, and frustrating or unrealized strategies.

The result of the study has revealed that there are a lot of investment and capacity building opportunities to the Nigerian economy, and with trickling down effect to the informal sector, emerging through the strategy execution in the regulatory management of NDPI. Indigenous companies in the NDPI are making progress, and have a lot of prospects including partnership opportunities with foreign financiers. The findings of the study has further revealed that strategy execution in NDPI has promoted a goal-oriented and structured approach to managing strategies with a view to developing high value capabilities and making investments that optimize peoples' values.

Some of the challenges the regulatory managers experienced in the course of strategy execution included weak regulatory framework, inadequate strategic thinking and foresight, inadequate ICT governance structure, and lack of regulatory autonomy. There seems to be no consistent strategic policies guiding the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry due to constant policy summersaults. The Federal government of Nigeria has seemingly not taken a firm stand on the removal of subsidies, and to realize full deregulation of the downstream petroleum market in spite of legislations. Government appears to be dilating between partial and complete removal of subsidy.

The finding revealed that the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry has suffered a long history of misplaced government interests and priorities in the process of policy formulation and implementation for the sector; leading to loss of national development opportunities (national income, and growth).

Other challenges were self-interest, political interference, corruption, and stakeholder resistance to change. These challenges need to be addressed to effectively execute strategies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. The need to address corruption together with improving infrastructure, policy formulation and legal framework, and performance management measures is critical in the quest to realize effective strategy execution in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. I have demonstrated that the procedure and findings of the study were valid and trustworthy.

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Appendix A: Notification of IRB Approval to Proceed to Final Stage

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Notification of Approval to Proceed to Final Study Stage

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workflow@laureate.net

Tue 11/24/2020 2:48 AM

To: Michael Nwonu

Cc: john.kitoko2@mail.waldenu.edu; Bryan L. Forsyth



Congratulations! Your Walden Institutional Review Board application has been approved. As such, you are approved by Walden University to proceed to the final study stage.

If you have questions about the final study process, please contact research@mail.waldenu.edu.


Reply | Reply all | Forward

Appendix A: Notification of IRB Approval to Proceed to Final Stage continues

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IRB Materials Approved - Michael Nwonu

IRB <irb@mail.waldenu.edu>
 Tue 11/24/2020 2:48 AM
 To: Michael Nwonu
 Cc: John U. Kitoko <john.kitoko2@mail.waldenu.edu>

 Nwonu Consent Form.pdf
 264 KB

Dear Mr. Nwonu,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "The effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry."

Your approval # is 11-23-20-0358786. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on November 22, 2021 (or when your student status ends, whichever occurs first). One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application document that has been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended. Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 10 business days of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the Documents & FAQs section of the Walden web site:
<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Doctoral researchers are required to fulfill all of the Student Handbook's [Doctoral Student Responsibilities Regarding Research Data](#) regarding raw data retention and dataset confidentiality, as well as logging of all recruitment, data collection, and data management steps. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkIMUx43pZegKImdiQ_3d_3d

Sincerely,
 Libby Munson
 Research Ethics Support Specialist
 Office of Research Ethics and Compliance
 Walden University
 100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 1210
 Minneapolis, MN 55401
 Email: irb@mail.waldenu.edu
 Phone: (612) 312-1283
 Fax: (612) 338-5092

Information about the Walden University Institutional Review Board, including instructions for application, may be found at this link: <http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Reply | Reply all | Forward

Appendix B: Invitation Letter for the Interview

Michael Nwonu
Walden University

10 November, 2020.

Hello

Invitation to Participate in a Qualitative Research Interview

I am inviting you to participate and respond to my interview questions for a study of the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. I am inviting you for this interview because available public records show that you have been a manager in one of the regulatory agencies for the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry. I, therefore, trust that you have lived experience of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry, and that you will be willing to share that experience in this interview. The purpose of the interview is to enable me to understand strategy execution through the lived experiences of managers of regulatory institutions, who have experienced the phenomenon. I will be asking you about your lived experiences in this regard, and apply this information solely to writing my Ph.D. dissertation and completing a doctorate in management from Walden University. You and I will mutually schedule the interview date and time, which I expect to be within seven days after I have received your consent.

I have attached the consent form which contains the following information: (i) Description of the background information and purpose of the research; (ii) explanation of the procedure for participating in the interview, which includes a description of the use of two electronic (telephone or email) interview options; (iii) a statement of how your

participation will assist in the research findings and outcome of the study; (iv) describe how you will receive a local currency equivalent of seven U.S. Dollars (\$7.00) Starbucks gift card as an appreciation to be sent to you after participating in the interview; and (v) a statement of how I will handle any document you may volunteer to provide in supporting your responses to the interview questions, although the researcher will not ask for any document.

I will keep all the information you will provide during the interview confidential and de-identified. You will also have the opportunity to review the transcribed interview for accuracy checks and validation.

Please review the consent form, and if you decide to participate, please respond to this email with the word "I consent" within 10 days of receiving the consent form from me. This period is to provide you with enough time to review the study information and ask questions before deciding whether to take part.

Regards.

Michael Nwonu
Ph.D. Management
Walden University.

Appendix C: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study about *The Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in the Regulatory Management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry*, which is the sub-sector of the petroleum industry responsible for the supply and distribution of refined petroleum products to the Nigerian economy. The study is in partial fulfillment of my requirements for the award of a Ph.D. in Management with a specialization in Leadership and Organizational Change at Walden University in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. The researcher is inviting senior and middle managers of regulatory agencies under the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources that have experienced strategy execution and regulatory management in the downstream petroleum industry, and are willing to share their experiences. I obtained your name/contact information via the public websites of the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources and that of its relevant agencies. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part or not.

The person conducting this study is a researcher named Michael Chinedu Nwonu, who is a doctoral student of Management/Leadership and Organizational Change at Walden University. The researcher is a planning officer at the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA), which is one of the agencies of the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources, but this study is separate from that role because the researcher is not among the professional category that executestechanical and commercial regulations in the downstream petroleum industry, who are the potential participants to this study. The researcher does not have any reporting/service relationships with the potential

participants, who work in different organizations and regional locations. I am, however, assuring **that** declining or discontinuing participating in this study will not negatively impact the participant's access to my services (if any).

Background Information

In Nigeria, the existing regulatory conditions and scholarly opinions in the literature suggest that the existence of a capacity gap and inefficient process of regulatory strategy execution are the challenges of regulatory management in the downstream petroleum industry. The supply and distribution of petroleum products have constantly failed to meet national targets despite regulations, laudable policies, and strategy formulations (Dikwa, 2016). Scholars have expressed opinions that creating and implementing an effective regulatory management system in Nigeria is both difficult and complex (Ekhaton, 2017; Teri University, 2015). It is also scholars' opinion that regulatory models that succeeded in developed countries could prove counter-productive in Nigeria (Ekhaton, 2016; Teri University, 2015). A study of the Effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry (NDPI) is apt and will focus on the capacity, efficient process, and procedures with which the relevant regulatory institutions are pursuing the goal of sustainable development of the industry (Estache & Lewis, 2010; Teri University, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies, understand the meaning they hold for those experiences, and how the lesson from the experience can be used to improve the practice of strategy execution and regulatory management for the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Respond to the interview questions. This is a formal study and I will be interviewing 20 participants; asking each person to respond to questions about their lived experiences, perspectives, and opinions regarding strategy execution within the context of regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.
- Set aside between 45-60 minutes for the interview, which I recognize as a significant commitment that the consenting participant has volunteered to make. The interview will be conducted on telephone or email in the English language and is confidential.
- Please take note that the interview protocol contains 10 interview questions, and I may further ask a series of clarifying questions to enrich your response. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.
- Permit me to audio-tape each interview to enable accurate recall memory and word-to-word transcribing for purpose of analysis.
- I may conduct a follow-up interview to elicit more clarifications of issues from participants as the study progresses.
- I will send the transcribed interview to the interviewee for further review, accuracy checks, and validation.

