

Sustainable Strategic Management Practices (SSMP) Implemented Within the Food Industry: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: Sustainable strategic management is the new critical component within the business environment. Organizations are encouraged to adopt the use of SSMP to enhance their competitiveness in the long run. The purpose of this paper was to systematically review literature related to the implementation and adoption of Sustainable Strategic Management Practices within the food industry. This paper made use of a systematic literature review in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the SSMP that are being implemented within the food industry. Through the use of SLR, the paper initially identified 1047 articles, these were screened and the paper excluded 224 articles owing to the fact that they were not speaking to the aspects that the paper was looking forward to. 192 articles were also excluded owing to the fact that they lacked the depth that the paper was looking forward to, the paper ended up with 32 articles that spoke to the key aspects that the paper was exploring in the available literature. The paper found out that in the adoption of SSMP firms faces a lot of key aspects that included the regulatory pressures, the firms must in cooperate a massive comprehension of the regulatory environment and tailor make their strategies in relation to the needs and demands of the regulatory environment. The leadership must show massive commitment for the success execution of SSMP. There must be clear lines of communication in order for enhanced business and gratification of the consumers in the long run for the business. The paper concludes that for enhanced SSMP within the food industry, the internal and external business environment plays a pivotal role in the organizations.

Keywords: sustainable strategic management practices, leadership, food industry, Innovation, organizations

INTRODUCTION

The business environment in which organizations are operating calls for the robust implementation and adoption of key strategies that have the capacity of turning the fortunes of organizations, (Porter, and Kramer, 2011). The food industry plays a pivotal role in the lives of consumers and hence the various businesses that are operating within the food industry needs to come up with massive strategic approaches that they adopt in the desire to offer the best of services to the various consumers in the market. Organizations are always on the outlook of the various approaches that have the capacity of enhancing their functionality as well as their performance in both

the long and short run for the business. According to Hernandez, and Cook, (2023) adoption of SSMP is imperative for the organizations in the food industry as it has the capacity of linking the day-to-day functions of the business to the external demands within the business environment. The current business environment tends to have a whole lot of regulatory aspects that have to be well appreciated by the businesses within the food sector. There are ecological rules and regulations which have a bearing impact on the functionality as well as the performance of the business. As the businesses are operating, they have to take note of the demands of the regulatory aspects and implement measures through the implementation of SSMP that can enhance their functionality as well as development of a health triple bottom line for the business, (Kaplan, and Norton, 2001).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Management and the implementation of SSMP

The implementation of Sustainable Strategic Management practices requires the management within an organization to be capable of making massive decisions that are mainly centered at enhancing the overall performance of the organization (Geissdoerfer, Vladimirova, & Evans, 2018). This approach requires the management to be well positioned in the institution and being able to pick the various business units that are integrated. According to Elkington, (1997) the integration of organizational business units can be linked to the various aspects such as the functionality of the business units, the competitiveness of the sub units as well as the corporate management approaches that are found within the various sub units in the business. This therefore means that as managers, there is massive need for the understanding of the functionality of the sub units in order to be able to create unique SSMP that can enhance the triple bottom line of the business in the long run. According to Porter and Kramer, (2011), the organizations need also to have a better comprehension of the various functional levels in order to enhance the aspect of sustainability within the organization.

Supply chain and the implementation of SSMP within Food industry organizations

Jones, Robinson, & Smith, (2016) are of the view that functionality speaks to several issues such as the supply chain aspects that are associated with a business unit, the raw materials that which are needed by the business and hence the capacity of the management being able to comprehend the and formulate decisions that are capable of taking the organization to the next level. The majority of the firms that are operating within the food industry tend to have a number of sub units and for effectiveness, the organization management needs to be well aware of the needs of each and every sub unit and this has the capacity of enhancing the functionality of the sub unit leading to the attaining of a health triple bottom line, (Barney, 1991). According to Hawken, Lovins, & Lovins, (1999) the managers of the various business units in an organization have to position themselves on the right paths within the organization, these paths will eventually create synergies within the organization and fostering a culture of shared values in the organization leading to enhanced institutional development and the gratification of the consumers.

