

Capacity Development and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Advancing the Resource-Based Argument.

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Abstract: *The efficiency or otherwise of an organization and the competitive operations of getting thing done in the way and manner in which they were designed for the achievement of a set objective cannot be achieved without effective capacity development. Human capital development gives hope for the transformation of our institutional and individual components as well as the society in general from what it was to what it should be. The human capital is hereby entrusted with more challenging responsibilities and in it lies the centrality of the process of development, its capacity must be built on constant basis. This paper used survey research as a grand design, examined the human quality response to capacity building techniques in Nigeria, and used questionnaire to extract response from the respondents. The result of the analysis reveals that, the process of human capital development and capacity building in Nigeria faces allot of challenges ranging from institutional to environmental ones among others and concludes that improvement of human capital as a strategy of improving service quality or delivery of same, requires very solid institutional, statutory and economic base(s). It is therefore recommended that stewardship function and improved management support system should be incorporated in the activities of organizations through which human capital development, effective capacity building will combine to expedite positive adjustment in the character of services delivered as well as nature of clients and stakeholders` satisfaction.*

Keywords: *Human Capital Development and Capacity Building, Sustainable Development and Resource-Based View*

I. Introduction

It is incontestable that human capital plays an important role in the development of all kinds of systems but the problem is how to efficiently generate, mobilize and manage resources for the achievement of development goals (Fajingbesi, 1999).

In Nigeria`s bid to developing especially as the vision 20:2020 hopes, building corresponding capacity has become a topmost priority. The institutional and individual components of such capacity must be pursued as national priority. This remains the only avenue of securing the aspired status of being among the twenty developed economies in the world.

Noting the sensitivity attached to the human component of organizations, the human capital is hereby entrusted with more challenging responsibilities and in it lies the hope for the transformation of the society from what it was to what it should be. This paper submits that due to the centrality of Human Capital in the process of development, its capacity must be built on constant basis.

This paper is divided into three major parts with the first concerned with brief discussion on the linkage between capacity building and development; the second part commits to review of literature; the third discusses the methodological considerations and the last section discusses the data so collected on the basis of which conclusion and policy recommendations follow.

II. Review of Related Literature

This section attempts a review of literature on the variables of the study. We utilized books and other sources of academic information in the generation of relevant theoretical information. We also commented on the inputs so generated in the light of methodology used by the authors, as well as their conclusions based on which we have been able to determined the gap between where we are and where we are going.

The following are hereby presented thus:

2.1 Capacity Building

In an attempt to explain the concept of capacity building, Morgan (1993) identified several distinct phases of concern with building government capacity. In the 1950s and early 1960s, when many countries were emerging from colonial status to independence, efforts focused on *institution building*, or equipping developing countries with the basic inventory of public sector institutions...to manage a program of public investment. By the later 1960s and early 1970s, however, attention had turned to the notion of *institutional strengthening*, focusing more on improving the operation of existing organizations and the training and performance of public sector personnel. Then, attention shifted to *development management*, which concentrated attention on the capacity to manage development programs, particularly those focused on the economic and social conditions of the poor majority, which often required considerable organizational initiative and inter-institutional coordination (Deborah, 2003). *Institutional development*, a concept that was broadened to include private sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) activities and that focused more on developing institutions with effective processes for managing change, was on the agenda during much of the 1980s. These distinct phases in the history of building capacity in developing countries, and the technical assistance projects they encouraged, have been subjected to considerable criticism over the years. They have been held to account for focusing development assistance at a narrow project level rather than encouraging attention to broader issues of policy definition and development strategies. Application of these approaches through technical assistance tended to result in narrowly-defined projects that were pursued with little regard to the social, political, economic, and organizational context in which development activities were carried out. In addition, non-governmental organizations and the private sector as co-participants with government in development activities were often marginalized by the approaches of the past. Overall, many efforts to strengthen capacity focused too much on "getting the job done" rather than on building sustained ability to carry out development-related functions.