Additional information for participants responding to email interviews include:

- I will send out interview questions to multiple emails and compile a list of potential participants who will like to use email interviews.
- The interview or conversations will take place via email
- I will reorient the participant to the conversation at the beginning of each email, and place the research questions on the computer screen for the participants to make frequent references to them while constructing responses.
- I will ask the participants to respond to the interview questions through typing their answers in an email
- Each email conversation will last for 45-60 minutes, and I will align the time of each interview with that of the analysis concurrently to allow for proper documentation and integration of emerging themes while keeping the conversation going.
- During the email interviews, I will keep journal commentaries on emerging issues, decisions that will be taken along the conversations, the lessons learned from the interview, and the impact of the email interview on the data collected.

I humbly invite you to recognize that a thorough and detailed response to the questions will lead to a rich and meaningful study outcome. The researcher will not ask you to provide any documents to support your responses, but if you deem it necessary to support your response with the relevant document, I will only review the document to draw additional insight from it as part of your response. To further ensure confidentiality and protect the identity of the individual participant, I will not reference or cite any

official document I received from a participant in the final research report without the express permission of the participant.

Here are some sample questions:

- ❖ How do your personal values and world-view inform your perspective on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness?
- ❖ Describe the process of strategy execution in your regulatory institution, and how that process has changed over the last three to five years?
- ❖ What have been the challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry?
- ❖ Briefly describe your role as it relates to strategy execution in the regulatory management process of the institution, and how that role has changed over the last three to five years?
- ❖ How do you perceive the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry; its sustainability, and its success factors?
- ❖ How would you interpret the social and psychological meanings of your experience in strategy execution: The implications, inspirations, aspirations, and learning outcome you derive from the experience?
- ❖ What are the leadership and organizational development opportunities you see emerging from your experience of strategy execution?

Voluntary Nature of the Study

This study is voluntary. You are free to accept or turn down the invitation. No one will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to be in the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time. The researcher will follow up with all volunteers to let them know whether or not they were selected for the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

Being in this type of study involves some risks of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as sacrificing part of your personal and official time for this interview, and the inherent fatigue. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing beyond those the person experiences in everyday living.

Among the potential benefits of this study will include:

- ❖ It provides the participants with an opportunity to reflect and share their experiences
- ❖ It provides an opportunity for the participants to record and communicate their lived experiences as part of a research report through the instrumentality of a researcher who bears the cost.
- ❖ The record of participants' experiences will serve as a piece of veritable information and knowledge resource for reference and deepening the understanding and practice of strategy execution and regulatory management
- ❖ The participant will derive social and psychological meanings of their experiences; leading to inspirations, aspirations, and positive learning outcome

- ❖ The findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the study will lead to positive social change through improved practice and organizational effectiveness of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.
- ❖ The research will contribute to scholarly evaluation, evolution, and understanding of the concepts and practice of strategy execution and regulatory management.
- ❖ The study will result in positive social change through the improved capacity for strategy execution, regulatory management, and realization of organizational and regulatory strategies.

Payment

As an appreciation of your participation and time, you will receive a *thank you gift item* valued at the local currency equivalent of seven U. S. Dollars (\$7.00) Starbucks gift card to be sent to you after participating in the interview.

Privacy

Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details that might identify participants, such as the location of the study, also will not be shared. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purpose outside of this research project. Data will be kept secure by taking appropriate data security measures, including password protection, the use of codes in place of names, storing names separately from the data, and discarding names (when possible). I will store documents in a locked file cabinet in my home. I will store electronic files on a password-protected computer and backed up on a password-protected hard drive. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via 08055024791, 08103726505, or email michael.nwonu@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call the Research Participant Advocate at 001-612-312-1210 from outside the USA, or email address irb@mail.waldenu.edu). Walden University's approval number for this study is **11-23-20-0358786**, and it expires on **November 22, 2021**.

Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Obtaining Your Consent

If you feel you understand the study well enough to decide to participate, please indicate your consent by replying to this email with the words, "I consent." If the potential participant does not respond to the consent form before the expiration of the 10-day period, it will be the sole discretion of the researcher to decide and take other necessary actions that may support the progress of the study.

Appendix D: Interview Protocol Form

Interview Protocol Form**Interview Protocol**

Interviewee (Code Number): _____

Interviewer: _____

Introductory Protocol

To facilitate my note-taking, I will like to audiotape our conversations today. For your information, only the researcher on the project will be privy to the tapes which I will eventually destroy after transcribing them. Besides, I need you to review a consent form devised to meet my human subject requirements. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) I do not intend to inflict any harm. Thank you for agreeing to participate.

I have planned this interview to last no longer than one hour. During this time, I have several questions that I will like to cover. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you to push ahead and complete this line of questioning.

The Topic for Discussion: “The Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in the Regulatory Management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry.”

Introduction

I have invited you to this interview for you to speak with me today on this research topic; having identified you as someone who has some hands-on experiences

with strategy execution in regulatory management, and is willing to share your experiences.

This research project focuses on exploring the lived experiences of senior and middle-level managers regarding strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry with a particular interest in understanding the concept, and the reality of how managers of the regulatory agencies are executing regulatory strategies, and whether one can draw from the lessons of that experience to improve understanding and practice of strategy execution in the industry.

This study does not aim at evaluating your techniques or experiences; rather the researcher is trying to learn more about the strategy execution process in regulatory management, hoping that learning from the experiences of other people will help improve professional knowledge and practice; leading to the positive organizational performance outcome.

Interview Outline

- A. Background Information on the study
 - B. Interview questions
 - C. Perspectives on managers' characteristics
 - D. Post-interview comments/observations.

A. Background Information on the Study

I have set the background of this study on the existing regulatory conditions in the Nigerian downstream petroleum, and scholarly opinions in the literature of the subject that I have reviewed. In Nigeria, the existing regulatory conditions and scholarly opinions

in the literature suggest that the existence of a capacity gap and inefficient process of regulatory strategy execution are the challenges of regulatory management in the downstream petroleum industry.

The supply and distribution of petroleum products have constantly failed to meet national targets despite regulations, laudable policies, and strategy formulations (Dikwa, 2016). Scholars have expressed opinions that creating and implementing an effective regulatory management system in Nigeria is both difficult and complex (Ekhaton, 2017; Teri University, 2015). It is also scholars' opinion that regulatory models that succeeded in developed countries could prove counter-productive in Nigeria (Ekhaton, 2016; Teri University, 2015). A study of the Effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry (NDPI) is apt and will focus on the capacity, efficient process, and procedures with which the relevant regulatory institutions are pursuing the goal of sustainable development of the industry (Estache & Lewis, 2010; Teri University, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of managers in executing downstream petroleum regulatory strategies, understand the meaning they hold for those experiences, and how the lesson from the experience can be used to improve the practice of strategy execution and regulatory management for the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry.

B. Interview Questions

1. How do your personal values and world-view inform your perspective on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness?

2. How long have you been involved in managing the regulatory strategy execution processes in the downstream petroleum regulatory institution where you work, and how do you describe the experience?
3. Describe the process of strategy execution in your regulatory institution, and how that process has changed over the last three to five years?
4. What have been the challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry?
5. Briefly describe your role as it relates to strategy execution in the regulatory management process of the institution, and how that role has changed over the last three to five years?
6. How do you perceive the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, its sustainability, and its success factors?
7. How would you interpret the social and psychological meanings of your experience in strategy execution of regulatory management: The implications, inspirations, aspirations, and learning outcome you derive from the experience?
8. What are the leadership and organizational development opportunities you see emerging from your experience of strategy execution?
9. How else will government and leaders of regulatory agencies improve the effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?

C. Perspectives on manager's characteristics

10. What are your perspectives as to the characteristics of managers who achieve effective strategy executions?

D. Post Interview: Comments and/or Observations

Appendix E: Sample of Participant's Interview Transcript PT01

The Topic for Discussion: “**The Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in the Regulatory Management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry.**”

Interviewee (Code Number): PT01

Interviewer: Michael Chinedu Nwonu (PhD in Management)

Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA.