Value creation as a result of SSMP implementation

According to Dyllick and Hockerts (2002) the implementation of SSMP within an organization has the capacity of creating a core value that can be used in the development of an organization's strategies. The organization's strategies tend to create an organization's identity which has to be grounded on a robust commitment to the issues of sustainability within an organization, (Barney, and Hesterly, 2010). The current business environment is comprised of competition and the capacity of organization to adopt and implement SSMP leads to effective resources allocation; it can also lead to enhanced utilization of the feedback that will be emanating from the diversity of the internal and external stakeholders that which are found within the business, (Burgelman, Christensen, & Wheelwright, 2009).

Each and every business operates within the confines of stakeholders which emanates from the internal and external business environment. David, (2019) is of the understanding that these stakeholders have their

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understanding of the business as well as the impact that which the business ought to have to the stakeholders, and hence the feedback that emanates from the stakeholders remains important for the sustainability of the business. This therefore calls for institutions within the food sector to strategically adopt and implement SSMP as a driver of the various activities that which are undertaken within the organization as well as the ever-changing business environment which calls for innovativeness, (Dess, Lumpkin, & Eisner, 2008).

SSMP organizational innovation and profitability

Dyer, Godfrey, Jensen, & Bryce, (2020), the implementation and adoption of SSMP does not merely hinge on the profitability aspects of the business, it also speaks to the various other issues that include the innovation within the business, the creation of sustaining approaches that capacitates the various stakeholders within the business to be accountable for their actions within the business. According to Senge (1990), the adoption of SSMP can lead to the creation of novel services which have the capability of enhancing the competitiveness of the business as well as the development of customer-oriented products which also responds to the needs of the current business environment. Dyllick and Hockerts (2002) spoke of the aspects of continuous learning, the business environment in which the organizations are operating calls for the businesses to be well positioned on the right paths in terms of learning the new dictates of the business environment.

The business environment is calling for individuals who have the capacity and capability of understanding and appreciating the changes that are happening as well as the impact that which can be conveyed by these changes, (Garcia, Lee, & Patel, 2022). The management tends to be on the forefront in the implementation of strategies that can actually transform and change the entire business leading to the creation of a competitive advantage in the business through the implementation and adoption of SSMP approaches.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In an attempt to review the SSMP implemented within the food industry, this paper made use of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis. This approach was adopted owing to its capacity to evidently categorize literature that has been formerly written around the aspects of SSMP implementation and adoption in the food industry. The data that has been generated is significantly analyzed through content themes with the conclusive desire of closing the gaps that are evident in the current literature. The collection of data was selected from journals which were gathered from credible databases. The current paper made use of the Scopus database, which is characterized as a high-quality data base as well as a reliable which contains articles that were published around the SSMP adoption and implementation. The current paper reviewed the journals in order to have a clear view and comprehension with regards to the trends on the implementation SSMP adoption and implementation within the food industry.

