



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

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Host-society uncertainty and risk management in Nigeria

Nordic project marketers' sensemaking under examination

ACTA WASAENSIA 344

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION 140
MARKETING

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Julkaisija Vaasan yliopisto	Julkaisupäivämäärä Maaliskuu 2016	
Tekijä(t) Isau Adeyeri Ganiyu	Julkaisun tyyppi Monografia	
	Julkaisusarjan nimi, osan numero Acta Wasaensia, 344	
Yhteystiedot Vaasan yliopisto Kauppatieteellinen tiedekunta Markkinoinnin yksikkö PL 700 65101 Vaasa	ISBN 978-952-476-660-9 (painettu) 978-952-476-661-6 (verkkojulkaisu)	
	ISSN 0355-2667 (Acta Wasaensia 344, painettu) 2323-9123 (Acta Wasaensia 344, verkkojulkaisu) 1235-7871 (Acta Wasaensia. Liiketaloustiede 140, painettu) 2323-9735 (Acta Wasaensia. Liiketaloustiede 140, verkkojulkaisu)	
	Sivumäärä 188	Kieli englanti
	Julkaisun nimike Kohdemaan yhteiskunnan epävarmuus ja riskinhallinta Nigeriassa: Tutkimuksen kohteena Pohjoismaisten projektimarkkinoijien ymmärryksen rakentuminen	
Tiivistelmä Nopeasti muuttuva ja turbulenti liiketoimintaympäristö lisää epävarmuutta ympäristöön ja yritykseen liittyvistä muuttujista, kasvattaa riskiä ja vaikeuttaa yrityksen menestyksen ennustettavuutta. Nämä piirteet ovat tyypillisiä nousevalle afrikka-laiselle liiketoimintaympäristölle tehden siitä nopeasti muuttuvan ja epävarman. Menestyäkseen ja selvitäkseen näillä markkinoilla yrityksen täytyy jatkuvasti tarkkailla, vastata ja mukautua näihin ulkoisen ympäristön epävarmuustekijöihin. Tässä tutkimuksessa selvitetään miten Nigerian turbulenssissa ympäristössä toimi-vat pohjoismaiset yritykset kykenevät sopeutumaan ja tekemään menestyksestä projektimarkkinointia. Sitä mukaa kun projektien merkitys osana yritysten arvon-luontia eri teollisuuden aloilla on lisääntynyt, , kyvykkyys myydä ja markkinoida projekteja on tullut välttämättömäksi. Yhdistettynä kohdemaan yhteiskunnan ris-kiin projektirytykset kohtaavat uudenlaisia operationaalisia ja organisatorisia haasteita. Tämä tutkimus tunnistaa ja analysoi kohdemaan yhteiskunnan epävarmuuden ja riskin luonnetta nigerialaisessa projektiliiketoimintaympäristössä sekä pohjois-maisten projektimarkkinoijien omaksumia riskinhallinnan muotoja. Tutkimuksessa sovellettiin laadullista monitapaustutkimusta. Tutkimuksen tarkoitusta lähestyttiin rakentamalla ymmärrystä prosesseista, joita projektimarkkinoijat omaksuvat pyrkiessään ymmärtämään ja hallitsemaan riskejä. Selviytyäkseen kohdemaan yhteiskunnan haasteista kuten terrori-iskuista (Boko Haram, sotaisuudet) ja kid-nappauksista, yritysten täytyi omaksua epätavallisia strategioita kuten operaatioi-den lokalisointi, turvallisuustietojen ja suojelun sekä konsulttien käyttäminen yrit-täessään sopeutua saavuttaakseen menestyviä pitkäaikaisia yritysprojekteja. Nämä strategiat olivat luonteeltaan sekä alistuvia että välttäviä riskinhallintastrategioita. Yksi tutkimuksen tärkeistä löydöksistä oli paikallisen tiedon (paikallinen kyvyk-kyys) merkitys riskin hallinnassa.		
Asiasanat kohdemaan yhteiskunnan epävarmuus, riski, riskinhallintastrategiat, projektit, projektimarkkinointi, ymmärryksen rakentaminen		

Publisher Vaasan yliopisto	Date of publication March 2016	
Author(s) Isau Adeyeri Ganiyu	Type of publication Monograph	
	Name and number of series Acta Wasaensia, 344	
Contact information University of Vaasa Faculty of Business Studies Department of Marketing P.O. Box 700 FI-65101 Vaasa Finland	ISBN 978-952-476-660-9 (print) 978-952-476-661-6 (online)	
	ISSN 0355-2667 (Acta Wasaensia 344, print) 2323-9123 (Acta Wasaensia 344, online) 1235-7871 (Acta Wasaensia. Business Administration 140, print) 2323-9735 (Acta Wasaensia. Business Administration 140, online)	
	Number of pages 188	Language English
	Title of publication Host-society uncertainty and risk management in Nigeria : Nordic project marketers' sensemaking under examination	
Abstract <p>The context of a rapidly changing and turbulent environment increases the uncertainty about environmental and organizational variables, increases risk and reduces the predictability of corporate performance. These instabilities make the business environment fast changing, insecure and are characteristic of emerging markets of Africa. In order to succeed and survive in these markets, firms must continuously monitor, respond and adapt to the influences of the external environment. This research focused on how the Nordic companies in the turbulent Nigerian environment are able to adapt and make successful project marketing. As projects have become an increasingly important part of the value creation process in many different industrial fields, the capability to sell and market projects has become essential. Coupled with the host-society risk, the project companies are faced with challenges different from the usual operational and organizational challenges they are used to.</p> <p>The study identifies and analyses the nature of host-society uncertainty and risks inherent in the Nigerian project business environment and the risk management approach adopted by the Nordic project marketers. The study applied qualitative multi-case study and addressed the research questions. This was done by addressing the sensemaking process of the (PMs) in the process of understanding and managing the risks. In coping with these host-society challenges like the terrorist attacks (Boko haram, militancy), kidnapping, the firms had to employ unusual strategies like localizing operations, using security information and protection, and consultants in their bid to adapt for successful project business. Acquiesce and avoidance strategies were used by the project marketers (PMs) in managing the risks. One of the important findings of the research is the influence of the local knowledge (<i>local capability</i>) in the management of the risks.</p>		
Keywords Host-society uncertainty, risk, risk management strategies, projects, project marketing, sensemaking.		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

When I look back at my journey to this day, I cannot help but be thankful to God for making this day a reality. It has been a rollercoaster- the good times and the not so good times. A lot of people and agencies played a big part in my getting to this stage and so must be acknowledged for their roles and efforts. With God, all things are possible for those that believe. I thank God for making this day a reality.

Firstly, I am much indebted to Professors Martti Laaksonen and Pirjo Laaksonen who doubled as my supervisors and my mentor, ensured the timely completion of this research via support all through the research process. I thank them for ensuring that I was financially okay to do my research, and for believing in me in becoming the creative project marketing researcher and the consultant I am today.

I also thank the official examiners of my thesis- Professors Asta Salmi and Richard Owusu for their constructive comments and suggestions to the manuscript. Their constructive comments have helped to improve the final version of the thesis and so increased my confidence in the research topic.

Special thanks to my entire family for their understanding and encouragements. Thank you Prince Al-Amin Adeyeri, Princess Aishat Adeyeri, Prince Abeeb Adeyeri, Prince Habib Hassan, Princess Adebola Akinyooye, my granny (Iya Olu), and my mother (Mrs O. Odugbemi) for putting up with my long absence.

At some points in the process of my studentship at the university, I interacted with numerous wonderful people who contributed one way or another to my progress. Thanks to Professor Jorma Larimo, Arto Rajala, Assistant Professor Atiya Mahmood, Jenniina Halkoaho, Hanna Leipämaa-Leskinen, Henna Syrjälä, Minnie Kontkanen, Harri Luomala, Agnieszka Chialkowska, Minna-Maarit Jaskari, Nalikka Aminah, Anne Ahlqvist, Mia Smedlund, Beatrice Obule, Daniel Etchi, Catherine Ngwa and others that I failed to mention.

VIII

I also express my gratitude to Liikesivistysrahasto (Finnish Foundation for Economic Education) for supporting me financially at some point in the research process, and Vaasa University Foundation towards the completion of my thesis. I give thanks to both the Department of Marketing and the Faculty of Business Studies for ensuring that I was financially supported throughout the research years.

Isau Adeyeri Ganiyu

Vaasa, 2016.

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Abbreviations

BOO	Build-own-operate
BOOT	Build-own-operate-transfer
BOT	Build-operate-transfer
D-U-C	Discontinuity, uniqueness, and complexity
Ems	Emerging markets
FFP	Fund for Peace
IB	International Business
IMP	Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group
INPM	International Network for Project Marketing and Systems Selling
KIBS	Knowledge intensive business service
LDCs	Less developed countries
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MNCs	Multinational corporations
MTN	A South African communication company in Nigeria
NACCIMA	Nigerian Association of Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture
PHCN	Power Holding Company of Nigeria
PM	Project Marketer
PMBOK	Project management Book of Knowledge
PMF	Police Mobile Force
PMI	Project Management Institute
PPRO	Police Public Relations Officer
RBDM	Risk-based decision making
SPU	Special Protection Unit
KIBS	Knowledge intensive business service
NACCIMA	Nigerian Association of Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture
PM	Project Marketer

1 INTRODUCTION

As project marketing has become one of the dominating modes in international business (Hadjikhani, 1996; Günter, Bonaccorsi, 1996; Owusu, Sandhu and Kock, 2007; Skaates et al., 2002), the capability to sell and market projects have become more essential (Jalkala et al. 2010; Grönroos, 1997; Skaates et al., 2002) when one looks at the state of host-society uncertainty around the world today. It then becomes critically important to understand ways of conducting successful and hitch-free project marketing operations in such turbulent situations. *“Managers deal with environmental uncertainty and risk on an everyday basis, especially when it comes to making decisions and taking action. In order for a manager to be informed and to be able to take purposeful actions, he/she needs to translate and interpret what is going on in and around a business and by doing so make sense of the context”* (Bredmar 2015). Making sense is what is otherwise known as sensemaking. This involves the process of generating a social world, including organizations, and then interpreting the world (Weick 1990, 1995, 2001). In this vein, this research aims to examine the management behavior of three Nordic project marketing firms in Nigeria bearing in mind their perceptions of host-society uncertainty and the way they have managed the risk of the turbulence in the Nigerian business environment. The research is centered on how the individual project marketers understand the environment and deal with it by placing the elements of the host-society uncertainty into framework, comprehending, and constructing meaning in patterning their operations. Imperatively, described as sensemaking in this research.

1.1 Background of Study

The context of a rapidly changing and turbulent institutional environment has remained relatively underexplored (Scott 1995; Wright et al. 2005) considering the fact that environments vary in their degree of turbulence or stability (Dess & Beard 1984). Scholars have recognized that most emerging economies are characterized by greater institutional risk than developed economies (Oliver 1992; Hoskisson et al. 2000; Peng 2000, 2003; Chung & Beamish 2005). Uncertainty about environmental and organizational variables reduces the predictability of corporate performance, that is, increases risk (Miller 1992). Increased volatility of the business environment makes systematic strategic planning difficult (Grant 2003) as it makes the business environment unpredictable, fast changing, and insecure (Hadjikhani & Johanson 1996). These instabilities are what Gurr (2001), explained as all disruptive forms of internal opposition to governments, including revolutions, terrorism, assassinations, riots and demonstrations which Jeannet & Hennessy (1998), referred to as social

unrest and are called the host-society turbulence/risk. Boyne & Meier (2009:801) believe that this external environment has an influence on organizational performance and went further to state that the impact of turbulence has been investigated in a series of empirical studies and most focused on private sector organizations but the majority of these studies support the proposition that turbulence has a negative effect on performance (Li & Atuahene-Gima 2001; Lin & Germain 2003; Kuivalainen et al. 2004).

In order to succeed and survive in these markets, firms must continuously monitor, respond and adapt to the influences of the external environment (Duncan 1972). Studies by Das & Teng (1996) and Miller (1998) suggest that global corporations may benefit from choosing strategies that take international risk factors into consideration in the strategy formulation process. There are various theories and researches that have made contributions to the study of organization-environment relations but presented varying ideas about organization adaptation (Samuelson 1999; Grant 2003; Boyne & Meier 2009). Organizational adaptability is defined by Cameron (1984) as referring to modifications and alterations in the organization or its components in order to adjust to changes in the external environment.

This research is conducted within the context of project marketing by Nordic companies in the context of host society uncertainty and risk management. Projects have become an increasingly important part of the value creation process in many different industrial fields, and the capability to sell and market projects has become essential (Grönroos 1997; Skaates, Tikkanen & Lindblom 2002; Jalkala et al. 2010). Similarly, industrial product offerings have become increasingly complex and augmented (Günter & Bonaccorsi 1996) and as such project marketing becomes one of the dominating modes in international business (Hadjikhani 1996; Günter & Bonaccorsi 1996; Skaates, Tikkanen & Lindblom 2002; Owusu, Sandhu & Kock 2007). It is believed that firms generally find international business opportunities to be inherently more risky than domestic ones (Vernon 1985; Ghoshal 1987; Miller & Bromiley 1990; Werner, Brouthers & Brouthers 1996). Efforts to mitigate the effects of these environmental risks require understanding the local institutions which require organizations to conform to the rules and belief systems prevailing in the environment to survive (Meyer & Rowan 1977; DiMaggio & Powell 1983; Suchman 1995; Dacin 1997; Kostova & Zaheer 1999; Xu & Shenkar 2002).

It can be expected that the Nordic companies came all the way from the Scandinavia to do business in Nigeria instilled with their own business cultures, which is more or less a reflection of the practices and ways of doing business in

their region. Considering the perception about the Nigerian business environment to be risky, this research examines how the selected Nordic companies manage to overcome the challenges. In view of increasing importance of projects in the value creation process coupled with the need for special skills in selling projects, more especially in the face of environmental turbulence leading to uncertainty and risk, this study deals with understanding the risk management activities of Nordic project firms operating in Nigeria in their long term success drive.

1.2 Problem discussion

Extant literature shows that ‘with established markets becoming saturated, multinational corporations (MNCs) have turned increasingly to emerging markets (EMs) in the developing world’ (London & Hart 2004:350). With reference to the African countries which are regarded as developing, Owusu (2002:527) pointed out that they are developing countries with immense development deficit as shown by the lack of basic amenities and of socio-economic and production infrastructure like electrical power, water, roads, and factories of the home-grown technology. In the same vein, these developing Africa countries are perceived as risky and unstable, leading to low positive expectations in medium to long-term business activities by the international business community (Owhoso et al. 2002). The Economist (May 1st 2013) noted that ‘seven out of 10 fastest-growing economies of the past half-decade are in sub-Saharan Africa.’ Owusu (ibid) pointed out that series of crisis ranging from coup de tat, unstable polity, sit-tight government, ethnic militia, kidnapping, insecurity of lives and property, terrorism, unemployment, bribery and corruption, just to mention a few are characteristics of these African countries. However, Nigeria is “used as shorthand for the business opportunity in Africa and it is also a summary of the continent’s shortcomings” (The Economist of 23rd August 2014).

EY (2013-14:2) edition noted that *many of the companies that have pursued a longer-term African growth strategy are generating excellent returns from their investments. In fact, empirical analysis reveals that ROI from investments in Africa have consistently been among the highest (if not the highest) in the world since the 1990s. For companies seeking to grow and investors seeking higher returns, the African growth story should therefore stand out. While most developed economies continue to struggle, Africa clearly offers an exciting opportunity for investment and growth.* The EY (2013-14:2) went further that “the likes of Angola, Ghana, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zambia, are among the fastest growing in the world”.

The Economist (23rd August, 2014) made a comprehensive analysis of the prospects and problems of doing business in Nigeria by providing a compelling need for international businesses thinking of making it big to now begin to think of doing business in Africa. It pointed out that the continent now contains some of the world's fastest growing economies. According to this edition of The Economist, "to make it big in Africa, a business must succeed in Nigeria, the continent's largest market. No one said it would be easy". However, African countries are by no means homogeneous as they have different religion, social and economic conditions (Muriithi & Crawford 2003:312). Nigeria being the most populated African country, is growing at the rate of 2-3 percent a year, has abundant natural and economic resources existing in the country. According to the above cited edition of the Economist, "tales of rich rewards have made many firms scrambling to invest in Nigeria and the prospects offered by Nigeria have made it a test-bed for the Africa strategies of consumer-goods firms". The summary of the article is that "it is the best testing ground for new ventures and, if it works in Nigeria, you can do it anywhere". An example presented in the edition is the case of a South African communication company- MTN, that took a gamble in buying a license for one of the four mobile licenses sold at auction in 2001 and within five years, had 32 million customers and remains the biggest single source of profits with which -it could expand into other parts of Africa and Middle East.

Despite the positive features, Nigeria is highly regarded as highly turbulent because of the very high level of kidnapping, robbery, unstable polity, bombing by various sects- religious and ethnic, assassination, ethnic militia and insecurity of lives and property, bureaucratic hurdles, bribery and corruption, which makes the general environment being regarded as highly risky and business unfriendly. The Doing Business (2013) data for Nigeria reported that out of 189 economies surveyed, shows that Nigerian ranks 147 out of the 189 countries, 170 out of the 189 (2014), in terms of the ease of doing business. Before 2009, Nigeria was battling with the problem of Niger Delta militancy which was accompanied with kidnappings of foreign expatriates for ransom and the destruction of government installations. From 2009, Nigeria began to witness another form of terrorist attacks from the Northern part of Nigeria by a group that is now world-wide known as Boko Haram. Despite the turbulence Nigeria is presently undergoing,

which creates uncertainty and business risks, it presents high potential for project opportunities like energy projects, construction, health, food and agriculture, education, technology, ICT, maritime and offshore services.

Nigeria noted for its epileptic power supply whereby most communities do not have access to this basic social infrastructure, those that have it cannot rely on the very poor supply from the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN). This lack of access to efficient energy resources has had adverse impacts on manufacturing, commerce, industry, agriculture, etc. (Olise & Nria-Dappa 2009). The implication of this is the spiral effects it has on the other development triggers and opens up investment opportunities in those areas. Nigeria currently generates about 4,000 megawatts of electricity. Ejiolorun Alike (ThisDayLive 22 Feb 2015), reporting the inauguration of the rehabilitated Units at the Egbin Power Station in Lagos stated that the Minister of Power, Chinedu Nebo stated that the country now has the capacity to generate 5,500 megawatts, adding however, that vandalism restricted generation to 3,800 mw as at Saturday February, 2015 for a population of about 177 million Nigerians. On the other hand, South Africa with a population of 47 million generates more than 40,000 megawatts of electricity, Brazil generating 100,000 megawatts of electricity for a population of 201 million people (http://africacheck.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Nigerian-Power-Task-Force_Nigeria-Power-Crisis.pdf).

But despite the uncertainties, the potential afforded by these markets is high (Luqmani, Habib & Kassem 1988; Owusu 2002; Ramamurti 2003; London & Hart 2004) even though marketing to governments in less developed countries (LDCs) is rather complicated as physical and cultural differences, language barriers and political instability can make marketing opportunities in LDCs appear unattractive to international firms (Cateora 1983; Dawson 1985; Luqmani, Habib & Kassem 1988:55). As a result, it is helpful to consider the risk in the environment so as to be able to match efforts with outcome because in the case of volatile market conditions the effect of the political, economic, legal, and cultural environments is expected to be magnified (Cundiff & Hilger, 1988) which Chung & Beamish (2005:36) argued that it varies in their intensity according to whether the environment is stable or in crisis.

Peng, Wang & Jiang (2008:921) noted that as researchers increasingly probe into emerging economies whose institutions differ significantly from those in developed economies, there is increasing appreciation that formal and informal institutions, commonly known as the “rules of the game” (North, 1990), significantly shape the strategy and performance of firms – both domestic and foreign – in emerging economies (Hoskisson et al. 2000; Wright et al. 2005). Research into the effects of uncertainty and risk factors on project business into Nigeria is scarce more especially from the Nordic countries and there is the call for more research by researchers like Owhoso et al. (2002), Owusu, (2002), Habiyakare (2009), Owusu & Habiyakare (2011).

It is expected that the companies coming from entirely different environment and culture would bring with them their business culture and practice. The Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway) are noted for specific distinct characteristics. They are noted for being the least corrupt countries in the world, are described as pragmatic, trustworthy and hardworking, disciplined, and have a strong work ethics. Companies from the Nordic countries are generally democratic, and normally operate short line of communication between management and employees. Everyone in the companies is made to feel significant and their voices are worth listening to <http://www.postnordlogistics.com/en/the-nordics/Pages/culture.aspx>

It should be noted that Nigeria has just experienced a change of government on May 29 2015, and a great number of development program have been planned by the newly elected President. These development programs have suddenly raised the hope of flurry of projects across the country in the areas of agriculture, energy, and railway projects in the bid to close the gap of infrastructural deficit presently experienced in the country. Consequently, companies that survive in this environment with all the above mentioned attributes will undoubtedly adapt well in similar African countries, and companies that could strategize around the expectation of coming projects due to the new government in Nigeria will be better placed for project business.

However, the interconnectedness of the relationships between the international project companies, opportunities, and risks in the business environment and firm

strategies are captured in the figure 1. Nigeria is characterized by a mix of promising business opportunities with attendant host-society risks that project companies must contend with. On the other hand are the Nordic companies pursuing project opportunities in the turbulent environment and striving for long term success by the use of strategies. The promising business possibilities in Nigeria offer opportunities for project business and successful project marketing guarantees long term success. On the other hand, the promising business possibilities existing in Nigeria are affected by the presence of the host-society risks, affects project marketing, and subsequently affects the long term success of the Nordic companies.

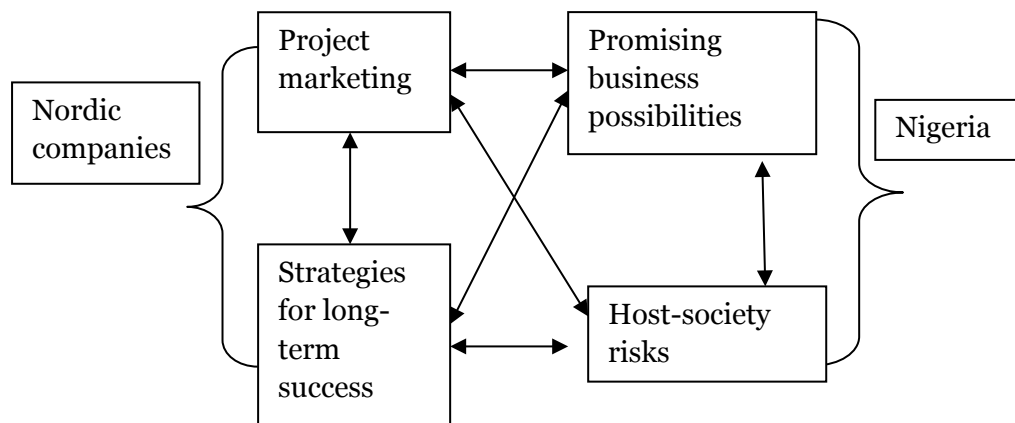


Figure 1. Matching project opportunities with environmental risk

1.3 Research gap and significance of study

This research is a follow-up on the Owusu and Habiyakare (2011) with regards to managing environmental turbulence for successful business in Africa, focusing on Nigeria, and concentrating on achieving adaptation for the purpose of long-term project business success. Owusu & Habiyakare (2011) examine the internationalization behavior of seven Finnish business-to-business firms in South Africa as a result of their perceptions of risk and market turbulence and the way they have dealt with risk and turbulence in the S.A. business environment. The research also investigated how the changes that occurred in the country after the mid-1990s have impacted the risk and turbulence perceptions of the companies. The study finds that the levels of perceived risk and turbulence were high in the market and the firms have used networks, alliances, gradual involvement, and a combination of entry modes to deal with the situation. This study similarly examine the project marketing behavior of

three Nordic companies in Nigeria as a result of their perceptions of uncertainty and risks, and the way they have dealt with risk and turbulence in the Nigerian business environment.

The significance of this research lies in its empirical approach to the issue of project marketing risk management in a turbulent environment which is largely under-studied. Empirical research studies which deal directly with African business issues, especially in the Nordic countries (Habiyakare 2009; Owusu 2002, 2003; Owoso et al. 2002; Nwankwo & Richards 2004; Owusu & Habiyakare 2011) are limited. With established markets becoming saturated, multinational corporations (MNCs) now increasingly turning to emerging markets (EMs) in the developing world (London & Hart, 2004:350), it is expected that more researches focusing on doing business in Africa will increase. This research is important as it depicts how to manage the uncertainty and risk of turbulence thereof in order to successfully adapt to the turbulent African business environments and other similar turbulent non-African countries that alternatively offer business opportunities.

Why this study is focused on Nigeria and why is it important? What makes this research so important is that it is a clinical case of countries experiencing host-society turbulence, a country rich in resources and attractive project business opportunities. This research is significant in the sense that it would unearth, understand, and explain the risk management attitude required for project marketing in Nigeria, and similar countries experiencing host-society turbulence. Apart from the potentials and opportunities inherent in doing business projects in Nigeria, the research assesses the problems, as well as ways of overcoming problems in expanding project operations to Nigeria, which could be used as study lens for business and projects in Africa because “it is the best testing ground for new ventures and, if it works in Nigeria, you can do it anywhere” and “it is a summary of the continent’s shortcomings” (The Economist of 23rd August 2014) apart from its advantage of population and resources, a great deal of knowledge about marketing projects in turbulent Nigeria would as well mean understanding doing business in Africa.

Another significance of this research is that it is expected to contribute to project marketing literature by expanding discussion and knowledge of managing country-specific uncertainty and risk of environmental turbulence in developing countries, and research on doing business in Africa. It is hoped that it will contribute theoretically to the contextual approach in studying international marketing studies and IMP (Industrial Marketing and Purchasing Group) research by incorporating sensemaking into the management of environmental

uncertainty by project marketers in achieving successful project sales. The study contributes to the literature on business in Africa by providing implications for how successful firms develop their risk management strategy in turbulent African markets.

Project marketing involves the sale of huge systems in such industries as Aerospace, Construction, Energy, Telecommunications etc. at the international level and characterized by the three D-U-C features that distinguish it from other types of business-to-business marketing (Cova and Ghauri, 1996; Mandjak and Veres, 1998; Tikkanen 1998). The significance of researching in this field lies in the unique nature of the complexity involved in project business and having special skill needs, faces the environmental variables differently from the other forms of business-to-business or business-to-consumers as it rests on relationship marketing and management, and liaison with project clients.

However, this research is important for its application of sensemaking approach that the project marketers use in understanding the uncertainty and risk management. It is used in this study because it reflects the managers' viewpoint. The sensemaking here is understood in line with Pernu, Mainela & Puhakka (2015) where sensemaking is considered to be about individual's understanding of their position...and the experiences, interpretations and perceptions of the individuals in their sense making process guiding their actions in business over time. It is based on the concept and interpretation by the PMs of the influence of the contextual elements in the activities of the project marketers. The study is important because it explicates the sensemaking process of the PMs with regard to how they perceive the uncertainty, how it is linked to risks, and the sensemaking of how to act. The sensemaking is seen as a process in itself that links uncertainty, risks, and actions/activities.

1.4 Purpose and objectives of study

The purpose of this research covers how Nordic project marketers behave when facing a turbulent environment. It was noted by Oliver (1991:175) that it makes sense to investigate the range of responses available to organizations rather than to argue a priori that passive conformity or, alternatively, strategic noncompliance is the appropriate mode of responsiveness to the environment.

In view of this, the purpose of the study is to *identify and analyze the nature of host-society uncertainty and risks inherent in the Nigerian project business environment and especially to explore the managerial perceptions of the forms of risks and firm-specific approach of handling them*. The aim of this research is to examine the adaptation behaviour of Nordic project firms in Nigeria as a result

of their perceptions of risk and the way they have dealt with risk of turbulence for successful project marketing.

A look at the work of Sitkin & Pablo (1992), Brouthers, Brouthers & Werner (2002) shows that higher levels of uncertainty will be related to higher levels of risk in line with the previous works of Das & Teng (1996), Miller (1992, 1993, 1998), Brouthers (1995) and Vermon (1985). The uncertainty and risks faced by international firms have been classified by Gurr (2001) Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser (2002), Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007), as political risk. Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007:738) noted that host-society related risks are likely to be of greatest concern to firms operating in developing countries rather than those firms operating in developed countries which is supported by Rice & Mahmoud (1990), and Pahud De Mortanges & Allers (1996). Based on this, the research shall focus on identifying and understanding the nature of host-society uncertainty and risks inherent in the Nigerian project business environment and how they were managed.

In the same vein, because the way senior executives make sense of their environment is influenced by the individual perceptions of uncertainty that exists in the environment (Phua 2007:754), this research shall explore relationships between the managerial perceptions of the country-specific uncertainty and the host-society risks, and firm-specific approach of handling them. Phua while paraphrasing Elenkov (1997), noted that “differences in perception that underlies the heterogeneity of management decisions between firms could determine the difference between successful and unsuccessful firms as they strive to obtain the best possible ‘fit’ between the environment and its strategy”. This view is supported by Partington (2000:98) that “as the brain of the organization, and the key determinant of its strategic posture, therefore their perceptions about the environment and the ways they affect firm performance are likely to correspond to their approach”. However, the managerial perceptions would be considered along Oliver (1991) risk management strategy (acquiesce, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation).

Cameron (1984) noted that “organizational adaptability competency becomes key success of organization in rapid changing environment”. Based on the above reasons, this research will assess the adaptation approaches of the Nordic Project Marketers to the uncertainty and risk in the Nigerian project business environment. In obtaining the necessary empirical data to address the research objectives, important questions are asked and include:

1. What is the nature of host-society uncertainty and risks inherent in the Nigerian project marketing environment?

2. What are the Nordic managerial perceptions of the uncertainty/risks and firm-specific approach of handling them?
3. How do the Project Marketers make sense of the host-society uncertainty and risks for the long-term survival of Nordic firms in turbulent Nigerian environment?
4. How isomorphic will the Nordic companies get in their risk management approach in their project marketing in the turbulent host-society environment in the long-run?

It is expected that answers to these three main categories contained in the research topic (uncertainty perception, host-society risks, and managerial decisions) can unveil ways to successfully adapt to the turbulent environment. This study strives for academic contribution by this risk research setting where deep understanding about the risk in project business is addressed. Lot of information is offered where Nigeria is seen as very difficult business environment. Is it true? Is the general opinion satisfied enough? Can deeper thematic interview serve common perceptions and decision rules which on the other hand reveal more realistic nature of the conditions for successful project business?

1.4.1 Objectives of the study

In managing the objectives of this study, specific conditions are needed. Firstly, we need managers of long-standing experience and in the same business area; secondly, we need a turbulent host-society context (Nigeria), and lastly a demanding/attractive business interest. These goals lead to the final choice of the three Nordic firms (Ericsson, Sandvik and Wartsila) that was found to have the three elements. The research looks at the influence of the uncertainty perception of the Nordic project marketers and the level of risk arising from the events, how they make sense of the risk situation and their strategy for handling the risks in the adaptation process of the firms, and the long-term success of the project marketing companies. Because the empirical data sought in this research is connected to the perceptions and actions of the experienced project marketer, emphasis on their risk management decision making approach is assessed in this study. However, the philosophy of science of this research is heuristic. The basic idea is that it is based on the managers' viewpoint, and the researcher is interpreting based on the experience and context. The objectives include:

1. to create understanding about risk management is in relation to host-society uncertainty and long-term project business

2. a focus on sensemaking perspective. The aim is to specify how sensemaking should be connected to managers' business conduct and the way to approach sensemaking for empirical analysis
3. the experienced managers' opinion will be explained in terms of perception of uncertainties, risks, and actions/activities
4. the challenge to construct comprehensive outputs in terms of isomorphism. Conclusions for further studies are developed by:
 - a. Comprehensive model is described and
 - b. Managerial implications are constructed in order to express how uncertainty, risks, and actions can be connected.

Both implications will be developed in order to make hypotheses for further studies.

As noted above, in handling these objectives, specific demands for sensemaking is needed in terms of:

- High level of experience of the manager (PM),
- High level of host-society turbulence
- Attractive business interest in the long-run

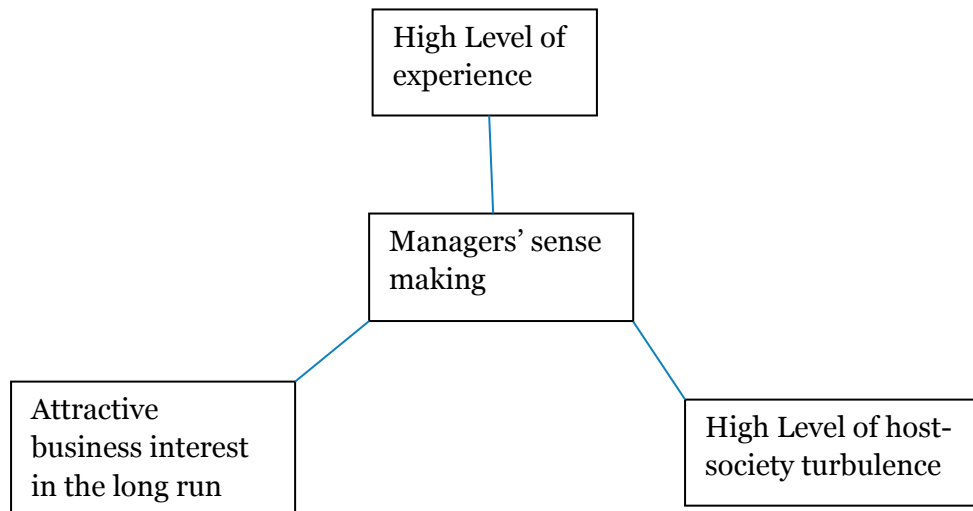


Figure 2. Specific conditions for sensemaking in this research

The figure above shows sensemaking condition that for a successful project marketing to occur, the sensemaking manager would have a high level of experience of the environment. A newly posted manager to the country would definitely lack this experience and knowledge. A high level of host-society turbulence must be present requiring sensemaking for risk management. The presence of business attraction creates the need for sensemaking to manage the risk to be able to take advantage.

1.5 The Research Context (Nigeria)

Nigeria as we have it geographically today, got its political independence from Britain on the October 1, 1960, has about 177 million population and is considered as the most populous country in Africa and the 7th most populous country in the world (Library of Congress, 2008, The World Bank, 2013) and it is projected that Nigeria's population would increase to 440 million by 2050 to make it the 3rd largest population in the world. It has total land area of 923,768 sq. km. (356,668 sq. mi.) making it the 14th largest country in Africa in land mass. It comprises 36 states and its Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Nigeria is constituted by over 500 ethnic groups, and the three largest are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba and is roughly divided in half between Christians (Library of Congress, 2008). The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north and its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the

Atlantic Ocean which stretches 774 km (480 mi.). Nigeria as an Emerging market (The World Bank, 2013, Population Reference Bureau, 2014), is regarded as an oil rich nation and is considered as the 14th largest oil producing country in the world with about 2.2 million barrels of crude oil produced per day. Nigeria is blessed in mineral resources which are yet untapped, with GDP of US\$318.5 billion while per capita income is estimated at \$1,831 (World Bank 2013), and increased to US\$594.257 billion (IMF 2014) after rebasing the economy making it the largest economy in Africa.

Nigeria offers great opportunities and “foreign companies that tough it out in Nigeria- the likes of Shoprite stores, Nestlé for food and SABMiller in booze- have shown they can prosper...even so, it is not a place for the faint-hearted” (The Economist, April 12th 2014: 12).