Question No. 1: [How do your personal values and world-view inform your perspective on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness?](#)

Response: The perspective is personal based on regulatory functions and expectations within my 32 years' experience; it is my own thinking. Let us go back to Government policy in the oil and gas industry; whatever regulatory strategy adopted would aim at effectively realizing government policies. Going back to the history of oil in Nigeria, Government was initially docile. Later, government realized it was giving out too much wealth. In the 1970s government interest was in establishing policies and collecting royalties. However, in late 70s government showed more interest and established NNPC, and other Subsidiaries. The Petroleum Inspectorate (PI) was set up as the statutory monitoring agency for the petroleum industry.

Perceptively, a mistake was made: A regulatory body, Petroleum inspectorate was placed under a player, NNPC. The core function of the Petroleum Inspectorate was to see to the accurate implementation of government policies by all operators in the industry including NNPC, map out policies, goals and strategies to collect government revenue. The NNPC, on the other hand, was an operating arm of government.

People started seeing the loophole, and advised Government to excise the Petroleum Inspectorate from NNPC. Government heeded this advice, but unfortunately placed the Petroleum Inspectorate under the supervising Ministry instead of being on its own as an autonomous regulatory institution. Since 1988, the name of Petroleum Inspectorate was changed to Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR). Thus, personal values and world view help in the process of strategic thinking, planning and implementations

Question No. 2: How long have you been involved in managing the regulatory strategy execution processes in the downstream petroleum regulatory institution where you work, and how do you describe the experience?

Response: I started work in DPR on 23rd January, 1987, and have within 33 years, moved through the rank and file, up to Deputy Director (DD) South East. A lot actually evolved. When multinational companies started exploring oil in Nigeria, the interest of Government was on what they can realize as revenue. To have a permit, the charge was five naira (N5.00) only, which extended to 1988. The management of DPR realized it was not good enough. DPR started looking at how revenue can be generated from her activities. These necessitated to series of reviews, increase in revenue and effective and efficient performance that has characterized the regulatory agency up to date. The experience has been wonderful, informative, enriching, educative, responsive and satisfactory for being part of the Team that added value to the industry.

Question No. 3: Describe the process of strategy execution in your regulatory institution, and how that process has changed over the last three to five years?

Response: The handicap was that the organization was tied to government funding. A lot of office facilities and other things were lacking. The DPR set up a Review Committee; leading to a set of charges now being used. The royalty charged was minimal. In the petroleum industry, you talk of putting value to activity and this value is calculated in dollars. The industry is dynamic; the government strategy should be dynamic in line with the global reality. For instance, the charges of certain services had remained same for donkey years until recently. Every strategy implementation involves both the operator and the regulatory agency in line with laid down guidelines and procedures. Finance and mapping strategy for regulating the industry have to be stepped up.

Question No. 4: [What have been the challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry?](#)

Response: The policy is from Government. One's role is to dissect the policy and put it in phases: Short term, medium term, and long term. Starting from short term, how do we go about doing it?

First, we identify the challenges, which mostly hitherto had been finance. We realized we were charging peanuts. We stated what we wanted and prayed to the relevant authorities for permission, legislative powers, and following laid down bureaucratic system. Our strength is that the industry including the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) is given priority by the Presidency. And DPR has the expertise to provide the services.

There are bottlenecks; The Petroleum industry bill (PIB) has for over 10 years been in the legislative system. It would have addressed some of the lapses in the industry. The others have to do with the operators who sometimes fail to keep the procedures and there are consequences.

Question No. 5: Briefly describe your role as it relates to strategy execution in the regulatory management process of the institution, and how that role has changed over the last three to five years?

Response: My role is to lead my Team in follow-up on the policies; implementation is by the people. So, we followed up on the implementation of the policies to make government benefit, and the industry grow.

Question No. 6: How do you perceive the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, its sustainability, and its success factors?

Response: The issue here is that it is not all the policies that succeeded; the multinationals do things that favor them. Government operates 40:60 ratio. They go about these finances; the idea is that they always want to inflate. International market for oil and gas is a global thing. The question is do they keep to standard? We have to equate it globally and checkmate what they are bringing in.

They have to come and discuss with DPR, we look at their plans and benchmark it globally before approval. The processes are taken sequentially to ensure a win-win situation. We point out issues we wanted them to address. Sometimes they go back to the

drawing board. A lot of successes have been achieved and this is mainly due to expertise, integrity and accountability of all involved.

Question no. 7: How would you interpret the social and psychological meanings of your experience in strategy execution of regulatory management: The implications, inspirations, aspirations, and learning outcome you derive from the experience?

Response: In strategy implementation, especially in the oil and gas industry you are dealing with people and the environment. So there are a lot of social and psychological issues that must be considered; the safety of the people, how your operation affects them and their means of livelihood and the environment. As such caution must be applied and the people should be carried along and in some cases be involved. Employment Opportunities should be created for them, educational facilities, hospitals roads, etc. should be established for the benefit of the host communities because whichever way you look at it, there are social and psychological aspects.

Thus, my aspiration is to enhance the livelihood of the people and to create a good and safer environment for the community and the operators. We do more to encourage people to be informed and see the benefits and opportunities deliverables from what is going on in their environment.

Question No.8: What are the leadership and organizational development opportunities you see emerging from your experience of strategy execution?

Response: There are a lot of opportunities and emerging; things that will benefit all and sundry: the economy, government, individuals, etc., but there are challenges. For instance, Enugu Deport and its environ was a beehive of activities when the deport was

set up. There was a lot of trickling down effects to informal sector activities such as food hawkers, pure water sellers, and so on; leading to economic and social growth, things were happening. Suddenly, a lot of unpatriotic attitudes including pipe line vandalizations and crime rate increased, and many people could no longer make a living. There was a case of adulteration in 2013, and the truck was intercepted. We took and analyzed the product sample and found it was not good for consumption.

The Nigerian Civil Defense took up the case, and the case is still in court up to today. This has a lot of chain reactions including waste of time, money and other resources. There was no reason for such a case to linger in court for seven years. These are challenges. Indigenous companies are still less than major Operators; Multinational Companies still have domination in terms of volume of production. However, indigenes are also making a lot of investments and progress in the industry. Indigenes have a lot of prospects; they need to pull resources together, partnership with foreign financiers etc.

Question No. 9: [How else will government and leaders of regulatory agencies improve the effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?](#)

Response: Looking at how improvement can come:

Vandalism of pipelines: Pipelines are vandalized because they are isolated in remote places. In some countries pipelines are in locations that have roads by the sides. Agencies can easily pass through the constructed roads and monitor the pipelines. Even in water ways, the navy can patrol. In Nigeria, nobody goes to the remote isolated locations to

monitor the pipeline. Government can construct roads along the pipe line (not on the pipeline).

Refinery: When Nigeria was planning for the refinery to be built, the car (Beetle) and Peugeot were mainly what we had. Today our roads are congested with cars that means more consumption of PMS. Government should have planned for the future; there were limited strategy or foresight in those days. Rural Electrification Boards (R.E.Bs) was springing up here and there, and the Nigerian Electricity Power Authority (NEPA) was more effective than generating sets were rare. Today every family source of electricity is mainly generating set. Another increase in PMS consumption Government thinking, should be proactive. Refinery capacity was built based on limited thinking or plan of those days. At a time, we felt it was better to import than to refine. Nigeria is supposed to be equipped to refine more products that she can consume, then export the excess to neighboring countries and make more foreign income. Rather we import refined products which have a lot of economic set back on our economy.

We have not been effective in planning for the future, product availability, and managing safety/security. I do not know what Government will lose if they totally deregulated the Downstream sector especially premium motor spirit (PMS). Market forces should be allowed to drive price, thus empowering the public to buy from most competitive and cost effective seller. Looking at it critically, there is something why government is still holding on. We now have a regime of lower and upper limits; monitored deregulation does not help. There are opportunities for more job, economic growth, etc.

