ABSTRACT

The objective of this manuscript is to theoretically and empirically evaluate the application of planning techniques and associated contingency strands in the strategic management processes. Planning itself is the process of setting objectives and the decision of how they are to be achieved. The end product of planning is a plan irrespective of its continuous nature. The paper examined the relevance and characteristics of planning, patterns of planning, and contingency planning. The planning techniques dealt with in this paper that would ensure effective strategic management feasibility include forecasting, both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, with relevant examples; including forecasting usefulness, general purpose of forecasting and types. Other techniques of planning and applications explored and applications in the study are budgeting, scheduling and sequencing, in addition to types of schedules and techniques that would statistically enhance strategic management processes feasibility. The adoption of relevant planning techniques and the feasibility is therefore recommended. The study also recommends the need for contingency plans with time and space.

KEYWORDS

Contingency strands; Strategic management feasibility; Planning techniques examination; Relevance; Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Planning in itself is a decision-making process and involves setting of objectives and deciding how they are to be achieved. The end product of planning is plan, which is a blue print to
achieve firm’s objectives. It is important to understand that the concept of planning involves two key aspects: (1) developing the goals and objectives an organization seeks to attain, and (2) deciding on the means to achieve them. It may not be so necessary for one person or group to perform both activities. In fact, it may be possible and even desirable for one department to define the organizational goals and objectives, while other departments focus on the means to achieve them. For instance, top manager may establish the goals and objectives of producing a new product within two years, and engineers in the organization may be responsible for developing the means to accomplish this objective. However, in all instances, managers should closely coordinate the development of goals and objectives, as well as, the creation of means to accomplish this objective. However, in all instances, managers should closely coordinate the development of goals and objectives, as well as, the creation of means to achieve them. Basically, there are two types of planning: (a) strategic planning and (b) tactical planning. Strategic planning involves making decisions about the organizations long-term goals, objectives and strategies. Strategic planning is the foundation of strategic management process and plays vital roles to the effectiveness of every organization (Chikwe, n.d.). Relatedly, tactical planning is the process that specifies the details of how an organization can achieve its overall objectives. Tactical planning apply to specific areas or parts of the organization and derived from strategic objectives. Chikwe further specifies that strategic planning cover shorter period of time horizon, and must of necessity, be updated continuously to meet current challenges, with time and space, since it is specific and directional.

Strategic planning in large organizations include, contingency planning, and this involves the preparation for unexpected, major, and quick changes (either positive or negative) in the environment, that will have a significant impact on the organization and require immediate responses (Hellriegel, Jackson and Slocum, 2005). Planning in itself is concerned with ends (what is to be done, i.e. objectives), as well as with means (how it is to be done, i.e. strategy).

As can be reasoned, and noted that planning is basic to the other fundamental management functions. Through planning, a manager attempts to prepare for and predict future events. Without the activities determined by planning, there would not be anything to organize, no one to direct, or activate and need to control. Planning is pervasive in nature. Planning involves the construction of a programme for action to achieve stated goals and objectives through the use of procedures and practices.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Planning is the selecting, relating of facts, and the making and using of assumptions, regarding the future in the visualization and formulation of proposed activities believed to achieve desired results. It is the determining in advance what is to be done and how it is to be done. In brief, five basic characteristics of planning as suggested by Chikwe (n.d.) are:

- Planning includes personal or organizational identification. This implies, how it will be implemented, and by whom, is part of every plan – not details of what action might be desirable.
- Planning relates to conditions of relative certainty and uncertainty. For example, what machine and personnel to use, how long and periods.
- Planning is intellectual in nature and basically, it involves mental work, reflective thinking, imaginative, and foresight are used.
- Planning involves the future i.e. it is futuristic. Management members try to look ahead, anticipate eventualities, prepare for contingencies and map out activities.
- Planning is pervasive and continuous. The pervasiveness of planning,
however, makes it clear that planning is not concentrated among top-level managers alone (they also plan and hand over to other levels). Planning being continuous implies that, it is never-ending activity of a manager. In planning, variables are present and must be appraised periodically. All plans are tentative and subject to revision and amendment as new facts become known, and as variables are re-evaluated.

**Patterns of Planning**

Planning differs widely among enterprises. For instance, some organizations may stress strong and persistent growth, while some pay little attention to change future events.

There are therefore, three suggested divergent and current patterns in planning practice as specified below (Awujo, 1989):

- **Satisfying**: this aspect was introduced by Herbert Simon. He offers this satisfying concept as a substitute for the maximization concept. In this way, and adoption, deficiencies are corrected and customary ways of business are preserved. Also, survival therefore, becomes the major importance, while growth and development are secondary.

- **Optimizing**: this stresses on doing, as well as what is possible. Optimum plans are not always attained, but close approximation of them.