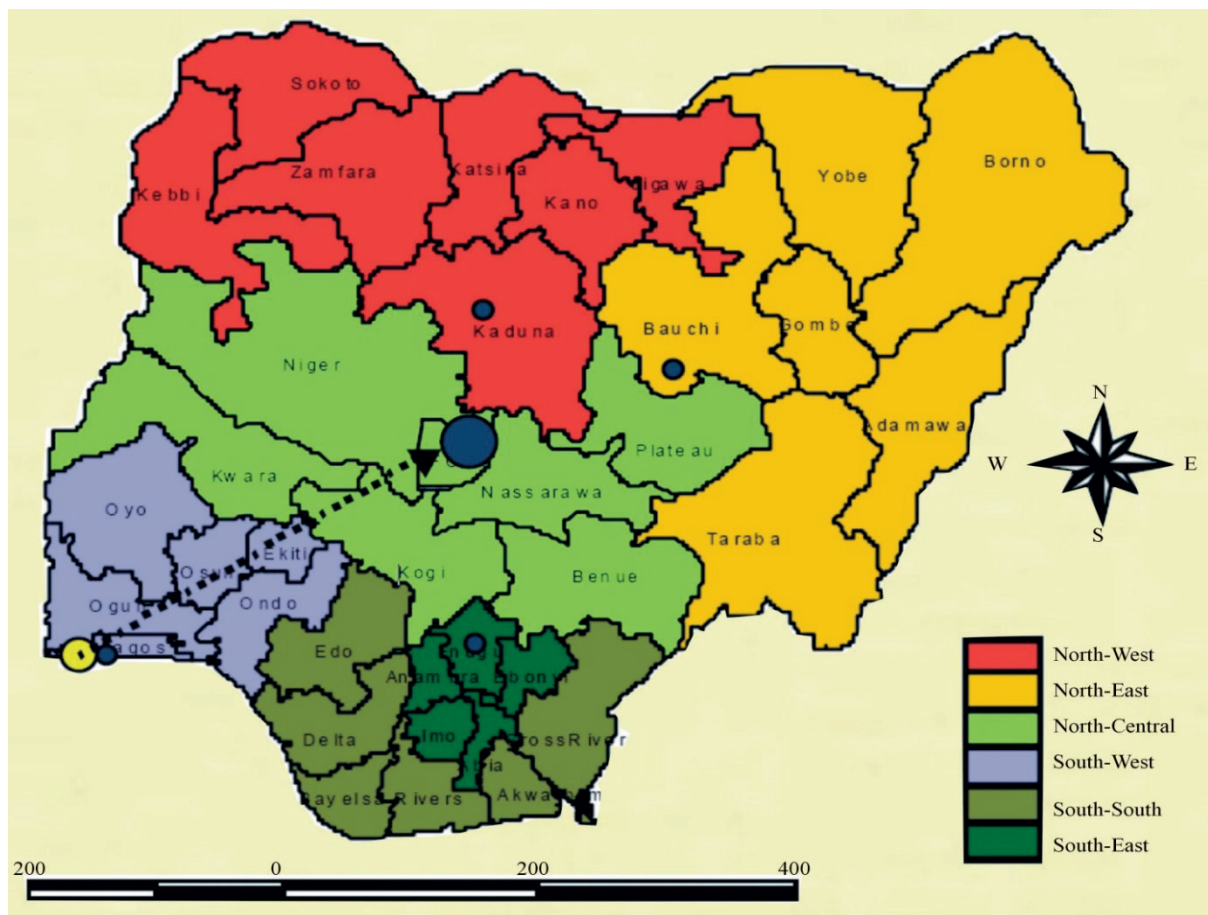


Figure 3. Political map of Nigeria by regions

(Source: <http://www.nnadeaf.org/Members.htm>)

Despite these positive features, Nigeria is highly regarded as highly turbulent because of the very high level of kidnapping, robbery, unstable polity, bombing by various sects- religious and ethnic, assassination, ethnic militia and insecurity of lives and property, bureaucratic hurdles, bribery and corruption, which makes the general environment being regarded as highly risky and business unfriendly by the outside world. The Doing Business (2013) data for Nigeria reported that out of 189 economies surveyed, that Nigerian ranks 147 out of the 189 countries in terms of the ease of doing business while the figure for 2014 shows a more disturbing figure with 170 out of the 189 countries surveyed (see <http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/>). However, as a Nigerian having adequate understanding of the environment, I would argue that the parameters used by FFP are not reflective of the situation in Nigeria as being business unfriendly when one has a good understanding of the geography of Nigeria because the problems are area specific- Northeast (ethnic/religious attacks), Southeast & South-south (kidnapping). The other parts of Nigeria are safe for business and should not be assumed that the whole country is engulfed in turbulence.

For some six (6) years now (since 2009), Nigeria has been going through political instability and topsy-turvy apart from the massive corruption ravaging the country resulting in the country's failure to capitalise on its many advantages. Consequently leaves the mass of the population relatively poor coupled with the inadequate infrastructural facilities. It is a common knowledge that Nigeria is currently tackling its epileptic power supply despite the recent wholesale transfer of the electricity business into the private hands in November 2013.

Similarly, since 2005, Nigeria has been experiencing youth militancy in the Niger Delta part of the country resulting in the destruction of oil pipelines and kidnapping of expatriates working in the region, and disruption of supplies. In the end, the agitations from the Niger Delta youths were acceded to necessitating the government of Nigeria under the presidency of the late Umaru Musa Ya'adua to negotiate with the militants and offer amnesty in 2007. However, the kidnapping continued but solely for ransom till date.

The Boko Haram Debacle: From 2009, Nigeria began to witness another form of terror attacks from the Northern part of Nigeria from a group that is presently known world-wide as Boko Haram. The insurgents have been inflicting collateral damage and it is reported that not less than 12,000 people have died so far in the attacks (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YovZEU3jUQ>).

A snapshot of the Boko Haram from between 26 and 29 July, 2009 when the crisis started where over a thousand people were killed by the sect around Maiduguri, Bauchi, Potiskum, and Wudil (ThisDayLive, 25 Jan 2012); shows that

Boko Haram Kills 210 in Borno Dawn Attack (ThisDayLive,12 Apr 2014); HRW: Boko Haram Kills 2,053 Civilians in 6 Months (ThisDayLive,15 Jul 2014); 129 Girls abducted by Boko Haram as Abuja Death Toll Rises to 76 (ThisDayLive, 16 Apr 2014). A similar dateline of the major Boko Haram attacks was made by Kunle Falayi (August 11, 2014) in the Punch newspaper where he made a list of the bombing incidents by the sect in the Northeast part of Nigeria. Bombing attacks by the Sect are almost a daily occurrence nowadays rendering the whole of the Northern region completely turbulent and business unfriendly. The list of bombings and attacks is endless and a climax of the turbulence reached the peak in August 2014 when Boko Haram finally declared Gwoza a caliphate (ThisDayLive August 26, 2014). Boko Haram killed an estimated 10,000 people in 2014 (CNN News, January 13, 2015). According to The Economist (March 28, 2015:77),

In the five years since, Boko Haram has spread havoc across parts of Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad. More than 10,000 people have been killed in related violence and as many as 1.5m driven from their homes. By the end of 2014 the group had conquered large tracts of three of Nigeria's north-eastern states and had declared its intention to form a caliphate. More recently, it has proclaimed its allegiance to Islamic State (IS), a jihadist group that holds sway over parts of Syria and Iraq.

Kidnapping: A report of the extent of the kidnapping activities was presented in the ThisDayLive of 13th May 2013 that 'at a summit held in Lagos last year (2012), the Regional Vice President, Africa, American Society for Industrial Security, Mr. Dennis Amachree, disclosed that of the top 10 countries with high kidnapping records in 2007, Nigeria occupied the 6th position. But Nigeria has since 2007 moved up to the third position, behind Mexico and Columbia (ThisDayLive, 19 May 2013)'. The increasing rate of kidnapping was further highlighted by the former Inspector-General of Police of Nigeria, Mr. Ogbonna Onovo, that between 2008 and 2010, Nigeria recorded 887 kidnap cases (ThisDayLive, 19 May 2013). Records available in this period showed that kidnapping was highest in Rivers State with 216 cases, followed by Anambra with 191 cases, Edo 166, Akwa Ibom 100, Delta 85, Abia 68 and Imo with 61 cases (ThisDayLive, 17 Dec 2012).

According to The Economist (September 14th 2014:38), "kidnapping in the oil region is invariably for ransom. Foreign oilmen used to be the usual targets, but rich Nigerian businessmen, prominent academics and even footballers have become increasingly vulnerable. The kidnapping menace has also got a lot worse this year in Lagos, Nigeria's largest city and its economic hub". In the same vein,

an updated statistics of the level of kidnapping was provided to support the claim that kidnapping in Nigeria is out of control. The Economist noted that “there are so many abductions across the country nowadays that they rarely into the news. During the first half of 2013, Nigeria had the most kidnap attempts in the world, accounting for 26% of all such recorded incidents. Mexico was second with 10% and Pakistan third with 7%”.

Nigeria is regarded as risky to do business because of the perceived risk of insecurity of lives and property, corruption, internal strife like bombing by dissident groups like Boko Haram in the Northern part of Nigeria, kidnapping for ransom by Niger Delta militants (MEND) in the South-South and South-East part, by the international business community. Although, efforts are been made in the last few years to try to tackle the many endemic problems which seem to overwhelm the country by the new administration of President Muhammad Buhari, whether the actions taken have yielded the much needed change in levels of transparency and levels of corporate governance; nevertheless, it is too early to conclude that the turbulence has been completely subdued.

1.6 Nigerian and the Nordic business cultures

Explaining the business practices of these Nordic companies in Nigeria would require comparing and contrasting the two cultures so as to understand the underlying values driving their project business attitude and risk handling behavior. This is in line with the various studies that have used one or more of Hofstede (2001) dimensions to explore similarities and differences across cultures regarding numerous aspects of business and management (Osland 1995:68). Factors normally considered in explaining differences between cultures include power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, pragmatism, and indulgence.

On power distance- which expresses the attitude of the culture towards these inequalities amongst us, Nigeria scores high on this dimension (score of 80) which means that people accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. Hierarchy in an organization is seen as reflecting inherent inequalities, centralization is popular, subordinates expect to be told what to do and the ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat. On the other hand, when we look at the individual countries in the Nordic region, Finland 33, Denmark 18, Norway 31, and Sweden 31, though the figures vary, but they are very low. This implies that these countries are characterized by being independent, hierarchy for convenience only, equal rights, superiors accessible, coaching leader, management facilitates and empowers. Power is decentralized

and managers count on the experience of their team members. Employees expect to be consulted. Control is disliked and attitude towards managers are informal and on first name basis and communication is direct and participative. Nigeria is high on power distance while the Nordic countries are very low on this measure. Basically, Nordic companies wherever are expected to exhibit low power distance.

On the factor of individualism, the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members, Nigeria, with a score of 30 is considered a collectivistic society. This is manifest in a close long-term commitment to the member 'group', be that a family, extended family, or extended relationships. Loyalty in a collectivist culture is paramount, and over-rides most other societal rules and regulations. The society fosters strong relationships where everyone takes responsibility for fellow members of their group. In collectivist societies offence leads to shame and loss of face, employer/employee relationships are perceived in moral terms. On the other hand, though the figures vary across these Nordic countries, differences so minute, Finland 63, Denmark 74, Norway 69, and Sweden 71. The Nordic countries are very individualistic societies where talk is kept at a minimum and you do not need to create relationships first to do business. There are clear lines between work and private life. Job mobility is higher and one thinks in terms of individual careers. The employer-employee relationship is based on a contract and leaders focus on management of individuals. Feedback is direct and nepotism is not encouraged. This dimension shows that the two cultures are far apart in terms of this measure – Nigeria is very high on the collectivism measure while the Nordic countries are pretty low and individualistic, and may likely influence the way they operate in this highly collective society.

On the issue of masculinity, a high score (masculine) is said to indicate that the society will be driven by competition, achievement and success, with success being defined by the winner/best in field. Nigeria scores 60 on this dimension and is thus a masculine society. In masculine countries people “live in order to work”, managers are expected to be decisive and assertive, the emphasis is on equity, competition and performance and conflicts are resolved by fighting them out. On the other hand, the figures for the Nordic countries are much lower when compared to Nigeria. Finland scored 26 on this dimension, Denmark 16, Norway 8, and Sweden 5. This means that the Nordic countries are considered as feminine societies where managers strive for consensus, people value equality, devoid of competition, and conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation. The Nigerian culture is such that is highly competitive and the winner takes all whereas the Nordic countries are very low on this dimension- a less competitive

society. This measure also shows the two cultures being far apart. There is the tendency to think that it may affect the Nordic companies' competitive attitude in the highly competitive Nigeria where equity is not guaranteed.

On the issue of uncertainty avoidance, which has to do with the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known, Nigeria has an intermediate score of 55 which does not show a clear preference. On the other hand, the Nordic countries vary greatly on this. Finland scored very high on this (59) which is even higher than the score for Nigeria. Norway showed no preference on this dimension (50). However, Denmark and Sweden scored very low on this dimension – 23 and 29 respectively, indicating they have very low preference for avoiding uncertainty, do not need a lot of structure and predictability in their work life. They maintain a more relaxed attitude in which practice counts more than principles and deviance from the norm is more easily tolerated. Nigeria is in-between in terms of this dimension. It's similar to Finland and Norway in terms of uncertainty avoidance but so far from Denmark and Sweden as they are very low on uncertainty avoidance and prefer less-structured life.

On the issue of pragmatism, which describe how people in the past as well as today relate to the fact that so much that happens around us cannot be explained, Nigeria scores very low (13) on this dimension, meaning that its culture is normative instead of pragmatic. People in such societies have a strong concern with establishing the absolute Truth; they are normative in their thinking. They exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future, and a focus on achieving quick results. On the other hand, the Nordic countries though have varying scores within the countries; however seem not to be so different from Nigeria on this. Finland scored 38, Denmark 35, while only Sweden scored 53 showing not having a clear preference on this dimension. Such societies are classified as normative, have a strong concern with establishing the absolute truth, exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future, and a focus on achieving quick result. This measure shows Nigeria to be far from being pragmatic and described as normative meaning that it is much directed by culture, save for the future and the Nordic countries are slightly different from Nigeria in this respect.

On the issue of indulgence, which is the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way they were raised, with a very high score of 84, Nigerian culture is said to be one of indulgence. People in societies classified by a high score in indulgence generally exhibit a willingness to realize their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun. They

possess a positive attitude and have a tendency towards optimism. In addition, they place a higher degree of importance on leisure time, act as they please and spend money as they wish. On the other hand, all the Nordic countries share this attribute with Nigeria. Finland scored 57, Denmark 70, Norway 55, and Sweden 78. This is one attribute Nigeria shares with the Nordic countries whereby a people exhibit willingness to realize their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun.

1.7 Philosophical foundation of the research

In this study, the focus of the research is to create understanding of how project marketers are interpreting their project business in relation to the environmental circumstances (host-society). This means that the philosophy of science behind this research approach is hermeneutic-phenomenological. Hermeneutics here refers to the holistic approach where managers' opinions in relation to the different context are assessed. It is a holistic interpretation based on macro and micro levels. Phenomenological approach in this context refers to the subjects having a rich experience about the phenomenon and based on the individual's experience. The field of project business and environmental risk management do not rely solely on either the qualitative or quantitative methodology but embrace methodological pluralism when striving to understand project business risk management behavior.

In this study, the focus is on the risk management behaviour of project firms in turbulent host-society environment, by assessing managerial perceptions of the forms of risks and firm-specific approach of handling them. Therefore, the specific research approach adopted in this study is *hermeneutic phenomenology*.

Laverty (2003:9) citing Kvale (1996) explained that hermeneutics is the study of human cultural activity as texts with a view towards interpretation to find intended or expressed meanings. Wilcke (2006) explicated that hermeneutics is now defined as "the theory and practice of interpretation and understanding (*Verstehen*) in different kinds of human contexts" (Odman 1988:63) and was originally referred to the study and interpretation of biblical texts. However, Langdridge (2007) defines phenomenology as a discipline that "aims to focus on people's perceptions of the world in which they live in and what it means to them; a focus on people's lived experience"; and "an umbrella term encompassing both a philosophical movement and a range of research approaches" (Finlay 2009) and "the focus is on the way things appear to us through experience or in our consciousness where the phenomenological researcher aims to provide a rich textured description of lived experience" (Kafle 2011:181). Phenomenology is

usually described as studying the essence, and hermeneutics as studying the processes of interpretation. (Kakkori 2009:19).

Hermeneutic phenomenology is the philosophy underpinning both hermeneutics and phenomenology (van Manen 1990). Hermeneutic phenomenology is “focused on subjective experience of individuals and groups” and “an attempt to unveil the world as experienced by the subject through their life world stories” (Kafle 2011). However, hermeneutic phenomenology is taken as a “research methodology aimed at producing rich textual descriptions of the experiencing of selected phenomena in the life world of individuals that are able to connect with the experience of all of us collectively” (Smith 1997:80). It attempts to unveil the world as experienced by the subject through their life world stories” (Kafle 2011). Like phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with the life world or human experience as it is lived (Lavery 2003:9).

Because hermeneutic phenomenology is focused on subjective experience of individuals and groups, is why this research approach suits the present study well. Accordingly, hermeneutic phenomenology, ‘meaning making’ is to “reveal a totality of meaning in all its relations (Gadamer 1997:471) through a process of interpretation which involves making manifest that which is hidden by going “beyond what is directly given” (Spiegelberg 1982:712), reading between the lines (Odman 1988)” as analyzed by Wilcke (2006:5). This is further simplified by Annells (1996) as an interpretive process that seeks to bring understanding of phenomena through language. Interpretation is seen as critical to this process of understanding. Lavery (2003:9) summarizing Annells (1996), Polkinghorne (1983), explained that “this interpretive process is achieved through a hermeneutic circle which moves from the parts of experience, to the whole of experience and back and forth again and again to increase the depth of engagement with and the understanding of texts”.

1.8 The structure of the thesis

Table 1. Structure of the thesis

<p>Part 1</p> <p>Part 1</p> <p>INTRODUCTION</p>	<p>1. Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background of the study • Problem discussion • Research gap and significance of the study • Purpose of study and research questions • The research context • Nigerian & Nordic business cultures • The philosophical foundation of the research • The structure of the dissertation
<p>Part 2</p> <p>LITERATURE REVIEW &RESEARCH FRAMEWORK</p>	<p>2. Host-society uncertainty & risk management in project business</p> <p>3. Sensemaking & the research framework</p>
<p>Part 3</p> <p>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSIONS</p>	<p>4 Research Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Approach • Why case study? • Method of Data Collection and justification • Research process • Case selection • Data analysis process • Establishing the trustworthiness of the research <p>5 Data analysis</p> <p>6 Summary of findings, Conclusions and Implications</p>

2 HOST-SOCIETY UNCERTAINTY & RISK MANAGEMENT IN PROJECT BUSINESS

The critical choices for this study include uncertainty which is the product of the environment, risks resulting from the uncertainty, risks management activities in project marketing. The basic idea of this chapter is the issue of host-society uncertainty, country-specific issues, and issues connected to long-term project business. In view of this, this chapter focuses on how these two areas are connected to risk management.

2.1 Uncertainty, risks and management

Risk is usually misunderstood and used interchangeably with other related terms such as harm, hazard, threat and uncertainty (Al Khattab et al, 2007:735). Uncertainty is the situation when it is not possible to calculate risk, and risk, is seen as less threatening as compared to uncertainty (Perminova, Gustafsson & Wikström 2007:75). However, the term turbulence and uncertainty will be used interchangeably in this research as they both mean the same thing in this research. Turbulence refers to current instabilities in the market as a result of political, economic, legal, or social policies or events; and according to Burgess & Steenkamp (2006), turbulence is a characteristic of emerging markets, including the developing countries of Africa. This of course is in line with Emery & Trist (1965:26) definition of turbulence as the dynamic processes produced by the increasing complexity of the “causal texture” of the environment, which produces “a gross increase in the area of relevant uncertainty”.

2.1.1 Uncertainty and risks

Uncertainty is an event or a situation, which was not expected to happen, regardless of whether it could have been possible to consider it in advance (Perminova, Gustafsson & Wikström 2008:77). But in the words of Aaltonen et al. (2010:566), “risks are events whose probability distribution and impacts are considered to be known, that can be identified a priori, and that can therefore be taken into account in the project plans”. As a result of this, some authors have advocated the use of the broader concept of uncertainty management instead of risk management (Petit 2012: 540), which is too focused on threats and events (Clede, 2009; Perminova, Gustafsson & Wikström 2007, 2008; Ward & Chapman, 2003). In this study, I use the term events and turbulence to describe the uncertainty activities to which some degree of risks are attached. According to Ward & Chapman, 2003:98–99), *uncertainty management is not just about managing perceived threats, opportunities and their implications. [...] It implies exploring and understanding the origins of project uncertainty before seeking*

to manage it, with no preconceptions about what is desirable or undesirable. However, Petit (2012: 540) quoting De Meyer, Loch & Pich (2002), Platje & Seidel (1993), noted that “in projects undertaken in rapidly changing environments where uncertainty may be unavoidable managers need to go beyond traditional risk management, adopting roles and techniques oriented less toward planning and more toward flexibility and learning” and so guided the use of the term risk management in this study because the goal is to understand how the firms manage the consequences of the turbulent host-society events when they happen.

Perminova, Gustafsson & Wikström (2008:74) explained that uncertainty is not a self-explanatory term, but concluded that one can make a conclusion that risk is uncertainty and even though these two phenomena are not synonymous; they are better described as cause and consequences. The difference between the two was however more simplified (ibid) that “uncertainty is when the established facts are questioned and thereby the basis for calculating risks (known negative events) or opportunities (known positive events) is questioned”. In this research, the two are taken as synonymous but however takes risks as the consequences of the negative events.

Olsson (2007:747) cited that Lefley (1997) argues that *although risk results from uncertainty, risk and uncertainty are not theoretically synonymous. Risk involves situations where the probability of outcomes is known, while uncertainty is the opposite (i.e. when the probability of outcomes is not known). It is obvious that different opinions exist regarding what to consider as uncertainty, risk and opportunity.* However, Perminova et al (ibid:75) pointed out that “most research in this [project business] field has focused on identifying and prescribing ways managers can either reduce or absorb the negative consequences of environmental uncertainty, which has been recognized as an important variable in the explanation of organizational stability and performance”.

However, there is, according to Rockett (1999), no single accepted or correct definition of risk and there are as many definitions of risk as there are people capable of defining it. Risk, moreover, is usually misunderstood and used interchangeably with other related terms such as harm, hazard, threat and uncertainty (Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies 2007:735). Miller (1992) argued that international firms are exposed to five types of international risk: natural, legal, societal, political and governmental. Daniell (2000) confined such risk to four components: financial, cultural, legal and political. Though according to Nawaz & Hood (2005), there is no universally accepted typology for categorizing risks in

international business. Risk, however, could be described as the negative outcome of an uncertainty (Olsson 2007:745). Olsson (2007:748) quoting Hillson (2004), maintained that “risk involves situations where the probability of outcomes is known, while uncertainty is the opposite (i.e. when the probability of outcomes is not known”) and as such, “risk is measurable uncertainty while uncertainty is unmeasurable risk”, (Olsson 2007). However, some authors have advocated the use of the broader concept of uncertainty management instead of risk management, which is too focused on threats and events (Ward & Chapman 2003; Perminova, Gustafsson & Wikström 2007, 2008; Cleden 2009). In this study, regarding differentiating between uncertainty and risk, it is thus important to state that the two terms is occasionally used interchangeably. As the focus of the research is about how the country-specific turbulent events effect is managed in the operations of the project marketing companies in the turbulent Nigerian environment, even though it is believed that uncertainty creates risk (cause and effect) (Perminova, Gustafsson & Wikström 2008:74), uncertainty is treated as cause and risk as effects.

Risks are events whose probability distribution and impacts are considered to be known, that can be identified a priori, and that can therefore be taken into account in the project plans (Aaltonen et al., 2010:566). There are two components to risk, which include (i) probability – the likelihood of the incident happening that give rise to the risk, and (ii) the consequence – the level of impact of the risk. Steger (1993) sees the link between environmental risks and market opportunities determining an organisation’s environmental strategy. Risk can be seen as a combination of the probability that an event will occur and its consequences. Risk may result in losses or gains and may affect all firms in a class or particular firms (Al Khattab et al, 2007:734).

2.1.2 Risk management

The occurrence of risk therefore suggests the need for its management. Das & Teng (1996) and Miller (1998) suggest that global corporations may benefit from choosing strategies that take international risk factors into consideration in the strategy formulation process. Ahola, Artto & Kujala (2011:2) noted that “risk management, tackles uncertainty by focusing attention towards identifying the occurrence of potential unfavourable events a priori and then coming up with a response to how either their occurrence or harmful effects can be avoided or reduced”. On the subject of risk management process, there have recently been a large number of researchers which have proposed different processes. With respect to risk management process, there have recently been a large number of researchers which have proposed different processes (Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila

2011: 221). Some of the most important approaches are: PRAM (Chapman, 1997), RAMP (Institution of Civil Engineering, 2002), PMBOK (Project Management Institute, 2008), RMS (Institute of Risk Management, 2002). Almost all of these approaches have a similar framework with differences in the established steps in order to get the risks control.

Studies like those of Miller (1993) emphasize country-oriented environmental risks instead of industry-oriented risk management. A number of variations of the PRM process have been proposed. In its Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, the Project Management Institute (1996) presents four phases of the PRM process: identification; quantification; response development and control while Kliem & Ludin (1997) describe a four-phase process (identification, analysis, control and reporting. Boehm (1991) suggested a process consisting of two main phases: risk assessment, which includes identification, analysis and prioritization, and risk control, which includes risk management planning, risk resolution and risk monitoring planning, tracking and corrective action. In the same vein, Fairley (1994) suggested seven steps which consists of (1) Identify risk factors; (2) Assess risk probabilities and effects; (3) Develop strategies to mitigate identified risks; (4) Monitor risk factors; (5) Invoke a contingency plan; (6) Manage the crisis; (7) Recover from the crisis.

Petit (2012:551) pointed out that project managers and portfolio managers clearly faced risks and managed risks using the traditional tools and techniques, they are also exposed to an environment which was constantly changing. In this vein, Ward (1999:331) noted that a common problem in project risk management processes is the need to determine the relative significance of different sources of risk so as to guide subsequent risk management effort and ensure it remains cost effective.

Managing risk is about “identifying and taking opportunities to improve performance as well as taking action to avoid or reduce the chances of something going wrong” (Standards Australia, 2004). Risk management includes the different techniques to either reduce the probability of occurrence of an event or reduce its impact on the project (or inversely for positive risks) (Petit 2012:540). The risk management processes include activities to identify, assess, plan a response, and implement a response (Association for Project Management, 2006; Pavlak 2004; Power 2007; Project Management Institute, 2008b; Petit 2012).

It is helpful to consider the risk in the environment so as to be able to match efforts with outcome (Brouthers, Brouthers & Werner 2002:495) in the international strategy formulation process (Das & Teng 1996; Miller 1998). Once risks have been identified through brainstorming techniques or expert judgment,

they are typically assessed using a probability and impact assessment to determine the overall potential impact on the project (Association for Project Management, 2006; Project Management Institute, 2008a).

Effective risk management typically has a four-phase process (Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila 2011):

1. **Risks identification:** The process of determining which risks may affect the project and documenting their characteristics. Risk identification is studying a situation to realize what could go wrong in the project development at any given point of time during the project. The process must involve an investigation into all the potential sources of project risks and their consequences. It is of considerable importance because the process of risk analysis and response strategies may only be performed on the identified potential risks.

2. **Risk assessment:** The process of prioritizing risks for further analysis by assessing and combining, generally, their probability of occurrence and impact. Once risk identification is complete, risk analysis is used to identify the likelihood the risks that have been identified will happen. The ranking of risks is necessary because it would be difficult, if not impossible, to provide a plan for dealing with every possible risk in every step of the project. With a risk factor value assigned to each risk, the team now has a roadmap for mitigating project risk by developing contingency plans only for the tasks that have the highest risk factor (Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila 2011:229). In the Assessment phase, an appreciation of which risks are important can help managers to decide whether to explore particular risks in more or less detail, how much time to invest in developing responses to particular risks, and how much resource it is worth investing in responses to particular risks (Ward 1999:334).

3. **Risk response:** The process of developing options and actions to enhance opportunities and to reduce threats to the project objectives. Oliver (1991) identified five "generic" responses to environmental uncertainties/risks are acquiesce, compromise, avoidance, defy, and manipulate which Petit (2011:540) classified into (1) Risk avoidance, (2) Risk mitigation, (3) Risk transfer, and (4) Risk acceptance.

4. **Risk monitoring and reviewing:** The process of implementing a risk response plan, tracking identified risks, monitoring residual risks, identifying new risks, and evaluating the risk process effectiveness throughout the project (Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila 2011:221).

Based on Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila (2011) listing of the risk management process and Oliver (1991) categorization of the risk management methods, I constructed a risk management process framework that I believe is adequate in explaining risk management process in both turbulent and non-turbulent environments as shown in figure 4.

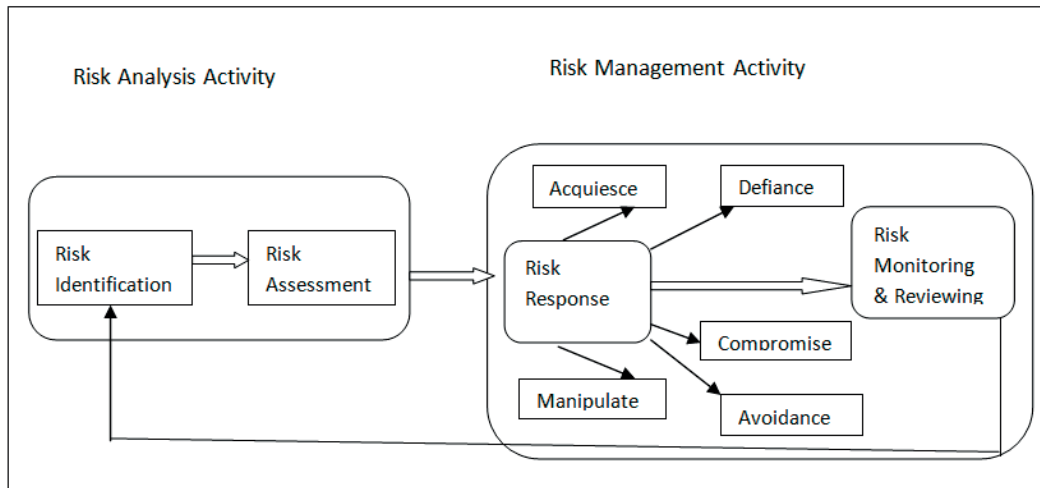


Figure 4. Construction of risk management process model

Most of the real-world risk analysis of problems contains a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data; therefore quantitative risk assessment techniques are inadequate for prioritizing risks (Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila 2011:220). Risk-based decision making (RBDM) is a kind of human behavior highly related to the decision maker's subjective perceptions (Alexopoulos et al. 2009). To facilitate the analysis of country-specific risk management strategies, this study adopts the categorization of firm-environmental strategies developed by Oliver (1991:152). Oliver (ibid) theorized that, "depending on a number of factors, such as the characteristics of institutional constituencies and the congruence of institutional norms and organizational goals, organizations may respond to institutional pressures in a variety of modes ranging from passive compliance with institutional norms to direct and active defiance of an institutional environment". Rather than just responding to risks or institutional pressures, Oliver (ibid) identified a number of strategic moves that can potentially mitigate the risks associated with the uncertainties and risks which a firm could adopt. Several risk management processes exist today that differ to some extent. However, they still include the important focus of identifying, assessing and mitigating a risk (Olsson 2007). The five "generic" responses to environmental uncertainties/risks are acquiesce, compromise, avoidance, defy, and manipulate which Aaltonen & Sivonen (2009) in their strategic response to stakeholder pressures classified as adaptation, influence, compromise,

avoidance, and dismissal strategies. Oliver (1991) categorization is adopted in this research and includes:

Acquiesce strategy: Organizations may acquiesce and fully conform to institutional pressures and expectations. This is a strategy by which organization accede to institutional pressures which may take the form of habit of following invisible, taking-for-granted norms; imitating institutional models; and complying to rules and accepting norms and institutional requirements. In order to cope with the risks and pressure posed by the institutional factors and to achieve the objectives of the project marketing, the organisations adjust and comply with the external institutional pressures. It involves the use of constructivism approach so as to foster effective relationships and good working relationships to gain advantage in the project marketing and manage risks.

Avoidance: They may avoid institutional pressures through such means as concealing nonconformity, responding symbolically, and buffering. This strategy is used when management considers the pressure associated with operating in a given product or geographic market to be unacceptable. This they do by concealing their nonconformity or buffering themselves from the institutional pressures.

Compromise: Organizations may compromise by partially complying with institutional demands (Oliver 1991: 151). When organizations face conflicting institutional demands, they adopt a compromise strategy in the form of balancing the expectations of multiple constituents, or pacify by placating and accommodating institutional demands, or bargain with the institutional stakeholders. Compromising strategy refers to a strategy by which a focal organization makes concessions and compromises over its own objectives, because of claims presented by stakeholders.

Defy: They may actively reject institutional norms or expectations in defiance of institutional pressures. Defiance is a more active form of resistance to institutional pressures (Oliver 1991: 156). Organizations dismiss threat by ignoring norms and values, challenge the rules and requirements or attacking the source of institutional pressure. It involves ignoring the presented demands of stakeholders. Not taking into account the stakeholder related pressures and their requirements in the project process.

Manipulation: Organizations may adopt an aggressive posture toward institutional agents and, through manipulation, attempt to actively change or exert power over institutional pressures. This is the most active response to institutional pressure (Oliver, 1991) because it is intended to actively change or

exert power over the content of the expectations themselves or the sources that seek to express or enforce them. It is the purposeful and opportunistic attempt to co-opt, influence, or control institutional pressures (ibid: 157). See table 2 below:

Table 2. Strategic responses to institutional processes

Strategies	Tactics	Examples
Acquiesce	Habit	Following invisible taken-for-granted norms
	Initiate	Mimicking institutional models
	Comply	Obeying rules and accepting norms
Compromise	Balance	Balancing the expectations of multiple constituents
	Pacify	Placating and accommodating institutional elements
	Bargain	Negotiating with institutional stakeholders
Avoid	Conceal	Disguising non-conformity
	Buffer	Loosening institutional attachments
	Escape	Changing goals, activities, or domains
Defy	Dismiss	Ignoring explicit norms and values
	Challenge	Contesting rules and requirements
	Attack	Assaulting the sources of institutional pressure
Manipulate	Co-opt	Importing influential constituents
	Influence	Shaping values and criteria
	Control	Dominating institutional constituents and processes

Adapted from Oliver, C. (1991:152).

Prior research suggests that organizational/managerial perceptions of environmental risks and market opportunities drive the importance that organisations place on environmental issues and the extent that the latter are integrated into decision making and business planning (Oliver 1991; Steger 1993; Aaltonen & Sivonen, 2009). This view is supported by Dickson & Weaver (1997:409) that senior executives make decisions that are predicated by broader market and institutional frameworks and so act “as the brain of the organization, and becomes the key determinant of its strategic posture and therefore their

perceptions about the environment and the ways they affect firm performance are likely to correspond to their approach” (Partington 2000:98). Put differently, “the way senior executives make sense of their environment is influenced by the individual perceptions of uncertainty that exists in the environment” (Phua 2007:754).