Question No. 10: What are your perspectives as to the characteristics of managers who achieve effective strategy executions?

Response: Most of these people are knowledgeable/experts in the field: Policy, planning, and strategy. DPR in those days was given a free hand to employ the best. Experience matters. Some of those who came in to build the petroleum industry in Nigeria were employed overseas, and most from the multinationals here in Nigeria, where they have acquired experiences working with foreign companies. They put in a lot of leadership, dedication, patriotism, and intellectual ability. Over the years, the Finance has been the greatest challenge but this has improved as well. Today leadership roles are assigned in Sections, Divisions, field offices and Zonal offices. Emphasis is now placed on Accountability, Responsibility, Ownership and performance. The policy of DPR has been that the staff should be responsible and claim ownership. A lot of ownership and accountability is bestowed on the workers; they put in their best, knowing fully well that there are a ton and consequences. However, Politics may be overriding.

Appendix F: Sample of Participant's Interview Transcript PT08

A. Interview Protocol

Interviewee (Code Number): _____PT08_____

Interviewer: _____

B. Interview Questions**1. How do your personal values and world-view inform your perspective on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness?**

Organizational effectiveness is a business strategy designed to improve the efficiency of the company without reducing the quality of the products or services. The key to organizational effectiveness is using the right tools and strategies to accomplish a specific goal. From my own perspective, organizational strategy and effectiveness can be realized by:

- ❖ Making use of Human Resources
- ❖ Focusing on education and growth
- ❖ Keeping the customers in mind
- ❖ Working on quality products and services
- ❖ Making good use of technology.

2. How long have you been involved in managing the regulatory strategy execution processes in the downstream petroleum regulatory institution where you work, and how do you describe the experience?

I have been involved in managing the regulatory processes in the downstream petroleum regulatory institution for over a decade and the experiences has been very

interesting. I have worked at the refinery, Depots and jetties and each one of them have their own peculiarities.

At the refinery, we deal with refining of Crude Oil to obtain the white products (PMS, AGO, HHK, ATK etc.) which are pushed to the depots either through pipelines or by petroleum tankers (vessels or ship). Pipelines are the most efficient but due to pipelines vandalism and ruptures, we rely more on petroleum tankers for evacuation.

At the Jetties, this is where petroleum tankers carrying petroleum products berth for onwards discharge to the depots. These vessels might be carrying imported or locally refined products. The vessels are ullage by a team of cargo inspectors cutting across different stakeholders and figures are generated which are transmitted by various parties to their organization.

At the Depots, trucks are used to evacuate the products to various retail outlets across the country. Different stakeholders usually have their representative on ground at the depots to ensure standards are followed during truck out.

3. Describe the process of strategy execution in your regulatory institution, and how that process has changed over the last three to five years?

Any petroleum marketers that want to import petroleum products must be duly registered with the department of petroleum resources and PPPRA. Such marketer must obtain import permit from my Agency PPPRA before products can be imported. When the products arrive the shore of Nigeria waters, the marketer notify (Notice of Readiness) our office and also submit the vessel documents to us. After successful verification of the

vessel documents, teams of cargo inspectors including PPPRA reps at the depots/jetties will go and ullage the vessel with the aim of determining the arrival quantities.

After discharge to depot tank farms, shore dip-off and calculations are done, confirm and signed by all parties represented. Based on the shore receipt figures, the agency advised the government to pay subsidy to the marketer so that the products can be sold to the public at the subsidized price.

Over the last few years, things have changed. Government no longer pay subsidy as a result of deregulating the industry. Marketers bring in products by first obtaining Quantity Notification (QN) from PPPRA and sell the products based on the forces of demand and supply in line with the price band approved by PPPRA. Due to scarcity of foreign exchange, NNPC is now the major importer of petroleum products in Nigeria.

4. What have been the challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry?

The prevalence of the imbalance in relationship between the Oil Marketing Companies and consumers has led to exploitations with cases of adulterated products, under discharge at retail outlets, payment above regulated pump prices, products diversion by marketers, hidden charges by depot operators to off-takers etc.

The inability of our refinery to work at full capacity has been another challenge of the downstream petroleum industry. This has resulted to importation of petroleum products at the international market price thereby pushing up the landing cost as well as the expected open market price (OMP) at the filling station.

There are lots of other challenges which include volatility of oil prices, obsolete laws and regulation, pipeline vandalism, corruption and lack of government funding.

Also, lack of government will to pass the PIB.

5. Briefly describe your role as it relates to strategy execution in the regulatory management process of the institution, and how that role has changed over the last three to five years?

Our Agency (PPPRA) is a Government Agency set up on the recommendations of the 34 members Special Committee on the Review of Petroleum Products Supply and Distribution (SCRPPSD). PPPRA was established as Nigeria's downstream regulator with the objective of managing and eliminating the various problems that characterized the sector.

The Agency's mandates are consequently targeted at achieving efficiency and effectiveness in the Downstream Sector. These mandates amongst others include:

- i. Determine the Pricing Policy of Petroleum Products;
- ii. Regulate the Supply and Distribution of Petroleum Products;
- iii. Create an information databank through liaison with all relevant Agencies to facilitate the making of informed and realistic decisions on pricing policies;
- iv. Moderate volatility in petroleum products prices, while ensuring reasonable returns to operators;
- v. Establish parameters and codes of conduct for all operators in the downstream petroleum sector;
- vi. Prevent collusion and restrictive trade practices harmful in the sector;

- vii. Exercise mediatory role as necessary for all stakeholders in the sector

Over the last three years. Some of these roles have change due to the fact that we have moved from the era of Petroleum Support Fund (PSF) to partial and complete deregulation of the petroleum industry where the prices of petroleum products are being determined by the market forces of demand and supply. Our role as a regulator now is to work with the market fundamentals in our pricing template and come up with a price band for marketers to sell their products. Any marketer selling above the price band or price ceiling could be sanctioned by the appropriate authority.

6. How do you perceive the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, its sustainability, and its success factors?

There has not been an effective regulation in the downstream petroleum industry in Nigeria. Firstly, there are too many regulators performing overlapping functions. The regulators themselves are also not well equipped with the authority to perform their functions. Secondly, the major players in the industry like the NNPC, Major Marketers, and MOMAN etc. don't want anyone to dictate to them how to do their operation. This leads to a lot of agitation between the regulators and the marketers.

Inability to effectively regulate the downstream has given room to lots of sharp practices. Sharp practices are engagement activities by depots and retail outlet workers to make abnormal profits to the detriment of consumers, such as under-measuring of products, collecting extra money before sales, and pumping air into vehicles instead of fuel products.

The Nigerian oil and gas industry is the lifeblood of the Nigerian economy. A well-developed downstream petroleum supply system will have a multiplier effect on almost all forms of business sustenance, including power generation, health, transportation, agriculture, cottage industry, small and medium-size and large enterprises.

To ensure sustainability in the petroleum industry, government must ensure all refineries are working at full capacity, new refineries must be build either by government or individuals. The petroleum industry must be fully deregulated for effective competition. There should also be need for a single regulator backed with appropriate legislative laws. By so doing, there will be product availability, job creation and economic growth.

7. How would you interpret the social and psychological meanings of your experience in strategy execution of regulatory management: The implications, inspirations, aspirations, and learning outcome you derive from the experience?

The social and psychological meaning of my experience as a regulator in the downstream is an interesting one. I was able to relate well with stakeholders and marketers at all levels of operations. I was loved by so many for wanting to follow due diligence in every operations and was also disliked by others for being too strict in making sure standards are followed. The implication is that most of the marketers in the downstream petroleum industry are not responsible. Someone's life could be in danger just by ensuring that standards are followed. You may be seen as too strict and want you out.

I am really inspired by what I do, always finding new ways of doing things to ensure effectiveness and strategic execution of regulation in the industry. I also draw inspiration from some players in the industry who have the wherewithal, human resources and capacity in doing their operation.