Identification, screening and eligibility

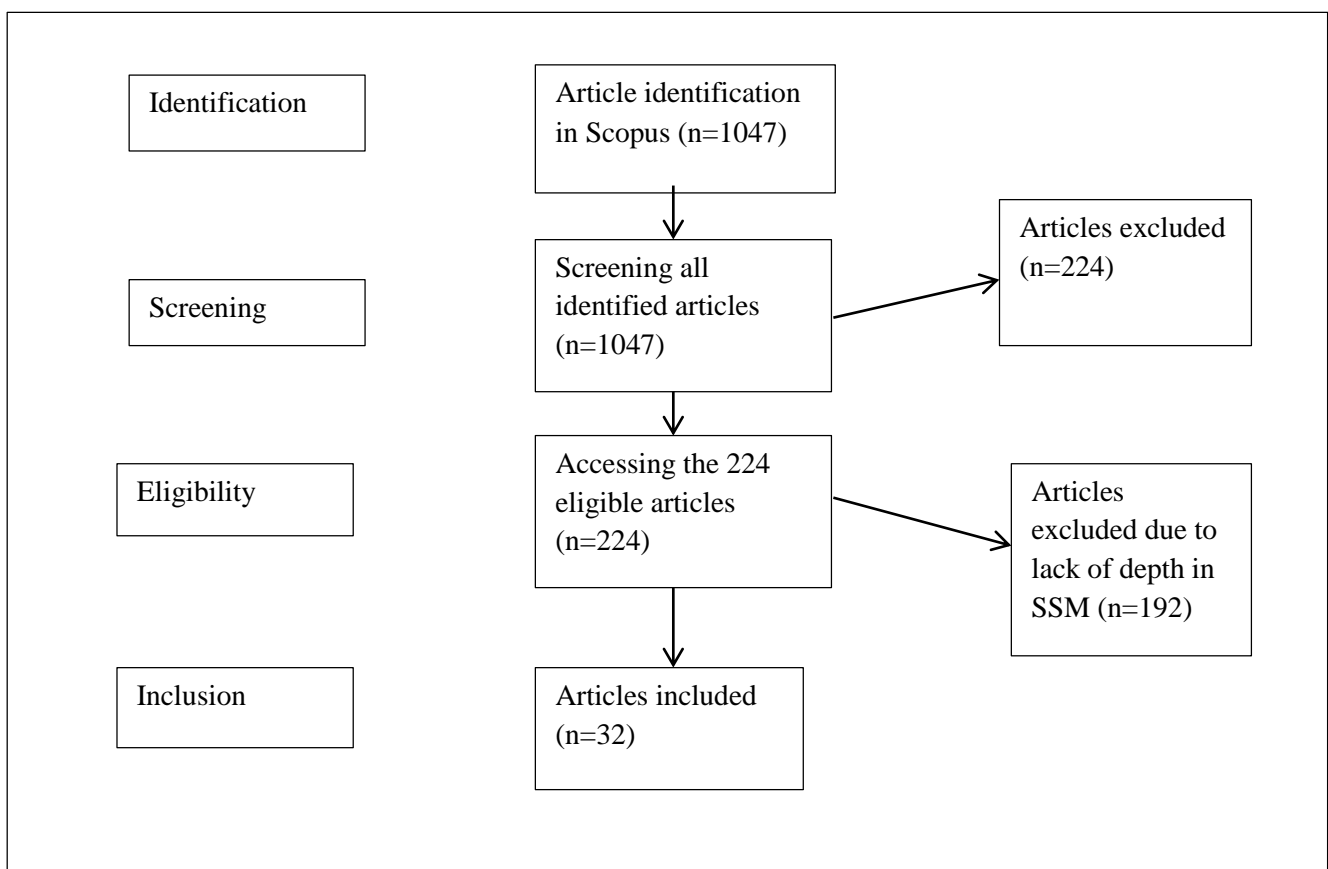
The initial approach to this paper was to classify and choose the articles that were regarded to be suitable and related to the scope of this paper. In order to accomplish this, the paper made use of keywords that are related to SSMP implementation and adoption. These were sought for in the Scopus data base. Through the use of keywords in search, the Scopus managed to convey 1047 articles that are related to SSMP implementation and adoption.

The article identification phase was regarded as the initial phase of the process in this paper, which was followed by the screening process which was grounded on the inclusion and exclusion approach. Articles that were deemed to be irrelevant to the purpose of the paper were excluded from the paper in order to pave way for a reliable outcome of the paper. The articles that were considered to be appropriate for the current paper were included and retained in the paper. The inclusion criterion that was adopted in this paper encompasses the document type, the publication stage, source type as well as the language, those articles that were published in English formed part of the articles reviewed in this paper, articles that were published in other languages were

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development-UK excluded in this paper. Accordingly, after the screening process, 224 articles from the 1047 were then selected to be reviewed in this paper.

The concluding stage was checking the eligibility of the articles. Of the selected 224 articles, they were then posed to the eligibility testing based on the titles, the abstracts as well as the main contents of the articles. Subsequently the articles clearly articulating the SSMP implemented within the food industry were conclusively selected. As an outcome, the current paper managed to select 32 articles for the systematic literature review, these were said to be suitable for the attainment of the aims of the current paper. Figure 1 resembles the selection process which was implemented in the current paper.