In addressing the executive perception of environmental uncertainty and effect on strategic functions of construction firms, Phua (2007), the researcher worked on the belief that little empirical work has been done to examine how the external environment as it is perceived by senior executives affects the way firms operate in understanding the dynamic interaction between construction firms and their external environment. The researcher examined the impact of perceived managerial environmental uncertainty on firm’s activities across different sectors of firms within the construction industry; perceived managerial environmental uncertainty and frequency and extent of changes in firm strategies. The paper adopts the conceptualisation of the environment as consisting of its perceived state (Bourgeois 1980; Milliken 1987; Miles, Snow & Pfeffer 1974). In contrast to the objective state which refers to the ‘hard’ characteristics or state of affairs of the environment, the perceived state is the state of affairs about the environment as they are perceived by the decision-makers of firms. It is this perception that has long been argued and repeatedly tested to be the environmental construct that is most relevant in the study of firm’s behaviour and activities (Bourgeois 1980). Because senior executives make decisions that are predicated by broader market and institutional frameworks, they act “as the brain of the organization and is the key determinant of its strategic posture”, (Dickson & Weaver 1997:409) and therefore their perceptions about the environment and the ways they affect firm performance are likely to correspond to ‘real’ underlying causal relationships (Partington 2000:98). In other words, the way senior executives make sense of their environment is influenced by the individual perceptions of uncertainty that exists in the environment. A useful extension of the perceptual construct is that it relates to “an individual’s perceived inability to predict accurately” the state of the environment, its effect on the firm and the type of response options that are available (Milliken 1987:136). Results from 526 firms across various construction-related sectors show a link exists between senior executives’ perceived environmental uncertainty and the kinds of activities or strategic functions that firms use. Results also show that while the day-to-day firm support activities are not generally affected by differences in perceived managerial environmental uncertainty, firms do not seem to consistently put more emphasis on strategic functions like long-range planning process, and R&D activities even when the perceived environmental uncertainty is high. The contradictory results indicate that broader industry characteristics might be at

play in influencing this lack of innovativeness by firms to pursue high-end strategic functions that could potentially improve the competitiveness of the industry. The vital conclusion of the research is that individual firms will adopt these processes to varying degree of extensiveness depending on the level of perceived managerial environmental uncertainty (Lindsay & Rue 1980); and on the other hand, executives who experience low perceived environmental uncertainty might focus more on the day-to-day firm support activities such as finance, accounting, and purchasing without seeing the need for adopting any long term strategic functions.

While several studies have also discussed both the nature of risks and strategies available for managing them (Miller 1992; Miller & Lessard 2001; Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser 2002; Pavlak 2004; Aaltonen & Sivonen 2009; Ahola 2009; Wang & Yuang 2011), none to my knowledge had specifically addressed the issue of host-society risk and management in project marketing but only recognized host-society in the categorization of political risks as affecting project business even though a lot have analyzed the nature of risks encountered at the project management phase. Researcher like Hadjikhani & Håkanson (1996) considered political actions in business networks in which they examined government-company relationships and noted that the influence of political rules on business is unidirectional but the impact is not uniform on organisations. Hadjikhani & Johanson (1996) studied the contraction of foreign market operations and exit from foreign markets when MNCs face market turbulence and decline where they assessed three Swedish multinationals in Iran during the turbulent year from 1975 to 1992. One of the strategic implications of their research is that “in the face of market turbulence, the firm has a choice among several different strategies, such as exiting, increasing commitments, assuming a sleeping position, and decreasing commitments”.

Boyne & Meier (2009) examined environmental turbulence, organizational stability, and public service performance. The results show that turbulence has a negative effect on performance and that this is compounded by internal organizational change and so pointed out that public managers can mitigate the harmful effects of volatility in the external environment by maintaining structural stability. The researchers also examined whether the impact of turbulence on performance is reinforced or reduced by internal organizational stability, and thereby shed light on the relative merits of theories of structural contingency and structural inertia. The results show that organizations in a turbulent environment find it more difficult to perform well, which is consistent with arguments that uncertainty about changes in finances and service needs places extra burdens on managers. It was concluded that the negative impact of

turbulence can, however be mitigated if organizations maintain structural stability. In contrast, their evidence suggests that organizations that respond to external change by pursuing structural change are likely to perform more poorly than their stable counterparts. Their conclusion was that structural inertia theory rather than contingency theory provides the best basis for understanding the links between turbulence, organizational stability, and performance, at least in the short run.

However, the few researches into Africa and developing countries in general also fall short of specifically addressing host-society risk that most African countries are characterized as they were more of exploratory dealing with why projects are failing (Lavagnon 2012; Rwelamila & Ssegawa 2014; Saint-Macary 2014). The only study on managing risk and turbulence in Africa by Owusu & Habiyakare (2011) is in internationalization of Finnish firms but not directly about project business in the African context but provided a good starting point for my research. In the same vein, studies directly relating to risk management in Nigeria were mostly concentrated on construction projects risk (Aibinu & Odeyinka, 2006; Nnadi & Ugwu 2014; Luka & Muhammad, 2014).

However, Jaafari (2001:92) made an analysis of risks normally encountered in project business (see figure 5 below):

Typical risk variables, treatments and deficiencies		
Risk variable	Description	Conventional treatment
Promotion risk	Probability that the investments made to fund the front-end activities will be lost (project abandoned)	Selective, innovation in concept or finance, strategic partnerships
Market risk, volume	Probability that the forecast sales volume will not materialise	Use strategic planning & supply curve & base forecasts on competitiveness [7,8]
Market risk, price	Probability that the actual unit price will turn out to be less than the forecast price	Generate probability distribution for unit price and test against potential price variations [7,8]
Political risks	Expropriation, discriminatory legislative or regulatory changes covering tax regimes & environmental laws; concession; political <i>force majeure</i> such as riots, strikes, civil unrest, wars, invasions, terrorism, & religious turmoil	Secure insurance from Export Finance, Overseas Investment Corporation (US) or World Bank's Multilateral Investment Guarantee
Technical risks	Probability that the project will not perform to the required technical standards (e.g. not meeting its license conditions) or produce substandard products or have excessive operating cost energy consumption	Reliance is made on expertise of design consultants and adequacy of the client's brief. Clients undertake own strategic planning separate from project delivery
Financing risks	Probability that the project revenues will not be sufficient to repay the debts, and hence, no financing can be organised	Apply rules of thumb, such as setting minimum interest and debt coverage ratios
Environmental risks	Probability that the project will have adverse environmental impacts beyond its permitted limits and increased liabilities	EIS and environmental impacts monitoring plans are often used
Cost estimate risk (completion risk)	Probability that the funds allocated to the project will be insufficient to complete the project	Collateral warranties that additional funds will be available
Schedule risk (delay risk)	Probability that the project will overrun its allocated duration	Collateral warranties plus imposition of liquidated damages for delay
Operating risk	Probability that the facility fails to perform its full functionality or its failure to generate adequate units of output or excessive consumption of resources	Frequent reviews and validation of project design concept, plus front-end simulation or pilot plant operation
Organisational risk	Probability that legal and managerial structures put together to develop and operate the project will not perform well	Normally an incorporated company is used plus clear lines of authority
Integration risk	Probability that separate bodies acting as sponsor, developer (or client) and operator will not work in synergy	Legal reviews and various legal provisions to cover all foreseeable eventualities
<i>Force majeure</i>	Probability of events beyond control occurring, acts of God	Insurance coverage, emergency plans
		Deficiency
		No guarantee to success, aggressive competition a major risk
		Markets may shift during the project development and implementation unless locked in via sales/guarantees/contracts
		Markets may shift during project development and implementation unless locked in via sales/guarantees/contracts
		Scope of guarantees are limited and not always available or effective, particularly if major upheavals are experienced
		Poor integration of conceptual design & prone to many errors & omissions. Often projects fail to live up to their expectations due to sub-optimal design
		Incapable of detecting interdependencies or testing various scenarios objectively
		Exposure to long term liabilities not covered by EIS processes. Complicated process and often prone to disputation
		Wrong approach in the sense that true risks are covered with paper not tackled
		Wrong approach in the sense that true risks are covered with paper not tackled
		Not all of the pertinent data are normally brought to bear on conceptualisation & implementation of project
		Contractors and designers are not part of the major decision processes
		Heavy reliance on legal provisions and entanglements which may not work
		Insurance not always available/cheap

Figure 5. Typical risk variables, treatment and deficiencies

Source: A. Jaafari (2001)

Considering the general landscape of international project business, Doh & Ramamurti (2003) examined risk in developing country infrastructure projects. The article reviews data and surveys recent cases that underscore the emergent threats faced by companies seeking to develop and manage infrastructure projects in developing country. The researchers analyzed the role of government in both facilitating and impeding investment in order to better understand the successes and failures of infrastructure investment. In response to some of the challenges presented by governments' roles in international infrastructure investment, the researchers identified a number of available tools and specific strategic approaches that can help companies mitigate risk in infrastructure such as leveraging international agreements, drawing on multilateral project finance, pursuing first-mover positions and engaging all relevant stakeholders. The paper concludes by drawing implications for management research and practice.

2.1.3 Host-society risks

The subject of the research (host-society risk), falls within the classification of political risk. Political risk, as suggested by Brink (2004) arises from both political and societal sources. Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007:738) noted that political risk is the most obvious risk when projects are exposed to the international environment which was defined quoting Iankova & Katz (2003) that "societal risk are risk arising from political actions of non-governmental organisations which include revolutions, coups d'e'tat and civil wars. Conversely, Gurr (2001), opined all disruptive forms of internal opposition to governments, including revolutions, terrorism, assassinations, riots and demonstrations which Jeannet & Hennessy (1998), referred to as social unrest. Furthermore, Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007) explained that the common theme of these risks is that they are undertaken against a constituted authority and can have a negative impact upon international and domestic investments and can be in the form of limitations in supplies necessary for production, interrupted government services, damage to physical property, personnel loss, or even complete abandonment of the operation (Minor 2003; Brink 2004).

The external environment is regarded as comprising all the social, economic and physical factors that exist outside the boundary of the firm which affect the strategic decision-making behaviour of firms (Duncan 1972). The different environmental dynamics place different demands on different firms in terms of the way they structure their strategic functions and activities, i.e. production, finance, sales and marketing, procurement delivery, etc. in order to cope with the environmental circumstances (Phua 2007:753) as these factors are constantly

changing and the ability of firms to timely detect the changes and decide when to respond and how to best adapt to those changes, are critical to their long-term success Phua (ibid) concluded. Because environments can be characterized along several dimensions (Haleblian & Finkelstein 1993:845), it should be noted that environments vary in their degree of turbulence or stability (Dess & Beard 1984) and in the degree of managerial discretion they permit (Hambrick & Finkelstein 1987).

A look at Al Khattab, Anchor, Davies (2007) on the managerial perceptions of political risk in international projects mentioned above where they examine the vulnerability of international projects to political risks, and exploring the correlations between those managerial perceptions of political risks and various firm-specific characteristics of international business projects operating in Jordan in 2005 showed that few studies of political risk, particularly in the context of international projects, have been carried out. More particularly the focus has been almost exclusively on developed, rather than developing, countries. Their research showed that international projects are more concerned about host-society and interstate related risks than host-government related risks. Host-government risks received the lowest concern rating among all the political risk types by Jordanian respondents. Respondents, however, are more concerned about the political risk which arises from a host society than those which arises from the direct actions of a host-government. Demonstrations, riots and insurrection are the risks of first and most concern to respondents, followed by revolutions, coups d'e'tat and civil wars. These risks are commonplace events in the Middle East and their consequences, in the event of their occurrence, are at the country level and expected to be severe. Nevertheless, terrorist activities are also commonplace events in the Middle East, yet they have received the least concern rating among all the host-society related risks. In the context of interstate risks, wars are the risk of second most concern to respondents and economic sanctions are the risk of third most concern among all the political risk types. The high degree of managerial concern about interstate risks was attributed to the risks are commonplace events in the Middle East. It was also found that the degree of concern about interstate risks is not significantly related to any firm-specific characteristics, suggesting that these risks are 'macro'. This finding implies that managerial perceptions of political risk in developing countries can be different from those in developed countries. In conclusion, the findings of the research suggest that international projects are more concerned about host-society and interstate related risks than host-government related risks.

The focus of this research falls in the general environmental factor as classified by Miller (1992) and specifically the host-society factors in the classification of the political risk by Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007) (see the highlighted on table 3 below).

Table 3. Classification of Political risk according to its sources

Sources of threat	Threat (source of harm)
Host-government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expropriation and/or confiscation • Contract repudiation • Currency inconvertibility • Ownership and/or personnel restrictions • Taxation restrictions • Import/export restrictions
Host-society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrorism • Demonstrations, riots and insurrections • Revolutions, coups d'état and civil wars
Interstate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wars • Economic sanctions

Source: A modification of Al Khattab Adel, Anchor John and Davies Eleanor (2007:736).

2.2 Contextual pressure

The environment is viewed as necessarily exerting pressures on business activities and effectiveness (Kostova & Roth 2002; DiMaggio & Powell 1983; Miller 1992, 1993; Scott 1995, 2001) and this is often explained in the views postulated in the Institutional theory. Institutional theory is relevant in this research because it is a concept of the environment. Institutional theory is used in this case because this research focuses partly on the relationship between one of the institutions (political) to which host-society belongs, as it affects the operations of project marketing firms in Nigeria even though project marketing researches are often situated in the Network and relationship theories. In the project marketing and management literature it is believed that projects must adapt to and be rooted in the environment in order to survive i.e. be

knowledgeable of the environments' rules, practices and norms (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) otherwise, conflicts may arise (Miller & Lessard, 2001) and this could be seen as indirectly espousing the doctrine of the institutional theory.

2.2.1 Institutional pressure

Although the dominant theoretical view often used in project business research is the network approach. This approach assumes that enterprises are interwoven in a network containing both business and non-business actors (Hadjikhani & Ghauri 2001; Keillor & Hult 2004), as project business is defined as necessarily leading to the creation of a business network (Bansard, Cova & Salle 1993; Gunter & Bonarccorsi 1996; Welch et al. 1996). Relationship and network approaches are the dominating, and strongly recommended conceptual frameworks used in research project business (Ahmed & Törnroos 1995; Gunter & Bonarccorsi 1996; Cova, Mazet & Salle 1996; Welch et al. 1996; Owusu 2003) but this research takes exception and borrows from the institutional theory.

Peng, Wang & Jiang (2008:921) pointed out that 'as researchers increasingly probe into emerging economies whose institutions differ significantly from those in developed economies, there is increasing appreciation that formal and informal institutions, commonly known as the "rules of the game" (North, 1990), significantly shape the strategy and performance of firms – both domestic and foreign – in emerging economies (Hoskisson et al. 2000; Wright et al. 2005). Institutional theory has emerged as an approach to the study of organization-environment relations (Meyer & Rowan 1977; DiMaggio & Powell 1983; Chung & Beamish 2005) and has been referred to as holding the potential to analyze firms operating across different national contexts (Kostova, Roth & Dacin 2008; Westney & Zaheer 2009). Leung et al. (2005) and Redding (2005) make a compelling case that international business research should focus more on the context of institutions.

Given that many elements of the institutional environment, such as culture and legal systems, are often specific to a nation (Rosenweig & Singh 1991), organizational practices can be expected to vary across countries (Kostova & Roth 2002:215). Oliver (1991) maintained that "depending on a number of factors, such as the characteristics of institutional constituencies and the congruence of institutional norms and organizational goals, organizations may respond to institutional pressures in a variety of modes ranging from passive compliance with institutional norms to direct and active defiance of an institutional environment." On the other hand, researchers like Gooddrick & Salancik (1996), Davis & Greve (1997), Kostova & Roth (2002) have shown empirically that

organization's response to institutional pressures is affected by organizational characteristics.

Oliver's (1991) strategic responses to institutional processes identifies the different strategic responses that organizations enact as a result of the institutional pressures toward conformity that are exerted on them and to develop a preliminary conceptual framework for predicting the occurrence of the alternative strategies. Similarly, the article offers a typology of strategic responses that vary in active organizational resistance from passive conformity to proactive manipulation. Ten institutional factors are hypothesized to predict the occurrence of the alternative proposed strategies and the degree of organizational conformity or resistance to institutional pressures. Based on the assumption of potential variation in these dimensions of organizational behavior, Oliver proposed five strategic responses which vary in active agency by the organization from passivity to increasing active resistance: acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation. The article proposed that organizations do not invariably conform to the rules, myths, or expectations of their institutional environment.

However, to facilitate the analysis of environment-related risk management strategies, this study adopts the categorization of environmental risk by Miller (1992, 1993) and Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007). This is because this categorization is the one of the most comprehensive and inclusive in the international business literature. In this research, I build on the growing interest of organizational researchers in exploring the sources of variation in the strength of institutional pressures and the strategic responses to these pressures (Oliver 1991; Powell 1991; Scott 1991) and concentrate on the general environment. I explicitly draw on Oliver's theoretical framework to provide a foundation for categorizing strategic responses of organizations to institutional pressures so as to understand the degree of isomorphism among the firms. I specifically look into the issue of isomorphism to see if there is consensus in the perception and opinions of the project marketers (PMs) regarding the problems of host-society uncertainty and risks in the Nigerian environment and how they manage it for the long run success of the firms, and the desire to improve on the generalizability of the findings from the research.

2.2.2 Isomorphism as expected result

Studies in institutional theory concentrated their attention on isomorphism i.e. how organizations are becoming more similar. The focus was on explaining similarity and homogeneity. DiMaggio & Powell (1983) identify three mechanisms through which institutional isomorphic change occurs, each with its

own antecedents: 1) coercive isomorphism that stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy; 2) mimetic isomorphism resulting from standard responses to uncertainty; and 3) normative isomorphism, associated with professionalization. In line with this, Scott (1995, 2001) identified three distinct pillars of the institutional context i.e. regulatory (corresponding to coercive pressures), normative (related to normative pressures), and cognitive (elaboration of the concept of mimetic pressures). According to Kostova & Roth (2002:125), a central tenet of the institutional perspective is that organizations sharing the same environment will employ similar practices and thus become "isomorphic" with each other. The adoption of these practices is explained by organizations' conformity to institutional pressures driven by legitimacy motives (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Institutional isomorphism offers appropriate examination of convergence in organizational practices (DiMaggio & Powell 1983). According to Granlund & Lukka (1998:159), isomorphism is based on two core ideas (Meyer & Rowan 1977; DiMaggio & Powell 1983; Oliver 1991), environments are collective and interconnected, and organisations must be responsive to external demands and expectations in order to survive.

Coercive isomorphism (regulatory): Coercive isomorphism results from both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society within which organizations function.

Mimetic isomorphism (cognitive): Uncertainty is also a powerful force that encourages imitation. When organizational technologies are poorly understood (March & Olsen, 1976), when goals are ambiguous, or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty, organizations may model themselves on other organizations (Kostova & Roth 2002:151).

Normative pressures: A third source of isomorphic organizational change is normative and stems primarily from professionalization.

Why is isomorphism considered in this research? The issue of isomorphism is considered in this research in order to assess whether the case companies behave in the same way in relation to the uncertainty and the subsequent host-society risk management in terms of their background of being firms coming from an entirely different business environment and culture (Nordic). Of course the Hofstede's dimensions has classified the two business cultures to be at different end of the continuum and as such are expected to operate in terms of their

imported business culture and norms and thus guide their response to handling the uncertainty and risk in the host's business environment.

Table 4. Three Pillars of Institution

Theory Element	Regulative	Normative	Cognitive
Basis of compliance	Expedience	Social obligation	Taken for granted
Mechanisms	Coercive	Normative	Mimetic
Logic	Instrumentality	Appropriateness	Orthodoxy
Indicators	Rules, laws, sanctions	Certification, accreditation	Prevalence, isomorphism
Basis of legitimacy	Legally sanctioned	Morally sanctioned	Culturally supported, conceptually supported

Source: Scott, W.R. (1995).

In line with the pressures of these institutions as classified by Scott, the focus in the examination of isomorphism in this study is to check if there are similarities in the perceptions and behaviours of the firms or employ similar practices and thus become "isomorphic" with each other with regard responses to these pressures (Oliver 1991; Powell 1991; Scott 1991).

2.3 Project business pressure

Project business is seen either as a form of export (Vanhoucke 2001; Hill 2003) or as a later mode that develops as a result of the gradual process of knowledge acquisition and experience that enables firms to move from export via an agent to more involved modes (Johanson & Vahlne 1977, 1990a, b) or as a "hit-and-run" approach, i.e. to get rid of excess products or to gain business on short-term bases (Owusu, Sandhu & Kock 2007: 696). It is "the part of business that relates directly or indirectly to projects, with a purpose to achieve objectives of a firm or several firms" (Artto & Wikström 2005:351). According to Turner & Müller (2003), "a project is a temporary organization to which resources are assigned to undertake a unique, novel and transient endeavour managing the inherent

uncertainty and need for integration in order to deliver beneficial objectives of change”. In this research, I have adopted the definition of Holstius (1989) and Skaates, Tikkanen & Lindblom (2002) that *Project is a complex transaction designed specifically to create capital assets that produce benefits for the buyer over an extended period of time.*

It should be pointed out that project business consists of project marketing and project management. According to Atkinson (1999:337), Project Management is the application of a collection of tools and techniques (such as the CPM and matrix organisation) to direct the use of diverse resources toward the accomplishment of a unique, complex, one-time task within time, cost and quality constraints. Each task requires a particular mix of these tools and techniques structured to fit the task environment and life cycle (from conception to completion) of the task. Similarly, the definition of project management by the British Standard for project management (1996) has it that project management is the planning, monitoring and control of all aspects of a project and the motivation of all those involved in it to achieve the project objectives on time and to the specified cost, quality and performance. In the same vein, the PMBOK Guide (1996) defines project management as “the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques in order to meet or exceed stakeholder requirements from a project”.

Project marketing deals with the sale and marketing of projects. Project marketing entails all activities done before, during, and after the project is delivered and relationship based. Drawing on the work of Cova & Holstius (1993), Jalkala et al. (2010), project marketing is defined as a multifunctional process of managing networks and buyer-seller interaction within and between projects in businesses where the value creation process includes the search, preparation, bidding, negotiation, implementation, and transition of a project. On a general level (Skaates & Tikkanen 2003), a marketed project is “a transaction concerning a functioning whole which is delivered to the buyer” (Holstius 1987) and covers “a discrete package of products, services and other actions designed to create (capital) assets for the buyer over a certain period of time” (Cova & Ghauri 1996).

A good way of looking at the difference between the two is highlighted in the argument of Hadjikhani (1996) that project delivery encompasses individual project supply processes within a multi-firm ‘project network’. The management of business relationships between actors in the buying and selling firms is important before, during, and after delivery not just a project delivered by one firm/a group of firms to another organisation/group of organisations and a set of

managerial actions taken by the supplier(s) (Skaates & Tikkanen 2003). However, this study is concerned with the management of host-society effects in the project marketing context.

Project operations are subdivided into partial projects, turnkey projects and turnkey plus projects (Luostarinen & Welch, 1990) and mean:

Partial projects: Partial projects include partial system deliveries. Here the purchaser is planning and managing the project by itself, by buying several systems, and putting together a project by itself. The purchaser buys parts or systems of the total project from various suppliers who are involved only in specifying their own supplies of inputs, equipment, technology or know-how.

Turnkey projects: In a turnkey project, a complete system is delivered to the buyer. Here the *turnkey* marketer (supplier, consultant or contractor) is involved in the overall technical and economic planning of the project from the beginning, wherein the marketer would bid for the project based on its own specifications. In the traditional legal sense, after contract award, the marketer takes full responsibility for completing the project. It is expected that the purchaser will finally receive a completed, functioning facility and pay the contract price. Turnkey project generally includes: (1) supply of technology and know-how, (2) basic design and engineering, (3) supply of complete plant and equipment, (4) design and construction of civil works, (5) commissioning of the total plant facilities up to the start-up stage (Luostarinen & Welch, 1990: 126). It usually defines the extent of marketer responsibility and liability for a project.

Turnkey-plus projects: Turnkey plus projects are complete system deliveries plus additional services such as personnel training or facilities management. Here after completion of what would be a usual turnkey project the marketer continues to manage the facility, for a period, on a management contract. The marketer may also license the plant to produce some goods using its technology or those of its network partners, or undertake a contract to train the personnel of the buyer. In some cases the marketer may help to market the products of the plant or even take equity shares in the investment.

However, Hoskisson et al (2000), Burgess and Steenkamp (2006), Owusu, Habiyakare (2011) noted that contextual international business studies have concentrated on studies of developed markets, and the extant theories are not necessarily applicable to emerging and developing markets. Contrarily, Wright et al (2005:2) noted that institutional theory, transaction cost theory, agency theory, resource-based theory, have been identified (Hoskisson et al. 2000; Peng

et al. 2001; Meyer & Peng 2004) as leading theories when probing into emerging economies.

2.3.1 Characteristics of projects

Each project is seen as unique and different from any other as project business scholars (INPM scholars) have agreed on four main distinguishing characteristics of project business – discontinuity (discontinuity of demand and business relationships between projects), uniqueness (uniqueness of individual projects), complexity (the complexity of the project offering and business network), and the extent of financial commitment (Hadjikhani 1996; Mandjak & Veres 1998; Tikkanen 1998, Cova, Ghauri & Salle 2002; Skates & Tikkanen 2003; Owusu, Sandhu & Kock 2007).

The business of project-based firms (Hobday 2000; Artto & Kujala 2008) is characterized by discontinuity, uniqueness, and complexity (DUC) (Mandják & Veres 1998). Firstly, in many project-based industries it is typical that a customer that buys a project delivery may not buy another one for several years or even decades, potentially reducing incentives for both the supplier and the customer to invest in mutual long-term collaboration. Secondly, delivered projects are often characterized by a high degree of uniqueness as they need to be tailored by the supplier to ensure that they meet the specific requirements of the customer (Ahola, Artto & Kujala 2011:4). Thirdly, the complexity of each individual project in terms of the number of actors involved throughout the supply process is enormous.

Discontinuity: Periodical purchasing is a fact in international projects. Hence, there is discontinuity of demand and business relationships between projects. Buyers purchase projects when there is a need for new capacity (Hadjikhani 1996:319). Apparently international project market is defined as containing few buyers who buy projects repeatedly, where each particular market is often dominated by only one buyer belonging to the public sector and the same buyer shows up in the market at different periods (ibid:319). Project marketing is explained not in terms of penetration into a new market, but in terms of the management of an already existing relationship wherein the formal relationship is interrupted and the ability of the buyer to change sellers is high.

Uniqueness: This refers to the uniqueness of each project in technical, financial and socio-political terms. Each project sale or purchase is also considered unique. Each project is characterized by a high degree of uniqueness as they need to be tailored by the supplier to ensure that they meet the specific requirements of the customer (Ahola, Artto & Kujala 2011:4). Uniqueness is found in technical,

economic and organizational aspects regarding the parties, their resources, the activities carried out, and the business contexts. There are usually long and complex interaction processes before contract award and during implementation (Bansard, Cova & Salle 1993).

Complexity: This refers to the complexity of each individual project in terms of the number of actors involved throughout the supply process and the complexity of the project offering. Most projects are characterized by an extreme technical, financial, political and societal complexity (Cova, Ghauri & Salle 2002:16).

Financial Commitment: The extent of financial commitment of the parties involved in projects is large. Most projects are of a more modest size but are nevertheless important in financial terms (Cova, Ghauri & Salle 2002:21). Despite these figures being high, they are similar to those encountered in continuous supplier/customer relations (e.g. in industrial product involving repeat purchasing). Very high figures can also be noticed over a given period. But the fundamental difference is that in project business the amounts are centered on a single project (ibid:21).

2.3.2 Risk management in Project Business

Several studies have discussed both the nature of risks and strategies available for managing them in project business and environments in general (Slevin & Pinto 1987; Miller 1992; Miller & Lessard 2001; Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser 2002; Pavlak 2004; Aaltonen & Sivonen 2009; Ahola 2009; Wang & Yuang 2011). Studies such as Salmi (2000), Aaltonen et al. (2010), Ahola, Artto & Kujala (2011), Liu, Wang & Ma (2011), Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007), Hadjikhani (1998), Hadjikhani & Johanson (1998) addressed risk in project operations in general; while, Peng & Luo (2000), White (2000), Doh & Ramamurti (2003), Ramamurti (2003) focused on strategies in emerging economies which found support in the works of Leung et al. (2005) that IB research should focus more on the context of institutions.

Table 5 shows the nature of work done concerning risk management behaviour of the international firms. Similarly, only a very few of the researches were based on turbulent environment as most were centered on managing project risk in stable environments. The table below shows much of the work on risk/uncertainty management in the general project business areas which includes project marketing and project management functions.

Table 5. Research in uncertainty and risk management in project business.

Author and (Year of Publication)	Title	Focus of analysis	Category
Aaltonen, Kirsi, Kujala, Jaakko, Lehtonen, Päivi & Ruuska, Inkeri (2010)	A stakeholder network perspective on unexpected events and their management in international projects	How a focal project's local stakeholder relationships are associated with the emergence and management of unexpected events in the context of international projects.	Managing stakeholder relationships risk in international projects
Ahola, T., Artto, K. and Kujala, J. (2011)	Managing project uncertainty: critical incidents in multi-firm project networks.	Managing uncertainty in a project network	Project network and risk
Joe Sanderson (2012)	Risk, uncertainty and governance in megaprojects: A critical discussion of alternative explanations	Performance problems exhibited by many megaprojects, and examine the governance solutions.	Risk in megaprojects
Jun Liu, Qiuzhen Wang, Qingguo Ma (2011)	The effects of project uncertainty and risk management on IS development project performance: A vendor perspective	Integrative model to explore the moderating effects of uncertainty on the relationship between risk management and IS development project performance	Risk management and project performance
Zarkada-Fraser A. and Fraser C., (2002)	Risk perception by UK firms towards the Russian market	Reviews the concept of risk, and its manifestations in the volatile socio-economic and political Russia	Risk perception in volatile markets
Miller, R. and Lessard, D. (2001),	The Strategic Management of Large Engineering Projects:	Understanding the nature of risks in projects and	Nature of risks and management

	Shaping Risks, Institutions and Governance	management	
Florice, S. and Miller, R. (2001)	Strategizing for anticipated risks and turbulence in large-scale engineering projects	Use grounded theory to develop the notions of system robustness and, respectively, governability.	Risk in engineering megaprojects
Al Khattab Adel, Anchor John and Davies Eleanor (2007)	Managerial perceptions of political risk in international projects	Examines the vulnerability of international projects to political risks.	International projects and political risk
Hadjikhani, A. (1998)	Political risk for project-selling firms: Turbulence in relationships between business and non-business actors.	It concerns the interaction between project-selling firms and governments (the core actor in the non-business group) when they become challenged by sudden drastic political change.	Political risk and relationship turbulence
Hadjikhani A. and Johanson, J. (1996)	Facing foreign market turbulence: Three Swedish Multinationals in Iran	Examines the responses of three Swedish MNCs to the dramatic changes in the Iranian market during the turbulent period 1975-1992	Turbulent foreign markets
Ramamurti, Ravi (2003)	Can governments make credible promises?: Insights from infrastructure projects in emerging economies	The role of governments in projects in emerging economies and the risk of government renegeing.	Risks in foreign market projects
Doh, Jonathan P. and Ramamurti, Ravi (2003)	Reassessing Risk in Developing Country Infrastructure	Reviews data and surveys recent cases that underscore the emergent threats faced by companies seeking to develop and manage infrastructure projects.	Risks in foreign market projects

Obviously lacking in the literature is the explicit attention to the strategic influence of the environmental turbulence in the response strategy formulation in the developing countries. As a result of this, this research adapts the studies of Hadjikhani & Johanson (1996), Hadjikhani (1998), Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser (2002); Ramamurti (2003), Doh & Ramamurti (2003), Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007); Owusu & Habiyakare (2011) in addressing the risk management strategies of the Nordic project marketing firms in Nigeria by assessing the sense making attitude of their PMs in managing the risk.

2.4 Summary in terms of successfulness

In the project management literature it is believed that projects must adapt to and be rooted in the environment in order to survive i.e. be knowledgeable of the environments' rules, practices and norms (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) otherwise, conflicts may arise (Miller & Lessard, 2001). Cases of projects manifesting the environmental risks abound ranging from politically risky projects like government reneging (Ramamurti 2003). Frynas & Mellahi (2003:542) citing Wells & Gleason (1995) that a build-own-operate (BOO) infrastructure project carries more political risk than a build-operate-transfer (BOT) or a build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT) project. The Dabhol project in India by Enron is a popular case in project business. It was reported that Enron seems to have done a good job of writing comprehensive contracts that anticipated many contingencies and included clauses to resolve uncertainties in its favour. However, Enron's business strategy was said to be unmindful of the obsolescing bargain logic, which probably raised the incentives for government reneging. Enron appears also to have underestimated the risks arising from political change (Ramamurti 2003). Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007) examine the vulnerability of international projects to political risks. The findings of their research suggest that the political risk associated with international projects poses a threat to the majority of companies and that the vulnerability to political risk is related to a firm's degree of internationalization.

A successful project business according to Olsen (1971) is that project that balances cost, time, and quality criteria which is otherwise known as 'The Iron Triangle'. Other researchers supporting the idea of time, cost, and quality as the yardstick of successful projects include Pinto & Slevin (1988), Saarinen (1990) Wright (1997), Wateridge (1998) which Atkinson (1999:339) pointed out that are measuring the delivery stage. However, two other possible criteria which could be used to measure the success of the project according to Atkinson (ibid) are the resultant system (the product) and the benefits to the many stakeholders involved with the project such as the users, customers or the project staff.

According to Kupakuwana & Berg (2005), a successful project was seen as one in which the triad of time, budget, and specification (traditional measures) was complied with at a profit, with the addition of customer satisfaction as the fourth important success parameter in the recent literature. Caru, Cova & Pace (2004:532) pointed out that in the project business, what is truly relevant is not that the project eventually is finalized in time and according to the budget, but that the customer is satisfied with the overall experience of the company.

It should be pointed out that in turbulent host-society environment, it is possible for projects not to be able to meet up with all the above stated parameters of successful project business as stated by Atkinson (1999), Kupakuwana & Berg (2005) and other similar studies as a result of host-society events. However, Cameron (1984) noted that “organizational adaptability competency becomes key success of organization in rapid changing environment” and this is supported by research literature and management research emphasizing adaptation as an important capability for survival and success. Therefore, “an organization’s fitness or performance is determined by how well aligned it is with the demands of its environment”. Turbulent host-society event could make projects more expensive as a result of security costs, delivery time could be longer as a result of delays, and may sometimes affect the project quality, and ultimately the customer satisfaction.

The complexity of project offerings exemplified in the characteristics of projects (D-U-C) adds to the pressure of risk management and successful project marketing. The nature of third party connections in project business adds pressure on the project marketing activities of firms more especially in environments that are experiencing host-society turbulence. The ability of the project marketers in making routine interactions with the potential project buyers is hampered as a result of the host-society incidents. The uniqueness of contexts in which international projects are undertaken cannot be overemphasized due to the political, economic, and social situation of the country and more especially in the developing countries. This contextual situation of these developing countries is often described as unstable. Managing the risks associated with this instability for successful project business becomes the more salient. In terms of this research, successfulness of Nordic project marketing firms is defined in their ability to survive in the turbulent host-society environment.