My aspiration is that I am very hopeful of a better sustainable petroleum industry both at the regulatory end and that of the marketers or players. With the passage of the proposed PIB, there is going to be a sustainable industry with a success story.

8. What are the leadership and organizational development opportunities you see emerging from your experience of strategy execution?

Leadership is a function of knowing yourself and having a vision that is well communicated in order to achieve organizational goal or objective.

From the experience of strategy execution, I should be able to lead others by example by formulating policies and procedures; a process that provides a structured approach to clarifying, communicating, implementing, and managing strategy. The goal here is to ensure the organization focuses on developing high value capabilities and making investment that optimize values.

9. How else will government and leaders of regulatory agencies improve the effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?

On the part of the government, they should make good policies and allow implementation without interference from members of the same government or public. Like in the case of PIB, it's been agreed that when it is passed into law will address

almost 90% of the problems associated with the petroleum oil and gas sector but due to vested interest from various quarters, it is yet to see the light of the day. Government should also provide an enabling environment for businesses to thrive.

On the side of the regulatory agencies, trainings and retraining of their human resources is very important. You cannot be an effective regulator if you don't know what you are to regulate. They should also invest in technology. Technological tools play an essential role in the efficiency and effectiveness of a company both as office tools or regulatory tools.

C. Perspectives on Manager's Characteristics

10. What are your perspectives as to the characteristics of managers who achieve effective strategy executions?

- a) They know their organization very well.
- b) They are able to assess the current situation, develop a clear strategic direction for the future, and formulate a [strategic map](#) for how the organization achieves that direction.
- c) They focus on effective implementation of the strategic priorities and objectives outlined in the strategic map.
- d) They provide regular opportunities to adapt both the strategy and the approach to implementation to meet ever-changing realities.
- e) They find a common language. Make sure everyone can talk about the **execution** issues you face in the same way.
- f) They walk the talk.

- g) They stay organized.
- h) They are experienced.
- i) They are very knowledgeable.
- j) They are reliable.

D. Post Interview: Comments and/or Observations.

No Comments.

Follow-up Interview

In most developed countries of the world, the petroleum industry is regulated by a single regulator. The regulatory body may have sub offices handling specific roles. In Nigeria for instance, we have NCC regulating Telecommunication's network, NERC regulating Electricity, CBN regulating Banks, FCCPC for Consumers protection etc.

But this is not the case for the petroleum industry. There are so many regulators with overlapping functions. Marketers and consumers of petroleum products are sometimes confused as to whom to channel their complaints. There is no good customer/consumer feedback mechanism for them to report a problem and even if there are, they are not effective, that is why consumers sometimes don't have confidence in any of the regulators. They hardly get justice when they are cheated.

The marketers on the other hand, see the different Regulatory Agencies as exploitations, each coming with their policies to extort money from them. There are usually lots of agitation between the marketers and regulatory agencies.

In my opinion, the regulatory agencies in the petroleum industry will perform better if merged into one formidable indivisible organization. The new organization can be called 'Nigeria Petroleum Regulatory Authority' (NPRA) or Commission (NPRC). The new regulatory body will then be backed up by an Act, with its mandate and powers to sanction clearly spelt out and communicated to members of the public and players in the industry.

The regulatory body will come up with policies to protect the consumers against fraudulent marketers and also developed a channel to interface with the consumers and members of the public for them to get justice if need be.

The Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) pending before the National Assembly aims to harmonize all the legislation and significantly restructures the industry particularly the functions of the various regulatory agencies, intending to eliminate overlaps.

Appendix G: Sample of Participant's Interview Transcript PT16

A. Interview Protocol

Interviewee (Code Number): _____PT16_____

Interviewer: _____Michael Nwonu_____

The Topic for Discussion: “The Effectiveness of Strategy Execution in the Regulatory Management of the Nigerian Downstream Petroleum Industry.”**B. Interview Questions**

10. How do your personal values and world-view inform your perspective on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness?

Answer: Values and experiences are majorly what form perception of any situation. My personal values and world-view is therefore huge in my perception on the realization of organizational strategy and effectiveness.

11. How long have you been involved in managing the regulatory strategy execution processes in the downstream petroleum regulatory institution where you work, and how do you describe the experience?

Answer: About six years thereabout and I must tell you the experience has been on of mixed feelings. There are times you feel so good you have everything under control and by the next minute, you become so overwhelmed with goals that seem insurmountable. The downstream operation is very dynamic and with a good number of players who know their onions and a few more who operate in the sector at short intervals during the course of the year. Because of the different information and knowledge these

groups of people have, you have to always deploy strategies that help them understand their obligations in the sector.

12. Describe the process of strategy execution in your regulatory institution, and how that process has changed over the last three to five years?

Answer: The Agency reviews its Strategic Management Plan yearly which is aligned with the vision and mission of the Agency. This summarily is to ensure effective and efficient distribution of petroleum products across the country, while ensuring that the operators in the sector enjoy reasonable returns on their investments. Strategy execution in the Agency in the last three years in the Agency has been quite intentional.

There has been increased investment in the people (Staff of the Agency), particularly managers who are saddled with the responsibility of cascading the adopted strategies to their teams. Training and retraining of these managers have afforded them with the knowledge and exposure to effectively utilize resources (both man and material) at their disposal. There seems to be more devolution of powers from the centre to the various heads of departments and zones to allow for quick intervention to arising situations which has yielded many positive results.

13. What have been the challenges of effective strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry?

Answer: Like I said earlier during the interview, the Nigerian downstream petroleum sector is a dynamic one with players of diverse interests. Managing all these challenges in a country where the external forces (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) have significant impact on policies of the Agency as well as the

investment plans of the players are not an easy job. For example, the deregulation of the sector has been impacted by the dwindling price of crude oil and as a consequence, refined products in the last two years as a result of global political tensions and more recently in the last year, the pandemic caused by Covid-19.

Despite all efforts of government to make the sector self-sustaining, it has been impossible to convince operators to invest in the importation of petroleum products; also, the uncertainty in the foreign exchange market in Nigeria which is unpredictable has had a negative effect in the execution of strategies by the Agency.

14. Briefly describe your role as it relates to strategy execution in the regulatory management process of the institution, and how that role has changed over the last three to five years?

Answer: As a Chief Regulatory Officer in the Agency, it is my responsibility to supervise cargo importation and products discharges/receipts into tanks at the various depots in the Lagos Zone, monitor the distribution of the products across the country as well as collate reports on these operations sent in by field officers deployed to the jetties and depots within the zone. Ensuring that laid down processes and procedures are followed in accordance with international best practices.

In the last couple of years, my role even though has not changed significantly, I have however continued to help my team members achieve their optimum by being a charismatic team lead. Regarding the operators, I have collaborated with other people in the department to improve the documentation and vessel scheduling process by encouraging the use of technology to transmit information, rather than the hard copies

used many years ago. This has significantly reduced the process time and improved efficiency in the operations of the Agency.

15. How do you perceive the effectiveness of strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry, its sustainability, and its success factors?

Answer: Strategy execution in the regulatory management of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry though not excellent, has continued to improve and can be described as beyond average. Its success factors include better communication, devolution of powers, and empowerment of those saddled with the responsibilities of executing these strategies. The sustainability of the execution of these strategies are largely dependent on the political and economic forces, which the Agent has very little or no influence on.

16. How would you interpret the social and psychological meanings of your experience in strategy execution of regulatory management: The implications, inspirations, aspirations, and learning outcome you derive from the experience?

Answer: The execution of strategy helps to measure individual abilities and competencies as well as collectively as a team on the job. This in turn helps to identify gaps and training needs arising from individual appraisals. Furthermore, it has helped to properly focus the initiative of the team towards achieving a common goal as defined by the strategy. Personally, it has helped me to understand individual differences and how to relate to team members based on their individual situations and needs.

17. What are the leadership and organizational development opportunities you see emerging from your experience of strategy execution?