Figure 3.1: PRISMA flow diagram



Source: Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, (2009)

Accordingly, 32 articles were found to have a relationship with SSMP adoption and implementation in the food industry and they were then reviewed in relation to the targets of the current paper. The current study developed sub-themes for SSM adoption and implementation within the food industry and reviewed the related literature emanating from the selected 32 articles. The findings are now presented in the subsequent section of the current paper.

RESULTS

This part of the paper presents the results that emanated from the literature review of the 32 articles around the SSMP implementation within the food industry. The current boom in technological adoption is calling for various businesses to implement key strategies that are targeted at enhancing the competitiveness of the businesses as well as the enhanced market share for the businesses.

SSMP and organisational efficiency

Green, and White, (2023) indicated that the implementation of SSMP plays an impressive role in the correct allocation of resources to the various sub units within an organization. An organization operates with various SBUs and these SBUs require resources for them to effectively function, (Harrington, and Moore, 2016). Through the adoption and implementation of SSMP, the businesses are able to give the SBUs the right resources at the right time that leads to enhanced operational efficiency, (Anderson, and Brown, 2020). As the businesses are operating, one key approach that has to be adopted in the business is making effective use of the limited resources. The resources need to be allocated to the areas where they are massively needed. This results in the organisation managing to perform effectively as well as the organisation being competitive in its industry owing to the fact that it is using the limited resources effectively at the right time in the right quantities, (Barney, and Hesterly, 2010). Monitoring and evaluation of the resources has to be adopted as a sustainable practice within the business environment for sustained business operations.

The findings of the current study indicated that the current business environment constitutes a robust use and implementation of technologically oriented strategies and systems. This therefore means that as organisations are operating, they need to be sure that all the strategies that they are adopting are technologically oriented, the technological orientation results in the organization effectively responding to consumer needs and wants on time, enhanced competitiveness of the organisation as well as the enhanced meeting of market demands as well as market regulations. In order for a business to embrace the technological advancement, there is need for effective resources allocation within the business's SBUs, (Bansal, and DesJardine, 2014). The current business environment has taken a shift and this shift calls for the players within the business to strategically engage in robust investment in technologically oriented systems that will eventually lead to the attainment of economies of scale for the entire business units.

Dyer, et al, (2020) are of the view that apart from the adoption and implementation of technology, effective allocation of resources, there is need for the investment into the key drivers of organisational development. According to Briones, and Felzen, (2019), these are the human resources who are capable of driving the functionality of the organization on a day-to-day basis. To attain the motivation and the creation of a motivated workforce, intrinsic motivational approaches as well as extrinsic motivational approaches have to be created in an organization, (Freeman, 2010). Such can be attained through training and development of the employees so that they are hands on to the changes that have engulfed the business environment and can work in tendon to the changes that are found in the business environment, (Burgelman, Christensen, & Wheelwright, 2009).

Through employee training and development, the organisations are capacitated to effectively make use of the resources; they align their day-to-day activities to the vision of the organization owing to the fact that there is the zeal as well as the massive understanding on resources utilisation within the entire organization. According to Brown, Green, & Patel, (2020), training and development, resources allocation and investment in technology are not enough without monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation approaches can be used by businesses to identify the loopholes, gaps as well as to record all the success stories that would have been recorded through the implementation of strategies in the business, (David, 2019). The SSMP that are being adopted in the businesses has to be accompanied by a lot of monitoring activities to enhance the activities and close down the gaps that will be noticed within the business, this has the capacity of enhancing the competitiveness of the business as well as the satisfaction of the several consumers within the business.

Leadership commitment and SSMP implementation

Dess, Lumpkin, & Eisner, (2008), noted that the adoption of SSMP is not regarded as a simple step within an organization; there are stakeholders that are pivotal in making sure that the SSMP has been received with great awareness in the organization. The leadership and organisational management need to show some level of

commitment to change as well as to the alignment of the organisational vision to the dictates of the business environment, (Freeman, 2010). The organisational leaders as the head of the institutions develop key strategies that have to be sustainable and are capacitated in driving the institutional vision, (Garcia, Lee, & Patel, 2022). This consequently means that as the organization is developing its strategies leadership commitment has to prevail through moral support, financial support as well as worker developmental supports that eventually substantiate the sustainable adoption and implementation of SSMP in the organization. According to Green, & Philips, (2021), where the leadership does not show their commitment to new institutional approaches, it becomes very difficult and challenging for the organization to implement long lasting strategies that can eventually drive the competitiveness of the business.