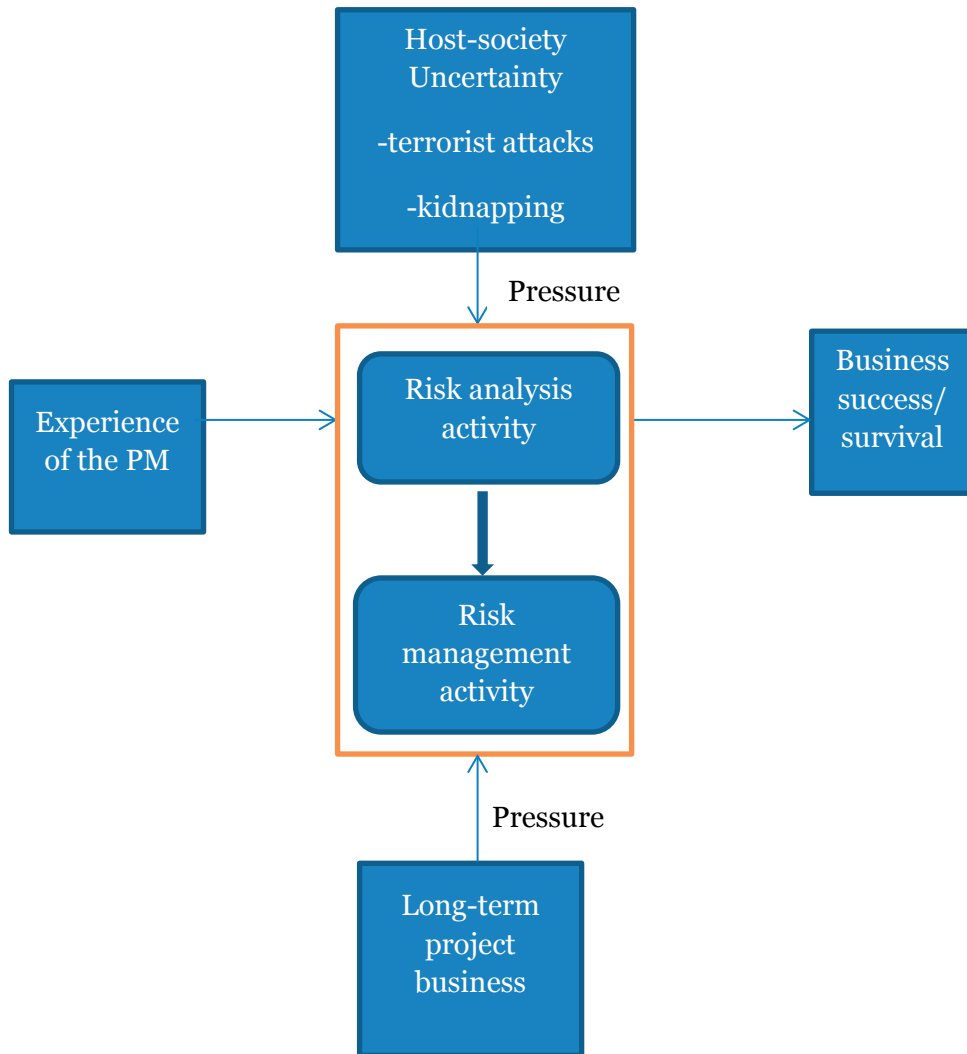


Figure 6. Elements of successful risk management in turbulent environment

The host-society uncertainty brought about by terrorism and kidnapping creates pressure on businesses in the environment and more so, the project companies. These uncertainties portend risks and companies must make everything possible to manage and avoid the risk. This is exemplified in the risk management activities of the companies as displayed by the PM. Risk management activities depends on the perception of the extent of the level of the uncertainty. Successful implementations of these risk management activities will lead to long term project business operations in the environment. In the similar manner, the manager's experience is connected to the way this idealized in different host-society contexts and in different project businesses. The experience of the PM in the environment helps in the perception of risks, and the consequent risk management activities. Subsequently, this leads to successful project marketing

and business survival. Successfulness in this research is defined as the ability of the company to survive and remain in the country unaffected in the long-run.

The unique interplay of these elements in the model brings forth the idea of sensemaking which is understood in this research to mean individuals' understanding of their position...and the experiences, interpretations and perceptions of the individuals in their sense making process guiding their actions in business over time as explained by Pernu, Mainela & Puhakka (2015) and is covered in the next chapter.

3 SENSEMAKING OF CONTEXTUAL PRESSURES

Weick (1995) proposed a framework that offered an explanation for how individuals and organizations make sense of their environment and was called sensemaking. He explained that “sensemaking is about such things as placement of items into frameworks, comprehending, redressing surprise, constructing meaning, interacting in pursuit of mutual understanding and patterning. It is not synonymous with interpretation or decision making. It is not interpretation as it encompasses more than how cues, information is interpreted, but is concerned with how the cues were internalized in the first instance and how individuals decide to focus on specific cues” (pp7-9).

Sensemaking refers to the processes involved in understanding events and behaviours in a broad sense (Rasmussen, Sieck & Osland 2010:2). It can mean learning about the culture, politics, and structure of a new venture or about a problem that you haven’t seen before. It can mean figuring out why a previously successful business model is no longer working (Ancona 2012:4). Sensemaking is most often needed when our understanding of the world becomes unintelligible in some way. This occurs when the environment is changing rapidly, presenting us with surprises for which we are unprepared or confronting us with adaptive rather than technical problems to solve (Heifetz & Linsky 2009). The importance of sensemaking is that it enables us to act when the world as we knew it seems to have shifted (Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld 2005). Weick (1995) identifies three elements which trigger conscious sensemaking – a frame, an extracted cue, and a connection.

Sensemaking, as introduced by Karl Weick (1995:4) refers to how we structure the unknown so as to be able to act in it. “It involves coming up with a plausible understanding—a map—of a shifting world; testing this map with others through data collection, action, and conversation; and then refining, or abandoning, the map depending on how credible it is” (Ancona 2012:3). It is the process of “structuring the unknown” (Waterman 1990: 41) by “placing stimuli into some kind of framework” that enables us “to comprehend, understand, explain, attribute, extrapolate, and predict” (Starbuck & Milliken, 1988: 51). It is the activity that enables us to turn the ongoing complexity of the world into a “situation that is comprehended explicitly in words and that serves as a springboard into action” (Weick, Sutcliffe & Obstfeld 2005: 409). It refers to the processes involved in understanding events and behaviors in a broad sense (Rasmussen, Sieck & Osland 2010:2). It can mean learning about the culture, politics, and structure of a new venture or about a problem that you haven’t seen

before. It can mean figuring out why a previously successful business model is no longer working (Ancona 2012:4).

3.1 Nature of sensemaking

Sensemaking is not about finding the “correct” answer; it is about creating an emerging picture that becomes more comprehensive through data collection, action, experience, and conversation (Ancona 2012:6). According to Starbuck and Milliken (1988), sensemaking involves placing stimuli into a framework that enables people "to comprehend, understand, explain, attribute, extrapolate, and predict." Sensemaking involves:

Framing or indexing the situation- Sense making begins when a person identifies a situation and consciously notices cues that provide information about the situation. In determining what to attend to and what to ignore, a person “frames the situation.” (Bird & Osland, 2005:124).

Making attributions or extracting cues- The next step is attribution, a process in which cues are analyzed in order to match the context with appropriate schema. The matching process is moderated or influenced by a person’s social identity (e.g., ethnic or religious background, gender, social class, and organizational affiliation) and a person’s history (e.g., experiences and chronology). The extracted cue is the present moment of experience where the expected does not happen, or the unexpected happens (e.g., surprise), or at least the individual believes (or senses) this to be the case.

Selecting a script or schema: The collision of the frame and the cue – involves making connection. Schemas are cultural scripts that entail “a pattern of social interaction that is characteristic of a particular cultural group” (Triandis 1984:1364). They are accepted and appropriate ways of behaving, specifying certain patterns of interaction. Schemas reflect an underlying hierarchy of cultural values. When making sense of schema, we may also find vestiges of cultural history and tradition (Bird & Osland 2005:124).

Mills, Thurlow & Mills (2010:192) noted that sensemaking as an analytic approach has been incorporated into a number of research studies (Brown, 2000, 2004; Boudes & Laroche, 2009; Berry, 2001; Paull, Boudville & Sitlington 2013) but the majority of the work in this area highlights the strong connections between narrative analysis and sensemaking in the social construction of meaning. Mills et al. (*ibid*) pointed out that “over time, sensemaking has been refined and explicated so that in addition to being a stand-alone theoretical framework, it has now started being used as a method of analysis” even though

they later admitted that there is still a lack of empirical studies that draw specifically upon Weick's framework as a method of analysis (pp 192).

Osland & Bird (2000) article on sense making focused on people working across cultures who are frequently surprised by cultural paradoxes that do not seem to fit the descriptions they have learned. The authors identify the sources of cultural paradoxes and introduce the idea of value trumping that "in a specific context, certain cultural values take precedence over others. Thus, culture is seen as embedded in the context and cannot be understood fully without taking context into consideration". To decipher cultural paradoxes, the authors propose a model of cultural sense making, linking schemas to contexts. They spell out the implications of this model for those who teach culture, for people working across cultures, and for multinational corporations. It is believed that a true understanding of the logic of another culture includes comprehending the interrelationships among values, or how values relate to one another in a given context. In a given context, specific cultural values come into play and have more importance than other values. To a foreigner who does not understand enough about the cultural context to interpret why or when one value takes precedence over another, such behaviour looks paradoxical but members of the culture learn these nuances more or less automatically.

The sensemaking used here is modeled around the Bird and Osland (2005) model of sense making. The sensemaking process provided by Bird & Osland (2005) has the elements of framing the situation, making attributions, and selecting script.

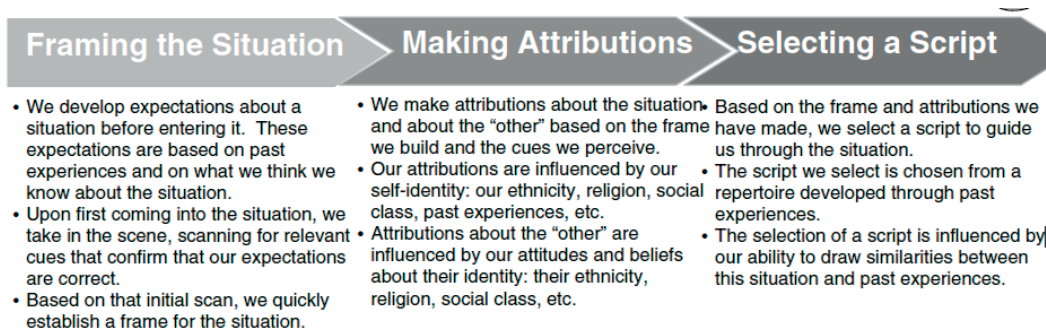


Figure 7. Sensemaking model

Source: Bird Allan & Osland Joyce S. (2005).

This research takes a holistic view of the project marketers' activities by showing both the scope and the depth of their sensemaking activities. In order to be able to succinctly explicate the sense making of Nordic project marketing to succeed in the long-run in the face of host-society uncertainty and risks in the Nigerian

project environment, certain important sensemaking works were found important and used in this research and presented in the table below:

Table 6. Research in sensemaking

Author and (Year of Publication)	Title	Focus of analysis
Osland Joyce S. and Bird Allan (2000)	Beyond sophisticated stereotyping: Cultural sensemaking in context	The authors identify the sources of cultural paradoxes and introduce the idea of value trumping: the authors propose a model of cultural sensemaking, linking schemas to contexts.
Ancona, Deborah (2012)	Sensemaking: Framing and Acting in the Unknown	Introduce “sensemaking” as a key leadership capability for the complex and dynamic world we live in today.
Osland Joyce and Osland Asbjorn (2005)	Paradoxes and Cultural Involvement,	An exploratory study that articulates and describes nine paradoxes inherent in the expatriate experience based on data from a sample of 35 repatriated business people.
Nielsen Christine S. and Gannon Martin J. (2006)	Cultural Metaphors, Paradoxes, and Cross-Cultural Dimensions	Study of cultural dimensions
Rasmussen, L. J., Sieck, W. R. & Osland, J. (2010)	Using cultural models of decision making to develop and assess cultural sensemaking competence	They outline a theoretical framework for cultural sensemaking that connects high level metacognitive skills to region-specific knowledge.
Gary Klein, Brian Moon, and Robert R. Hoffman (2006)	Making Sense of Sensemaking 1: Alternative Perspectives	Assessment of perspectives on sensemaking
Paull Megan, Boudville Ian and Sitlington Helen (2013)	Using Sensemaking as a Diagnostic Tool in the Analysis of Qualitative Data	The paper demonstrates how researchers can use sensemaking to diagnose and explain phenomena in ordinary situations, and how it can be added as an analysis and interpretation tool in their toolkit.
Weick Karl E.,	Organizing and the	They took stock of the concept of

Sutcliffe Kathleen M., Obstfeld David (2005)	Process of Sensemaking	sensemaking by pinpointing central features of sensemaking,
Balogun Julia and Johnson Gerry (2005)	From Intended Strategies to Unintended Outcomes: The Impact of Change Recipient Sensemaking	Focus on the social processes of interaction between middle managers as change recipients as they try to make sense of the change interventions.
Medlin and Törnroos (2014)	Interest, sensemaking and adaptive processes in emerging business networks- An Australian biofuel case	Elaborating sensemaking as an inter-organizational process, and how processual research captures reality in flight.

The studies outlined in table 6 above provided detailed concepts and procedure by which sensemaking is operationalized and used in interpretation. Osland & Bird (2000), Osland & Osland (2005), concentrated on the cultural paradoxes inherent in the experience of the sense maker about the environment. They identify the sources of cultural paradoxes and introduce the idea of value trumping and proposed a model of cultural sensemaking, linking schemas to contexts. In the same vein, Nielsen & Gannon (2006) examined cultural dimensions where the focus was on metaphors and paradoxes. These studies applied sensemaking to people working across cultures who are frequently surprised by cultural paradoxes that do not seem to fit the descriptions they have learned. The studies focused on expatriates who are more involved in the local culture that are more likely to experience paradox and how the expatriates handle and resolve paradox. Similarly, Rasmussen, Sieck & Osland (2010) applied cultural models of decision making to develop and assess cultural sensemaking competence. They outline a theoretical framework for cultural sensemaking that connects high level metacognitive skills to region-specific knowledge.

Ancona (2012) looked at sensemaking as a key leadership capability for the complex and dynamic world we live in today and enables leaders to have a better grasp of what is going on in their environments, thus facilitating other leadership activities such as visioning, relating, and inventing. She outlines ten steps to effective sensemaking, grouped under enabling leaders to *explore the wider system, create a map of that system, and act in the system* to learn from it. Klein, Moon & Hoffman (2006) examined the various perspectives on sensemaking. Their focus was about making sense of sensemaking perspective itself. Of importance is the work of Paull, Boudville & Sitlington (2013) whereby they demonstrated how researchers can use sensemaking to diagnose and explain

phenomena in ordinary situations and how it can be added as an analysis and interpretation toolkit.

However, Medlin & Törnroos (2014) studied network processes by applying concepts such as interests, sensemaking and in-between, and adaptive processes in emerging business networks. Concept of inter-organizational sensemaking was developed by elaborating the in-between. The focus of the study was on 'how managers understand and develop proactive processes for network change to support emerging businesses. Their emphasis was on managers following 'schema' and 'idea logics' to organize interactions' (Welch & Wilkinson 2002). Their perspective was the extension of sensemaking as an inter-organizational rather than as an intra-organizational process. Critical elements of the sensemaking were presented and analyzed whereby they presented a model and description of sensemaking across business relationship where at least two actors are involved.

The sensemaking perspective as exemplified in the above studies explicated the risky decision-making expatriates and international companies address when operating in foreign countries and how sensemaking helps in achieving this. The sensemaking researchers explored how individuals and organizations handle risk by systematically creating cognitive systems that pre-empt uncertainties from becoming risk. However, according to Gephart, Maanen & Oberlechner (2009:149), "the sensemaking view, based in qualitative studies of texts concerning accidents and actual events, is better suited to understanding uncertainty but suffers from retrospective biases in understanding decision outcomes".

3.2 The research framework

This section of the thesis connects important elements involved in the host-society uncertainty and risk management of project marketers. The research focuses on the general project business environment consist of natural, legal, societal, political and governmental (Miller 1992; Daniell 2000; Hill 2002) to which international firms are exposed. In making this research model, it is believed by this researcher that effective project marketing risk management would be achieved by understanding the interplay of the country-specific risk elements and the interaction of the relevant actors in the project marketing process. It was noted by Miller (1992) that the general environment uncertainties correspond to factors that affect the business context across industries. The core of the research is the idea of sense making process of the project marketers in understanding of events in the environment, and the experiences, interpretations

and their perceptions in their sense making process guiding their actions in business over time.

The research is based on the understanding that in order to achieve successful project marketing and long-term success in the face of country-specific host-society uncertainty and risks of Nordic firms, the following critical elements relating to project marketing in turbulent environments must be understood and how they are related (figure 8). It should be pointed out here that the inclusion of the identified elements is not because they are all to be tested but a way of showing their importance in the project marketing network. The elements include the project marketing companies, project buyers, the project marketer, the environmental context, and the host-society uncertainty and risk. The project marketer's (PMs) perception and sense making constitute the core of the research model. This holistic framework covers the scope of the research, making clear the interactions between all the elements of the research.

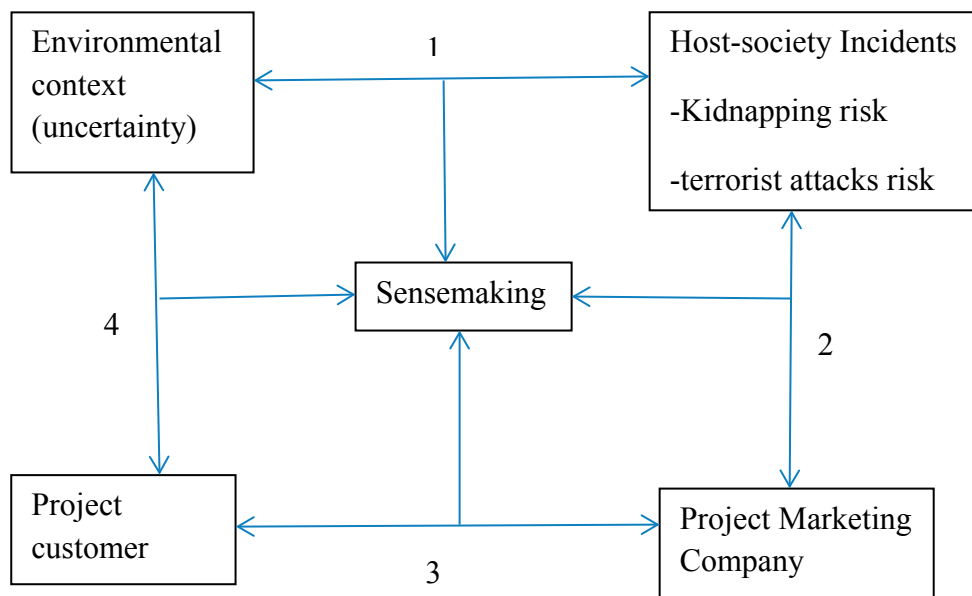


Figure 8. The holistic sensemaking framework

1 = perceived uncertainty in the environment leading to risk

2 = perceived risk based on the risk assessment

3 = nature of project identification

4 = nature of project customer

The holistic sensemaking framework is a result of the research model (figure 6). As presented in the research model, it is observed in figure 6 that the experience of the PM leads to the understanding of the uncertainty and risk perception and risk management activities. This process leads to successful project marketing and business survival in the turbulent environment. This whole process is reflected in sensemaking activities and is the very reason it occupies the center of this research framework.

Environmental context: It has to be noted that this general environment affects the operations of the project companies positively or negatively depending upon being stable or unstable. It consists of the economic, political, social and legal. According to Haleblan & Finkelstein (1993:847), “as an environment grows more turbulent and a firm's decision-making tasks grow more difficult, managers have greater information-processing requirements”, that is, “the degree of environmental turbulence or stability greatly influences the information-processing requirements of a top team and the complexity of managerial work” (*ibid*). It should be born in mind that “although uncertainty and risk is not the same thing in a management context, it is nevertheless an assessment of uncertainty that leads to the risk” (Bredmar (2015:45). Presently, the Nigerian environment is experiencing a high uncertainty that has made the country more risky with events like the Boko Haram attacks, high rate of kidnapping, in addition to other variables that complicate doing business in Nigeria. Increased volatility of the business environment makes systematic strategic planning more difficult, and these instabilities make the business environment unpredictable, fast changing, and insecure (Hadjikhani & Johanson 1996; Hadjikhani & Håkanson 1996; Salmi 2000; Grant 2003). “A rather fine line is drawn between the transformation of a more general uncertainty into a specific risk, which by doing so becomes easier to handle and act upon” (Bredmar 2015:45). The most related of these studies to my study is that of Hadjikhani & Johanson (1996) whereby companies face the choice of exit as a result of the turbulence in the environment resulting from political change. The environmental context of this particular research is Nigeria as a result of the turbulence it is going through; and the research is focused on the host-society class (see table 3) of the political context of the environment as classified by Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007).

Project customer: this refers to the project buyers which could be government or private buyer. The project customer as an organization (government or private) has its business culture, rules and norms which determine how it approaches its businesses, and interacts with other stakeholders in the business environment. It also shares a reciprocal relationship with the environment (economic, political, social, and legal) as it provides values to the general environments, and is directly influenced by the uncertainty in the environment and the resultant risks.

Project marketing company: In this particular research, refers to the international companies (Nordic companies) marketing and doing projects in the country. The project companies possess unique capabilities that distinguish them in their areas of business which is about value creation for the benefit of the project customer. Their product offers are characterised by what is known in project business as DUC- discontinuity (discontinuity of demand and business relationships between projects), uniqueness (uniqueness of individual projects), complexity (the complexity of the project offering and business network), and the extent of financial commitment (Hadjikhani 1996; Mandjak & Veres 1998; Tikkanen 1998, Cova, Ghauri & Salle 2002; Skates & Tikkanen 2003; Owusu, Sandhu & Kock 2007). More importantly, they have project capability. These project companies have operational offices in the country, no production facilities, and have been operating in the country for a long time and have acquired local experience. They also have their own business culture, rules and norms, and project marketing experience. The project marketing is directly and indirectly affected by the uncertainty in the environment and the resultant risks in the process of creating values and must take strategic actions to avoid the risks. The focus of the project firms is how to effectively manage the uncertainty and resulting risks for a successful long-run business.

Sensemaking: This is the most critical element in the framework whose perception and actions directly and indirectly determine the successful operation of these project firms in the uncertain and risky environment and in this case is the PM. The project marketer plays liaison role across all the critical elements identified in this framework. According to Phua (2007:754), the way senior executives make sense of their environment is influenced by the individual perceptions of uncertainty that exists in the environment. It was also pointed out by Elenkov (1997) that “It is this variance in perception that underlies the heterogeneity of management decisions between firms which could determine the difference between successful and unsuccessful firms as they strive to obtain the best possible ‘fit’ between the environment and its strategy”. The manager’s perception of the country-specific uncertainty and the host-society risks ‘has a great role in a firm’s strategy’ (Elenkov 1997; Phua 2007; Alexopoulos et al.,

2009). The PM operates based on the level of information available to him directly from his observation, and other sources supportive of this need since individuals' understanding of their position...and the experiences, interpretations and perceptions of the individuals in their sense making process guiding their actions in business over time (Pernu, Mainela & Puhakka 2015).

Host-society incidents: Host-society risk refers to social unrest (Jeannet & Hennessy 1998), and all disruptive forms of internal opposition to governments, including revolutions, terrorism, assassinations, riots and demonstrations (Gurr 2001). These are likely to be of greatest concern to firms operating in developing countries rather than those firms operating in developed countries (Rice & Mahmoud 1990; Subramanian, Motwani & Ishak 1993; Pahud De Mortanges & Allers 1996). According to Bredmar (2015:46), "when an uncertain context can be defined, preferably in quantitative terms, it thus becomes a risk, which could be seen as a subset of a larger amount of uncertainty". Nigeria has been experiencing a high degree of host-society turbulence like Boko-Haram, and kidnapping and has created a high degree of uncertainty and risk as characterized by Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007) and has been a major source of worries to doing business in Nigeria for international companies. In view of this, "when different patterns have been identified, concerning for instance how often an incident or an outcome occurs, then different types of policies or procedures could be established in the organization" (Holt 2004; Bredmar 2015). The host-society incidents create risks like the risk of being kidnapped and being victim of terrorist attacks. It becomes imperative for the project marketer to ensure that the likelihood of experiencing these identified risks is avoided. Ability to avoid these risks will be subject to his experience and knowledge about the environment.

3.3 Sensemaking approach in this research

The data gathering focused on questions asked along the three dimensions of sense making- indexing situation (uncertainty), making attributions (risk), and selecting scripts (actions). With regard to indexing the situation, I asked questions regarding their perception of uncertainty in Nigeria. They were also asked the nature of risk that they were faced due to the host-society incidents, and how they enact appropriate behavioural scripts. In line with this sense making dimensions as depicted by Bird & Osland (2005), my analysis of the cases reflects these dimensions.

My application is in line with Pernu, Mainela & Puhakka (2015) where sense making is considered to be about individual's understanding of their

position...and the experiences, interpretations and perceptions of the individuals in their sensemaking process guiding their actions in business over time. If sense making occurs when organizational members confront surprising or confusing events and issues and must act (Maitlis 2005; Pernu, Mainela & Puhakka 2015), then its application in this research is in order as it examines the project marketers confronts turbulence in the Nigerian environment, make sense of the events and act in a certain manner. Similar to Medlin & Törnroos (2014) whereby the focus of the study was on how managers understand and develop proactive processes for network change to support emerging businesses, the focus of this particular research is on how the project marketers understand and develop adaptive strategies for the host-society risk events in the turbulent environment for long term success.

Based on the risk management process model (figure 4) and the elements of successful risk management (figure 6), the uncertainty, risk, and actions themes is here developed in line with the Birds & Osland (2005) sensemaking procedure. This shows the depth of the sensemaking applied in this research. The schemata of the sense making process provided by Bird & Osland (2005) is adapted and replaced with the research elements: framing the situation (uncertainty), making attributions (risk) and selecting script (actions).

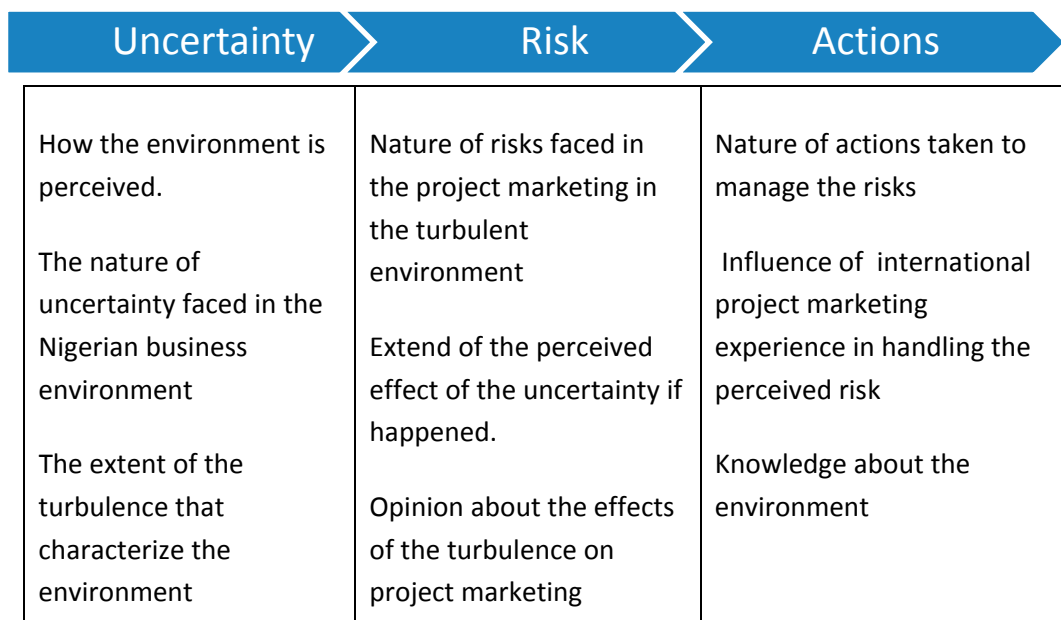


Figure 9. Framing themes in terms of uncertainty, risk, and activities

This process helps in the construction of the hypothetical model for turbulent environment and project marketing in the conclusion part of this thesis. The themes should be viewed in terms of (1) the nature of uncertainty, nature of risks, and the nature of actions taken. (2). Specificity: specific uncertainty, specific risks, and specific actions.

In summary, a sensemaking practice is used to construct interpretations and explanations of events and phenomena. It involves the transformation of a vague environmental uncertainty into a risk that could be decided upon. Even though it is better suited to understanding uncertainty, it suffers from retrospective biases in understanding decision outcomes (Geophart, Maanen & Oberlechner 2009). By and large, it helps in understanding uncertain situation and determining the nature of risks it creates for the individual organization.

4 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methods used in this research. It focuses on the nature of the research and the approach used in the process of empirical data gathering. The process began by selecting the research cases which was gotten by first asking the Nordic embassies (Finnish Embassy, Swedish Embassy, Norwegian Embassy, and Danish Embassy) in Nigeria for the listing of Nordic companies into project business in Nigeria. The listing provided by these embassies contained the names of the Nordic companies in Nigeria, their email addresses, phone numbers, and the office addresses. Having been supplied with the listing of the Nordic companies in Nigeria, emails were sent to those identified to be in the business of projects. The listings supplied by these embassies included companies that were not into project business as well as those into project business. In all, a total of 69 Nordic companies were listed as doing business in Nigeria and emails were sent to all in the hope of determining their suitability for my research

4.1 Research Approach

Skaates & Tikkanen (2003:509) suggested that project marketing researchers have to construct their understanding along Pettigrew's (1985) three dimensions of context, content, and process. They believe that it is fruitful to use intensive, focused, qualitative methods to create an understanding of the phenomena under study in their real-life contexts, based on multiple informants' own construction of their situations under study. The research under consideration is in line with this suggestion by Skaates & Tikkanen (2003) in which the context (Nigeria), content (host-society uncertainty), and process (risk management in the project marketing process) were the elements of the study.

International Business (IB) research are noted to dealing with dynamic and volatile situations that demand creative and flexible research designs and methodologies (Ghauri & Grønhaug 2005) and as such require exploratory research and qualitative methodologies to capture multi-dimensional phenomena (Yin 2003). Qualitative methodologies can help to find 'meaning behind the numbers', provide flexibility without requiring large samples (Sykes 1990) and offer a clear and holistic view of the context (Denzin & Lincoln 1994; Ghauri & Grønhaug 2005). Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila (2011:220) noted that "most of the real-world risk analysis problems contain a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data and quantitative risk assessment techniques are inadequate for prioritizing risks". Qualitative research may include multiple methods such

as, case studies, ethnography and participant observation, grounded theory, biographical and participative inquiries (Strauss & Corbin 1994).

According to Kreps, Herndon & Arneson (1993), “qualitative research can provide researchers with data for diagnosing and designing strategies to address organizational difficulties”. Mason (1993) pointed out that “qualitative methods are strong for understanding the meanings people attach to their behaviour, discovering new things about a phenomenon, and generating hypotheses”. As this research is not a follow-up research with regard to the context of the research, and content, only propositions towards theory building would be generated based on the empirical data. Based on the nature of the study, case study method is adopted in the research.

4.2 Why case study?

Prasad (2005:4), quoting Pauwels & Matthyssens (2004) noted that “within the field of qualitative IB research, the case study methodology is the most prevalent and could be characterized as ‘qualitative positivism’ and is loosely derived from the guidelines set out by Eisenhardt (1989) or Yin (2009)”. The prevalence of the case study is not surprising because of its potential to generate novel and ground-breaking theoretical insights (Welch et al. 2011:740). Case study method of data gathering was adopted in the research whereby few cases were chosen and can be generalized for similar phenomena and contexts (Yin 1994). Case study provides useful knowledge and able to delve deeply into phenomena and to relate processes and phenomena to their contexts (Yin 1994; Miles & Huberman 1994; Halinen & Törnroos 1995; Gummesson 1998). Furthermore, they are the most suitable methods for doing descriptive and exploratory/causal research answering “how” and “why” questions tracing events, process, as well as causes and effects (Yin 1994:13)

Similarly, by comparing previously developed theories with new empirically derived insights, the case-study approach is especially appropriate for developing new theoretical insights (Yin 1994). A case study is especially useful when the focus is on ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions and on understanding the cases in their unique contexts, in the settings where they take place (Stake 1995; Yin 2003). In line with Yin (2003:6), that ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are more explanatory and likely to lead to the use of case studies, histories, and experiments as the preferred research strategies, this research adopts the case study approach which can be generalized for similar phenomena and contexts (Yin 1994) and can answer the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions by tracing events, process, as well as causes and effects (Yin 1994:13). Case studies provide useful knowledge and able to

delve deeply into phenomena and relate processes and phenomena to their contexts (Yin 1994; Miles & Huberman 1994; Halinen & Törnroos 1995; Gummesson 1998). It enables a researcher to go beyond a cross-sectional “snapshot” of a social or business process and helps to create a better understanding of the variations of the phenomena under scrutiny (Miles & Huberman 1994; Skaates & Tikkanen 2003). It was also noted by Halinen & Törnroos (2005) that the underlying idea for case research is to have many-sided view of a situation in its context. The justification lies in the fact that case study approach can transcend the local boundaries of the investigated cases, capture new layers of reality, and develop novel, testable, and empirically valid theoretical and practical insights (Eisenhardt 1989; Voss, Tsikriktsis & Frohlich 2002).

Yin (2003:13) defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”. The idea of contextuality of case study was supported by Piekkari, Welch & Paavilainen (2009:569) when they defined case study as “a research strategy that examines, through the use of variety of data sources, a phenomenon in its naturalistic context, with the purpose of “confronting” theory with the empirical world”.

Case studies are well suited to interpretive sense-making (Lincoln & Guba 1985) because they enable the rich contextual description essential to understanding an action through the actor’s subjective experience of it. As with this particular study, a rich description of the context (Nigeria), adds to our understanding of the volatility and risks it poses for project business; and helps our explanation. Though, some research cautioned against casual use of single key informant responses to represent organizational level constructs (Seidler 1974; Phillips 1981) and therefore, this research hopes to overcome this setback by the use of multiple cases to justify the claims. Even though Leonard-Barton (1990), Dyer & Wilkins (1991) argue vigorously in favour of single-case studies, Yin (2002:53) argues that, when you have the resources, you should prefer multiple case studies over single-case studies (see also Eisenhardt 1989, 1991).

Because of the need to improve on the trustworthiness of this research, multi-case study approach was applied similar to Eisenhardt (1989), Eisenhardt & Graebner (2007), Jalkala et al. (2010) so as to be able to have a more generalized position on the research interest which is a move in a different direction in the use of case study research from the traditional IMP approach that is based on a single, unique in-depth case (Håkansson et al., 1979). *Multicase-study* approach

makes it possible to handle each selected firm as unique and considered as individual which could have been analyzed as *single-case study* (Yin 1994). It involves concentrating on each single case almost as if it were the only one.

4.3 Research Process

This research examine the Nigerian project marketing environments (contextual dynamism) and the nature of risks inherent in marketing projects in Nigeria, the risk response strategies employed. However, the methodology of research and analysis for the study is inductive, where the goal could lead towards theory development. The process involves preparing for the empirical data collection and the actual field data collection. The preparation for the empirical data collection started from doing extensive literature review so as to identify key concepts in the research and to address in the research protocol.

In this research, a semi-structured interview was used in the empirical data collection which 'can be used to study both 'what' and 'how' questions (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008:82). In obtaining data for this research, two sets of interview protocols were designed and applied at two different time intervals. The first interview protocol was applied between November and December 2013 on the project marketers of the case companies while the second set of interview protocol was applied in April, 2014. The first set of protocol was based on understanding the turbulent Nigerian environment, the nature of risks encountered, and the firm-specific approach of handling the risks. The second set of interview protocol was a follow-up on the first and designed to confirm the earlier positions of the PMs regarding their perceptions about the environment as a result of the increasing escalation of the turbulence so as to be able to understand the sense making process of the PMs.

Since this multi-case study was conducted within selected international project business firms marketing projects and doing projects in Nigeria, it was ensured that they must have been operating for not less than ten years in Nigeria, and that the project marketer/manager must have functioned as PM for not less than 5 years as a way of ensuring that they experienced the start of the turbulence the businesses were facing.

