

Abstract

Using dynamic capabilities theory, complex adaptability theory and institutional theory, the study investigated the extent to which organizational learning, firm resources, institutional isomorphism, organizational adaptability explain strategy execution in Uganda's transport firms. Transport firms in Uganda operate in a very volatile environment with each transport firm pursuing unique strategies which require different executions. This turbulent environment has created difficulties for road transport companies to run and manage their business effectively yet, being a land locked country, Uganda relies mainly on road transport for mobility of people and products. This suggests that there is a need to investigate the execution of strategies in such a country to foster the sector's growth and sustainability. As such, there was need to develop a framework that promotes successful strategy execution among transport firms. The study theorised and hypothesized basing a case study of a transport Pioneer Easy Bus (PEB) that had developed excellent strategies but did not succeed in executing them successfully. The study took an explanatory sequential cross-sectional mixed research design as guided by critical realism philosophy. This entailed collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at a single point in time. Initially, a pilot study was conducted among 34 transport firms to determine the reliability and validity of the study instrument. Subsequently, the quantitative data for the final study was collected from a sample of 95 PSV transport firms. The data was then entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 25) for preliminary analysis and later aggregated to the unit of analysis. Thereafter, it was imported into SMART PLS for further analysis using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). A bootstrap approach was employed for the mediation test. The qualitative data was collected from 10 cases and analysed using the Gioia methodology with the aid of the NVivo version 9 software from which themes and subthemes were generated. The findings in respect to the study objectives indicated that the study variables explained 83.7% variances in strategy execution. The findings also indicate that organizational learning, firm resources, and institutional isomorphism are directly related to strategy execution. Unlike organizational learning, firm resources and institutional isomorphism are also directly related to organizational adaptability. Moreover, organizational adaptability partially mediates the relationship between firm resources, institutional isomorphism, and strategy execution but does not mediate the relationship between organizational learning and strategy execution. These quantitative results are further complemented by qualitative findings obtained from senior managers and passengers of transport firms in Uganda. Furthermore, this study provides evidence that using a multi theoretical approach provides a better explanation of strategy execution among transport firms in Uganda. Basing on the findings of the study, policy makers like URA should set flexible taxes and other operating requirements depending on the environmental outcomes to enable them survive in volatile environment and consider subsidizing taxes on new vehicles for public transport to make them affordable. For practitioners, senior managers need to understand the rules and regulations governing the operation of transport in Uganda to enable them not to be charged with non-compliance. Methodologically, the study findings indicated that strategy execution phenomenon is better understood by studying both the objective and subjective aspects through collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. This is because execution realities are both structured and unstructured. This study's cross-sectional design limits its scope; future longitudinal studies are needed to explore strategy execution over time. Future research could investigate additional factors beyond organizational learning, firm resources, and institutional isomorphism. Additionally, exploring other transport sectors, like air, rail, and water, could provide valuable comparisons for successful strategy execution.