- **Adaptivizing**: this stresses that operations should be adapted to short run and also to major future changes.

**Contingency Planning and Plan**

Contingency plan is the product of contingency planning, defined as the alternative plans that can be used if certain major events do not occur as expected. Contingency plan is like “a mechanic tool box”, where there are many tools and no one tool can solve all problems (Chikwe, n.d.). Every problem has a solution there.

The basic benchmark relating to good strategic management is that companies set up plans on ways to handle unfavourable and favourable events before they happen. Many organizations make contingency plans to guide against unfavourable events. However, this arrangement according to David (2009), is somewhat a mistake, in that, both threats minimization and capitalizing on opportunities are still ways of improving a company’s competitive position. Irrespective of the level of carefulness exercised in strategies formulation, implementation, and evaluation and control, unforeseen events, such as natural disasters, arrival of very strong competitors, workers’ strikes, boycotts and government actions, can still render the strategies obsolete. Nevertheless, in order to minimize the impact of potential threats, organizations are advised to develop contingency plans and incorporate same as part of their strategy-evaluation process. The alternative strategies that were not selected for implementation can also serve as contingency plans, if selected ones did not work. Reasons why firms establish contingency plans in organizations as opined by David (2009), include:

- In event that sale objectives are not reached, what actions the organization can take in order to avoid profit losses.
- The withdrawal of a major competitor from particular markets in view of intelligent reports would necessitate certain actions in the organization.
- What actions an organization can take if it strives to meet up with high demand and in event of the demand of new products exceeding plans.
- The actions an organization can take in event of occurrence of certain disasters, such as attempts by hostile
takeover, loss of computer capabilities, loss of patent protection, destruction of manufacturing facilities as a result of environmental dynamics and so on.

The actions a firm can take in event of new technological advancement, making the new products obsolete sooner than expected.

Planning Techniques

The basic planning techniques are (1) forecasting (2) budgeting and (3) scheduling and sequencing.

Since planning always involves looking into the future, one is always faced with errors in the estimating process. Therefore, many planning techniques utilize different approaches for handling decisions under conditions of risk.

Many techniques and aids are available for improving the planning process. However, techniques depend on the type of activity and the dimensions to be planned. In predicting the future, various techniques of forecasting are pertinent and including:

- Forecasting economic conditions
- Sales for a particular product
- Supply of scarce resources
- Availability of skilled workers.

Forecasting

This was popularized by the decision-making school of thought of Herbert Simon and others. Forecasting can be defined as an attempt to predict the future by using qualitative or quantitative means. In an informal way, forecasting is an integral part of human activity, but when viewed from the business point of view, increasing attention is being given to formal forecasting systems which are constantly being reviewed. Planning and forecasting are closely related in such a way that managers tend to equate the two. However, planning is concerned with setting goals and objectives, and with developing, projecting, predicting, or estimating some future events or conditions of the organizational environment.

Forecasting is a fundamental part of planning. It is the source of the organizations planning assumptions, which in turn are the foundations upon which long-range plans and strategies are developed. Therefore, the accuracy of the forecast, which in turn, is a function of the rate at which the organization's environment is changing. Thus, a central problem to planning in any organization is knowing what is likely to happen, both in the organization and its external environment. In some sectors, a top manager who fails to anticipate future events can misallocate resources; attract adverse publicity and even removal from office. In the private sector of the economy, ineffective forecasting can lead to the selection of incorrect course of action, unsold inventories, decreased profits and in some cases, the financial failure of the firm.

While these examples are extremes, Gannon (1977), emphasize the critical role which forecasting plays for both individual manager and the organization. A general manager has to know the history or knowledge of the organization, without which he cannot forecast effectively and plan.

Virtually, every form of decision-making and planning activity in business involves forecasting. Typical applications include.

- Production planning and control
- Inventory control
- Capacity planning
- Investment cash flow
- Cost projections
- Demand forecasts
- Budgeting
• Corporate planning, and so on.

**Statistical Forecasting Techniques**

Statistics is simply defined here as, the science of chance and risk, measuring accuracy, reliability and validity of information and relationship for decision making. There are many forecasting techniques, but however, only a few of them have received attention and recognition in strategic management circles.

These techniques have often been used in conjunction with each other for the identification of opportunities and threats.