As a result of such criticisms, an explicit concern with *capacity building*, which Morgan views as `the successor to earlier institutional capacity approaches` evolved. The concept is used in widely differing ways. However, Morgan (1998), for example, refers to capacity building as "the ability of individuals, groups, institutions and organizations to identify and solve development problems over time." Capacity building in this perspective implies the development of coordinated and interdependent activities of the public sector, the market, and civic organizations and calls attention to a broad array of actions and processes required for sustained development.

This broad definition has the advantage of bringing into consideration the elements whose omission in past approaches and practices are blamed for the failure of efforts to improve performance. However, its very size is its weakness. By suggesting that capacity building is almost synonymous with development itself, it makes operationalizing the concept in a meaningful way almost impossible.

On the other hand, others have preferred to define capacity building much more narrowly in terms of developing and sustaining the specific skills required by individuals in public sector positions. This approach avoids the amorphous nature of the definition put forward by Morgan (1998) and is useful for planning much focused interventions in the name of capacity building. However, it does not allow for much consideration of institutional or contextual factors that affect the contributions that skilled human resources can make to development activities.

Historically, the concept of capacity building evolved in 1991 from what was known as institution building (Deborah, 2003). To Schachter (1999), The term "capacity building"(or "capacity development") came into vogue in the early 1990s among international development agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1999) defines capacity building as the process by which individuals, groups, organizations and societies increase their abilities to (i) perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives; and (ii) understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner." Moreover the modern concept of capacity development suggests a shift from building new capacities/institutions towards enhancement and strengthening of existing capacities.

Human capital development becomes a part of an overall effort to achieve cost effective and sustenance of peace and unity in Nigeria. Hence, government needs to understand human capital that would enhance citizens' satisfaction and improve performance. Therefore, there is a broad assumption that human capital has positive effects on peace sustenance, Nigeria's unity and government performance. The notion of performance for human capital remains largely untested. Hence the paper attempts to look into the connection between human capital, sustenance of peace and unity and organizations performance in Nigeria. Therefore, the pertinent question is:

- i. How does human capital development promote peace for sustainable unity in Nigeria?

While much of the argument in the literature in terms of factors contributing to performance, this paper intends to look at one of the factors i.e. human capital.

This literature based paper begins by defining the concepts of human capital and organization's performance. It then explores the human capital theory and connection between human capital and organizations performance. In the final section, we develop a model and conclude the significance of the human capital as a pillar in future analysis of sustained peace and unity in Nigeria.

2.2 Capacity Development and Organization's Performance.

What is human capital? According to Schultz (1993), the term "human capital" has been defined as a key element in improving an organization's assets and employees in order to increase productivity as well as sustained competitive advantage. Human capital therefore, refers to processes that relate to training, education and other professional initiatives in order to increase the level of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and social assets of an employee which will lead to the employee's satisfaction and performance, and eventually on the organization's performance. Rastogi (2000) stated that human capital is a significant input for organizations especially for employee continuous improvement mainly on knowledge, skills, and abilities. Thus, the definition of human capital is referred to as "the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes embodied in wellbeing". (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD 2001:18).

With the constantly changing society, government requires human capital to strive for superior competitive advantage via sustained peace and unity there by incorporating creativity and innovations. This is essentially important for the country's long term sustainability. In order to foster peace and sustainable unity in Nigeria, we must know our differences, identify our weaknesses and learn to live together without provoking or irritating one another. Undoubtedly, human resource input plays a significant role in enhancing societies competitiveness (Jauro Bose, 2012). At a glance, substantial studies were carried out on human capital and their implications of fostering peace and sustainable unity and obviously, human capital enhancement will result in greater competitiveness and performance (Agarwala, 2003; Guthrie et al, 2002).

Meanwhile, there is a significant relationship between innovations, peace and sustained unity under the human capital philosophy (Lumpkin & Dess, 2005).

In relation to this, the level of peace and sustained unity could vary from one society to another. Nonetheless, some level of sustained peace and unity in the context of human capital enhancement could be put forward. In some cases, societies achieve maximum peace and unity amongst themselves as a result of their engagement in one job or the other most especially in the southern part of the country. This is in the area of Information Technology (ICT). It results in profitability; capital employed and returns on assets. Besides, return on investments (ROI), earning per share (EPS) can also be used as measures for sustained peace and unity in the south compared with the northern part of the country. Interestingly, peace and sustained unity can be measured using "perceived performance approach".