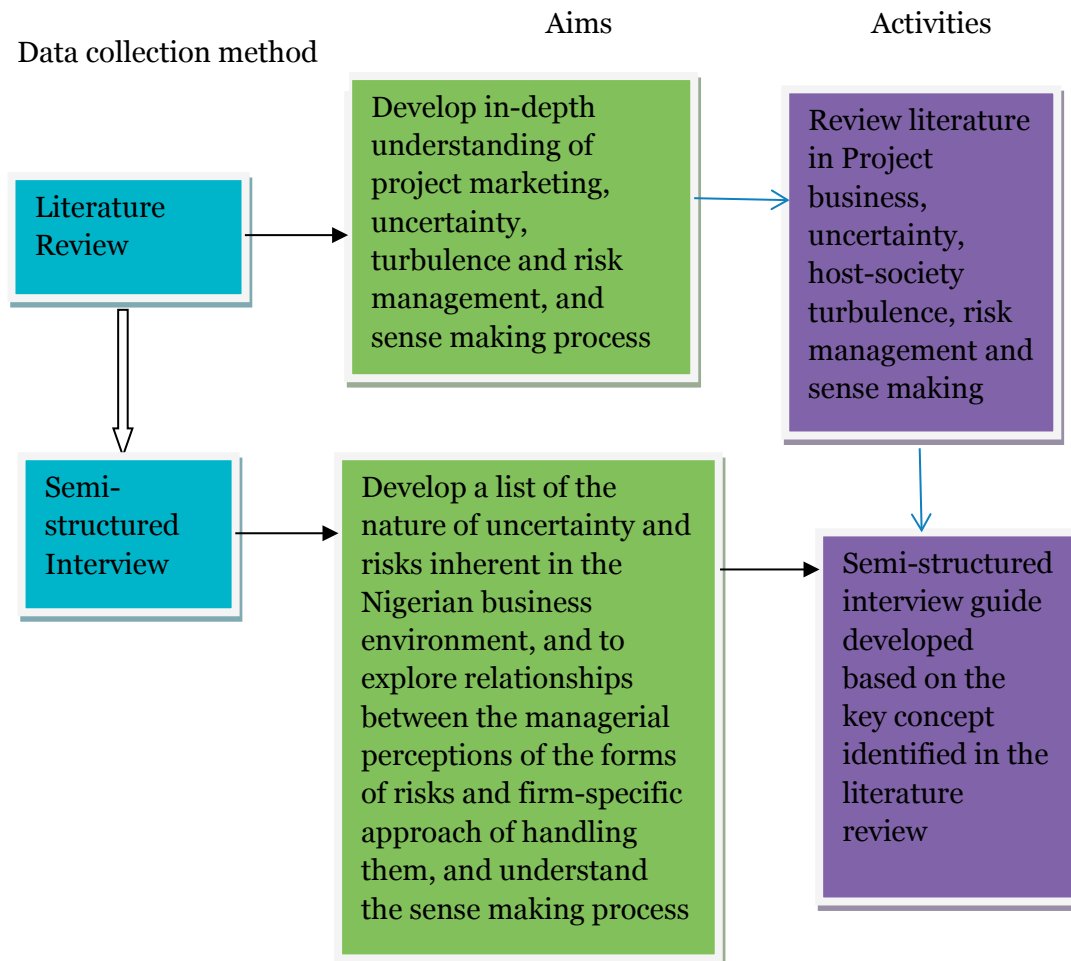


Figure 10. The Research Process

4.4 Method of Data Collection and justification

The present research approach is similar to Pettigrew (1985) use of a framework of three dimensions (content, context, and process) to examine the “what, why, and how” in which some British firms have adapted to their environments. Pettigrew (ibid) indicated that the strategic process is not only dependent on content, that is, the choices of product offerings and markets served, but also on context and process. This research is interested in what kinds of risks are faced in the turbulent Nigerian project marketing environment that the Nordic firms adapt to and why the choice of response strategies.

Instead of statistical representativeness, case studies offer depth and comprehensiveness for understanding the specific phenomenon (Easton 1995: 475). Although it has been argued that case study research is more appropriate

for the development of theory than for the testing of theory, it can actually be used for both (Woodside & Wilson, 2003). In my view, a qualitative approach is particularly appropriate for project business research because every project is unique, complex, and discontinuous coupled with the issue of environmental turbulence which makes the research context specific. In this vein, interview is used in the data collection process in line with the suggestions offered by Strauss & Corbin (1994), Sinkovics, Penz & Ghauri (2008).

4.4.1 Interviews

The interviews were based on an open-ended format through the use of an interview guide (Patton 1990; Fontana & Frey 1994). Open-ended interviews involve outlining a set of issues before the interviewing begins (Patton 1990). The interview protocol focused on country-specific elements, project-specific elements, decision-specific elements, and company-specific elements. Interviews were conducted at the offices of the managers at times convenient to them. The interviews were conducted in a personal, conversational manner, and relaxed atmosphere. This style of interviewing elicited robust information from the participants as they talked freely. The open-ended questions allowed the participants to talk informally about different aspects of their tasks and challenges. As a necessity, I requested permission to tape-record the answers to the open-ended questions. The interview sessions lasted between one hour and one and a half hours. The variation in time for each interview was a result of the managers elaborating more on certain issues than others. Themes emerged during data collection, probing questions relevant to these patterns were inserted into the interview sessions to investigate them further (e.g., questions about perception of corruption). At the end, the interviews were transcribed for proper analysis. Of course, the limitation of conducting interviews is the dependency on the participants' recall of events, this was overcome by the interviewer supporting discussions with examples of past events being a Nigerian, and the PMs easily supported with how they handled the effects of such occurrence.

In conducting the interviews, the frame constructed (figure 9) was however translated into questions bothering on uncertainty, risk, and actions. The questions were deduced to answer the question of the nature and specificity regarding uncertainty, risk, and actions, (see the figure below and appendix 1 & 2).

Uncertainty	Risk	Actions
<p>What is the nature of uncertainty and risks do you face in the Nigerian business environment?</p> <p>What do you think about the turbulence that characterizes the Nigerian business environment like Boko Haram, Niger Delta militancy?</p> <p>How do you cope with these critical events?</p>	<p>How do these risks influence your marketing strategy?</p> <p>What risks do you face in the Nigerian business environment?</p> <p>What do you make of the effects of the turbulence and your project business in Nigeria? Why did you say so?</p>	<p>What contribution can you accord your international project marketing experience in handling the perceived risk of marketing project in Nigeria?</p> <p>Could you please explain to me the nature of risk management approach normally used by your company in relation to the turbulent Nigerian project environment?</p>

Figure 11. How the themes were operationalized

4.5 Case Description

In line with Piekari & Welch (2011:4), that multiple data sources are encouraged as a form of triangulation, allows the research to converge on a single account. As noted earlier, case companies include Ericsson, Sandvik and Wartsila. Data were collected through two interview sessions with the Project Marketers/Managers (PMs) of these case companies. PM in this thesis refers to project marketer as used in this research.

ERICSSON Nigeria

Ericsson Nigeria was established in 1960 for the purpose of making the Networked Society a reality, where anything that can benefit from being connected is connected. They provide industry-leading network equipment and software, as well as services for network and business operations. Their portfolio also includes products for the enterprise, cable, mobile platform and power module markets.

Ericsson is a leader in the development and deployment of LTE systems around the world, providing innovative solutions for GSM, which still provides voice and data services for billions of people; WCDMA, which brought mass mobile broadband to the world; and CDMA, which now provides cost-effective mobile-data connections. Besides mobile networks, Ericsson is a strong player in core networks, microwave transport, Internet Protocol (IP) networks and fixed-access solutions for copper and fiber. In addition, they keep these networks running at optimal efficiency with our portfolio of operations support systems (OSS) (see <http://www.ericsson.com/ng/thecompany>).

SANDVIK Nigeria

Sandvik is a global high-technology engineering group founded in 1862 and specialized in tools and tooling systems for metal cutting, mining, construction. It specializes in three areas namely: tools and tooling systems for metal cutting as well as components in cemented carbide and other hard materials; equipment and tools for the mining and construction industries as well as various types of processing systems, and products in advanced stainless steels, special alloys and titanium as well as metallic and ceramic resistance materials. Sandvik Nigeria is part of the Sandvik Group, a global industrial concern with advanced products and world-leading positions in construction and mining equipment manufacturing and supplies. Sandvik Mining and Construction Nigeria Ltd offers the world's widest range of equipment for rock drilling, rock excavation, processing, demolition and bulk-materials handling (see <http://www.informationng.com/tag/sandvik-mining-and-construction-nigeria-ltd>).

WARTSILA Nigeria

Wartsila is a global leader in complete lifecycle power solutions for the marine and energy markets. Wartsila is a world leader in energy technological innovation and total efficiency, especially in the vessels and power plants. In 2013, Wartsila's net sales totaled EUR 4.7 billion with approximately 18,700 employees. The company has operations in more than 200 locations in nearly 70 countries around the world. Wartsila is listed on the NASDAQ OMX Helsinki, Finland. Wartsila in Nigeria has its headquarters in Ikeja, Lagos. As a Services branch, Wartsila in Nigeria has more than 800MW of installed power based in industrial, marine, and offshore applications. 200MW of the installed base is under asset management services solutions where its skilled personnel operates and maintains the power plants for customers. Wartsila in Nigeria was incorporated as Energy Operators Nigeria ("EON") in 2008 (see http://www.wartsila.fi/en_NG/about-us/overview).

4.6 Data analysis process

As mentioned earlier, all interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim after the data collection stage. Transcripts of interviews were reviewed (content analyzed), and codes were made from the transcripts to denote relevant categories. The empirical data analysis and findings from the research are presented in the following chapters. At this stage, the analysis focused on emerging theoretical concepts that helped to explain and evaluate.

The interview materials were coded manually into the NVivo10 software and thematically organized (see appendix 3). As masses of data can be gathered over the course of a study, Silverman (2010) advocates an early start to the analysis process to avoid the situation where the researcher is always in catch up mode. As is common in qualitative traditions (Richards 2009), data collection and analysis occurred concurrently. An initial coding framework was based on reading transcripts and coding themes, which derived from the study questions and objectives. A detailed coding framework developed through an iterative process of independent coding conducted by the researcher facilitated by the use of NVivo10 (qualitative data analysis tool).

In the following chapter, I discuss the outcomes of this analysis and the resulting learning objectives (see Rasmussen et al. 2009 for full description). Moving beyond such steps as coding and thematic analysis, Paull, Boudville & Sitlington (2013:1) explained that researchers must determine how best to interpret the data they are examining, and adopt an approach which suits the phenomenon under investigation, the paradigm in which they are operating, their own personal styles as researchers, and the data with which they are working.

It should be borne in mind that I conducted two rounds of interview sessions. The themes covered are categorized into the general areas and the objectives-specific themes: Information about Nigeria, nature of turbulence and risk perception, risk handling, and the sensemaking (indexing, making attributions, and selecting of schemas). The two interviews were coded together to cover the overlapping questions as a way of reconfirming the earlier questions about the environment and project marketing in Nigeria.

The empirical data were collected from the project marketers of the three companies used in this research and not company-based data. The data collected were individual project marketer's opinion about the country-specific uncertainty, and the host-society risks they face in the Nigerian turbulent environment and how they manage the risks. The managers include the project marketer/manager (PM) of Ericsson who is a Nigerian, and has been functioning

in that capacity for seven (7) years in the company at the time of first interview in 2013 and has worked in the project manager capacity for another company for three years before joining the company to manage the project business for Ericsson Nigeria. This empirical material was collected via interview with the project marketer/manager on the 18th of December, 2013 and it lasted for one and a half hours. The second interview took place on the 18th of April, 2014 and also lasted for one and half hours.

The second project marketer interviewed is the PM of Sandvik who is a Nigerian, performs project marketing function only, and has been functioning in that capacity for seven (7) years in the company at the time of the first interview in 2013. The empirical material was collected via interview with the project marketer in his office in the case company in Nigeria on the 12th of November, 2013 and lasted for one and half hours using a voice recorder, and the second was sent by email via the internet in April, 2014 but was returned in May 2014 as written answers to the interview protocol.

The third project marketer interviewed is the PM of Wartsila and is a European, has been functioning in that capacity for ten (10) years in Nigeria and 18 years in total as project marketer at the time of the first interview in 2013. This empirical material was collected via interview with the PM in the premises of the Head office complex in Finland on the 3rd of February, 2014 and it lasted for one and half hours using a voice recorder, while the second was sent by email via the internet in May, 2014 but was returned in June, 2014 as written answers to the interview.

However, the approach of data analysis used in this research can be classified as discourse analysis (DA) which ‘describes a heterogeneous range of social science research based on the analysis of interviews and texts as well as recorded talk’ (Silverman 2006:223). Discourse defines how you can think and talk about something (Ericsson & Kovalainen 2008:227). Silverman quoting Potter (2004:202) maintained that DA has three unifying assumptions namely:

- a. *Anti-realism*: that DA is against the assumption that we can treat accounts as true or false description of ‘reality’.
- b. *Constructionism*: that DA is concerned with ‘participants’ constructions and how they are accomplished and undermined’.
- c. *Reflexivity*: that DA considers ‘the way a text such as this is a version, selectively working up coherence and incoherence, telling historical stories, presenting and, indeed, constituting an objective, out-there reality’

In line with the need for proper organization of the empirical data for the discourse analysis (DA), NVivo10 statistical application which is a computer-based textual analysis application normally used in qualitative research is used for the empirical data processing. Interview texts are transcribed for easy use of NVivo analysis. The interview data are coded and the nodes made from the data include information about Nigeria, country-specific uncertainty and host-society risk, project business, indexing context, making attributions, selecting schema, and general. These nodes also have their own sub-nodes. Manual data analysis of the output of the NVivo was made for the purpose of adequate sensemaking. However, it should be noted here that questions relating to the background of the managers could not be thoroughly followed-up as they were evasive and not wanting to say much about themselves and their companies other than what they do as project marketer and so could not do much in interpreting the responses in terms of their cultural background.

4.7 Establishing the trustworthiness of the research

The value of any research lies in its ability to show its validity and reliability (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008:292). Eriksson & Kovalainen (ibid) noted that “qualitative researchers and methods books are divided in their opinion of whether the accuracy of interview and observation accounts, for instance, can be evaluated with the classic criteria of reliability and validity in research”. Validity refers to the extent to which conclusions drawn in research give an accurate description or explanation of what happened. Reliability tells us the extent to which a measure or instrument yields the same result on repeated trials.

Anderson and Skaates (2004) argued that it is of utmost importance for IB researchers using qualitative methodology to explicate their procedure, to ensure validity both during the research process and in the presentation of results. Therefore, in order to improve outcome validity, the researcher should:

- (1) explicate the rationale for using qualitative inquiry in your study (Parkhe 1997);
- (2) clarify data selection procedures (Brewer 2001; Brouthers & Bamossy 1997);
- (3) explain data handling procedures and how possible errors of the type one, two and three variety have been avoided during the data collection process (Hellman 1994; Tsang 1999)

- (4) clarify data analysis and interpretation procedures (Teigland, Fey & Birkinshaw 2000; Tsang 2001);
- (5) use your raw data as much as possible in supporting the claims made (Beechler & Yang 1994).

However, the above criteria has been suggested to be inadequate in evaluating this nature of constructionist qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and was replaced with conformability, credibility, dependability, and transferability.

To establish “trustworthiness” of qualitative research, credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability need to be established (Sinkovics, Penz & Ghauri 2008:691) by the use of formalized and software-based procedures for the analysis and interpretation of qualitative interview data. In essence, the use of software programmes is deemed to help to substantiate the analysis and interpretation of textual interview data.

Dependability: This is concerned with your responsibility for offering information to the reader, that the process of research has been logical, traceable, and documented.

Transferability: This is your responsibility to show the degree of similarity between your research, or part of it, and other research, in order to establish some form of connection between your research and previous results.

Credibility: This involves asking whether you have familiarity with the topic and whether the data are sufficient to merit your claims. Whether you have made strong logical links between observations and your categories? Whether any other researcher can, on the basis of your materials, come closely to your interpretations or agree with your claims?

Conformability: Refers to the idea that the data and interpretations of an inquiry are not just imagination. It is about linking findings and interpretations to the data in ways that can be easily understood by others.

In line with the suggestion of Lincoln & Guba (1985), the trustworthiness of this research would be assessed by checking its credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability in section 6.5.

4.8 Ethical issues

Informed consent: Interviews were audio-recorded upon granting of permission by each participant in addition to the hand written notes. Prior to the

start of the in-depth interviews, participants were sent the interview protocol ahead for approval by the company's management. The managers were made to understand that participation in the study was entirely voluntary even though they were nominated by their Head-offices and they may refuse to answer a question or continue the interview. The managers were also assured that the data collected from the interview would be used for the writing of a thesis and potential publication in academic journals. Participation in interviews consists of answering in-depth open-ended interviews that was expected to last between one hour and two hours. The managers were also reassured that responses will remain confidential to the greatest extent possible and no identifying information will be used in the transcription of the in-depth interview or any other written documents, such as field notes as their names will not feature in the write-ups. They were equally reassured that their participation in the study will in no way impact their situation and their companies. A summary of the study findings was made available to the managers as a way of ensuring that the data transcription was the precise words of the managers.

Confidentiality: The managers were assured of the confidentiality of their identity as their names would not be used in the research even though they did not object to such. The only caution to this is that the responses they provided were their personal views and not necessarily speaking for the companies. The interviews were conducted in the office of the managers at their convenience. The interview audio-records, transcripts, and field notes are kept and safely locked away with pseudonym labels in order to protect participants' identity but will be destroyed after five years.

5 DATA ANALYSIS

The focus of this chapter is to analyze and interpret the empirical data from the interviews conducted by this researcher between November 2013 and May 2014. It specifically addresses the research questions in order to assess the objectives of the research. It first examines the PMs' perceptions about Nigeria as a basis of sense making of their risk perception and management strategies. However, it is pointed out here that most of the empirical data is not presented here in the analysis of the host-society uncertainty and risks as they do not directly relate to the subject but serve to increase our understanding of the subject (see appendix 3 for the complete data set).

5.1 Multicase analysis

The case analysis is here presented looking at the themes covered in the empirical data whereby the responses are crossed-analysed. However, it has to be noted here that the analysis were not made on all the themes covered in the empirical data, as only the relevant themes are analyzed, but the full data is attached to this thesis as appendix 3 for any interested reader. The empirical data analysis is based on the research questions and includes:

1. What is the nature of host-society uncertainty and risks inherent in the Nigerian project marketing environment?
2. What are the Nordic managerial perceptions of the uncertainty/risks and firm-specific approach of handling them?
3. How do the Project Marketers make sense of the host-society uncertainty and risks for the long-term survival of Nordic firms in turbulent Nigerian environment?
4. How isomorphic will the Nordic companies get in their risk management approach in their project marketing in the turbulent host-society environment in the long-run?

The cross-case analysis involves Ericsson, Sandvik and Wartsila with regard to the research questions and covers the information about Nigeria, turbulence and risk perception, risk handling, and the sensemaking process of the managers' responses. However, in order to verify the claims of the PMs of the nature of host-society risk they encounter in the Nigerian project environment, extra data was sought from two additional sources that this researcher found in the conundrum of doing business in Nigeria as pointed out by the project managers

as vital to business success - the government, and the security agencies. The Government perspective was sought because it is believed that host-society turbulence arises from both political and societal sources (Iankova & Katz 2003; Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies 2007) which were claimed by the Nordic companies that they rely heavily on the security agencies for the purpose of navigating the turbulent Nigerian environment.

5.1.1 Nigerian business environment

The cross-case analysis involves triangulating the response of the PMs of Ericsson, Sandvik, and Wartsila on the nature of information about Nigeria. The idea of requesting this information is in order to be able to understand the basis for the PMs' strategy decisions. With regard to how the PMs view Nigeria, the marketers believe that:

what is said outside has some roots because I won't say it's completely not true...what scares people is the nature of image being created in the international media...a growing economy...Though government is becoming more transparent. I won't say the situation is improving anymore but I'll say it is still workable but it's not the very best situation (Ericsson PM).

the information about Nigeria is invariably completely false; if you are in the country, you find a lot of disparity between what they tell you outside and what actually is the case happening inside Nigeria....Nigeria is a developing economy with a lot of challenges as regards expertise, skills and others.... the Nigeria compliance level has been changing for some time now...The cost of doing business is very high (Sandvik PM).

For most of the people that have not been to Nigeria, thinking that it's a so risky place, it's just like any other normal country. .. Nigeria is a fast growing market and with lots of potential despite all the difficulties, it's more interesting to be there than not being there. As you know here in Nigeria, projects not awarded on turnkey are mostly delayed and sometimes don't get finished (Wartsila PM).

It can be assumed from the above responses that all the PMs shared the same viewpoint about Nigeria and that the view of the outside world about Nigeria is completely not correct. It is believed that what scares the international companies and people is the nature of image being created in the international media. In the same vein, they all shared the belief that Nigeria is faced with a lot of challenges but it is becoming more transparent. Although, there's the tendency

to think that the views of the managers of the two companies are similar because the two PMs are Nigerians and so gave the positive impressions about Nigeria. I later realized that my assumption was not correct as the third manager who is a European asserted the views displayed by the other PMs who were Nigerians and was more positive about the prospects offered by Nigeria.

As noted in the case selection section of this research that four case companies were selected and interviewed but only three were used in this research as a result of the fact that the PM of the fourth company was just four months on the job, I found his story about Nigeria (problems and prospects) supportive of what the others equally said. Despite the fact that he was just four months on the job in Nigeria, he believed that:

All said information about Nigeria is incorrect. Nigeria is a country full of opportunities, the people are very supportive and it is not as dangerous as people outside might believe and, my own experience here is very positive and I totally believe that this kind of image is deliberately produce outside Nigeria to enhance the security industry to increase security investment. I believe that the dented images are rather unnecessary especially in main cities like Abuja or Lagos. Of course there are millions of people in Lagos, there are always problems. In fact when you are here as a guest, and a foreigner, you don't see these problems. You are not really in any danger because you are following the same rule you follow in Europe, US or elsewhere.

However, it is worthy of note that all the respondents and others that commented about Nigeria in the course of this research were equally of mixed postures that Nigeria is highly turbulent but risky for business. For instance,

Nigeria is an investment destination and Lagos State is in the heart of it all. There's not any investor coming to Africa that is not thinking Nigeria first. And when you think of Nigeria, Lagos is their preferred choice. It's an investment destination, businesses thrive here, provides the enabling environment for businesses to thrive, and all the leisure to make living in Lagos interesting...it depends on which part of Nigeria one is referring to. But generally, we can say that the companies are seeking protection from the general insecurity in the country. However, Nigeria is an investment destination and Lagos State is in the heart of it all. There's not investor coming to Africa that is not thinking Nigeria first. And when you think of Nigeria, Lagos is their preferred choice. It's an investment destination, businesses thrive here, provides the enabling environment for businesses

to thrive, and all the leisure to make living in Lagos interesting (Lagos PPRO)

...even when you have business deals, you book your flight in such a way that you quickly finish and get out of the area immediately. But before (*in the long past*), you could say why should you be in a rush to return and could lodge in one of the hotels and travel the next day. This is no longer the case. This of course adds to the cost of doing business. Properties are being destroyed, no sales, lives are lost every day....However, the governments have done so well in tackling the kidnapping problem in states like Anambra, Delta, Abia for instance, you can see people coming back home (NACCIMA).

5.1.2 Country-specific uncertainty & host-society risks

Having provided insight into how the PMs viewed the peculiarity of the business environment they operate in, it is then reasonable to assess the issues covered in the objectives of the study/research questions bearing in mind perception of the project business environment. As regards to the first objective of the research that involves identifying and explaining the country-specific uncertainty and host-society risks inherent in the Nigerian business environment that concern international project marketers, the Project marketers noted that

...the Niger-Delta militancy...also the Boko-Haram in the North....There is risk in government processes, not being on time, delaying things around your delivery, there's risk with transportation (Ericsson PM).

...It is true that there are cases of kidnapping and Boko Haram attacks here and there but we have never experience any of such incidents ... government policies in Nigeria have changed in the last 2 years for more than three times as regards importation and exportation (Sandvik PM).

...kidnapping in the Niger Delta, the Niger Delta people are kidnapping people and releasing them for ransom.... there are issues like Boko Haram, Niger Delta militancy ... dicey political situations (Wartsila PM).

The nature of risks inherent in the Nigerian business environment is not in question as both the local and the international media is painted with negative episodes of happenings in Nigeria on a daily basis which the PMs of the case companies were unanimous in their host-society turbulent risk perception that *the Niger-Delta militancy kidnapping people for ransom, and the Boko-Haram attacks in the North responsible for the bombing as source of uncertainty and*

risks they experience. Similarly, the security agents covered in this research confirmed the nature and the spread of the turbulence and noted that:

In the Northern part of Nigeria is the problems of Boko-Haram attacks and kidnapping. In the South East and South-South (Niger Delta) is the problems of kidnapping for ransom and armed robbery. In the South West Nigeria is the problem of armed robbery. So, it depends on which part of Nigeria one is referring to. But generally, we can say that the companies are seeking protection from the general insecurity in the country (Lagos PPRO).

So far, a high level of uncertainty were noted by the various respondents noted in this research and which run contradictory to the managers' proclamations about the image of Nigeria being highly risky by the outside world. The managers all claimed that Nigerian environment is just like any other country and at the same time lamenting about the presence of host-society turbulence in the project environment.

5.1.3 Uncertainty perception and risks management

According to Phua (2007:754), the way senior executives make sense of their environment is influenced by the individual perceptions of uncertainty that exists in the environment. Having enumerated the nature of risk they encounter in the turbulent Nigerian project environment as noted above, they also enumerated the various approaches used in handling the risks. With regard to the second objective of the research that involves exploring the relationships between the managerial perceptions of the forms of risks and firm-specific approach of handling them, the PMs noted that

We also use security advice... We also use a tool called mini-risk tool to assess the situation...we watch the trend and base our decisions on how we see it...we isolate the area where there is problem....before you even start to sell the project, risk analysis is done and that risk analysis is carried out throughout the life of the project...We prefer to influence by our talk leadership, technological leadership and grassroots....use of locals. ...prefer to have locals and use them for the projects and everybody does the same....we subscribe to the anti-corruption tenets (Ericsson PM).

When it comes to travelling (within the country) we get information beforehand...these inherent security risk is the reason why our company is working globally but operate locally. Meaning that it is a global company but the locals run the companies... Local support is important in

running a business here in Nigeria....you need to work closely with clearing agents and logistics department....it's a policy that we must always take-on zero corruption....we deal with the directors of companies (Sandvik PM).

If Boko Haram is acting in certain parts of the North Eastern states, where we are not doing business, my answer is that it has no big impact. Of course, the closer the problem comes, the more the impact it will have. We do re-evaluation of the situation on all-time basis...Involve protection services for areas, times when travelling without which would be deemed to be too risky...Most of our business is conducted in areas where we have to deal with the normal "Nigerian challenges"....following the governance set by "Nordic /western" business culture i.e. highest ethical and legal standards in business industry (Wartsila PM).

The above approaches to risk management is synonymous with what Alexopoulos et al. (2009) describe as risk-based decision making (RBDM) which explain a kind of human behaviour that is highly related to the decision maker's subjective perceptions.

It could be observed from the PMs' responses above that they were all unanimous in stating that they often seek security advice from security agencies that specialize in such which is a practical approach they use in managing the turbulence being generated in the project business environment. They were also emphatic in the use of locals (Nigerians) for their project business instead of importing expatriates from abroad (Nordic region) who might not be vast in the knowledge of the Nigerian project business environment as a way of handling the environmental risks. In the same vein, a simple approach which I consider an escapist approach to handling the risk of the turbulence as noted by the managers was to isolate and exclude the turbulent parts of the country from their operations and areas to do business. As indicated in the uncertainty avoidance of Hofstede's cultural dimension, it is expected that companies from Finland and Norway need some predictability in their life whereas those from Denmark and Sweden do not need a lot of structure and predictability in their work life. Since the companies involved in this research are a mix of Sweden and Finland, it is not expected that they all show sign of uncertainty avoidance but that's not the case in this research. They all show a high degree of uncertainty avoidance whereby they all avoided operating in the turbulent areas and keep to the safe and more predictable areas of the country. Personally, the need to avoid uncertainty and host-society risk is context based rather than the culture the PMs were from. Having a high tolerance for uncertainty does not mean throwing caution to the

wind to working in a zone that is highly predictable that there could be a bombing attack (Northeast for instance).

It has to be said here that Nigeria is a vast country divided into six regions. The whole of Nigeria is not at war and so having some areas devoid of turbulence. What is required of project marketers or any new comer to Nigeria is to recognize the divisions and make careful assessment to be able to identify which is worthy of business. In actual fact, each region has its peculiarity and issues. To lump the whole of Nigeria into one description and making conclusions is not only inadequate but denies such companies the opportunity of cashing in on the project opportunities abundant in the country and this was shown by the companies by ‘conducting business in areas where they only have to deal with the normal ‘Nigerian challenges’.

An important issue addressed by the PMs that was not directly related to the turbulence but was more germane to doing business in Nigeria is the much talk about corruption in the Nigerian business environment whereby they all said to maintain the anti-corruption tenets of their companies as reflected in their non-participation in project processes deemed to be corrupt. This is a reflection of the Nordic business culture of the companies as carried by the managers and that explains why they all showed preference for private customers as against government projects.

Another salient issue addressed by the managers that was also not related to the turbulence under consideration but was important to doing successful project business in Nigeria is the issue of the nature of projects. Experience has taught the PMs that projects not awarded on turnkey are delayed and sometimes do not get finished. The result of this experience is that at all time, they should only accept turnkey or turnkey-plus projects. This practice of course could be linked to the Nordic culture of not playing around with time and the need to keep to agreements. Partial projects would necessarily lead to delays and most times late delivery. If keeping to time and sticking to agreements are so help as important, then avoiding projects not on turnkey or turnkey-plus makes a better sense.

However, the claim by the Nordic companies that they use the assistance of the security agencies in managing the effects of the host-society turbulence was supported by the security agency that:

...When the companies come that they need extra security apart from the normal security provided by the Nigerian police, what they do is apply. When they apply, we analyze their request on the account of the crime mapping we’ve already done. We ascertain the area they want to operate;

we now deploy extra security to them. For instance, the crime level in Lagos is very tolerable. When we analyze these issues and we see the need for extra security, we determine the extent of extra security to be provided. We can deploy the secret service, we can deploy different services. We can also deploy combat teams like the PMF (Police Mobile Force), the SPU (Special Protection Unit) and what have you (PPRO, Lagos).

5.1.4 Categorising the risk management strategies

According to Oliver's (1991), "organizations may acquiesce institutional pressures and expectations; may compromise by....; they may avoid institutional pressures through...; they may actively reject...; lastly, organizations may adopt an aggressive posture...through manipulation, attempt to actively change or exert power over institutional pressures" which Peng (2003:276) classified as acquiesce to institutional pressures by making strategic choices, such as compliance, cooptation, and defiance (Child 1972, 1997; Oliver 1991, 1992). The methods of dealing with the risk of the turbulence as pointed out in the data are categorized by the researcher in the table 7:

Table 7. Categorizing the risk management

Strategies	Ericsson	Sandvik	Wartsila
Adaptation (acquiesce)	<p>We also use security advice.</p> <p>use of locals</p> <p>We also use security advice.</p> <p>We watch the trend and base our decisions on how we see it.</p> <p>Prefer to influence by our talk leadership, technological leadership and grassroots.</p>	<p>We get travel information</p> <p>Localizing operations,</p> <p>Get local support</p> <p>We deal with the directors of companies.</p> <p>work closely with clearing agents</p>	<p>involve protection services</p> <p>Following the governance set by “Nordic /western” business culture</p>
Compromise	Never used	Never used	Never used
Avoidance	We isolate the area where there is problem.	<p>We don’t do any direct business with the government, we deal with private sectors and we’ve always used consultants (as a way of avoiding corruption)</p> <p>...we use them to forward most of our concerns to the relevant parties</p>	Conducting business in areas where we have to deal with the normal “Nigerian challenges”- avoiding turbulent areas.
Defy	Never used	Never used	Never used
Manipulation	Never used	Never used	Never used

The tabular categorization of the strategies for handling the risk of turbulence in the Nigerian environment by the PM shows that they use two out of the five

strategies as classified by Oliver (1991) and include acquiesce, and avoidance. Compromise, defiance, and manipulation strategies were never mentioned to be employed at any time.

- *Acquiesce* (adaptation)- (the organizations adjust and comply with the external institutional pressures): the PMs noted that they use security advice in determining where to go and when to go; also use security personnel when going out as shield from attacks; get local support, and localizing operations; watch the trend and base decisions on how they see it (Ericsson, Sandvik, Wartsila).
- *Avoidance*: in the IB literature and as explained by Oliver, it is a way firms may avoid institutional pressures through such means as concealing nonconformity, responding symbolically, and buffering. But in this research context, it is a way by which the organizations isolate the area where there is problem to focus on areas where there is no turbulence-avoiding turbulent areas (Ericsson, Wartsila). One major issue talked about by the managers is the issue of corruption in the Nigerian project business which they all claimed they avoid and do not participate because of their company policies even though this is not the focus of this research.
- *Defiance*: This is a process by which organisations dismiss threat by ignoring norms and values, challenge the rules and requirements or attacking the source of institutional pressure. The managers never showed any indication of defying or attacking sources of institutional pressures. Even when it concerns other risk factors other than the turbulent events like bribery and corruption in project business in Nigeria.
- *Compromise*: Organizations may compromise by partially complying with institutional demands (Oliver 1991: 151). The PMs noted that there was no time they ever compromised to the corruption demands of projects agents in Nigeria and most often lose out when especially are government projects. In the same vein they never compromised on their security too. They noted that going out without security protection would deem too risky (Wartsila). They do not compromise. In a more practical sense, one would find explanations as to why they do not compromise in the Hofstede's characterization of countries and cultures which characterized them as upright, transparent, and least corrupt in the world. When giving gifts, it is not common for business associates to give each other gifts, and legislation against bribes is severe.

- *Manipulation*: This is the most active response to institutional pressure (Oliver 1991) because it is intended to actively change or exert power over the content of the expectations themselves or the sources that seek to express or enforce them. With regard to the turbulence, manipulation cannot be seen as an option. Possibility of manipulating Boko Haram not to attack or kill is out of the question. Similarly, the possibility of manipulating the kidnappers not to kidnap. The firms do not engage in manipulation strategy in their risk handling approach. Similarly, they cannot be involved in manipulation of project process because in terms of negotiating business terms, the Nordic business partner is likely to be totally frank regarding what he expects from you and what he himself can contribute and prefer transparency. It is important to be very precise when negotiating terms. Nordic people prefer written contracts. The business contract is considered irrevocable and a partner will expect the contract to be fulfilled to the letter.

On the basis of the risk management process designed in this research (figure 3), based on Nieto-Morote & Ruz-Vila (2011) and Oliver (1991), the risk management activities of the firms are contextualized for easy understanding of what the firms do.

Table 8. The risk management process

<i>Risk Identification</i>	<i>Risk Assessment</i>	<i>Risk Response</i>	<i>Risk Monitoring & Reviewing</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boko-Haram • Kidnapping • Government Processes 	Mini-risk tool Security advice	Get travel information use of locals (acquiesce) involve protection services (acquiesce) following set standard processes (acquiesce) avoiding turbulent areas for projects (avoidance)	We do re-evaluation of the situation on all-time basis.

In the course of the interview, question relating to the consequences of the turbulence on the operations and success of the project companies was also asked as way of understanding in which way it affected the company operations. The responses of the PMs are categorized in the table below:

Table 9. Consequences of the turbulence on project success

Ericsson	Sandvik	Wartsila
<p>It means your budget for security increases</p> <p>the speed with which you can roll out decreases</p> <p>So, your commitment to delivering within a time, scope, and cost becomes suspect.</p> <p>So projects are going to be more expensive for you to deliver the same kind of projects.</p> <p>And even now your resources have started becoming more expensive because the risk you are taking on them is higher.</p> <p>There are some places you can't even send some personnel because of their skin colour. So, it limits your capacity in terms of areas</p>	<p>This will slow growth in some region</p> <p>When our client company is closing down business in the turbulent region, it means we are closing our business there too</p>	<p>The effects of Boko Haram in Nigeria is mainly limited to a certain area</p>

The summary of the table above concerning the effects of the turbulence on the operation of the companies in the business environment as indicated by the managers include increased budget for security increases, decrease in the speed of operations thereby affecting commitment to delivering within a time, scope, and cost, projects are going to be more expensive to deliver, and even resources are going to become more expensive because the risk you are taking on them is higher, limits in the places the companies could send some personnel because of their skin colour.