Answer: My experience of strategy execution has reiterated the importance of leadership which must be situational at every single time. Leaders should be dynamic and use appropriate tools and techniques needed for different situations. Leadership styles for short-term goals may not necessarily be same as those of long-term goals.

Leaders are expected to exhibit the full range of leadership from being transactional to being transformational as situation demands. This can be achieved by defining clear and achievable goals as well as ensuring that resources to carry out the jobs are made available timely. An authentic leader that is empathetic, serves as a coach and mentor and demonstrates integrity on the job improves organizational development opportunities.

18. How else will government and leaders of regulatory agencies improve the effectiveness of strategy execution in regulatory management of the downstream petroleum industry?

Answer: Government and leaders of the regulatory Agencies need to institute an effective feedback mechanism which is expected to help document lessons learned for future use. In addition to this, forecasts and simulations of events draws from other countries experiences should be conducted to help position Nigeria for likely and unforeseen circumstances. The fire brigade approach of responding to situations as they arise should be abolished because it is counterproductive.

D. Perspectives on manager's characteristics

19. What are your perspectives as to the characteristics of managers who achieve effective strategy executions?

Answer: To achieve effective strategic execution, managers should walk their talk to enlist trust and effective performance in their team members. Managers who show empathy on the job are many times more likely to inspire performance in their teams than those who are autocratic always, regardless of the situation. Coaching and mentoring by managers also helps to inspire confidence in team members.

E. **Post Interview:** Comments and/or Observations.

Planning and management are veritable tools to the achievement of goals and objectives of every organization. Executing strategies to fit the plans at achieving the goals therefore becomes very imperative. It is however very important that manager and their teams do not loose focus and therefore must be reminded constantly of the big picture through means adopted by the organization (pictures, meetings, symbols etc).

Realistic, simple and relatable goals are very important so as to clear grey areas and ambiguities. Managers must remember that the greatest resources are the employees, without which goals and strategies would remain as paper work. It therefore makes it germane to recruit the right kind of people for the job, inspire and motivate them along their personal and collective needs and measure their performance based on their abilities. The downstream petroleum sector is in dire need of a roadmap which should be followed by Agencies of government to develop the sector and position the country amongst nations of excellence globally.

Appendix H: Databank Search and Review of Public Documents

The purpose of integrating this databank search and review of public documents into what is essentially a phenomenological inquiry is to increase the methodological rigor and sophistication of the study; eliciting further findings, evidences, and better insight. This data bank search and review of public documents helped to draw a big picture and better understanding of the concept and application of strategy execution (Palmatier, Houston &Hulland, 2018). This review is a critical summary of the documentary evidences of policy and practice (Bahishti, 2021).

The review shows that the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry has been dynamic, information and data-driven, and has documentary evidences of applications. The reviewed documents were essentially policy papers that constituted the Legal and policy environment, the regulatory framework, the technology environment, social and cultural aspects, and some specific relevant guidelines.

The regulatory agencies for the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry derive their strategies from the country's national development policies/goals, their mandates as contained in the enabling laws, and the priorities of the Honorable Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (HMSPR); setting out a developmental road map and focus areas for the industry. These documents set the intentions and strategies for change in the Nigerian oil and gas sphere in particular (as in Table A1) and the economy as a whole.

- i. ***The Law/legal framework:*** Various versions of the Petroleum industry reform bill (OGIC, OGIC 2, PIB, PIGB, and PIB 2020):

Table A1

Various Versions of the Petroleum Industry Reform Bill (2000-2021)

Date	Reform Event
14 th August, 2000	Inauguration of Special Committee on the Review of Petroleum Products Supply and Distribution (SCRPPSD)
28 th March 2001	Inauguration of the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Committee (PPPRC)
2003	PPPRA (Establishment) Act No. 8, 2003
24 th April 2004	Draft National Oil and Gas Policy
7th Sept., 2007	Re-Inauguration of Oil and Gas Industry Committee (OGIC)
5th Sept., 2007	Approval of National Oil & Gas Policy
28th May 2008	OGIC Report completed
2009-2015	Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB)
2016-2017	Petroleum Industry Governance Bill (PIGB); the 7-BIG WINS
2018-Oct. 2021	Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) 2020
October 8, 2021	Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) 2021. The latest version of the petroleum industry bill (PIB 2020) was successfully passed into law by the National Assembly; the president signed it into law, the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), 2021.
2021.	Inauguration of two regulatory agencies (one upstream regulator and one midstream/downstream regulator) for the Nigerian petroleum industry the Nigerian Midstream & Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (MDPRA), and the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission through the merging of PPPRA, PEF, Downstream segment of DPR.

Note: *Researcher compiled from the available administrative records of the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources and the regulatory agencies.*

The key objectives of the Petroleum industry Act (PIA) 2021 include promoting transparent administration of petroleum resources; enabling two, independent industry regulators; creating a conducive environment for petroleum operations; unbundling the NNPC into efficient commercial entities; streamlining the overreaching powers of the minister; and redefining and delineating the roles and responsibilities of institutions across the value chain.

The PIA established the Nigeria Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) and the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA). The Commission and the Authority have become dual regulators of the petroleum industry upstream and midstream/downstream respectively.

The NMDPRA has taken over the interests, rights, obligations, and liabilities of the downstream segment of the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) and the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) (PIA, 2021), and will be principally responsible for licensing, monitoring, supervision of petroleum operations, including enforcement of laws, regulations and standards within the sector. The anticipation of the PIA necessitates an adaptive approach to planning- that is the development of plans that consolidates on the strengths and achievements in the Nigerian Downstream but also allows a smooth transition for future roles as prescribed in the Act.

ii. **The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) 2017-2020.**

The ERGP is national development agenda/plan. The ERGP is a clear road map of strategic policy actions and enablers required to revive the economy and place it on a path of sustainable growth and development. The ERGP focuses on three strategic objectives: restoring growth, investing in our people, and building a competitive economy. The goals of the ERGP were (a) to stabilize the macroeconomic environment through aligning monetary, trade and fiscal policies; accelerating non-oil revenue generation; drastically cut costs; and privatize selected public enterprises/assets.

The ERGP also aimed at achieving agriculture, food security, and deliver on agricultural transformation. Another goal was to ensure energy sufficiency in power and petroleum products an urgent increase in oil production; expanding power sector infrastructure, and boosting local refining for self-sufficiency.

Furthermore, the goal of ERGP was to drive industrialization focusing on SMEs, improve ease of doing business, and accelerate national industrial revolution plan implementation. Finally, the goal of the ERGP was to improve transportation infrastructure through delivering targeted high priority transportation projects, and enable private sector financing of infrastructure.

The development of the ERGP brought about feeling of market uncertainty; it was clear that Government has shifted its focus on developing non-oil revenue and taken actions towards developing the Agricultural sector. This presupposes that there might be a limit to the extent of Government's involvement/ support of the sector and consequently, the market will be left to develop on its own. The Industry though faces uncertainty on a global scale with respect to the volatile price of crude. Market rebalancing forecasted for year 2018 however, the uncertain nature of the petroleum market still offers less respite. Taking advantage of favorable conditions to lure investors will be beneficial to sustaining the Industry.

iii. **HMSPR's Priorities/ Developmental Road Map and Focus Areas**

Each of the HMSPR's road maps focused on some specific priority areas as in Appendix A2. These focus areas were the pillars upon which the government hopes to anchor its developmental policies and the corresponding project and program initiatives within the period.