The main thrust of this paper is to see how human capital development can bring about peace and sustainable unity in Nigeria with the aim of articulating a national response to the social and economic divide between the south and the north.

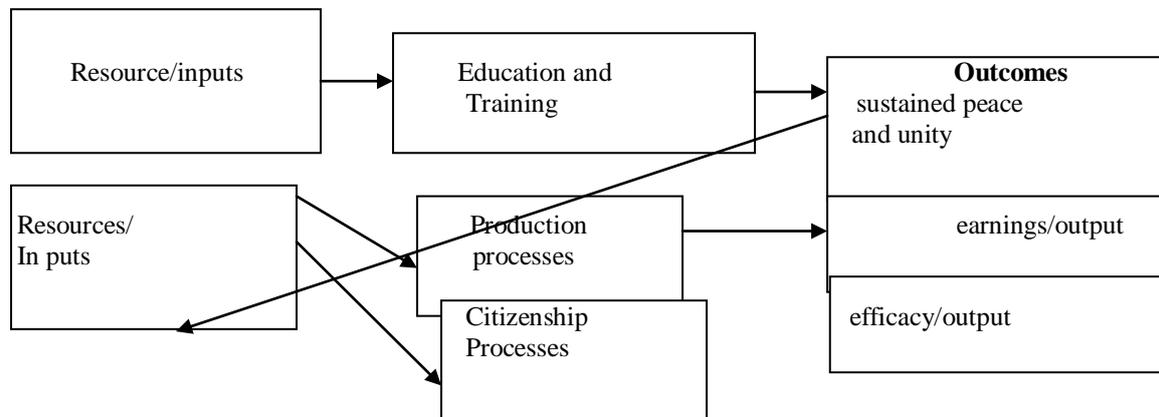
2.3 Human Capital Theory

The theory of human capital is rooted from the field of macroeconomic development theory (Schultz, 1993). Becker's (1993) classic book, *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education*, illustrates this domain. Becker argues that there are different kinds of capitals that bring about sustainable peace and unity amongst citizenry. These include; sensitization, dialogue, schooling, computer training course and expenditures on medical care. And in fact, lectures on the virtues or punctuality and honesty are capital too. In the true sense, they improve health, peaceful coexistence, raise earnings, or add to a person's appreciation of literature over a life time.

From the perspective of classical economic theory, human capital considers labour as a commodity that can be traded in terms of purchase and sale. This classical theory very much focuses on the exploitation of labour by capital. However, unlike the meaning traditionally associated with the term labour, human capital refers to the knowledge, expertise, and skill one accumulates through education and training. Emphasizing the social and economic importance of human capital theory, Becker (1993) notes that most valuable of all capital is that investment in human being. Once human beings are properly invested, sustainability of peace and unity in a given society is no doubt guaranteed. Becker distinguishes sustainability of peace and unity in human capital from general purpose human capital. Examples of sustained peace and unity human capital include expertise obtained through education and training in peace and conflict resolutions, procedures or other expertise specific to a particular society. General purpose human capital is knowledge gained through education and training in areas of value to a variety of firms such as generic skills in human resource development. Regardless of the

application, Becker considers education and training to be the most important investment in human capital which guarantees peace and unity in a society.

Figure 1. Presents the key relations in human capital theory and the assumptions of sustained peace and unity underlying these relations



Source: A model of Human capital theory (Swanson, 2001: 110)

The relationship represents the concept of production functions i.e. peace and unity sustainability as applied to education and training. The key assumption underlying this relationship is that investment in education and training results in increased in peace and unity via learning.

The entire human capital continuum represented is assessed using return-on-investment analysis or cost benefit analysis. The human capital theory is an important agent for boosting peace and unity. Thus this study has capitalized in this theory for arguing that human capital becomes an element in the sustainability of peace and unity in any society.

In many international fora, Nigeria is perceived as a conflict prone society and the youths are at the heart of most violent conflicts in the country. Recent empirical studies suggest that the youths are prosecutors of about 90 to 95% of violent conflicts in Nigeria. This is just because of their refusal to develop themselves in a multi track capacity – building interlinking areas like human capital investment, employment, skills acquisition and peace and conflict prevention education and training.