Leadership commitment is also shown through recurring innovation approaches that will be implemented in the organisation more often, (Harrington, and Moore, 2016). According to Hernandez, and Cook, (2023), the current business environment is ever changing and the changes that are witnessed in the business environment calls for a leadership that clearly understands its duties to drive the institutional vision to the next level. The institutional vision can be driven by way of introducing new sustainable business approaches, where the leaders are on the forefront in steering the innovation, (Kaplan, and Norton, 2001). Green, and Philips, (2021) posits that a committed leadership develops a workforce that also keen on developing novel business approaches that enhances the performance of the business as well as the competitiveness of the business.

One key aspect that is happening from the external business environment is the aspect of rules, regulations and laws that guide the operation of the businesses, within the food industry, the leaders have to show massive commitment to the adoption and observation of the rules, laws and regulations that prevail in the external environment, (Jones, Robinson, & Smith, 2016). Such comprehension denotes that the business will be able to develop strategies that are aligned to the demands of the business environment and hence the strategies can be sustainable for a long time in the business environment. Lien, and Mguyen, (2018), noted that leadership commitment creates unity of purpose in the organization; it creates the desire to win as a team as well as the suppleness in terms of the embracing of change within the organization.

Leadership which is committed to the attainment of organisational goals draws clear communication lines for the stakeholders in the industry, (Peterson, and Lee, 2021). This means that communication within the organization has to be up and down, this allows the management to effectively communicate their grievances while at the same time allowing the employees to share their views with organisational leadership. Thus, creating an institution that is grounded on information sharing. Stead, and Stead, (2015), information is the key to success when it is properly used in an organization.

Information is very important in an environment that is ever changing and hence the organization must draw clear communication lines that allow for the sharing of information within the organization. Through information sharing, the management gets to know the key result areas that need massive investment in terms of resources, trainings, capacity building exercises as well as technological investments, (Wilson, 2015). This results in the organization being positioned on the right paths in terms of understanding the consumer needs as well as the approaches that can actually be adopted in order to gratify the needs of the consumers. A business that dwells much on information sharing effectively addresses the concerns of the various stakeholders while at the same time addressing its own vision through adopting sustainable strategic management approaches, (Wilson, 2015).

Regulatory influence in SSMP implementation

Kumar, Thompson, & Martinez, (2022), noted that businesses don not operate in a vacuum, they operate in an environment that is comprised of a number of rules and regulations that have to be observed in order for the businesses to attain their goals. As the businesses are developing and implementing strategies, they need to be in line with the current rules and regulations, this facilitates enhanced and smooth business operations for the

reason that there won't be the availability of hiccups that hinders the businesses in the execution of their day to day activities, (Smith, and Rosa, 2019).

There are rules that protect the environment, as businesses there is need for the practice of proper waste disposal approaches that leads to an enhanced business environment, (Anderson, and Brown, 2020). Observation of the climate has also to be key in the business environment as they are operating, failure to adhere to the environmental rules and regulations leads to penalties from environmental protection institutions and hence affecting the triple bottom line for the business. This therefore means that as organisations are operating the legal environment is a key environment that has to be well observed as it can capacitate the operation of the business, (Garcia, 2021). Business that operate with the understanding of rules, laws and regulations are poised for attainment of success in both the long and short run for the entire businesses, (Clark, and Williams, 2021).