Table A2

HMSPR's Developmental Road Map and Focus Areas

Period/Regime	HMSPR's Priority Areas
----------------------	-------------------------------

2015-2017	i. Policy and regulation
7-Big Wins	ii. Business environment and investment drive
	iii. Gas revolution
	iv. Refineries and local production capacity
	v. Niger Delta & Security
	vi. Transparency and efficiency
	vii. Stakeholder management and international coordination

2019 -2023	i. Eradicate smuggling of premium motor spirit (PMS) across the Nigerian borders
Nine (9) thematic areas/deliverable priorities	ii. Complete gas flare commercialization program and LPG penetration
	iii. Increase crude oil production to three million per day
	iv. Reduce the cost of crude oil extraction by at least 5%
	v. Aggressively promote passage of the Petroleum industry bill (PIB)
	vi. Aggressively promote passage of deep offshore and inland basin PSCA
	vii. Increase domestic refining capacity
	viii. Create large number of well-paying jobs
	ix. Implement strategy towards taking 100 million Nigerians out of poverty.

There has been legislative inconsistency and lack of regulatory harmony in the reform process which results in confusion, wastage of scarce resources, and unhealthy rivalry (Alabi, 2021). Government has explained its reluctance to remove subsidy in spite

of the recent passage of the petroleum industry bill into law. The Honorable Minister of State for Petroleum Resources (HMSPR) stated that government's continued intervention in determining the pump price of PMS was necessary to safeguard the consumers of the product from being exploited by the oil marketers (Ebo, 2020).

iv. **The Regulatory Framework**

Flowing from the constant changes and the length of the reform, there have been variations in the regulatory framework, changes in the executive have impacted corresponding changes in the priority / focus areas. The regulatory regimes were:

a). The *petroleum support fund (PSF)*: This PSF is the subsidy era. From 2006 to 2020, the federal government of Nigeria spent about N15 trillion on fuel subsidy, and this included subsidy on foreign currencies. Some experts have stated that the subsidy government has been paying over the years were the root of corruption and fraud against the country; having been hijacked by the cabal, it is no longer benefiting the citizens it was targeted at. Marketers faked documents to collect subsidy for products they never imported, and also smuggled subsidized premium motor spirit (PMS) to neighboring countries to make higher profit (Wuyo, 2020).

An irony of the subsidy is the National Bureau of Statistics (2021) report that the intra-city transport fare in Nigeria escalated by an average of 283 %, notwithstanding that the money government pays out as fuel subsidy has been on the increase. The World Bank, IMF, and energy experts have decried the rising cost of petroleum subsidy to government; urging government to bring the subsidy to an end (Olatunji, 2021).

b). *Price modulation mechanism* (Modulated pricing framework).

c). *Appropriate pricing framework (APF)*. The implementation of the APF policy was for effective regulation of supply and distribution of petroleum products, especially the premium motor spirit (PMS). The APF entailed a periodic review of policy framework to reflect current trend and dynamics in oil and gas sector. The development and introduction of price modulation mechanism (PMM) and appropriate pricing framework (APF) in 2016 for validation of petroleum product supply and distribution reignited the commercial vibrancy of the downstream sector. Government saved an estimated sum of over N500 billion through the introduction of APF and PMM (PPPRA, 2016)

v. **Strategic Management Plan**

This 3-year strategic management plan is usually derived from a four-perspective approach to planning of the balanced scorecard performance management system used extensively in private and public sectors organizations around the world. Each of the regulatory agencies translates institution-wide strategic directions into specific operational objectives and measures in line with the Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR) roadmap.

It is against this backdrop that the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) developed her strategic management plan and 2018 annual work plan with a focus on the following six strategic goals: The efficient regulation of supply and distribution of all petroleum products; promotion of downstream investment; promotion of gas revolution; development of codes of conduct; sustainable stakeholder engagement; among others.

The agency decomposed these strategic priorities into six strategic objectives as follows: Regulatory evolution, leveraging on technology, organizational excellence, financial sustainability & stewardship, development of our people, and stakeholder engagement (PPPRA, 2018).

These objectives are continuous improvement outcome to make the strategy more actionable. Over the course of the next three (3) years, all Departments and Business Unit in PPPRA will align to and concentrate their efforts toward six (6) primary strategic goals. These six (6) goals represent the major areas in which PPPRA will move toward a more secure and prosperous future for the Nigerian people. In the broadest terms, these areas concern the domestic Nigerian economy through the stimulation and sustenance of the Nigerian downstream, the increase of the Nigerian human capital base as well as instilling a culture of organizational excellence across PPPRA.

The goals, objectives, strategies, and supporting information in this plan are ambitious, setting forth Agency's intentions through the 2018- 2020 Fiscal Years. The Agency plans to use a suite of performance measures and indicators to evaluate progress toward each of the strategic objective that supports these six (6) goals. Performance measures will be monitored and updated as objectives and programs evolve over time.

In addition to using regularly reported performance data, we plan to conduct in-depth evaluations of programs as well as analysis of more qualitative information to help better understand the success and impact of program strategies and actions. This SMP has been designed to span the period of three (3) years, which at the same time anticipates an evaluation of the level of achievement and possible reviews. In other words, the

Agency's strategic planning is continuous in order to meet the needs of the industry as they may arise.

The critical success factors that will reduce the incidence of unsuccessful implementation of strategic plan were:

- ✚ Leadership ownership and commitment to devote sufficient time, energy and financial support to the entire process including the associated reward and punishment to improve the obligation of the employees
- ✚ Communication: This is more effective when it is centralized, streamlined and coordinated within the organization
- ✚ Human resource capacity: Deliberate effort to plan for competent staffing, providing training and educating the work force.
- ✚ Development and adherence to an annual work plan, which serves as a yearly strategy development manual
- ✚ Implementation discipline: Strict discipline from all implementers; the plan document should be a source of regular reference. Projects should be implemented as scheduled; Outcomes and output need to be delivered in line with the specifications. Revision of plans where necessary should be based on credible reasons and proper justifications.

The Regulatory/Operational Guidelines

The agencies operationalize their mandates and implement their plans through issuance of regulatory guidelines, codes of conduct to guide the market behaviors of the operating companies. Some of these regulatory guides included:

- i. *Guidelines for the importation of petroleum products into Nigeria* (DPR, 2020).

The purpose of issuing and publishing this Guideline is to provide a clear definition of the regulatory requirement for the issuance of permit for the importation of petroleum products, and the administration of vessel arrival notification and vessel discharge at the jetties. This guideline defines among other things, the following: Eligibility to apply for import permit of petroleum products; application conditions for issuance of petroleum import permit; stating the application method, the documentation requirement, and the fees payable. It contains specific guidelines on vessel arrival notification, Product certification for foreign exchange (Forex) returns, and Miscellaneous.

ii. ***Approved guidelines for the administration of petroleum support fund (PSF).***

This document is a 16-page pamphlet that contains a set of specific guidelines, responsibilities and linkages among of the five (5) institutional stakeholders/operators of the petroleum support fund (PSF). These institutions included the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF) who are the custodian of the fund; the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) that served as the regulatory authority/ fund administrator; the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) that performed the role of an inspector; the Petroleum Equalization Fund (PEF) monitored the PSF operations.

The oil marketing companies which consisted of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company and its subsidiaries as well as other major and independent oil companies were the operators in the downstream petroleum market. The federal Government of Nigeria

established the PSF in January 2006 as a subsidy and interventionist fund to stabilize the domestic prices of petroleum products against volatility in the international market.

This subsidy fund was an attempt to stabilize the prices of domestic petroleum product (the premium motor spirit) PMS and mitigate problems associated with it. There were two sources of financing the PSF which were through annual budgetary allocation and accruals generated during the period of over recovery; when the recommended price exceeded market-determined price. There were relevant guidelines on the procurement, storage and distribution of petroleum products as well as the eligibility of marketing companies to draw from the fund.

vi. *Contemporary issues and directives of Government issued from time to time.*

In 2017, the Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR) issued a letter directing all its agencies to develop strategies for increasing Internally Generated Revenue (IGR), reduce personnel costs and exit Treasury budget by 2020. In compliance with this directive, the relevant agencies continued innovating strategies towards achieving financial autonomy while also fine-tuning existing strategies to achieve the objectives. However, one agency planned to attain the status of Partially-funded Government Enterprise (GOE) with effect from January 2020; allowing it fund only its Personnel Budget from the National Treasury. The Capital and Overhead Budget will be funded from the internally-generated revenue (IGR).