2.4 Resource-Based View of Organizations: Imperative of Competitive Advantage

Resources are generally defined as “all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, etc. controlled by a firm” (Barney, 1991). The Resource Based View helps to explain the conditions under which a firm’s resources will provide it with a competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). In contrast with the emphasis on external analysis in traditional industrial-organization economics (Bain, 1959), the Resource Based View emphasizes an internal analysis of the differences in resource endowments across firms (even within the same industry) and explains how these differences can be a source of a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1986, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984 and Peteraf, 1993).

A firm is said to have a competitive advantage when the firm can produce more economically and/or better satisfy customer needs, and thus enjoy superior performance relative to its competitors (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993). Resources contribute to these performance advantages to the extent that they are valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and non-substitutable. Resources are valuable when they help to improve the firm’s efficiency and effectiveness (Barney, 1991). The conditions under which resources are valuable are context dependent (Barney, 1991, 2001; Conner, 1991; Priem & Butler, 2001 a). The value of a certain resource is determined in relation to such conditions as organizational strategy and external environments (Priem & Butler, 2001a). Resources also need to be rare to provide competitive advantage; otherwise valuable resources only provide competitive parity (Barney, 1991).

A valuable and rare resource can help sustain a firm’s competitive advantage to the extent that the resource is difficult to imitate (Barney, 1991). The sources of inimitability include:

- a. Unique historical conditions under which resource bundles are created,
- b. A causally ambiguous relationship between the resources and resulting competitive advantage, and
- c. Social complexity of the resource (Lipmann & Rumelt, 1982).

Finally, valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate resources can be a source of sustained competitive advantage to the extent that there are no strategically equivalent resources (Barney, 1991). When this exists, a firm that possesses valuable, rare, and incomparable resources may not be able to enjoy a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 2001). Hamel and Prahalan (1989) professed that reasonable benefit is obtained if a firm can obtain and develop human resources that enable it to learn faster and apply its learning more effectively than its rivals.

More recently, three approaches have emerged to extend the Resource Based View theoretically. One, the “dynamic resource-based view” of the firm (Helfat, 2000; Helfat & Peteraf, 2003), focuses on the resource side of the firm. This dynamic resource-based view incorporates the notion central to dynamic capabilities that resources and capabilities are continually adapted, integrated, and/or reconfigured into other resources and capabilities (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). In line with this dynamic view, more attention has been paid to the relationship between resources and strategy implementation (Maruping, 2002; Hitt, Bierman, Shimizu, & Kochhar, 2001; Newbert, 2007). The realization of the potential value of resources is dependent on the strategy of the firm and how the strategy is implemented and resources are utilized (Barney & Arikan, 2001; Hitt et al., 2001; Newbert, 2007) and Rastogi (2000).

Finally, some scholars e.g. Kannan and Akhilesh (2002) & Ruefli, (2005) have adopted Schumpeterian (1939, 1942) and hyper competition. D’Aveni, (1994) views to explain the persistence (or lack thereof) of sustainable competitive advantage among firms. These views stress that firms are increasingly finding it difficult to sustain strategic advantage over competitors and that sustained competitive advantage is more a function of creating a series of competitive advantages over time (Kannan and Akhilesh 2002) & (Ruefli, 2005). The Schumpeterian and hyper competition views complement the dynamic resource based view in their assertions that firms can realize a sustained competitive advantage only to the extent that they can create a series of temporary advantages (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1998; D’Aveni, 1994) through the continual adaptation and reconfiguration of resources.

III. Methodology

This work has been conducted through the use of survey as a grand design, examined the staff quality response to capacity building techniques in the Nigeria’s Corporate Affairs Commission. The variables for the study are human capital development and capacity building as the independent and dependent components respectively. In order to identify the population of this work, the register of all employees and customers developed or trained by the commission was obtained. From such registers, the study identified the number of employees that underwent capacity building and training programmes in Nigeria and abroad as well as the customers that took part in training programmes of the Commission especially due to introduction of the 2001 re-organization. This is in addition to Management members that have been interviewed in the study’s bid to complement information sought through questionnaires administered on staff and accredited customers. In this case, the sampling frame was determined.