5.1.5 Successful project business in Nigeria

In trying to understand the factors facilitating the long-run success of the project companies in the turbulent Nigerian environment, questions relating to this were asked and the PMs gave interesting responses. The PMs noted that:

Success results from *in-built transparency*, and *firm capability*, you need to have your success technological issues, talk leadership, property enumeration; those are the key factors you need to run successfully (Ericsson); *Local Support is important in running a business here in Nigeria, we are being successful here is because we employ Nigerians* (Sandvik); *what is extremely important is if the customer can rely on the supplier* (Wartsila). Traditional project literature defined successful project operation as meeting the triad of time, budget, and quality as the yardstick (Verzuh 1999), while the later definition included customer satisfaction (Jack & Mantel 2000). Successful adaptation in the face of the host-society risks results from the variety of approaches used in managing the effects of the turbulence on their operations like localizing operations, working with the security agencies for security information and protection, and the use of consultants. The resultant impact of these is successful project marketing operations leading to the long-term success of the Nordic firms in Nigeria. Overall, successfulness of the project marketing companies is defined by their ability to survive and remain in the business environment on the long-run.

Table 10. Factors for successful project marketing in turbulent Nigeria

Ericsson	Sandvik	Wartsila
in-built transparency Firm capability	Local support is important in running a business here in Nigeria we are being successful here because we employ Nigerians.	What is extremely important is if the customer can rely on the supplier during the lifetime of the plant

5.2 Understanding the Managers' Sense making Process

The second part of this chapter deals with constructing the sense making process of the project marketers/managers (PM). This involves constructing their indexing process, attributions making process, and selecting schemas/scripts. As noted in section 3.3, the sense making elements proposed by Bird & Osland (2005) (framing the situation, making attributions, and selecting script) has been replaced with the research elements: (uncertainty, risk, actions) and adapted for this research. This is the result of figures 9 and 11 where the themes for the research was created and the further interview protocol created.

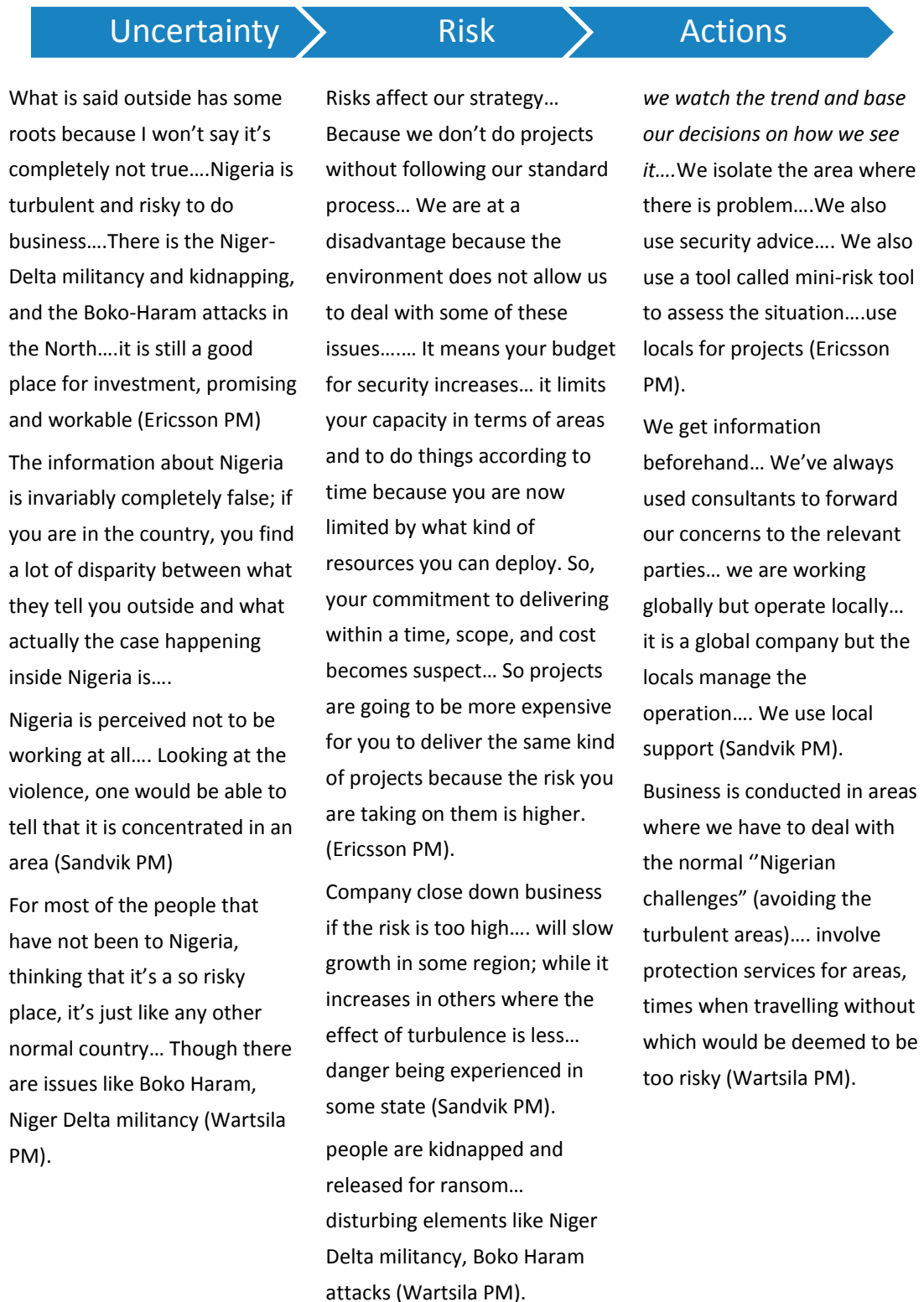


Figure 12. Sensemaking of the nature of uncertainty, risks, and management actions

Understanding how the project marketers handle the turbulent situations in the Nigerian environment requires one to understand firstly how they see the environment in the first place before one could appreciate how they later attempt to handle the situation.

The Ericsson PM claimed that ‘what is said outside has some roots because I won’t say it’s completely not true’ but admitted that Nigeria is turbulent and risky to do business because of the Niger-Delta militancy and kidnapping, and the Boko-Haram attacks in the North, but it is concentrated in an area. To him, it is still a good place for investment, promising and workable. (Ericsson PM).

Similarly, the Sandvik PM believes that ‘the information about Nigeria is invariably completely false, that if you are in the country, you will find a lot of disparity between what they tell you outside and what actually the case happening inside Nigeria is’. He believes that there are states that are still secure for business purpose because if one looks at the spread of the violence, one would be able to tell that it is concentrated in an area. To him, doing business in Nigeria has proved to be beneficial (Sandvik PM).

In the same vein, Wartsila PM is of the belief that ‘most of the people that that have not been to Nigeria that would think that it’s a so risky place, but it’s just like any other normal country though with disturbing elements like Niger Delta militancy, Boko Haram, bureaucracy, but it is a fast growing market with lots of possibilities’. To him, despite all the difficulties, it’s more interesting to be there than not being there (Wartsila PM).

However, the sense making process of the project marketers follows that haven understood the uncertainties prevalent in the Nigerian project business environment, it was easier for them to recognize the nature of risks they were prone to and so could strategize to mitigate such effects. If the risks are not controlled or prevented, their project marketing activities will be affected. For their businesses not to be affected, they must make some actions. In identifying the nature of risks their project marketing was prone to, they noted that:

Risks affect our strategy... Because we don’t do projects without following our standard process...We are at a disadvantage because the environment does not allow us to deal with some of these issues....It means your budget for security increases... it limits your capacity in terms of areas and to do things according to time because you are now limited by what kind of resources you can deploy. So, your commitment to delivering within a

time, scope, and cost becomes suspect... So projects are going to be more expensive for you to deliver the same kind of projects because the risk you are taking on them is higher. (Ericsson PM).

Company close down business when the risk is too high.... will slow growth in some region; while it increases in others where the effect of turbulence is less... danger being experienced in some state (Sandvik PM).

people are kidnapped and released for ransom... disturbing elements like Niger Delta militancy, Boko Haram attacks (Wartsila PM).

In order to avoid the risks from affecting their project marketing activities, the PMs also enumerated the nature of actions taken as a measure of preventing or managing the effects of the host-society uncertainties on their project marketing activities and they include:

we watch the trend and base our decisions on how we see it...We isolate the area where there is problem....We also use security advice.... We also use a tool called mini-risk tool to assess the situation....use locals for projects (Ericsson PM).

We get information beforehand... We've always used consultants to forward our concerns to the relevant parties... we are working globally but operate locally... it is a global company but the locals manage the operation.... We use local support (Sandvik PM).

Business is conducted in areas where we have to deal with the normal "Nigerian challenges" (avoiding the turbulent areas).... involve protection services for areas, times when travelling without which would be deemed to be too risky (Wartsila PM).

In summary, the Ericsson PM who is a Nigerian with 10 years of project marketing experience, believes that he is more efficient in the task because he understands the Nigerian environment and geography, and so could differentiate and isolate the turbulent areas from the rest of the country to do his project marketing- 'we isolate the area where there is problem'. He also maintained that they use a formal risk assessment tool called mini-risk tool to assess the situation and supports his decisions with security advice- 'we also use security advice'. He however believes that the company is successful because of its use of locals for projects- 'use locals for projects'. To a great extent, the PM works only in line with the policies of the company he represents and could not act beyond. For instance; he maintained that 'there are some actions we cannot take like some

officials wanting kickbacks on projects'. Overall, he admitted that the environment is turbulent but is workable- 'I won't say the situation is improving anymore but I'll say it is still workable but it's not the very best situation' (Ericsson PM).

The Sandvik PM is a Nigerian, and with about 7 years' experience as the project marketer at the time of the interview, admitted that the project environment is risky but 'we get information beforehand' as a way of controlling the risks, and so influences the nature of business he pursues- 'we don't do any direct business with the government, we deal with private sectors, we deal with contractors to the government'. 'We've always used consultants to forward our concerns to the relevant parties... We don't get involved, we get our consultants to make it clear we do not bribe'. He believed that local support is necessary as a way of overcoming the risk- 'because of all these inherent security risks, is the reason why we are working globally but operate locally. Meaning that it is a global company but the locals managing the operation' (Sandvik PM).

However, the Wartsila PM is a Nordic, has lived in Nigeria for 10 years at the time of the interview, but has been working as a project marketer for the last 18 years (sales department). He showed a great measure of the knowledge of the Nigerian project environment because he has lived there for over 10 years- 'Nigeria of course is like many other countries in Africa and is a fast growing market with lots of possibilities, so, it's more interesting to be there than not being there'. *What I could infer from the standpoint of this PM is that all should be done to ensure continuity of business instead of exiting the environment as a result of the problems they face.* However, he noted that he had to restrict business to certain parts of the country because of the turbulence- "business is conducted in areas where we have to deal with the normal 'Nigerian challenges' (avoiding the turbulent areas)... On a lighter note, he noted that 'the strategy for managing those risks roughly the same as in other countries' which I guess is borne out of his vast experience on the project marketing job in other countries before coming to work in Nigeria as noted in his introduction which include 'involving protection services', and 'following the governances set by "Nordic" business culture, that is, highest ethical and legal standards in business industry' (Wartsila PM).

Going through the sense making process of the managers above, I wondered if the cultural differences indeed influenced their perception of uncertainty and the host-society risks they encounter in the Nigerian project business environment. As indicated in responses of the PMs (appendix 3), it could be observed that the managers that were Nigerians to a large extent, believed that they were more

effective because they were Nigerians, understand the environment better, and move around easily. But when I looked at the response of the third manager who is a Nordic manager, his evaluation of the business environment was not different from the other two who were Nigerians. He sees it as not different from any other country. He also sees more opportunities in Nigeria business environment as against the turbulence just like the Nigerian PMs. What I found common across all the managers is the influence of their company's culture, norms and rules in the way they operate and has nothing to do with their origin or culture. They are normally guided by the company's culture and rules in doing their project business. The only influence I could make from this is that rather than being influenced by the business environment's culture or the managers' cultural background, they were more influenced by the company's culture, rules and norms in the way they work and the knowledge of the environment which I called the local capability in this research. They all framed the situation the same way; their attribution was similar as they all allude to the companies' culture. Largely, they attributed part of their success to their experience in the Nigerian environment.

Similarly, my observation of the activities of the PMs from the strategy point of view is generally a lack of any medium to long term strategies regarding their project marketing operations. Is there any conscious strategy possible in this host-society environment on both the medium and long term? My answer to this question is that it is not possible considering the analysis of the environment provided by these PMs. If they from time to time have to seek security advice before they could go to meet project clients or potential clients, and not possible to make any pre-determine appointments, then my answer is a definite NO. Definitive plans would not be possible as security situations change rapidly. A support relationship was observed between the Nordic companies operating in the Nigerian project environment and the security infrastructure in the country that helped in their successful project business. This relationship is found to be salient in the turbulent environment as it provides the firms information and security support.

5.3 Bridging theory and Empirical data

As a contextual research, this research is positioned in the context of managing risk of turbulence in emerging economies. Given that many elements of the institutional environment, such as culture and legal systems, are often specific to a nation (Rosenweig & Singh 1991), Oliver (1991) maintained that "depending on a number of factors, such as the characteristics of institutional constituencies and the congruence of institutional norms and organizational goals, organizations

may respond to institutional pressures in a variety of modes ranging from passive compliance with institutional norms to direct, and active defiance of an institutional environment". Kostova & Roth (2002:215) paraphrasing DiMaggio & Powell (1983), that a central tenet of the institutional perspective is that organizations sharing the same environment will employ similar practices and thus become "isomorphic" with each other. This section also answered the question 4 of the research purpose that was about whether the companies would become isomorphic in the long run in the turbulent environment. The adoption of these practices is explained by organizations' conformity to institutional pressures driven by legitimacy motives (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In Hawley's (1968) description, isomorphism is a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions. Scott (1995, 2001) identified three distinct pillars of the institutional context i.e. regulatory (corresponding to coercive pressures), normative (related to normative pressures), and cognitive (elaboration of the concept of mimetic pressures). Coercive isomorphism that stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy; (2) mimetic isomorphism resulting from standard responses to uncertainty; and (3) normative isomorphism, associated with professionalization. This typology is an analytic one: the types are not always empirically distinct (Dimaggio & Powell 1983:150).

Because my research is more about the effect of environmental turbulence which Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007), Miller (1992) categorized as the host-society risk in classifying general environment uncertainty, my task in this section, is to relate the empirical materials to the elements of the theory. My analysis here will consider the various aspects of the empirical data to observe the aspects of isomorphism across the activities of these companies. I here look at the empirical data in terms of the three isomorphisms.

Coercive isomorphism (regulatory): Coercive isomorphism results from both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society within which organizations function. Evidence from the interviews with the case companies shows that the case companies show some form of coercive isomorphism with regard to the behaviour of the Nordic companies regarding management of the risk of Boko Haram insurgency and kidnapping in the Niger Delta. Consequently, the companies resorted to use the security information and security agencies to protect themselves and staff in their operation:

...We also use security advice. We watch the trend and base our decisions on how we see it....we isolate the area where there is problem (Ericsson

PM)...When it comes to travelling (within the country) we get information beforehand (Sandvik PM)...involve protection services for areas, times when travelling without which would be deemed to be too risky (Wartsila PM)

The companies also show a great deal of isomorphism in localizing their project operation by employing locals to run the activities of the companies:

... use of locals. ..prefer to have locals and use them for the projects and everybody (company) does the same (Ericsson PM)...these inherent security risk is the reason why our company is working globally but operate locally. Meaning that it is a global company but the locals manage the operations (Sandvik PM)...Even though Wartsila did not say anything in this regard, but could be inferred that all the foreign companies do it as claimed by Ericsson.

Another area of coercive isomorphism observable across these Nordic companies is in the area of being forced to avoid projects which they deemed to have element of corruption which is peculiar to the government projects as a result of their home culture which abhors corruption:

...there are some actions we cannot take like some officials wanting kickbacks on projects. ...we subscribe to the anti-corruption tenets. That is why we are not very successful with a lot of government deals (Ericsson PM)

...for Sandvik, it's a policy that we must always take-on zero corruption; there is no room for corruption, we've always used consultants (as a way of avoiding corruption)... All these are international consultants; we use them to forward most of our concerns to the government. It means that we can manage our risk outside of the day to day business; we are not exposed to any threat or anybody asking us for anything directly or even persuades somebody holding down our document anywhere. We don't get involved; we get our consultants to make it clear we do not bribe (Sandvik PM).

...In terms of project with the government, we do not engage in government projects in the event corruption is suspected involved (Wartsila PM).

Mimetic isomorphism (cognitive): Uncertainty is also a powerful force that encourages imitation. When organizational technologies are poorly understood,

when goals are ambiguous, or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty, organizations may model themselves on other organizations (Kostova & Roth 2002:151). Evidence from the interviews with the case companies indicates some form of mimetic isomorphism resulting from the uncertainty facing the companies in Nigeria:

...there is a lot of fear of things that need to be looked at before people can get to do things anymore. The frequent bombings now and then for instance, we put the area in trends but does not actually put the whole of Nigeria into such trend... we watch the trend and base our decisions on how we see it. Nigeria is big such that we could isolate the area where there is problem. We also use security advice (Ericsson PM).

...Nigeria is perceived not to be working at all.... The current happenings in Nigeria is rather unfortunate, because Nigeria does not have any trace or affiliation with terrorism from history, but irrespective of the danger being experienced in some state, I still believe there are states that are still secure for business purpose. Looking at the violence, one would be able to tell that it is concentrated in an area. Risk being undertaken in Nigeria, I mean it's quite huge... And because of all these inherent security risks, is the reason why Sandvik is working globally but operate locally (Sandvik PM)

...10 years ago, people would say that Nigeria was a place where you should never go. For most of the people that have not been to Nigeria, thinking that it's a so risky place....though with disturbing elements like Niger Delta militancy, Boko Haram, bureaucracy... dicey political situations. ... Maybe tomorrow we'll get a more stable environment. Most of Wartsila business still conducted in areas where we have to deal with "the normal Nigerian challenges". ... We do re-evaluation of the situation on all-time basis. ...involve protection services for areas, times when travelling without which would be deemed to be too risky (Wartsila PM).

Normative pressures: this source of isomorphism is normative and stems primarily from professionalization which defines the conditions and methods of their work (Larson 1977:49-52). Evidence from the interviews with the case companies shows that the case companies show some form of normative isomorphism resulting from the professionalism and their cultural association:

...Nordic companies generally, are more open, have set standard processes, and have lots of experience inserted in the processes that allow people to express themselves and increase an atmosphere of freedom.

There are some of the marked differences which are sort of marked in culture which is also a mark in the way people work in the Nordic countries...there are some actions we cannot take like some officials wanting kickbacks on projects.... There are certain rules we have to follow (Ericsson PM).

...we don't do any direct business with the government, we deal with private sectors and we've always used consultants (as a way of avoiding corruption). ...we use them to forward most of our concerns to the relevant parties (Sandvik PM).

...our way of conducting business in Nigeria has to deal with the day to day local Nigerian challenges however following the governances set by "Nordic /western" business culture. ...my company instructs me to work as per the code of conduct set up. All the business that we have been/is conducting is free of corruption. We do not deal in government projects if corruption is suspected involved (Wartsila PM).

In summary, it is possible to align with DiMaggio & Powell (1983) that the adoption of these practices (in this case, subscribing to security information, security protection, use of locals and localizing operations) as a way of organizations' conformity to institutional pressures and thus become isomorphic forces. Invariably, the Nordic firms in Nigeria so resemble each other because they face the same set of environmental conditions (Hawley 1968) as they are similar in the way they perceive the environment and the approaches employed in managing the host-society risks.

6 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

As this research is about identifying host-society uncertainty and controlling the likely risks, my discussion in this chapter focuses on summary of the findings from the study, make conclusions based on the findings from the research, and the discussion of the implications of the research- theoretical implication and managerial implication of the research, and the study limitations. Based on the findings of the research, if a common structure could be constructed to represent the practices of the managers, then this could be used to represent business culture in the turbulent Nigerian environment.

6.1 Summary of Findings

The summary of findings will relate to the nature of information about Nigeria, and the three research questions. First of all, the PMs believe that the information about Nigeria is completely false because if you are in the country, you find a lot of disparity between what is said outside Nigeria and what actually is the case happening inside Nigeria and you will find that Nigeria is a fast growing market with lots of possibilities.

However, findings from the study indicate that the project companies are faced with the threats of Boko Haram terror attacks and kidnappings which have prominently become part of living in the turbulent Nigerian environment and have greatly influenced their project marketing strategies. It is interesting to think of how and why they have managed to remain in the country despite the overwhelming danger of kidnapping and bombing attacks which have become almost a permanent feature in the Nigerian environment- 'it is not a place for the faint-hearted' (The Economist, April 12th 2014: 12). Aside from the nature of host-society risks in the Nigerian project marketing environment, other salient risk were also noted by the PMs as being confronted by their companies. These include corruption, risk in government processes, policies and importation procedures whereby customs policies have changed in the last 2 years for more than three times as regards importation and exportation which they were able to manage by working closely with clearing agents and logistics department (Ericsson, Sandvik, Wartsila).

Bearing these risks in mind, the PMs handle the risks by involving protection services for areas, and times when travelling without which would be deemed to be too risky, also use security advice; similar to that is the watching trends and basing decisions on how they see it. Above all, they isolate the area where there is problem; and following the governance set by Nordic /western business culture in their dealings. The Nordic companies alleged that they have been able to cope

with the turbulence because they have localized operations i.e., making use of the locals (Nigerians) for their project business operations. In the same vein, the Nordic companies showed a great measure of understanding of the Nigerian geographical environment as claimed by the PMs because their operations are either handled by Nigerians or by Nordics that have lived in Nigeria long enough. The combination of these approaches has contributed greatly to their successful adaptation in the turbulent Nigerian environment.

The Nordic companies that were used as case study were present in Nigerian before the start of the turbulence, are already established, institutionalized, and understand the environment better. This they are able to do with use of locals and localizing their operations, they also alleged to use consultants in doing their businesses especially with the government. The benefit of this understanding has helped the companies in avoiding some regions of the country where there was report of turbulence and threats and only doing projects where they considered safe instead of abandoning businesses in the country. This has created a form of adaptation for the case companies.

A very germane finding from the research is that the Nordic companies focus on the private project buyers because it is devoid of corruption, and pay less attention to government projects which they sometimes perceive elements of corruption as their companies warn them never to get involved in any project process deemed to be corrupt. The Nordic business culture requires transparency, uprightness, and due process and is their guiding principle in their project marketing functions.

In summary, the specific findings from the research include:

- The threats of Boko Haram terror attacks and kidnappings which have prominently become part of living in the turbulent Nigerian environment have greatly influenced their project strategies whereby they must work with security agencies and incorporate security advice and which ultimately dictates how they go about their operations. The companies adapts to the turbulence by subscribing to security information from security agencies to assist them in their movements, and actually procuring security protections for safe movements.
- The Nordic companies alleged that they have been able to cope with the turbulence because they have localized operations which I called local capability as a result of the diversity of the PMs whereby one is a Nordic and whose response was not different

from the Nigerian managers in their project business operations which suggests that what is more important is the knowledge of the environment.

- The Nordic companies focus more on the private project buyers because it is devoid of corruption, and pay less attention to government projects because of the perception of corruption that normally goes with such projects in Nigeria. The Nordic companies warn their PMs never to get involved in any project process deemed to be corrupt.
- Rather than exiting the country/environment, the companies adapted well by avoiding some regions of the country where there was report of turbulence and threats and only doing projects where they considered safe instead of abandoning businesses in the country like the case of the Swedish companies in Iran studied by Hadhikhani (1996) and the Chinese companies in Libya examined by Zhang & Wei (2012).
- The findings also show that they adapt better because of their acquisition of KIBS support (in this case, the security agencies and consultants) for their effective project marketing operations.
- Above all, their perception (PM) of the Nigerian project business environment is at variance with the general belief across the world that it is a very risky business environment even though they admitted to the presence of host-society uncertainty but believe that it is manageable.
- In the sensemaking of these project marketers (PMs), it was believed that the host-society uncertainty will not necessarily constitute risks if certain control measure were put in place. Invariably, the uncertainties will only lead to risks if the actions noted above are not taken.

6.2 Conclusions

It should be pointed out that the Nordic companies used in this research were present in Nigeria long before the escalation of the turbulence and were already established and institutionalized, understand the environment, and have adapted better (12- 60years in Nigeria). It can be said that they survive better because they have become adapted into the Nigerian system looking at their overall view

that Nigeria is like any other developing country with its own problems and opportunities. I can say that they have accepted the risks as part of what they needed to manage and poised undaunted considering their impressions about Nigeria:

you'll get that what scares people is the nature of image being created in the international media. I tell you most of what is said are not true (Ericsson PM); generally from the outside world, Nigeria is perceived to be very corrupt, Nigeria is perceived not to be working at all. But if you are in the country, you find a lot of disparity between what they tell you outside and what actually is the case happening inside Nigeria. ...the information about Nigeria is invariably completely false (Sandvik PM); for most of the people that have not been to Nigeria, thinking that it's a so risky place, it's just like any other normal country. The image of Nigeria may be bad when I came here, but 10 years after, we have been able to show that it is actually a country where despite all the difficulties, it's more interesting to be there than not being there. ... Nigeria of course is like many other countries in Africa and is a fast growing market with lots of possibilities.... So, Nigeria despite the limits still has also lots of opportunities (Wartsila PM).

However, the views of the PMs above is not different from the assessment of Gidado (1996) and the World Bank (2002) with a mix of the high and the low side of the Nigerian economy that "with its large reserves of human and natural resources, Nigeria has the potential to build a highly wealthy economy, to reduce poverty significantly, and to provide the health, education and infrastructure services its population needs". It can be said that there is a great deal of attraction for project firms to think of Nigeria because of the huge potentials it offers despite the risks presented by the environment.

Can we say the Nordic companies used in this research were successful in managing the effects of these host-society risks? My answer is yes. They have survived and are doing well considering their strategies and how they have been able to understand effective ways of going about their project business without incidents over the years and can always avoid turbulent areas. Because these host-society risks have continued to plague the country on the continuous basis, it is safe to conclude that any new Nordic company wishing to do project business in Nigeria must be ready to accept these host-society problems as part of the risks to be handled and adopt the same approach to handling them just like those identified in this research. They have been able to adapt to the turbulent Nigerian

environment as a result of their long stay and understanding of the workings of the environment.

Secondly, with regard to the managerial perceptions of the forms of risks and firm-specific approach of handling them, the empirical data shows no difference in the perception of the managers about the image of the country, the risk which the turbulence generates, and importantly, how they handle the risks. Based on the research data, can one really say that the managerial perception of the nature of the risks influenced their approach of handling them? My conclusion based on the empirical data warrants me to answer yes. For instance, their perception of the extent of the turbulence made them to limit their operations to only areas that are considered safe and devoid of e.g. Boko Haram attacks because they have good understanding of the geography of Nigeria, and also how they manage the incidence of kidnapping by the use of security protection. I could infer that it is a result of the opportunities they believe the environment engendered instead of completely avoiding the whole country.

Thirdly, with regard to successful adaptation of project marketing firms in the face of host-society uncertainty and achieving the long-term success, the empirical data showed that due to the long experience of the companies in Nigeria, they have come to realize that *'projects not awarded on turnkey are mostly delayed and sometimes do not get finished'*. My conclusion is that the Nordic companies do not accept projects that are not turnkey or turnkey-plus. It can thus be concluded that any new Nordic company desiring to market projects in Nigeria should only accept turnkey or turnkey-plus project if it desires to succeed in the long-run in Nigeria. One major issue talked about by the managers is the issue of corruption in the Nigerian project business which they all claimed they avoid and do not participate because of their company policies even though this is not the focus of this research. It actually confirms the general belief outside the country about the Nigerian business environment being highly corrupt but as Nordic firms, they manage it well by avoiding projects they deemed to show signs of corruption in the process.

Another important finding of this research is the idea of localizing operations for effective adaptation of the Nordic companies. Localizing operations involves employing locals to manage some functions for the company. It is believed that being locals affords them the opportunity of going freely around without anyone noticing, and have good understanding of the environment. However, due to the difference in the background of the managers involved in this research, considering their level of understanding and perception about the Nigerian environment, I was able to conclude that localizing does not necessarily mean

that the managers must be Nigerians but rather, what is more important is the understanding of the workings of the environment which anyone that has lived in Nigeria long enough could as well acquire.

In the same vein, the PMs acknowledged the use of security agencies and consultants (KIBS) in managing the uncertainty and risks in the turbulent Nigerian project business environment. My conclusion from this is that information resident in the company/PM may never be enough in the time of host-society turbulence and would need to augment what they have with help from such identified KIBS in effectively managing the effects of the turbulence. It is in order to conclude at this point that these Nordic companies were able to survive the turbulence because of the support they get from the KIBS without which they would not succeed in the long-run. This thus highlighted the role of KIBS in successful adaptation in turbulent and highly risky environments.

The companies adapted well by avoiding some regions of the country where there were reports of host-society turbulence and doing projects only in the areas considered safe instead of abandoning businesses in the country like the case of the Swedish companies in Iran studied by Hadhikhani (1996) and the Chinese companies in Libya examined by Zhang & Wei (2012), this I found consistent with the claims of the PMs about the prospects provided by the country where they claimed that “it is better to be here [Nigeria] than not being here” and that what is needed is knowing how to adapt to do business. This is understandable in the PMs’ use of acquiesce and avoidance strategies as their risk management strategy.

A very salient point I was able to understand from the research is the idea of situations that are manageable and those that are not manageable. This point is inferable from the contents of the PMs’ responses whereby they felt that there were alternative actions like segmenting the geography of the country to identify those places safe enough for their project marketing activities to concentrate and those to avoid; actions like withdrawing from highly volatile and less volatile; actions like avoiding certain project clients. This is underscored in the PMs’ believe that it is not the best situation but it is workable.

From a strategic point of view, one could infer that this is not an easy task as situations change with the unpredictability of bombing attacks and kidnappings. If the PMs do rely on security information so as to ensure their safety all the time before embarking on project marketing prospects, then one could describe their approach as emergent or contingency as all decisions would be based on the approval of a third party (KIBS). I must add that planning is possible in the parts

considered safe but with caution that the turbulence could spread to the areas initially considered safe.

From the sensemaking point of view, one could understand the sequence of reasoning of the PMs as they acknowledged the existence of the host society turbulence and recognized the effects it could have on their project marketing activities if it happens and its consequences. Sensemaking helps understand how uncertain situation becomes a risk connected to a decision or operation through the process of translating and interpreting the uncertainty – risk – decision into action. For the Nordic companies not to be affected, they recognized some actions available to them in order to manage and control the risks from affecting them. It is a cause-effect relationship and so must embark on actions that would prevent the effects from happening.

It is a general belief that business is about risk taking. However, did it really matter that the risk aversion attribute noted in the Nordic culture as indicated in the Hofstede cultural dimension had anything to do in the risk perception and management attitude of these Nordic companies in Nigeria? I will say here that it played a great role as all they think of is to be free from corruption, risk of terrorist attacks, and kidnapping.

In the same vein, the issue of isomorphism was identified among the Nordic companies marketing projects in Nigeria with regard to how they handle their project marketing activities in the turbulent environment as their risk management strategies appear similar. Kostova & Roth (2002:125) noted that organizations sharing the same environment will employ similar practices and thus become "isomorphic" with each other.

Based on the findings, i can conclude that successful risk management of the uncertainty and host-society turbulence in the Nigerian environment leads to firms' successful adaptation, leads to successful project marketing, and the subsequent long-term success of the project companies. For successful adaptation to occur, the firms must work with security agencies for security advice and protection regarding where to go and movement about.

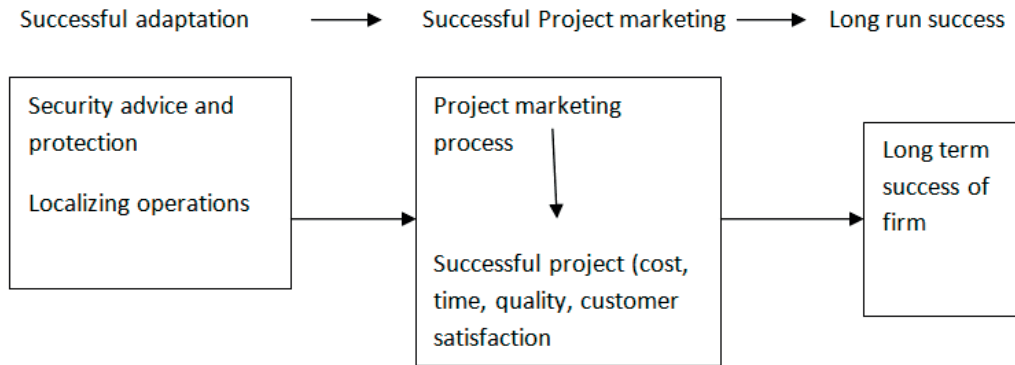


Figure 13. Successful adaptation and long-term success of the project marketing firms

However, it should be noted here categorically that any company wishing to operate in the Nigerian environment should be aware beforehand that turbulence in the Nigerian environment is cyclical and ongoing. By this I mean that uncertainty is never ending. As one crisis ends another begins. Take for instance, the Niger Delta militancy started sometime around 2006, and subdued between 2008 and 2009, then came the Boko-haram terrorism from 2009 and almost completely defeated as at January 2016. As Boko-haram was being defeated, another crisis started in the name of IPOB (Independent People of Biafra) struggling to secede from Nigeria. While the Government is still trying to grasp with the IPOB agitation, another confrontation ensued between the Shiite Muslims in Kaduna, a state in the Northern part of Nigeria leaving about 300 people dead between December 12 & 14, 2015 according to the Human Rights Watch. This should not be a source of worries for any marketer that is experienced and vast about the Nigerian environment. In other words, experience is vital to successful project marketing in the turbulent Nigerian environment.

Above all, as a Nigerian doing research on the subject matter, I am happy that the managers were able to express their schemes as duly expressed in the sensemaking models. This will go a long way in helping my career in project marketing in the country.

6.3 Research Implications

This section discusses the theoretical and managerial contributions of the research. A number of both theoretical and managerial contributions emanated from this research which is about uncertainty and host-society risk and long-term success in turbulent environment.

6.3.1 Theoretical Implication

This research employed the institutional theory and using sensemaking in analysing how the Nordic companies manage the uncertainty and the host-society risks and achieving adaptation in the turbulent Nigerian environment for long-term success. Considering earlier research in the area of project marketing, turbulence, risk management and adaptation:

The way the project marketers perceive the uncertainty and the host-society turbulence influenced their approach to handling the effect resonates with the findings of Child (1972), Dess & Beard (1984), Hambrick & Finkelstein (1987), Oliver (1991), Steger (1993), Dickson & Weaver (1997), Partington (2000), Phua (2007), Aaltonen and Sivonen (2009), that the way senior executives make sense of their environment is influenced by the individual perceptions of uncertainty that exists in the environment and becomes the key determinant of its strategy approach. The implication of this is that any Nordic firm desiring to market problem in the turbulent Nigerian business environment must hire for its project marketing functions someone who is vast in the knowledge and understanding of the happenings in Nigerian environment. Consequently, the perception of the manager matters in the way he manages the effects of the turbulence. Every effort would be made to conduct their project marketing instead of exiting the country without a struggle.