The review of public documents shows that Nigeria has been on the road to reform for a very long time. The reform has been appearing imminent on several occasions in the past, and was most likely to come at a time when it was least expected.

A single regulatory body, the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), was overseeing the entire upstream and downstream subsectors of the Nigerian oil and gas industry until 2003.

In 2000, the Federal Government of Nigeria realized, based on the available facts, that the downstream subsector of the petroleum industry was operating sub optimally and almost threatening to atrophy due to many years of policy and regulatory neglect as well as 100% state regulation and control. The state of the industry as at then included the following (Agbaje, 2018):

- ❖ Complete erosion of domestic refining capacity
- ❖ Blighted products supply and distribution system
- ❖ Dearth of investments; resulting in severely limited storage capacity, and other logistic constraints
- ❖ Arbitrary and distorted costing and pricing structure
- ❖ Eroded right of interest
- ❖ Product shortages, adulteration, and profiteering
- ❖ Dominance of the state-owned oil company, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), in the supply chain
- ❖ Overarching government control on policies and factors of production, supply, and distribution.

In 2000, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up a special committee on the review of petroleum products supply and distribution. The special committee identified that the sector needed a phased reform and self-financing status. A meaningful reform

will require the entire overhaul of the petroleum industry; the regulation of all actors in the sector; functioning of existing institutions that are as far as possible self-funding; and structures that support the emergence and continuance of the desired operating environment (Omorogbe, 2017).

The structure here includes the law, institution, and the system. It is necessary for policy to have an enabling law, which provides the structure. On 8th May 2003, the National Assembly enacted the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) establishment Act Number 8 as an autonomous regulatory body for the downstream petroleum subsector, and with a mandate among other things, determines the pricing policy and regulates the supply and distribution of petroleum products to the Nigerian economy.

The Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR) and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) have been silently formidable in driving the policy. Along these ends, the Federal Ministry of Petroleum Resources has been a primary driver of the reform; the road to deregulation and other reform initiatives. These initiatives aim at refocusing government policy-making, regulatory agencies, and commercial entities to ensure they operate optimally for the overall benefit of the Nigerian economy (PPPRA editorial, 2017).

The specific initiative that followed the removal of petroleum subsidy in 2016 included the price modulation, appropriate pricing framework (APF), and the subsequent development of *7-BIG WINS*, which was a downstream development roadmap that also envisioned a shift from focus on oil to gas (Kachukwu, 2016; PPPRA, 2018). Under the

7-BIG WINS, government recognized the centrality of the role of a regulatory agency as the commercial regulator of the full spectrum of the downstream operations.

Government noted that efforts at realizing the reform objectives will require essential leadership qualities such as critical and innovative thinking, new ideas, technology, and partnership among various stakeholders (Kachukwu, 2017). The implementation of these initiatives has led to new investments in the industry (Agbaje, 2018).

The goal of government in the reform and institutional regulation of the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry is to reposition the sub-sector and open up the market for competition and more investment; leading to improved efficiency and transparency. The vision is the attainment of a strong, vibrant downstream subsector of the petroleum industry, where refining, supply and distribution of petroleum products are self-financing and self-sustaining.

Regulation does not come from the legislators whose responsibility is to make the enabling law for the regulator. The head of the regulatory body makes the regulations. It was imperative for the regulatory agencies in the Nigerian downstream petroleum industry to be properly positioned to reap the benefits of change through aligning their activities with the national objectives/policy, and promote sustainable development of the country. This policy alignment implies that the interest of any institution must be subsumed within national interests for the greater good of the country and the people.

The Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) Establishment Act (2003) listed the key mandates of the regulatory agency to include, the following:

- i. Regulate the supply and distribution of petroleum products
- ii. Determine the pricing policy of petroleum products
- iii. Establish parameters and codes of conduct for all operators in the downstream petroleum sub-sector
- iv. Create information data bank through liaison with all relevant agencies to facilitate the making of informed and realistic decisions on pricing policies
- v. Moderate volatility of petroleum products prices, while ensuring reasonable returns on the investment
- vi. Maintain constant surveillance over all key indices relevant to pricing policy and periodically approve benchmark prices for all petroleum products; to identify macro-economic factors with relations to prices of petroleum products and advise the Federal Government on appropriate strategies to dealing with them
- vii. Prevent collusion and restrictive trade practices harmful in the sector
- viii. Create firm linkages with key segments of the Nigerian society, and ensure that its decision and enjoy widest possible understanding and support.
- ix. Exercise mediatory roles as necessary for all stakeholders in the sector
- x. Carry out such other activities as appear necessary or expedient for the full and efficient discharge of its functions.

The Act intended a downstream regulator that had the capacity to address issues of concern within the downstream including the problems of product supply and distribution, pricing policy, codes of conduct, information service, strategies for dealing

with the macro-economic factors, mediation among stakeholders, and inefficient market operations. Past efforts at the reform of the petroleum industry in Nigeria has been instructive; having failed to realize the desired change. The reform is usually a modification of the existing institution to provide solution to whatever they perceive as the problem at the time.

The changes were hardly accompanied with the amendments to existing laws and consideration of the functionality/operation of the entire industry. This failure resulted in the existence of two regulatory institutions that have overlapping functions, and one of the two regulatory bodies has no enabling law. The supposed reforms were mere reorganization of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) with little or no attention to other areas.

Conversely, the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA), which was the only government institution with downstream capability, was dwarfed by a giant national oil company, and an older and more established regulator; and has been struggling to evolve under whatever option government may choose to adopt; either a single regulator or dual regulatory agency for the downstream and upstream petroleum subsectors.

Some of the newly recruited staff has been posted to support the field operations. This action will further boost the genuine efforts of the Government to evolve an end-to-end monitoring system for the generation of more reliable data in the Sector.

Other key challenges, as you are aware include:

- i. Non-participation of Oil Marketing Companies in PMS supply.

- ii. Agitations by Industry stakeholders for improved operational margins.
- iii. Inadequate organizational structure.
- iv. Lack of automation of Business Process.

Through the various policy initiatives, interventions, collaborations and other activities by the Agency, the following achievements were recorded during the year:

- i. Adequate Fuel supply nationwide all-year round with over 40 day's PMS sufficiency.
- ii. Improved commercial viability of the sector encouraging sustained investment in downstream infrastructures especially LPG facility.
- iii. Deepening of domestic capacity for LPG utilization.
- iv. Completed validation of nationwide Petroleum products truck-out data.
- v. Development and implementation of Competency Management program for staff to enable identification of skill gaps, development of strategic manpower and talents.
- vi. Development of Condition of Service for staff, and Codes of Conduct for Downstream Operators. Improved functionality at the Headquarters with the design, construction and furnishing of State-of-the-art Conference rooms, Auditorium and Seminar Hall.

In 2019 to 2021, the regulatory agencies attuned their activities towards the achievement of MPR's strategic priorities, deliverables and objectives.

The key performance indicators for the regulatory agencies were tracked and reported by the MPR in line with the approved roadmap, priorities, plans and programs.

The Agency is expected to deliver on the following Strategic objectives:

- i. Strengthen monitoring and tracking of PMS Supply and Distribution.
- ii. Implement cutting edge technology to allow seamless tracking.
- iii. Engage Stakeholders on Roadmap for the implementation of Key priorities.
- iv. Commence Operations on the Nigerian Gas Flare Commercialization Program.
- v. Encourage International Oil Companies and Oil Marketing Companies to invest in Renewable Energy.

In addition, the Agencies planned to step-up their drives towards the achievement of a vibrant and sustainable downstream sector through:

- i. Completion of the automation of business process project.
- ii. Conduct of nationwide retail outlet survey.
- iii. Continued implementation of competency management program through the engagement of the services of consultants
- iv. Training and retraining of staff to acquire industry-specific skills.
- v. Development of cost-reflective Tariffs for downstream infrastructures.

Conduct of sensitization programs on domestic LPG penetration.