The data generated from this population were entirely primary in nature. In addition to interviews with members of the Commission’s Management, sets of questionnaires were administered on the samples. The questionnaire elicited information on two variables thus: dependent and independent variables. As proxies for capacity building, in-house, on-the-job, domestic, and overseas training instigated by the reforms of 2001 capacity building and training programmes were considered to serve as the independent variable for this study. The nature and status or quality of services delivered vis-à-vis stakeholder satisfaction expressed in the process of company registration and incorporation served as dependent variable. Here, the nature of human capital development and capacity building efforts of the commission were believed to play a significant role in determining the extent of quality in the process.

IV. Data Analysis

Table 4.1 on **Whether the Presence of Institutional Mechanisms has enabled the Commission to Improve Service Delivery through Effective Capacity Building.**

| Category of Respondents | Yes | No | Not sure | indifferent | | Total |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| ANAN | 27 | 21 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 61 |
| CAC Staff | 137 | 117 | 75 | 2 | 0 | 331 |
| ICAN | 74 | 38 | 21 | 4 | 1 | 138 |
| NBA | 108 | 48 | 22 | 0 | 2 | 180 |
| Total | 346 | 224 | 131 | 6 | 3 | 710 |

Source: Field work, 2010.

The Commission has a human resource development policy that allows personnel to be developed in response to prevailing needs of the system. This is ascertained by the responses in Table 5.10 above. Based on the Seven Hundred and Ten (710) questions duly answered by the respondents, a significant Three Hundred and Forty Six (346) representing Forty Nine percent (49%) endorsed that there is an institutional mechanism in place. This mechanism is but the personnel department that is entrusted with the responsibility of training and development of staff and by extension, the Commission’s customers. This indicates that all training programmes of the Commission based on the dictates of the environment are designed as well as supervised by the personnel department. This encompasses both domestic and foreign courses on one hand and those carried out within and without the Commission.

The registered responses appear realistic noting the fact that they work in the organization and are affected by the decisions and policies of the Commission. It is only conventional that all staff are personnel and controlled by the Personnel department in one or another respect. The rating of the Commission by International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certification for Quality management System which made the Commission the first government agency to obtain ISO certification in Nigeria, as asserted Almustapha, (2008), was not only due to state of the art facilities in place but largely due to the assessed human resource which exhibited high sense of quality, maturity and ability to deliver. These combine to affect the character of service delivery in increasing (positive) transformation. The practice of capacity building in the Commission as undertaken by the Personnel department tend to inform specific choices and priorities of the staff or even the customers especially as those choices and priorities pertain to training by type.

Here due to the efficiency of the institutional mechanism, the Commission has been able to achieve tremendously bringing total number of registered Business names and incorporated trustees to One Million, Four Hundred and Twenty Seven Thousand, One Hundred and fifteen (1,427,115) and Twenty Three Thousand, Five hundred and Eighty Five (23,585) respectively in addition to Eighteen Thousand, Three Hundred and Forty Six (18,346) incorporated companies-courtesy of the reforms of 2001 (CAC Bulletin, 2009).

Table 5.11 Specific Alternative of Training Subscribed by Respondents as the Commission Strives to Attain World-Class Company Registry Status

| Category of Respondent | Foreign course | In-house training | Mentoring | in service training | All of the above | Total |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| ANAN | 28 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 60 |
| CAC Staff | 96 | 56 | 70 | 64 | 46 | 332 |
| ICAN | 41 | 26 | 31 | 19 | 21 | 138 |
| NBA | 76 | 38 | 33 | 14 | 18 | 179 |
| Total | 241 | 133 | 142 | 104 | 89 | 709 |

Source: Field work, 2010.