Similarly, the degree of the uncertainty and the host-society risk influencing the performance of the project firms was found to resonate with the proposition of Hadjikhani & Häkansson (1996), Hadjikhani (1998; 2000), Luqmani, Habib & Kassem (1998), Hadjikhani & Sharma (1999), Salmi (2000), Hadjikhani & Ghauri (2001), Anderson & Tushman (2001), Li & Atuahene-Gima (2001), Doh & Ramamurti, (2003), Lin and Germain (2003), Ramamurti (2003), Kuivalainen et al (2004), Welch & Wilkinson (2004), Power & Reid (2005), Hadjikhani, Lee & Ghauri (2008), that turbulence has a negative effect on performance considering the PMs' claim that *it means your budget for security increases; your commitment to delivering within a time, scope, and cost becomes suspect; projects are going to be more expensive for you to deliver the same kind of projects; becoming more expensive because the risk you are taking on them is higher; There are some places you can't even send some personnel because of their skin colour (Ericsson PM); This will slow growth in some region; closing down business in the turbulent region (Sandvik PM).*

One of the findings of this research is the peculiarity of the approach to managing the effects of the host-society turbulence which I found to resonate with the findings of Slevin & Pinto (1987), Miller, (1992), Miller & Lessard, (2001),

Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser (2002), Pavlak (2004), Hällgren & Maaninen-Olsson (2005), Hällgren (2007), Aaltonen & Sivonen (2009), Ahola (2009), Wang & Yuang (2011) that the nature of risks determines the strategies for managing them. The implication of this is that the literature would benefit more if attention is focused on the strategic options available to managing the host-society turbulence and their effectiveness. In the light of this, it will enrich the literature if the role of the security agencies in the management of host-society risk could be factored into the framework for managing environmental turbulence and project business.

The nature of this research contributes to research in volatile foreign market and host-society turbulence. It supports research like Hadjikhani & Johanson (1996), Hadjikhani (1998), Zarkada-Fraser & Fraser (2002), Doh & Ramamurti (2003), Frynas & Mellahi (2003), Ramamurti (2003), Al Khattab, Anchor & Davies (2007), Owusu & Habiyakare (2011). The research also contributes to researches in doing business in the turbulent African environment, and also to approaches to risk management by highlighting the importance of the KIBS in the firm adaptation and long-term success.

Lastly, this research contributes to the institutional theory literature by confirming the existence of isomorphism in the activities of the firms involved in the research and resonates with the claims of DiMaggio & Powell (1983), Martin et al. (1983), Kostova & Roth (2002) that organizations sharing the same environment will employ similar practices and thus become "isomorphic" with each other. Based on past studies and the general opinion of the project marketers, one can expect that:

Proposition1:

In the face of host-society turbulence, organizations operating in the environment will be isomorphic in the way they manage the risks from the turbulence;

Proposition 2:

The more favourable the PM's perception about the environment, the less he would think that his project marketing activities would be affected by the turbulence in the environment.

Proposition 3

The host-society uncertainty will not necessarily lead to risk if firms take certain control measures i.e., the uncertainties would result in risks only if the control measures are not observed.

6.3.2 Managerial Implication

This research addressed how the Nordic companies manage uncertainty and the host-society risks and being successfully adapted in turbulent Nigerian environment. However, the findings from the research are important and have far-reaching managerial implications and also offer constructs for further studies.

On the basis of this study, it was discovered that the firms adapted to the Nigerian project environment as a result of their knowledge of the local environment, and working with the security agencies. The study shows that the companies adapted so well that they know the nature of projects to undertake (turnkey or turnkey-plus), which areas to market projects and which areas to avoid. The implication of this is that any Nordic company wishing to market projects in Nigeria will successfully achieve quick adaptation by making use of people that have great understanding of the workings of the environment for the long-term success of the firm.

Close to the above is the influence of the security agencies in the operation of the project marketing firms. The security agencies provide them with information about where the firms could go and where to avoid. With regard to the uncertainty and the host-society turbulence (terrorist attacks) in Nigeria, it should be pointed out that it is restricted to certain region of the country (the North-East Region), while kidnapping is restricted to the South-East and South-South part of the country. The implication of the above knowledge is that any new project marketing firm wishing to market projects in Nigeria must understand this dynamics for successful project business. The company should know which region is safe for project business, which region to avoid, and how to work with security agencies. The managerial import of this is that project decisions would always depend on the security reports. If the report is negative, it means that the project would be avoided unless positive.

Another important implication of this research is the idea that instead of exiting from such environment, it is possible to identify and isolate the so turbulent and unworkable areas of the environment and remain to continue to do projects in the safer part of the country. What is required is adapting to the environment and

knowing how to manage the risks. Consequently, local knowledge is found to be important for successful adaptation to the turbulence and the subsequent long-term success of the Nordic project firms in turbulent environments. The knowledge and understanding of the environment is here described as the *local capability*. This local capability also involves having understanding of the local geography so as to know which part of the country is safe to go and places not safe to go for project business so as to avoid incidences.

Although the image outside Nigeria is negative and scares away foreign companies from coming to invest in Nigeria. In the same vein, the country has been going through turbulent time which has lasted for more than five years and yet to overcome. The turbulence has hindered businesses and destruction of properties in addition to the thousands of lives lost. In the end, the consequence of this turbulence is that it will generate more opportunities, and Nordic firms could be better prepared to seize the opportunities by getting more adapted in the Nigerian market environment in anticipation of the project opportunities to come.

Based on the above managerial implications, some propositions are deduced based on my observation of the relationships between the elements of the framework deduced in chapter 3 (figure 9) as shown in figure 14 below. Model 14 answered the challenge stated in **objective 4a** about describing a comprehensive model for the research and now constitutes the elaborated model.

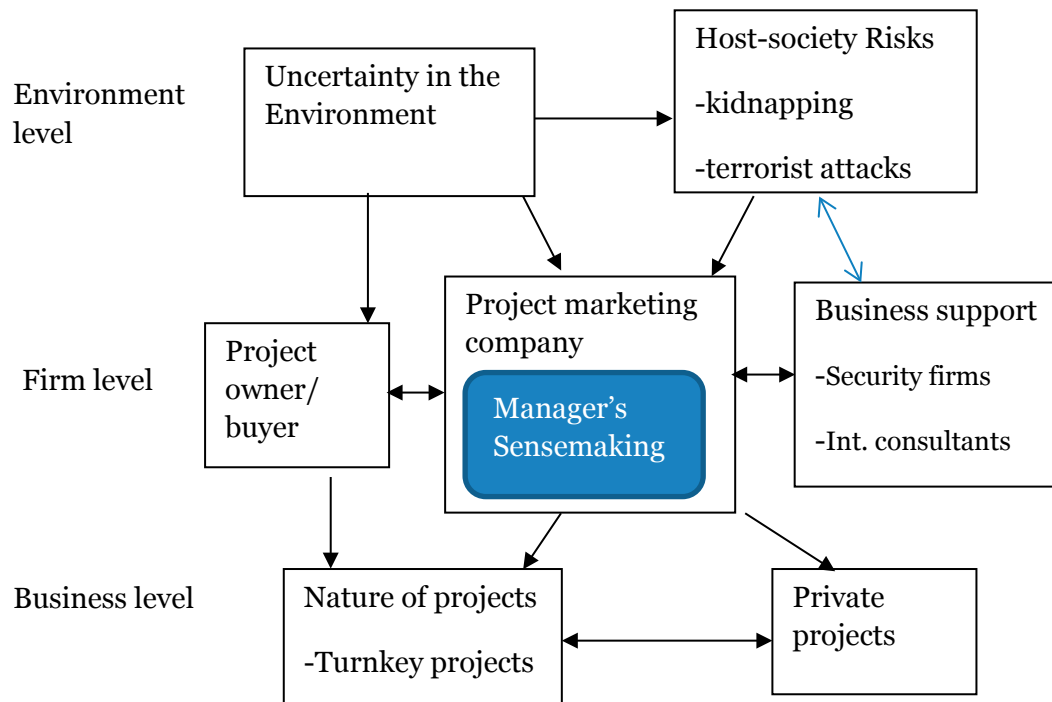


Figure 14. Elaborated framework model of project marketers' sensemaking

Proposition 4

The more clearly the business is restricted to the low risk zone where there is no host-society turbulence, the better the business is free from unexpected risks in the long-run;

Proposition 5

The more local expertise and security services is connected to the operation of the project marketing firm, the better chances of avoiding the risks and ensure successful project business in the long-run.

Proposition 6

The more spread the uncertainty and host-society risk, the greater the drive to employ the adaptation or avoidance strategy.

Proposition 7

Companies that concentrate on private company projects and pay less attention to government projects will be more successful in the long-run.

It was found in this research that what actually helped the PMs in managing the uncertainty and the host-society turbulence was their local knowledge and understanding which this researcher call the 'local capability' and an important factor necessary for successful adaptation and responding to the uncertainty resulting from the environmental institutions. In addition to all the above, in the context of this research, it is in my opinion to suggest the study of local capability in the future research as it is found to be connected to all the above propositions. Local capability in this research means the knowledge and understanding of the business environment which could be possessed by Nigerians handling the company's strategic functions because they are locals, or a foreigner with great experience of the local situations and has lived in the environment for many years. The main essence of this local capability is to ensure successful adaptation of firms to the environment to generate successful project marketing, and guarantee the long-term success of the firms in the turbulent Nigerian environment. Based on this, it is here postulated for future research that *the more local capability resident in the project firm in the host-society environment, the better adapted to the turbulent environment in the long-run.*

6.3.3 Constructing sensemaking based on managers opinions

This section answers 4a & 4b of the research objectives. It suffices to point out in this section that the basis for including elements into the sensemaking models constructed in this section is based on at least two out of the three PMs saying the same thing and is therefore accepted to be included in the model. It must be said that the PMs' sensemaking is based on the need to avoid the impact of the turbulence and ensure adaptation for successful project marketing in the long

term. This construction is based on figure 6 which relates to the elements of successful risk management for project marketing. This of course leads to the construction of figure 15 and 16. Figure 15 relates to the host-society pressure part of the figure 6 while figure 16 relates to the pressure for successful project business in the long term. Therefore, to do successful project marketing in the face of host-society risk, project companies must learn to acquiesce by getting information and security assistance from the security agencies, and getting locals to handle project marketing operations, going only for turnkey or turnkey-plus projects or avoid risks by paying less attention to the government projects, restricting operations to only safe areas.

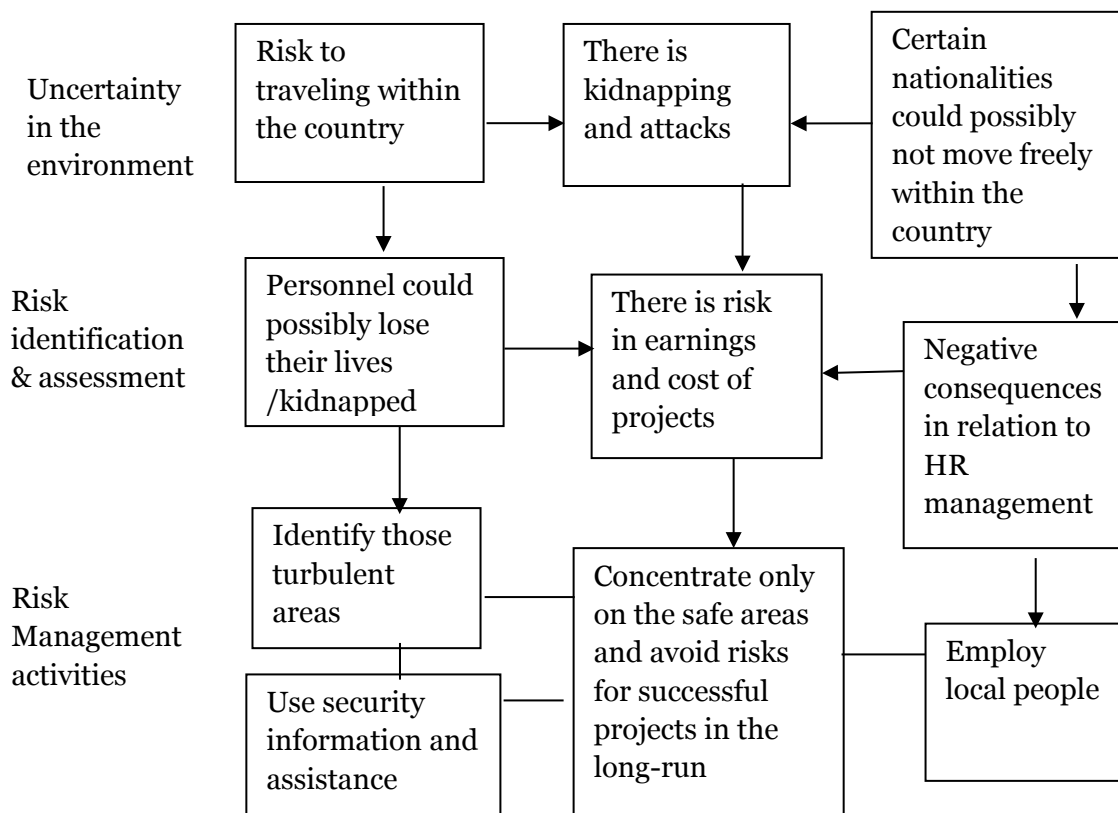


Figure 15. Construction of success-related risk management in host-society context (Nigeria)

The construction (figure 15) summarizes the cycle of uncertainty, risks, and risk handling. The high level of tension of kidnapping and terrorist attacks makes travelling within the country uneasy. There will also be risk of certain nationalities not able to travel freely. The kidnapping and the violent attacks

makes travelling within the country risky thereby leading to personnel possibly losing their lives or getting kidnapped for ransom. From the empirical data, it is right to surmise that the appropriate way of handling this issue of kidnapping and terrorist attacks that make travelling within the country risky, is to identify the turbulent areas in the country and avoid such areas; and the use security information and support in moving around the country for the project marketing function. In the same vein, the incidents limit available human resources. Considering the findings from this research, the solution to this problem is to employ local people.

The consequence of these kidnapping and violent attacks is the risk in earnings and cost of projects. The empirical data from the research suggest that by identifying those turbulent areas to avoid, and similarly seeking security information and protection, coupled with the approach of employing local people, firms will be able to manage the risks better leading to successful project marketing in the long-run.

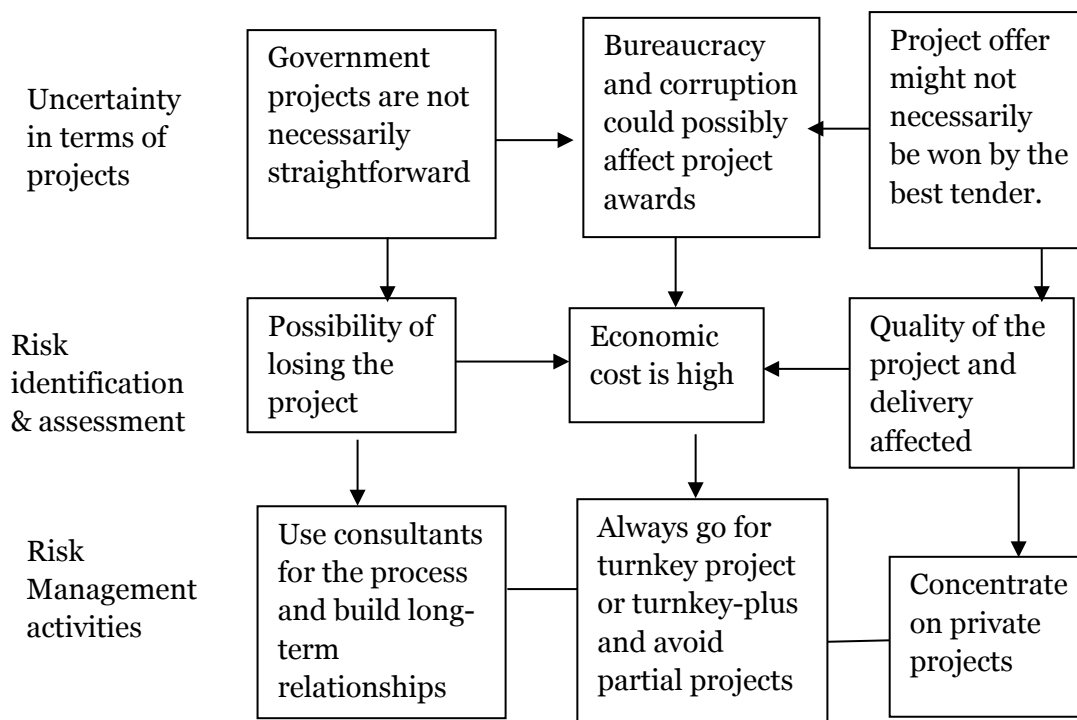


Figure 16. Construction of success-related risk management in project business (Nigeria)

The construction (figure 16) summarizes the tension faced with regard to the pursuit of projects as stated in objective 4b. There is the perception that Government project process is not straightforward as there is normally a complex bureaucratic process associated with it and sometimes comes with elements of corruption, and sometimes leading to unqualified companies winning projects. The resultant effects of the bureaucracy and Government project process not being straightforward is the possibility of loss of projects. This of course translates to economic loss to the Nordic project marketing firms. Of course, the bureaucracy and corruption most times results in unqualified companies handling projects, which subsequently affects the quality of the projects, and most times affects the schedule of the project delivery. Faced with the prospects of losing projects, the firms could use consultants for the process and build long-term relationships with important stakeholders. In the event that project awards are sometimes political such that unqualified firms get projects leading to quality and delivery becoming affected, project companies should always go for turnkey or turnkey-plus projects. Faced with these consequences associated with Government projects not being straightforward, project companies would do better by concentrating on private projects.

One big question a foreign company or researcher would be wishing to be answered at this point is whether it is possible or not to have successful project marketing operations in turbulent host-society environment without high economic cost (figure 16). Practically speaking, I would say that this is subjective because a lot of added costs are made like acquiring security information and protection, having to source local resources when primarily such could be available within the company who is not local, or using consultants to do the job they could primarily do at no costs using their own resources.

Again, could one say that it is economically viable to exclude certain parts of the country and conducting operations only in the remaining parts that is considered safe? Every firm always tries to achieve economy of scale in their operations given their limited resources. Resources of the firm(s) would become underutilized in such situations. Although in the Nigerian situation, over sixty percent (60%) of the companies operating in Nigeria are situated in Lagos and around. Since it is given that the turbulence is restricted to certain parts of Nigeria (Northeast in the case of Boko-haram), and Southeast and South-south (kidnapping), it is enough to say that firms would not be affected greatly in terms of economy of scale as they could restrict their operations to Lagos and around. However, this is only positive for firms that concentrate on private projects. Those firms that market projects more to the Governments (States and Local Governments) would not achieve the economy of scale as Governments in those turbulent parts would be excluded from their project marketing activities as it is considered risky going to those areas.

Figures 15 and 16 (sensemaking about managing the risk of turbulence, and sensemaking about project marketing) are important because they are contributive to both from the management and theory point of view. The models were constructed based on the proposed rule that if a common structure based on the 3 companies is found and constructed, it means that the constructed models represent the business culture in Nigeria which is based on uncertainty-risk perception and management elements in the project business context. However, the models can be a theoretical proposition for future research because the managers said relevant things in terms of risks and risk management in the Nigerian business environment; confirm proposition to theoretical discussion for later quantitative basis.

6.4 Assessing the trustworthiness of the research

As is generally believed in qualitative research, its objective is theoretical development, not theory testing, and the researcher is the central research

instrument, thus providing the main criteria of trustworthiness (Eskola & Suoranta 2001:210; Pernu, Mainela & Puhakka 2015:4). It should be pointed out that the strong point of this research is that the researcher is a Nigerian, is highly savvy about the general environment, the business culture, and a fair knowledge about the host-society uncertainty details in the Nigerian environment.

In line with Anderson and Skaates (2004) suggestion that it is of utmost importance for IB researchers using qualitative methodology to explicate their procedure, to ensure validity both during the research process and in the presentation of results, it was recommended that the researcher should:

(1) *Explicate the rationale for using qualitative inquiry in your study*

This researcher believe from the onset of the research that owing to the nature of the focus of the research (country-specific uncertainty and host-society risk management), the research was best approached from the qualitative perspective as a way of generating the salient variables required in theorizing management of host-society risks for successful adaptation of firms in turbulent environments. In addition, there is the absence of data that directly addressed the subject coupled with the attitude of businesses and managers of businesses in Nigeria to research and data provision.

(2) *Clarify data selection procedures*

In coming about the data, the researcher requested from the Nordic embassies (Finnish Embassy, Swedish Embassy, Norwegian Embassy, and Danish Embassy) in Nigeria for the listing of Nordic companies into project business in Nigeria. The listing provided by these embassies contained the names of the Nordic companies in Nigeria, their email addresses, phone numbers, and the office addresses. Having been supplied with the listing of the Nordic companies in Nigeria, I then wrote emails to those that I identified to be in the business of projects. The listings supplied by these embassies included companies that were not into project business as well as those into project business. In all, a total of 69 Nordic companies were listed as doing business in Nigeria and emails were sent to all in the hope of determining their suitability for my research. Out of these, about 15 were assessed to be into project business and further emails were sent to them requesting to be used for my research. Out of this 15, four were chosen to participate in the research. In the same vein, data were collected from the 4 Nordic companies during the first round of data collection exercise, but was discovered that data from one of the cases could not be used in this research

because the PM just assumed the position four months before the research interview leaving the researcher with three case companies used in the research. The three informants finally selected were specifically chosen because they are critical as a result of their unique experience and knowledge of the environment which makes them critical to provide the needed answers to the research questions.

(3) Explain data handling procedures and how possible errors of the type one, two and three variety have been avoided during the data collection process

All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim after the data collection stage. Transcripts of interviews were reviewed (content analyzed), and codes were made from the transcripts to denote relevant categories. As a way of improving the trustworthiness of this research and the credibility of the empirical data collected, my analysis and interpretation of the data chapter was sent to the PMs to read through and confirm that it was the content of our interviews and not manufactured but a reflection of the views of the project marketers.

(4) Clarify data analysis and interpretation procedures:

Interview texts were transcribed for easy use of NVivo analysis. The interview data transcribed were coded and the nodes made from the data to guide my analysis and interpretations.

(5) Use your raw data as much as possible in supporting the claims made

As shown in chapter five of this thesis, the research questions were directly answered by direct quotations from the empirical data resulting in the findings of the research.

Being a qualitative research, this research follows the recommendations of Lincoln & Guba (1985), Sinkovics, Penz & Ghauri (2008) that qualitative research should be assessed based on issues such as credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability of the outcome of the research.

Dependability: The information obtained from the company PMs were recorded using tape recorder and stored. The information obtained is traceable because the providers are the project marketers of their respective companies and could easily be reached. They were also sent copies of the empirical data analysis chapter whereby they made adjustment as a way of taking ownership of what was written to have been said by them.

Transferability: As far as this research is concerned, it is connected to previous researches in project marketing and risk management (Luqmani, Habib & Kassem 1988; Salmi 2000; Ramamurti 2003; Doh & Ramamurti, 2003), turbulent environments and effects on performance (Anderson & Tushman, 2001; Li & Atuahene-Gima 2001; Lin & Germain 2003; Kuivalainen et al. 2004; Power & Reid 2005), in developing economies (Owhoso et al. 2002; Owus, 2002, 2003; Nwankwo & Richards 2004; Habiyakare 2009; Bartels, Alladina & Lederer 2009; Owusu & Habiyakare, 2011), organization-environment relations and adaptation (Samuelson 1999; Grant 2003; Boyne & Meier 2009).

Credibility: In the course of the research, I was able to give graphic details of the turbulent Nigerian environment and the host-society phenomena taking place in Nigeria and their gravity. I believe that my interpretation of the organizational-environment relationship as a result of the uncertainty and the host-society turbulence was based on the empirical materials and my deductions were from the materials. For instance, my deduction of 'local capability' was inferred from the PMs claiming their effectiveness on the extensive knowledge and understanding of the environment which they also claimed to be so vital for managing the uncertainty and the host-society turbulence on their operations. Similarly, the empirical information obtained from the Nordic company PMs were triangulated in the chapter five of the thesis with data from two other perspectives- from an important actor that the Nordic companies work with in managing the uncertainty and the host-society turbulence (the security agents), and from a body of businesses in Nigeria- Nigerian Association of Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA)

Conformability: My interpretations of findings in the chapter five of this thesis and the conclusions reached in chapter six were directly based on the empirical data that were directly coded from the transcript from the interviews made in the course of the data gathering. All explanations and extrapolations were more of direct quotations from the empirical materials. As a result, my interpretations were made from the empirical data and presented in simple language that could easily be understood by all. As pointed above, the data presentation and interpretation section of this thesis was sent to the PMs and their advice was incorporated.

6.5 Study limitations and avenues for further research

This study is not without limitations just like any other research. The limitation of this research is assessed on the account of the theory applied in this research, the methodology of the research, and the adequateness of the empirical data.

Most research in project business often applied the Network and relationship theory. As a result, the focus of those studies concentrate more on relationships between the actors in the network of project and value nets. But because the focus of this research is a contextual analysis of the country-specific uncertainty and host-society risk and adaptation of Nordic firms, the institutional theory was used since it is the mostly used in international business. Institutional theory has been heavily criticized for its lack of consideration for the role of the agency in its analysis of institutions. As a result of this inadequacy, the theory was supported with the sensemaking method - an approach of making sense of situations from the point of view of the managers of the companies concerned. This is a way of making up for the inadequacy of the application of the institutional theory in this research showing the strategic role of the agency in the risk management strategy in the turbulent environment.

With regard to the research methodology, the limitation arises from the limited number of Nordic companies operating in Nigeria to choose from. This greatly limited the latitude of the researcher in the choice and number of cases used in the research. The research relied on the perception of the informants of the case companies and was assumed to represent the companies' approach. This study recognized that there may be some variation in their perceptions even though the institutional isomorphism shows that the PM of the case companies are similar in perception about the country and the turbulence, and the approach of handling the risks.

With regard to the adequateness of the empirical data, it must be said that some companies declined participation in the research and did not participate. Some that participated showed unwilling cooperation during the second round of the data collection making the researcher to send the interview protocol as a questionnaire via email. This denied the researcher the opportunity to seek clarifications with regard to certain answers and further probing and in some cases refusal to provide answers directly. They had to refer the researcher to their web pages for information on their companies thereby declined to talk about their companies.

Above all, a great drawback to doing research in Nigeria is the general attitude to research and data collection. This attitude is not only exhibited by companies and organizations owned by Nigerians but also by foreign companies and organizations. This affects the nature and extent of information that is obtainable and so makes no workable strategy possible. Unless this attitude changes, sound research is impossible.

Based on the above, opportunity for further research exists. There is need for more studies in strategies for managing the risk of turbulence for successful project marketing as a way of shedding more light on the unique approach that has helped the Nordic companies to attain adaptation in the turbulent Nigerian environment. Similarly, research is needed in 'local capability' and firm's adaptation, influence of the role of KIBS (e.g. security agencies, international consultants) in the success of Nordic project marketing companies as a way of furthering research in the claim of Achrol & Kotler (1999:146) that "companies embedded in strategic networks will enjoy significant market advantages in the future" and similarly, the nature and impact of networks and relationships in an international project marketing context has received limited research attention (Cova, Mazet & Salle 1993; Welch et al. 1996) and more research could be furthered.

One interesting area would be memory based approach. It helps in defining what is normal, and what is exceptional. The memory assist the sensemaking process of the manager based on the episodes and hence gives him the directive power to be able to differentiate between a normal situation and exceptional situation. For instance, based on episodic memory managers can express different decision rules which has directive power (see e.g. Pilleman 2000). It is important to separate general circumstances and specific ones, risk laden circumstances in relation to earning possibilities in turbulent environment.

Based on the findings and conclusions reached in this research, propositions were deduced which this researcher believes are worth testing in the subsequent researches. The findings of this research are also rich enough to be tested in the further research quantitatively as this research has provided a basis for assessing the incidents of host-society uncertainty and the risk management approach of the PMs.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 INTERVIEW GUIDE 1

The overall objective of the study is to identify and analyse the nature of country-specific uncertainty and host-society risks inherent in the Nigerian project business environment and especially to explore relationships between the managerial perceptions of the forms of risks and firm-specific approach of handling them. This research is about risk management of Nordic project marketers in the Nigerian business environment

Theme-specific questions

Country-specific elements

- What is the nature of uncertainty and risks do you face in the Nigerian business environment and how do you manage them?
- What do you think about the turbulence that characterize the Nigerian business environment like Boko Haram, Niger Delta militancy, kidnapping and so on and what influence do they have on your project marketing activities across all the stages of the process? How do you cope with these critical events?
- How do you see bureaucracy in the Nigerian project environment?
- How can you see the information about the Nigerian business environment and the reality you face in your project marketing activities in Nigeria?
- How do you see project marketing in Nigeria and project marketing elsewhere?
- What do you think greatly determines successful project marketing in Nigeria and why?
- There is politics in infrastructure projects everywhere around the world. What is the nature of politics you experienced in marketing projects in Nigeria and how it did impact on the bidding outcome?
- What do you understand by the 'Nigerian factor'?

Decision-making elements

- How do you identify and classify situations as risks? How do you assess these environmental factors – do you have specific risk assessment methodologies?
- Could you please explain to me the nature of risk management approach normally used by your company in relation to the turbulent Nigerian project environment?
- What are the factors normally considered in your decision making with regard to project marketing and why?
- How do these risks influence your marketing strategy?
- What contribution can you accord your international project marketing experience in handling the perceived risk of marketing project in Nigeria?

Project-specific elements

- Could you please describe the unique factors of your project compared to other projects in this area?
- How has your project characteristics and its unique features influenced your risk perception and risk management approaches.
- The time span between one project and another is often said to be long. Do you often experience this discontinuity? How do you address this discontinuity in your risk management strategy?
- How do you manage the complexity of the nature of network involved in your project, transactions, and relationships concerning your projects?
- How does the project complexity influence the risk management strategy choice?
- Considering the financial enormity of projects, how does this affect your project marketing strategy?

Company-specific elements

- Can you please describe your company background, history of company, project business and experience in Nigeria? How many projects have you successfully marketed so far in your entire years of project business in Nigeria?
- How do you normally get to know about projects?

- What has been the nature of projects you've done- Turnkey, turnkey plus? What is the highest value of projects you've ever won in Nigeria?
- Some firms have a practice of creating and maintaining relationship with the buyer long before there is project idea. Some only come in when there is call for tender to bid. How would you describe your project marketing logic in Nigeria?

Is there anything else you would like to share with me about Project Marketing Risk Management in Turbulent Environments: case study of Nordic firms marketing projects to Nigeria that I may have missed?

Appendix 2

INTERVIEW GUIDE 2

Indexing context- Noticing cues about the situation

We talked about Nigeria being a risky place for project business in my earlier interview. Do you still feel the same way now and why do you say so going by the recent happenings?

Making attributions- Drawing inferences based on identity and experiences

How do you see your identity as a Nigerian running project business in a Nordic company in Nigeria? Is there anything different in the way you do business and why do you think so? What do you think are the similarities or differences between the Nordic way of doing business and the Nigerian way of doing business and how do you think that has influenced the way you go about your project business?

What do you make of the effects of the turbulence and your project business in Nigeria? Why do you say so?

What are the factors you could say had helped a lot in successful project business in Nigeria which has contributed to your company's stay in Nigeria?

Selecting schema- Enacting appropriate behavioural scripts

How can you relate the influence of your culture history in the way you go about your project business?

What do you make of your organizational business values in the way you go about project business?

How long have you worked in this project marketing position? How has this experience helped in your risk perception and management?

How can you relate the role of government policies in the success of projects?

General questions

- What examples do you often find contradicting and confounding in the way project business is done here generally?
- What do you think are the contradictions in the Nigerian project business culture and the Nordic business culture? Why do you say so?
- We talked a lot about corruption in project business in Nigeria and especially government projects. Is it always like this?
- Under what circumstance do you think project business process could be devoid of corruption? Why do you think so?
- You said your company doesn't participate in project business process deemed to be corrupt. Why don't you participate because many other companies do it?
- Tell me about a time, in Nigeria when you were marketing/managing a project (partial, turnkey or turnkey plus) and found the process challenging or puzzling."
- What are your hypotheses about why a Nordic company behaves this way in this situation?
- How can you find out if these hypotheses are correct?"

Under what circumstance would project business in Nigeria be risk free?

Appendix 3

Empirical Data Presentation by Cases

ERICSSON Nigeria

This empirical material was collected via interview with the project marketer/manager of the case company in his office in the case company in Nigeria on the 18th of December, 2013 at 1300 Nigerian time and 18th of April,

2014 at 1400 Nigerian time. The two interviews are here presented together in the analysis as the second interview was a follow-up to the first. The project marketer (PM) is a Nigerian, performs both project marketing and project management function, and has been functioning in that capacity for seven (7) years in the company, and has worked in the project manager for another company for three years before joining the company to manage the project business for Ericsson Nigeria.

Information about Nigeria:

At the start of the interview, the manager was asked about how his company sees Nigeria concerning the kind of information about the country as generally portrayed by the media locally and internationally. The PM of Ericsson pointed out that

... what is said outside has some roots because I won't say it's completely not true. Like in most cases in the world, there are always issues everywhere. It's determination that you need to address and confront them and drive you forward. ...you'll get that what scares people is the nature of image being created in the international media. I tell you most of what is said are not are not true....And you know, we have one challenge in Africa but more in Nigeria- that a lot of time we are a growing economy, and coming out of colonization, so, there are a couple of things that are not quite as clear. Technically we are weak....

However, the PM was more positive believing that

... Nigeria is building the trust base that she never had. The reason again is that it looks like a lot of things have happened because there was no trust base.... financial transactions are increasingly been monitored, so the government is going after for instance the cash that is coming to the people and the Boko-Haram and co. There is a lot of transparency base... government is becoming more transparent.

Nature of Uncertainty and risk

Having inquired about how they see the information about Nigeria and the reality, the researcher moved on to ask about the nature of country-specific uncertainty encountered by the PM in the Nigerian business environment. The PM noted that

... there is normal security- you want to move things, you go with some people who are security agents, there is transport security like you getting waylaid.

There is the risk when you get to the site, having to do installation, there's the problem of what we call the 'area boys' but some call them "Omo Onile" (the indigenous people who normally demand that companies pay them agency fee for wanting to do projects in their community)... The last which is just rife in the past two or three years is the Niger-Delta militancy, which initially started as an ideological issue of resources and also the Boko-Haram in the North attacking government installations and also attacking many telecommunication installations and contractors.

... There is risk in government processes, not being on time, delaying things around your delivery, there's risk with transportation, two or three countries hitting those kinds of general risks, the risks of competence in installation, the risk with security which is one of the things you are categorically interested in.

... ..there are two major risks in the Niger-Delta: one- the area boys' problem, two- we have the militants' problem.

Risk perception

When the PM was asked to enumerate the kind of risks his company faces in the Nigerian business environment, the PM noted that

... there is a lot of fear of things that need to be looked at before people can get to do things anymore. ...There is always some sort of risks. It is not necessarily environmental risks. There could be commercial risk, solution risk, implementation risk, all kinds of risks can show up, you might not find the resources needed to do the job, you might not know where to find the resources to do the job even though you know how to do the job, the resources might be booked, the solution might not work- it might not actually match the need. Projects are basically risk laden. You can't avoid risks but you can have a low level of risk but it cannot be risk-free. There are some remote risks that you cannot even tell e.g., customs changing policies.... I told you it's really affecting us. ... Risks affect our strategy.

However, despite his perception of the environment being risky, he was optimistic about the situation improving

... Perceptions are hard to change. Sometimes back, there is perception in Europe that Africans lived on trees. They came here and meet people living in mansions. So you need to get a good dose of reality and they should come and see that Lagos is as fast as New York (laughs)... So right now, I won't say the

situation is improving anymore but I'll say it is still workable but it's not the very best situation.