Clark, and Williams, (2021), went on to allude that there are taxation and consumer protection laws that have to be observed by the businesses operating within the food industry. Green, and White, (2023), the food products and services have to be saved in an environment that is clean; this capacitates the reduction of spread of diseases, this have to be taken cognisance of by the food organisations so that they remain relevant in their organisational activities leading to the attainment of organisational vision and mission in the long run. In order to enhance smooth operations, businesses need to follow up on all the regulatory issues within the country, (Hawken, Lovins, & Lovins, 1999). The organizations have to observe all the available regulatory aspects from the aspects of taxation, paying all the necessary taxes that they are supposed to pay, leading to the success of the business in its endeavour, (Jones, Robinson, & Smith, 2016). Regulatory observation is important and it has to be well followed and implemented in order for the organization to attain economies of scale as well as the gratification of the consumers in the long run, (Peterson, and Lee, 2021). SSMP that is implemented in line with the regulatory requirements leads to the success adoption of sustainable strategies in an organization.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation and adoption of SSMP within the food industry calls for massive comprehension of the regulations that guides the operation of businesses, businesses need to be well aware of the various rules and regulations that are at the epicentre of their businesses, (Kiron, et al. 2013). These rules and regulations are pivotal in the development as well as the alignment of the policy frameworks and strategic frameworks that are imperative for the competitiveness of the businesses. An alignment of business activities with the rules and regulations in a country are imperative for the fact that they then can align the strategic objectives that the business is intending to attain in the long run. In addition to the comprehension and implementation of the rules and regulations within the business environment, success adoption of SSMP is also hinged on the leadership commitment.

The leadership in an organization are very important when it comes to the adoption of SSMP, they are the key personnel who are responsible for driving the adoption of SSMP, and they are at the epicentre in terms of sourcing for the resources as well as creating a positive environment that encourages the implementation of SSMP, (Smith, and Taylor, 2015). When the resources are available, the leadership through their commitment make sure that the resources are placed where they are needed most so that a comprehensive impact can be derived from the implementation of the SSMP through the proper allocation of the resources within the business, (Garcia, Lee, & Patel, 2022). In the same notion, leadership commitment is also at pivot in terms of creating an environment that encourages success as well as creating a motivational environment for the various employees so that they can actually have the desire of wanting to embrace the new change that will be coming into the organization.

The implementation of SSMP is also hinged on the adoption of clear communication lines which have to be followed in an organization, (Smith, and Rosa, 2019). The literature that has been reviewed pointed to the fact that one of the key imperatives is grounded on the developing clearly defined communication channels that have to be well followed in an organization for it to effectively implement SSMP and hence a change within the

business context, which leads to the success of the business initiatives in the long run. Communication is an important aspect in an organization and hence it has to be offered much preferences between both the internal and external stakeholders so that the organization can incorporate the feedback that is emanating from the diverse groups of stakeholders and use it in the improvement of its strategies leading to the development of sustainable strategies that enhances organisational effectiveness.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study imply that the organisations that are operating in the food industry needs to incorporate a whole lot of critical aspects in their day-to-day business activities. The management and leadership need to be innovative, this innovativeness have the capacity of conveying the organisations with key approaches that can actually be used in the competitiveness of the business (Briones, and Felzen, 2019). The understanding of the external business environment is an important constituent in the business food industry; the food industry is controlled by a lot of key aspects that span from the regulations down to the safety and health components. These have to be well incorporated in the strategies that the organisations are implementing for enhanced institutional development as well as the enhanced competitiveness of the businesses.

Businesses that are operating in line with regulatory demands are poised for success in comparison to those organisations that do not comply with the rules and regulations in the environment. This therefore calls for the management to be well positioned in terms of comprehending the business environment as it has a diverse of impacts to the functionality of the business as well as the success adoption of sustainable strategic management practices. Sustainable management practices also hinge of the availability of resources and hence the management and organisational leadership are key in sourcing the funding for effective deliverables of projects.

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Author contribution statement

Spy Mukonori and Abubaker Qutieshat participated in conducting this research study. Their participation in this study was not equal, with Spy Mukonori involved in the majority of the conceptualization, data curation as well as the formal analysis, the initial composition of the paper, writing, reviewing and manuscript editing. All the authors performed analysis and they were liable for the creation of visualisations in the study with the desire of illuminating the study conclusions. All the authors conveyed logical content, comprehensively edited the manuscript, approved the final version for submission and ominously agreed to be liable for all the work contained in the paper.

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