Considering the international rating of the Commission by International Standard Organization (ISO), as an outstanding company registry in the world today, the expectation of staff must be affected as job satisfaction will be proportionate to the practices in place. Here, the Commission’s staff have expressed interest or their subscription to a specific training package. The information in Table 5.11 indicates a significant subscription of foreign course as a superior alternative. This choice might have been informed by the clamor for adventure as held by many Africans who see visiting foreign land as a remarkable achievement in one’s life. In the alternative, the significance of the response might have been informed by staff willingness to compete with their counterparts in other regulatory agencies such as National Communications Commission (NCC), National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) or at most learn more skills that will enable them compete favorably with their foreign counterparts. In effect, Two Hundred and Forty One (241) of the Seven Hundred and Nine (709) respondents have indicated their subscription of foreign courses at the expense of other packages. This represents Thirty Four percent (34%) of the entire responses. As a reaffirmation of the differences in human beings, those who have chosen other alternatives/options are comparatively (numerically) more significant but none of the category of responses so prioritized is sensitive enough to shape the destiny of this study as alternative A as transparently clear in the table above.

Table 4.2 Responses as to any Evidence of Service Improvement as a Result of the Application of Specific Capacity Building Techniques.

| Category of Respondent | Yes | No | Total |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| ANAN | 13 | 9 | 22 |
| CAC Staff | 185 | 84 | 269 |
| ICAN | 55 | 16 | 72 |
| NBA | 68 | 13 | 82 |
| Total | 315 | 122 | 445 |

Source: Field work, 2010.

The responses in table 5.27 above need no explanation as about Seventy One percent (71%) of the total responses endorsed that evidences abound as to the service response to application of specific techniques of capacity building. It also sets out to confirm responses recorded and analyzed in tables 5-22 emphasizing on specific methods of training, 5.19 regarding number of companies deregistered and 5.14 about involvement (how many times) of staff and customers in training programmes of the Commission and table 5.12 which is interested in staff and customer awareness as to the methods employed by the Commission in training and this resulted in enhancing personnel skills. It can also be concluded that the caliber of staff and customers will facilitate introduction of new services and or increase the sophistication in service delivery. For example, In the spirit of globalization and in line with the Commission's vision of attaining world class companies' registry, the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) is considering a new registration system called 'off the shelf instant company'. In the interview with members of the management, the respondents endorse that a combination of techniques as opposed to a specific technique will enhance service productivity and delivery more. This is their response to question Eight (8) in the interview where the member indicated that compliance is an aspect of the services delivered by the Commission and all services are produced by the employees who were trained using multiple means ranging from on-the-job to mentoring among others.

- i. The Commission affirmed that the new registration system was aimed at further fast tracking and encouraging local and foreign investors. Off the shelf company is a company incorporated for the sole purpose of being sold which has traded and does not have any asset or liability.
- ii. It is clear that the decision to consider the possibility of engaging in the formation of the off the shelf companies as a product to be made available to members of the public stemmed from the benefits derivable from the new system. One of such benefits is that such companies will be available for interested buyers more or less instantly, which may be more convenient if the buyer is too busy to set up a new business or has a very urgent business to pursue.
- iii. It is evident that the Commission made arrangement to extend its services to other countries such as the United States of America. The idea is to enable customers living in such environment access to the CAC services even as they could register their businesses without having to come to Nigeria. In addition to the use of media by the public relations department of Commission as expressed by members of the management of the Commission during interview, a number of other evidences abound

V. Conclusion

i. In the process of service delivery, the CAC's ability to deliver is challenged by many problems notably, (IT, institutional and environmental) short comings capable of intensifying non-compliance while political interference ranging from appointment of Chief Executive (Registrar-General) of the Commission to membership of the Commission's board and decisions on conditions of service or even production of services among others and finally, the improvement of human capital as a strategy of improving service quality or delivery of same, requires very solid institutional, statutory and economic base(s).

ii. The enforcement of compliance arrangement in the Corporate Affairs Commission plays a significant role in ensuring the practice of corporate governance and service improvement. The Commission's action of (de-listing or de-shelving) corporate citizens that do not comply with the Commission's requirements such as statement of affairs based on which annual returns are paid has been partly responsible for the rating that the Commission has been receiving especially from international organizations such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Enforcement was almost absent in the pre-reorganization era for, many companies had no registration talk less of complying with any condition thereof.

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