Risk handling

Having identified the risk inherent in the Nigerian environment, the manager was asked to explicate how the risks are managed. The PM noted that

... Your environmental risk assessments have to be deeper....Risk analysis and management is part of what we do.... we watch the trend and base our decisions on how we see it. The frequent bombings now and then for instance, we put the area in trends but does not actually put the whole of Nigeria into such trend. By the way, Nigeria is big such that we could isolate the area where there is problem. We also use security advice

... We do risk assessment. We have a tool called mini-risk tool. It basically takes all your risks enunciation, and risk mitigation into consideration. It does the quantitative and qualitative analysis and it comes out with figures and says okay how much this risk is going to cost you if it happens.... We do risk analysis. As I told you, before you even start to sell the project, risk analysis is done and that risk analysis is carried out throughout the life of the project. We start it at the beginning of the project, when the project is half done, for instance when the customers says go ahead I will pay you this amount of money, we still do another risk analysis just to check to make sure that all these risks is calculated and would we be able to do it, otherwise let's stop it.

... But we use mini-risk tool to determine the value of the risk. It helps you to decide how and what you want to do. A lot of people sit down together to do the risk analysis and identify all the risks. After it is identified, we weigh all the risks... It uses a sort of Monte Carlo system. So when we are starting the project, what we do is we have what is called a "Decision Point", we call everybody together, apart from the mini-risk tool, there are some couple of other conditions and they all agree saying fine, this is what we must do.

... We prefer to influence by our talk leadership, technological leadership and grassroots usually in the way we address people.... For the 'area boys' problem in Nigeria, now at least there are specialist; that is people who actually specialize in negotiating this kind of situation and mediating the situation into truce.

In the same vein, the PM noted that part of the risk handling strategy is the policy of

...using of locals. In a way, locals understand the environment. You train locals, you understand the environment and then you live and survive in that environment. Then, you can do business in that environment.... That's the policy with Ericsson... and we have reduced the number of expatriates drastically. Though we are not there yet because we still import some people but there's improvement. You increase the management responsibilities for the locals. Get the best out of the locals. They prefer to have locals and use them for the projects and everybody does the same. That's what most companies here now do.

... For Niger-Delta militancy, a lot of engineers have been employed and some of them are locals.... Of course you have very good intelligence networks that tell you to go ahead before you go and do business in such environment. That is the reality of the situation. ...we subscribe to the anti-corruption tenets.

Nordic business and projects

In trying to understand the Nordic business culture from the standpoint of the Ericsson Company, the manager noted that

... We are here to ensure communication- as you know... Some are turnkey while most are turnkey-plus. There is always after sales support.

...Nordic companies generally, are more open, have set standard processes, and have lots of experience inserted in the processes that allow people to express themselves and increase an atmosphere of freedom which is different from a what we have in a 'more' Nigerian company ... those are some of the marked differences which are sort of marked in culture which is also a mark in the way people work in the Nordic countries and Nigeria.... usually Nordic companies are very apolitical, so there is no political undertone in their company dealings and they usually try to stay technologically ahead. So there's no way they are pinned down on political basis.

When talking about the Nordic business culture, the manager pointed out that they are being guided strictly by rules in terms of project marketing:

... yeah there are some actions we cannot take like some officials wanting kickbacks on projects.... There are certain rules we have to follow... we are a major company in telecommunication and we deal with many government corporations.

... Because we don't do projects without following our standard process, and again, other standard companies now use this process.... We are at a

disadvantage because the environment does not allow us to deal with some of these issues.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that the case company (Ericsson) was not so successful with government projects because of the corruption in the project process and have to keep strictly to the company's rules and

... It's only when it's down to when we were the only one that had the technology and they don't really have the choice (government projects) and...because we had the technology, we didn't have to bow down to any of the pressures that come with the government deals. Sometimes we do business with government but mostly do business-business even though there's problem with government projects. A lot of times we are invited for projects. Most times we go up to meet people. We meet clients, and ask them what did they want to do? ...Some are turnkey while most are turnkey-plus.... Sometimes we go for tenders and sometimes we've been talking with the clients before the call for tender.

On a positive note, as a way of overcoming turbulence and institutional pressures, the manager pointed out that

... we increase the management responsibilities for the locals.

Networks and relationships

When talking about the nature of networks and relationship building issues, the manager noted that they do more of *talk leadership*

...talk leadership makes you go out and build a human relationship and trust your judgment. ... It doesn't cost us to say merry Christmas. So we send out merry Christmas to all the government people as well every year... and you build a human relationship and he trusts your judgment, so that way, gives you the job and says this is how I want to run this project.... So we use customers' relations and talk leadership. ... We check on how our equipment is doing and keep the relationship going. ... Sometimes we've been talking with the clients before the call for tender.

Understanding the sensemaking process of the managers

However, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, the second round of the empirical data collection covered the sensemaking aspect of the operations of the project marketer. These cover the situation indexing, making attributions, and selecting of schemas.

INDEXING

The indexing aspect of the interview protocol covers the project marketer's noticing cues about the situation. This involves questions that concern the turbulent events in the environment and his perception of the situation. The manager noted that

... I think the escalation of the bombings by Boko Haram for the past few months is probably due to elections coming up. It has to do with the balance of power. Quite a few political changes are going on. ... yeah it's okay to be scared but ... you'll get that what scares people is the nature of image being created in the international media... I think people should not be too apprehensive.

... So right now, I won't say the situation is improving anymore but I'll say it is still workable but it's not the very best situation.

In the same vein, the manager was positive in his cue about the corruption situation in Nigeria that

... I won't say that Nigeria is that corrupt if I go back to how much Nigeria has been transparent.... The problem with Nigeria has more to do with infrastructure than to corruption.... Corruption is a thing like say a lot of money is diverted and I think more of the problem in Nigeria is lack of infrastructure.... Transparency is improving generally.... So, it's a good place for investment and for improvement.

MAKING ATTRIBUTIONS

In order to be able to make sense of the attitude and strategy behavior of the PM, questions relating to his identity and experiences in relation to his activities were asked.

Identity

The PM for Ericsson is a Nigerian, and has been the project business manager for seven years. With regard to the PM's identity as a Nigerian running project business in a Nordic company in Nigeria, he observed that

... most Europeans do business in a different way from the way we do business here in Nigeria.... Nordic companies generally, are more open, have set standard processes, and have lots of experience inserted in the processes that allow people to express themselves and increase an atmosphere of freedom which is different from a what we have in a 'more- Nigerian' company.

Effects of turbulence on project business

In order to understand the effects of the turbulent events on the project marketing activities of the company, the manager was asked to relate how these events (kidnapping, Boko Haram bombing) affect their project operations and he noted that

... It means your budget for security increases, the speed with which you can roll out decreases, if you plan to roll out in certain areas you have to be more cautious, there is the likelihood you cannot use certain kinds of resources because they probably have the different(non-Black) skin colour (laugh) yeah it's the reality.

... There are some places you can't even send Indians now, or Chinese. So, it limits your capacity in terms of areas and to do things according to time because you are now limited by what kind of resources you can deploy. So, your commitment to delivering within a time, scope, and cost becomes suspect.

... The key thing is, there is a lot of fear of things that need to be looked at before people can get to do things anymore. You need to be more careful; you can't just walk into a place and decide to do a project. Your environmental risk assessments have to be deeper and you need to understand what the people are thinking, why things are run in a certain manner- you have to take care of a lot more things than in normal situation. So projects are going to be more expensive for you to deliver the same kind of projects. You probably would deliver it half the cost in some countries. And even now your resources have started becoming more expensive because the risk you are taking on them is higher.

Factors for successful project business

When the question relating to the factors necessitating successful project business in Nigeria and why the company has been able to maintain strong presence in the country was asked, the manager noted that

... Because of that in-built transparency we have more respect and also empower the local people.

... You need to have your success technological issues, talk leadership, property enumeration; those are the key factors you need to run successfully.

... and you build a human relationship

SELECTING SCHEMAS

Having concluded questions relating to framing the situation and drawing inferences based on identity and experiences, questions relating to how they relate to enacting appropriate behavioral scripts were also asked and concerned the influence of culture, organizational business values, project experience, and government policies as coming into play in the PM's activities and the he noted that

...Of course being a Nigerian makes it easier than if a foreigner... it hasn't made things easy; it is just cheer determination to do things positively. That is the key.

... of course it gives me a broad view because I have worked both in operations and running a live company and operating projects. I've done both the marketing and operating.

Organisational business values

The PM was asked about what he makes the influence of the organizational business values in the way he goes about project business. The manager noted that

.... Essentially, we start risk analysis before we even start project bidding and the risk in fulfilling the project. ... Risk analysis and management is part of what we do

... yeah because there are some actions we cannot take like some officials wanting kickbacks on projects. ...Being transparent.

... empower the local people.

Project experience

When the PM was asked about the influence of his project marketing experience in the performance of his project business, he noted that

...he has 10 years experience in project business. Seven in this company and the other three was before I got here.... of course it gives me a broad view cos I've worked both in operations and running a live company and operating projects-both the marketing and operating.

... But we do as a rule take care of our customers by using a lot of business experience; business acumen is brought into play whenever we are talking to the clients.

Government policies

When asked about the role of government policies in the success of projects, the PM noted that

... government policy, a big environmental factor because when you work in an environment, you need to make sure that you are legal, you have to follow the legal framework of that environment, and government is a big determinant of that legal framework.... My thinking is that it is very complex because officially, government determines how you do business but most governments are now moving towards a more open environment... But a lot of businesses are stable in this country based on political feedback or considerations.

GENERAL

The General section of the interview covered questions in other areas that could assist the researcher in being able to understand the manager's perspectives regarding the contextual nature of his project functions.

Comparing projects in contexts

When asked to compare project business practice between Nigeria and the Nordic countries, the PM noted that

... I would say we are at if we say the Europeans are at level 4, and American are level 4, we could say the Japanese are at level 5. But Africa is at level 1 trying to get to level 2 and a couple of countries have managed to cross. Nigeria especially I would say the way even projects are initiated right now, there is tender process that the federal government follows and most companies have to follow. This is better than what government used to do but it's still not that the process is as transparent as level as is done in most other countries.

... We have our own way of understanding how things should be done here in Nigeria. A Nordic person might come here and where he needs to go like for instance see the King and give kolanuts- just to see him (laughs) – yeah he doesn't have those kinds of issues.

...Nordic companies generally, are more open, have set standard processes, and have lots of experience inserted in the processes that allow people to express themselves and increase an atmosphere of freedom which is different from a what we have in a 'more' Nigerian company because Nigerians have a tendency to think in a more rigid way. The Nigeria business structure is more rigid in terms of levels in the company for instance the MD down to the people who feel

that strength of hierarchy which in Nordic companies, we (Ericsson) are a little different from that type of structure- we are more equal and free. You are free to express yourself, the more you express yourself the more your influence grows. I guess those are some of the marked differences which are sort of marked in culture which is also a mark in the way people work in the Nordic countries and Nigeria.

Contradictions in the Nigerian business culture

When the PM was asked about what contradictions he observed to exist between the Nigerian project business culture and the Nordic business culture, he noted that

... yeah we don't keep to time, is a major cultural problem- the Nigerian culture. We are very bad at keeping to agreements. This really shows up a lot. Budgets are delayed; project monies not released on time and that kind of things... yeah time is a contradiction, not keeping to agreements. Nordic people keep to time- they think it's not a luxury you can play around with, and believe in agreements.

Corruption in Nigerian project business

With regard to the corruption perception of the Nigerian business environment, the PM disclosed that

... It is true that Nigeria has a high corruption index but a lot of people are not corrupt. This corruption thing is mostly perceived. You just need to know who, where and what in approaching things that make a difference. A lot of companies still do business in Nigeria

... Things are improving actually but the perception is still there.... I was listening to a guest talk a couple of weeks back and they particularly mentioned that yes Nigeria is high on corruption index... to an extent the corruption index is really nothing.

However,

...transparency is improving generally.... I won't say that Nigeria is that corrupt if I go back to how much Nigeria has been transparent. ... if you increase transparency, make it possible for people to be able to see who is actually getting the contract, why is he getting the contract?, is he supposed to get this contract? Was the bid process open, fair, was everybody carried along, was it not made exclusively tilted in a particular company's direction,?

... yeah because of the way government is- I mean, a lot of things are politically based here and people are not as fair as they should be and transparent.

... yeah because there are some actions we cannot take like some officials wanting kickbacks on projects. ...we subscribe to the anti-corruption tenets. That is why we are not very successful with a lot of government deals (laughs).

Challenges in Project business process

When the manager was asked challenges faced in the Nigerian project business, the PM noted

... Technically we are weak (Nigeria), so we have a tendency to go and look for partners from other countries and there is not clear cut policy in certain areas, so, we might have a company here who don't have the technical experience but have a good technical partner and want to bid for projects. All those kind of things are not so clear.

... like some officials wanting kickbacks on projects.

... there is normal security challenge- you want to move things, you go with some people who are security agents, there is transport security like you getting waylaid. There is the risk when you get to the site, having to do installation, there's the problem of what we call the 'area boys' but some call them "Omo Onile" (that is, the indigenous people).

Hypotheses about Nordic project business behaviour

With reference to the manager's response to the question of his hypotheses about how and why Nordic companies behave in the Nigerian environment, the PM noted that

... the Nordic people keep to time- they think it's not a luxury you can play around with, and believe in agreements.

... The Nordic companies behave this way because they have established processes from experience because they've worked in many countries and they have created processes- like having a checklist of what is required before any project bidding and it's management, we do risk analysis pertaining to the project before embarking on the project process. ... we don't do projects without following our standard process.

... Those processes are results of years and years of experience which has become knowledge pool of the Nordic companies because they have long history. So, they have developed process for projects. And that's why Ericsson's project management processes is so similar to what the America's project management body has (PMI). This has given us the edge.

SANDVIK Nigeria

This empirical material was collected via interview with the project marketer of the case company in his office in the case company in Nigeria on the 12th of November, 2013 at 10:30am Nigerian time using a voice recorder and the second was sent by email via the internet in April, 2014 but was returned in May 2014 as written answers to the interview protocol. The two interview responses are here presented (merged) together in the analysis- as the second interview was a follow-up to the first. The PM is a Nigerian, performs project marketing function only, and has been functioning in that capacity for seven (7) years in the company.

Information about Nigeria:

At the start of the interview, the manager was asked about how the case company sees Nigeria concerning the kind of information about Nigeria as generally portrayed by the media locally and internationally. The manager believed that

... Generally from the outside world, Nigeria is perceived to be very corrupt, Nigeria is perceived not to be working at all. But if you are in the country, you find a lot of disparity between what they tell you outside and what actually is the case happening inside Nigeria. ...the information about Nigeria is invariably completely false...Nigeria is a developing economy with a lot of challenges as regards expertise, skills and others....

If you take for instance, the cost of doing business in Nigeria, it is rather relatively very high. ...but doing business in Nigeria has proved to be beneficial for all the parties with the right policies and procedure in place.

... people believe that the average Nigerian investor believes we can always cut corners.

Nature of uncertainty

Having inquired about how they see the information about Nigeria and the reality, the researcher moved on to ask about the nature of turbulence

encountered by the project marketers in the Nigerian business environment. The PM noted that

...part of the risk I will say is the government not really putting down in black and white what is the cost of this and that, what you must do,... government policies in Nigeria have changed in the last two years for more than three times as regards importation and exportation.... That is the biggest risk I think we have come across for importing into Nigeria.

... But I think in the last years, these are the risks we've seen- change in government policies and the opening of Form M and all that. These are government procedures you need to acquaint yourself with and comply because government is in charge of the country even though you are the owner of the business

Risk perception

When answering question relating to the risks perceived by the project marketer, the manager noted that

..., regarding the issue with risk being undertaken in Nigeria, I mean it's quite huge.

... we have not come across any issue since we started operation in Nigeria.

Risk Handling

Having discussed the risks perceived by the PM, questions regarding how the company manages the risks perceived were asked and the manager (Sandvik Nigeria) noted that

...there is a portal and maybe for the Nordic countries only, they've set up offices in Nigeria like the trade and investment council to tackle all these problems. When the foreigners are coming to invest in Nigeria, if they go through all these channels, they'll be able to put him in the right direction- that is one.

... And another thing we've done with Sandvik is we have always used consultants ... All these international consultants, we use them to forward most of our concerns to the government.

... When it comes to travelling (within the country) we get information beforehand. But as locals, we sometimes find our own ways of going to places. Maybe we go in plain clothes.

... And because of all these inherent security risks, is the reason why Sandvik is working globally but operate locally. Meaning that it is a global company but the locals manage operations of the companies in each country because one, it give added value, two; they understand the culture of the country they are in and they'll be able to protect themselves and also understand how business work in that country.

... Local support is important in running a business here in Nigeria. You need local support, you need local fronts.... Yes, getting the right locals is key. If I may advice, to get the right local people it needs to be through the Nordic association. The Nordic forum should have contact of local people whom they think is okay and trusted for the job.

... you need to work closely with clearing agents and logistics department and after a while, you find that all these are sorted out. That is the biggest risk I think we have come across for importing into Nigeria. So the bottom line is apart from this peculiar risk, custom can decide to be funny sometimes.

... So when you are not dealing with all these people, then you know that it is relatively safe.

... we certify all our goods coming to Nigeria

Nordic business and projects

In trying to understand the Nordic business culture from the standpoint of the case company (Sandvik), the manager noted that

... We deal with people that have projects. We sell machine and bring people from factory to do it.... outright Sales of Construction Equipment to Contractors and as such are not exposed... Let's generalize it as engineering products we are into construction equipment like constructional machines that breaks, crush the rocks etc.

However,

... we don't do any direct business with the government, we deal with private sectors, we deal with contractors to the government. So the government gives them contract and they want equipment to execute these contracts. They come

to us. The government does not come to us. So it means we are talking with business people, we are not talking with government officials. So it has always been that we don't have direct link to the government.

Networks and relationships

When talking about the nature of networks and relationship building issues, the PM noted that

...With the customers, I will tell you the cost is zero. See we got very fantastic customers whereby we are offered dinner and they tell us we cannot pay for their dinner. So, the cost to us is very minimal. The only place we can incur is when we take a customer out for dinner. And taking a customer for dinner is not about eating but discussing business, it's discussing the next one year or the next six months. You get an indication of when to send in a quotation. You get the indication of what is going to happen next time. And on that dinner table, you will be surprised that you can sell things there. Sometimes you just call the customers to go to the night club with you, maybe he doesn't want to buy anything, and some customers are not good in beer but they talk in clubs.

INDEXING (*cues about the situation*)

The indexing aspect of the interview protocol covers the project marketer's noticing cues about the situation. This involves questions that concern the turbulent events in the environment and the manager's perception of the situation. The PM noted that

... Generally from the outside world, Nigeria is perceived to be very corrupt, Nigeria is perceived not to be working at all.... The current happenings in Nigeria is rather unfortunate, because Nigeria does not have any trace or affiliation with terrorism from history, but irrespective of the danger being experienced in some state, I still believe there are states that are still secure for business purpose. Looking at the violence, one would be able to tell that it is concentrated in an area.

... Doing business in Nigeria has proved to be beneficial for all the parties with the right policies and procedure in place; with the right set up, investor will do business in a country, as long as the threat level does not exceed what is currently on ground.

MAKING ATTRIBUTIONS (*Drawing inferences based on identity and experiences*)

So as to help understand the sensemaking of the strategy behaviour of the PM, questions relating to his identity and experiences in relation to his activities were asked.

Identity

The PM for Sandvik is a Nigerian, and has been the project business manager since 2008. With regard to the PM's identity as a Nigerian running project business in a Nordic company in Nigeria, he observed that

... There are indeed a lot of differences in working for a Nordic company in Nigeria

... It is very important you understand the culture, but this also has to be related to the way business is done. A clear understanding and acceptance of both culture keeps the business on the right track.

Effects of turbulence on project business

When the PM was asked about the effects of the turbulent events on the project marketing activities of the company, the manager was asked to relate how these events (kidnapping, Boko Haram bombing) affect their project operations and he noted that

... This will slow growth in some region; while it increases in others where the effect of turbulence is less. The Company will close down business if the risk is too high.

... So if ZZZ Company is closing down that business, it means we are closing our business there too; it affected us.

Factors for successful project business

The question relating to the factors necessitating successful project business in Nigeria and why the company has been able to maintain strong presence in the country was asked and the PM noted that

... Local support is important in running a business here in Nigeria. You need local support, you need local fronts. ... Yes, getting the right locals is key.

... Part of the reason we are being successful here is because we employ Nigerians. It's either your HR (human resources) is local or your business controller is local.

SELECTING SCHEMAS (*Enacting appropriate behavioural scripts*)

Here, questions relating to how they enact appropriate behavioural scripts were also asked and concerned the influence of culture, organizational business values, project experience, and government policies as coming into play in the PM's activities.

Organisational business Values

When the manager was asked about the influence of the organizational business values in the way he goes about project business, the PM noted that

... Sandvik support business owners, contractors and operators, who look to make good profit from the use of our equipment, while also offering them the best expertise there is. This way, we are dealing with the investors, who are the decision makers.

... So it's where our customers are that we do visit. And because of all these inherent security risks, is the reason why case Sandvik is working globally but operates locally. Meaning that it is a global company but the locals manage the operation of the company in each country because one, it give added value, two; they understand the culture of the country they are in and they'll be able to protect themselves and also understand how business work in that country.

... But, the most important is doing business with integrity and having the Sandvik value at heart. This is our history. We've come 150th years and we want to go 250years without denting the image of the company.

... everything is done via due process. Everything is been done openly. We have open mind and we have to do everything openly so that everybody makes contribution. If we have seven people saying yes, and one person saying no, we need to listen to the one person saying no and needs to understand why he's saying no. And that reason he's saying no, if it needs us to adjust our plan, we adjust our plan to accommodate his saying no.

... we make sure there is certification on our products.

Project experience

Similarly, the PM was asked about the influence of his project marketing experience in the performance of his project business, he noted that

... It's an everyday learning process, but also again, adhering to our values makes life and work easier.

I have been with Sandvik since 2008 in the capacity as Senior Sales Officer, Country Manager, and till now, Vice President, Managing Director.

Government Policies

When asked about the role of government policies in the success of projects, the PM noted that

... Government provides the enabling environment for the contractor to work here in Nigeria and we in turn support the contractors, while ensuring that our values and business ethics are adhered to. ... I think government policies in Nigeria have changed in the last 2years for more than three times as regards importation and exportation.

... I'll say it's a bit difficult because a lot of investors have different perceptions about projects in Nigeria.

GENERAL

This section of the interview covered questions in other areas that could assist the researcher in being able to understand and explain the PM's perspectives regarding the contextual nature of his project functions.

Comparing projects in contexts

When asked to compare project business practice between Nigeria and the Nordic countries, the PM noted that

...I think there is a lot of difference in project marketing in Nigeria. A lot of people run into government project, they get awarded contract without knowing anything about it, so it makes it much more difficult to market project in Nigeria.

Contradictions in the Nigerian business culture

Similarly, the PM was asked about what contradictions he observed to exist between the Nigerian project business culture and the Nordic business culture, he noted that

... Doing business with the organized private sector is more organized and structured, but we must also understand that timely execution of project is not a culture here. Why? Costs are not attached to time in most cases and also government policies are sometimes not adhere to.

... Private projects has got time frame, scope, and high due diligence which is in contrast to government projects.

Corruption in Nigerian project business

With regard to the corruption perception of the Nigerian business environment, the PM noted that

... it is true that Nigeria is perceived to be very corrupt, but we don't have such issues here. It's either you buy it or you don't buy. So if you don't learn to run business with justification and a very good heart, it's not going to work for us.... but I heard lately that the government is working to ensure that any form of corruption is reduced to the minimum as it affects cost of governance.

...and in every Nigerian project there is always variation whereby you go back to the government to tell them the money is not enough. And the government releases money knowing very well that they have taken all the money.

However, the manager also discussed their approach to handling corruption that

... you let them have the understanding and tell them that this is your price, there can be discount but there is no negotiation about what goes to the back or if you have that, it will be difficult at start, but at the end of the day, it pays off 110%. So, if you have the background knowledge about this, that there is nothing that can be sorted out, for Sandvik, it's a policy that we must always take-on zero corruption; there is no room for corruption, there's no room for all sorts. And if we must make a donation to an organization, there must be approval level that you have to go through to really prove that this organization really needs this donation.

... And another thing we've done with Sandvik Nigeria is we've always used consultants (as a way of avoiding corruption).... All these international

consultants, we use them to forward most of our concerns to the relevant parties.... It means that we are not at any risk; we are not exposed to any threat or anybody asking us for anything or even persuade somebody holding down our document anywhere. We don't get involved, we get our consultants to make it clear we do not bribe.

... the issue of bribery and corruption does not really come into play because we deal with the directors of companies. So I believe when you are talking of somebody asking you for gratification, it means it's someone below ladder and if you want to develop relationship with people below the ladder and if the ladder is high, it's going to take you many years to get to the top of the ladder. ... It means that we are not at any risk; We don't need to bribe.

Challenges in project business process

When the manager was asked challenges faced in the Nigerian project business, the PM noted that

... Nigeria is a developing economy with a lot of challenges as regards expertise, skills and others. I think there has been improvement in the way projects are being managed and executed.

...But project business is supposed to take into consideration a lot of factors-EHS (environmental health and safety), the credibility of the project, retainership, maintenance and etc. But all these come at a cost (high cost of doing projects in Nigeria).

... There is no picking of people who is the right for the job (nepotism).

... Sometimes it takes two years to get a document. Keep going. It'll come out eventually. Once they know you will not give them bribe, that you are going to pay the correct money, they'll issue you that document. They can sit on it for a while but not forever.

... Also, the local supports some get are not honest support. They are just looking for a way to cart out some money, tell you a lot of stories and they leave at the end of the day. Like I said, a lot of them are coming in.

... like change in government policies, I think government policies in Nigeria has changed in the last 2years for more than three times as regards importation and exportation. In the past you are only required to submit certain categories of documents but now, you need to for you to bring goods into Nigeria, you need product certification and other processes.

Hypotheses about Nordic project business behaviour

With reference to the manager's response to the question of his hypotheses about how and why Nordic companies behave in the Nigerian environment, the PM noted that

... But I think it's the commitment, transparency, accountability and expertise that make the difference here.

WARTSILA Nigeria

This empirical material was collected via interview with the PM of the Wartsila in the premises of the Head office complex in Finland on the 4th of June, 2014 between 10:30am and 1200 Finnish time using a voice recorder, and the second was sent by email via the internet in May, 2014 but was returned in June, 2014 as written answers to the interview protocol. The two interview responses are here presented (merged) together in the analysis- as the second interview was a follow-up to the first. The PM is a Nordic, performs project marketing function only, and has been functioning in that capacity for ten (10) years in the Nigeria and 18 years in total as project marketer.

Information about Nigeria

At the start of the interview, the manager was asked about how they see Nigeria concerning the kind of information about Nigeria as generally portrayed by the media locally and internationally. The manager believed that

...10 years ago, people would say that Nigeria was a place where you should never go. You can go to other countries but not to Nigeria. ...people are kidnapping in the Niger Delta, people would say ah that's a very dangerous place to be. ... The image of Nigeria may be bad when I came here, but 10 years after, we have been able to show that it is actually a country where despite all the difficulties, it's more interesting to be there than not being there. ... Nigeria of course is like many other countries in Africa and is a fast growing market with lots of possibilities.... So, Nigeria despite the limits still has also lots of opportunities. ... But Nigeria is not as beautiful or stable but has much bigger potential because there's virtually shortage of everything and so in dire need of plants and equipment.

... As you know here in Nigeria, projects not awarded on turnkey are mostly delayed and sometimes don't get finished.

Most of the time during the interview, this manager was so positive about the prospects of the country believing that

... For most of the people that have not been to Nigeria, thinking that it's a so risky place, it's just like any other normal country. The Nigerian people are nice and warmly. But people outside tell me that they are very dangerous.

... Maybe tomorrow we'll get a more stable environment. Nigeria is so far relatively stable. So far due to the measure being put in place over the couple of years, a lot of companies are already coming in and a lot more will come and there'll be improved in production activities and more firms will require to build more plants.

... Though there are other places in Africa you can go to but Nigeria is much more interesting than other places because of its resources, population and infrastructural needs. Nigeria was a long time a place where nobody went, but at the moment, there's a rapid increase in the number of companies coming in and 10 years later business may slow down but at the moment, it's an ideal destination.

Nature of uncertainty

After preliminary discussions about the perceptions on Nigeria, the researcher moved on to ask about the nature of turbulence encountered by the project marketer in the Nigerian business environment. The PM noted that

... people are kidnapping in the Niger Delta, the Niger Delta people are kidnapping people and releasing them for ransom.

... so you have to deal with different issues. One country with enormous potential is that you sort of like a critical mass number, it becomes interesting though with disturbing elements like Niger Delta militancy, Boko Haram, bureaucracy... dicey political situations.

However, it was ironic that the manager felt that

... Though there are issues like Boko Haram, Niger Delta militancy and so what?

Risk perception

Similarly, the PM was asked question relating to the risks he perceived in the Nigerian project marketing environment and he noted that

... Risks, Nigeria is not very different than many of the other emerging countries where we work, health and safety. ... So the kind of risk you face in the Nigerian business environment is the same that you'll face everywhere else.

... But if Boko Haram is acting in certain parts of the North Eastern states, where we are not doing business, my answer is that it has no big impact. If Boko Haram is moving next month into the middle of Niger, where there's nobody living, people feel like it's got no impact. Of course, the closer the problem comes, the more the impact it will have.

... So, people are going to those places with potential offerings and of course there are risks but with opportunities. And that applies to the balance of where you want to be working. If there are lots of opportunities, you might also be more flexible in taking certain risks.

Risk Handling

Having discussed the risks perceived by the PM, he was then asked questions regarding how the company (Wartsila) manages the risks perceived and he noted that

... Most of Wartsila business still conducted in areas where we have to deal with "the normal Nigerian challenges".

... We are in long-term operative where we do re-evaluation of the situation on all-time basis.

... The strategy for managing those risks roughly the same as in other countries.

...involve protection services for areas, times when travelling without which would be deemed to be too risky.

... following the governances set by "Nordic/western" business culture i.e. highest ethical and legal standards in business industry

Nordic business and projects

As a way to understand the Nordic business culture from the standpoint of the case company (Wartsila), the PM noted that

... our project business is divided into two- with the government involved and the government not involved. There are many firms where you can go to. We get projects mostly from the non-government involved companies. In actual fact, our projects are not necessarily tied to the oil industry but to the other

industries that are around the oil sector. ... We operate in a very niche market whereby we know the cost of our products does not come cheap and for that we look for the very top customers that understand what they want to buy.

... We do turnkey projects and we sometimes supply equipment.... Most of our business is conducted in areas where we have to deal with the normal "Nigerian challenges". ...the way of conducting business set by the missions/visions/code of conducts also visible on the our website

... our way of conducting business in Nigeria has to deal with the day to day local Nigerian challenges however following the governances set by "Nordic/western" business culture i.e. highest ethical and legal standards in business industry.... The typical 'first Nordic' approach is not to go at all to risky/dangerous places but to focus on "more attractive markets" instead.

... All the business that we have been/ is conducting is free of corruption... We are not involved in the politics and corruptions with projects...But for the government projects, more often is the issue of certain people wanting some money. And again, we cannot do such a thing.

Networks and relationships

When talking about the nature of networks and relationship building issues, the PM noted that

... In my opinion, it's good to have good relationship but not the most important.... So, it's more like 'we have them' relationship with the one building a plant.

INDEXING (*cues about the situation*)

The indexing aspect of the interview protocol covers the project marketer's noticing cues about the situation. This involves questions that concern the turbulent events in the environment and the manager's perception of the situation. When indexing the Nigerian situation, the PM noted that

...Most of our business is conducted in areas where we have to deal with the normal "Nigerian challenges".

MAKING ATTRIBUTIONS (*Drawing inferences based on identity and experiences*)

So as to help understand the sensemaking of the strategy behaviour of the PM, questions relating to his identity and experiences in relation to his activities were asked.

Identity

The PM for Wartsila is a Nordic, and has been the project marketer in Nigeria for ten years (10). With regard to the PM's identity and running project business in Nigeria, he observed that

... our way of conducting business in Nigeria has to deal with the day to day local Nigerian challenges however following the governances set by "Nordic/western" business culture i.e. highest ethical and legal standards in business industry.

Effects of turbulence on project business

When the question of the effects of the turbulent events on project marketing activities of the company was asked, with regard to events like kidnapping, Boko Haram bombing, the PM noted that

... As per earlier reply the effects of Boko Haram in Nigeria is mainly limited to a certain area where our company is not active. Clearly any company will act as certain dangers come closer and more probable is the effect.... But if Boko Haram is acting in certain parts of the North Eastern states, where we are not doing business, my answer is that it has no big impact. If Boko Haram is moving next month into the middle of Niger, where there's nobody living, people feel like it's got no impact. Of course, the closer the problem, the more the impact it will have.

Factors for successful project business

When the question relating to the factors necessitating successful project business in Nigeria and why the company has been able to maintain strong presence in the country was asked, the PM noted that

... What is extremely important for you as a customer is if you can rely on the supplier during the lifetime of the project.

SELECTING SCHEMAS (*Enacting appropriate behavioural scripts*)

Here, questions relating to how they enact appropriate behavioural scripts were also asked and concerned the influence of culture, organizational business values, project experience, and government policies as coming into play in the PM's activities.

Organisational business Values

With regard to the question of he makes the influence of the organizational business values in the way the PM goes about project business, the manager noted that it

... the way of conducting business set by the missions/visions/code of conducts also visible on the our website

Project experience

When the PM was asked about the influence of his project marketing experience in the performance of his project business, he noted that

... I am working in the sales department; my job is to sell contracts that will be executed by the project department. I have been working in this department for the last 18 years. Theoretically the more experience, hopefully the better the quality of the contracts ... I've lived here for 10 years.

Government Policies

With regard to the role of government policies in the success of projects, the PM noted that

... In terms of real business so far very little effect.

GENERAL

This section of the interview covered questions in other areas that could assist the researcher in being able to understand and explain the PM's perspectives regarding the contextual nature of his project functions.

Comparing projects in contexts

With regard to comparing project business practice between Nigeria and the Nordic countries, the PM noted that

... Difference is the short cut option that is always present in Nigeria and other countries, are less visible in countries with more demands on conducting business as per highest ethical and legal standards.

... the business to business can be as free from corruption as any Nordic country business to business. These firms just want the best for their projects- they are quite straightforward. ...For the non-government projects, there's not much of bureaucracy. But for the government projects, more often is the issue of certain people wanting some money.

Contradictions in the Nigerian business culture

The PM was asked about what contradictions he observed to exist between the Nigerian project business culture and the Nordic business culture and he noted that

... Nigeria and other poorer developing countries there is more focus on the money and less on the ethics

... here in Nigeria, projects not awarded on turnkey are mostly delayed and sometimes do not get finished.

Corruption in Nigerian project business

Similarly, when answering question with regard to the corruption perception of the Nigerian business environment, the PM noted that

... non-government very straight forward and government- not straight forward. ... In terms of project with the government, my company tells me I cannot do anything outside the book. ... we do not engage in government projects in the event corruption is suspected involved.... Some companies are able to do it. Are other European companies able to do it? No. All Western companies have the same policies. We are not involved in the politics and corruptions with projects going on.

However, this manager was subtle in his response about the issue of corruption in Nigerian projects that

... This corruption is in every country. Get this corruption, get it in any country, is the same- let's not call it Nigeria's problem. ... Maybe in the near future Nigeria will be better but Nigeria is not different from many other developing countries.

Challenges in Project business process

Regarding the challenges faced in the Nigerian project business, the PM noted

... But for the government projects, more often is the issue of certain people wanting some money.

Hypotheses about Nordic project business behaviour

The manager's response to the question of his hypotheses about how and why Nordic companies behave in the Nigerian environment, the PM noted that

... just to tell you that we have the theory that before you actually sell something, that you are going to build, going to operate it, it takes a long time.