These according to Chikwe, (n.d.) may roughly be classified into:

i. Quantitative techniques

ii. Qualitative techniques

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**Quantitative Techniques of Forecasting**

This involves trend extrapolation and is the most widely used. It involves picking a tracking factor or environmental variable, noting its trend (statistically or otherwise) and extending that trend into the future. Lead and lag correlates are often used in the process. Linear and nonlinear statistical models and techniques can be used when hard numerical data exist. The process normally involves line fitting to historical data, and extending the line into future periods. Most spreadsheet programmes and some operating systems have ease-to-use trend line extrapolation-routines built into them. However, more sophisticated packages like Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Statistical Analysis Software (SAS), installed on most computer mainframe systems and those available in microcomputer versions, are also used for detailed trend line analysis. It is important to note that the validity and reliability of trend extrapolation must be carefully evaluated in each application, as it is applicably done in other forecasting techniques. Parameters must be appropriately selected, and intrinsic or environmental constraints identified, as to avoid incorrect results.

These quantitative techniques are of varying levels of statistical complexity, which are based on analysis of past data of the item requiring forecast. For example, demand forecast or sales figures, stores issues, costs incurred and
so on. It is important to note that, however sophisticated the technique used, there is the underlying assumption that past patterns will provide some guidelines to the future clearly for many operational items (material usage, sales of existing products, costs, and so on). The past does serve as a guide to the future, but there are circumstances for which there are no data available. For instance, the launching of a new product where other more qualitative techniques are required. Some examples of quantitative techniques used in the present study include; (1) exponential smoothing for time series analysis (short range or operational forecast). (2) Linear regression methods for two variables (medium range forecasting).

Qualitative Techniques of Forecasting

These are techniques used when data are scarce, for instance, the first introduction of a new product. The techniques in use are Delphi method, developed by Rand Corporation (i.e. use of expert opinion or panel through sequential questionnaire), historical analogy (i.e. use of brainstorming when there is no previous data on exact previous performance) and market research. These involve the use of intuition, human judgement, and experience to turn qualitative information into quantitative estimates. It is also important to note that, although, while qualitative techniques are used for both short and long-term purposes, their use becomes of increasing importance as the time scale of the forecast lengthens. Even when past data are available, so that standard quantitative techniques can be used, long term forecasts require judgement, intuition, experience, flair, and other qualitative factors to make them more useful. As the time scale lengthens, past patterns become less and less meaningful.

Exponential Smoothing

Exponential smoothing involves the automatic weighting of past data with weights that decrease exponentially with time. This implies that the most current values receive the greatest weighting, and the older observations receive a decreasing weighting. The exponential smoothing technique is a weighting moving average system and the underlying principle is that, the New Forecast = Old Forecast + a proportion of the forecast error. The simplest formula is:

\[ \text{New Forecast} = \text{Old forecast} + x(\text{latest observation} - \text{old forecast}) \]

Where, \( x \) is the smoothing constant; the value of the smoothing constant \( x \) can be between 0 and 1. The higher the value of \( x \), the more sensitive the forecast becomes to current conditions; whereas, the lower the value, the more stable the forecast will be, and that it will reach less sensitively to current conditions.

Mathematically, the exponential smoothing can be expressed as,

\[ F_n = F_{n-1} + x(A_{n-1} - F_{n-1}) \]

Where, \( F_n \) = forecast for next period

\( A_{n-1} \) = actual value for previous period
x = smoothing constant (0 less than x, and x less than 1)

i.e. 0< x <1.

In times of changes and instability, a large fraction (0.4 and 0.8) is assumed and used, while in a stable situation, a small value of 0.1 and 0.3 is employed. From the above description, it is clear that we must determine a previous forecast and the value of x before a new forecast can be made.

When past data are available, the initial value \( F_{n-1} \) can be a simple average of the most recent observations. The exponential smoothing method is used mainly in operational planning such as, plant capacity planning, monthly sales forecast, inventory usage, and so on.

Example: The historical demand for a spare part is given below as:

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| July| 1,000 |
| August | 1,200 |
| September | 900 |
| October | 1,100 |

**Question:** In view of the above information, make a forecast for November using single exponential smoothing with \( x = 0.02 \), if the forecast for July was 1,100.

**Solution:**

\[
F_{Aug} = F_{July} + 0.2 (A_{July} - F_{July})
\]

\[
= 1100 + 0.2 (1000 - 1100)
\]

\[
= 1100 - 2 = 1098
\]

\[
F_{Sept} = F_{Aug} + 0.2 (A_{Aug} - F_{Aug})
\]

\[
= 1098 + 0.2 (1200 - 1080)
\]

\[
= 1098 + 0.2 (102)
\]

\[
= 1098 + 2.04 = 1100.04
\]

\[
F_{Oct} = F_{Sept} + 0.2 (A_{Sept} - F_{Sept})
\]

\[
= 1100.04 + 0.2 (900 - 1100)
\]
\[ Y = a + bx \]

Where, \( a \) and \( b \) are constants, and where \( a \) represents the fixed element (intercept) and \( b \) represents the slope of the line thus:

![Graph showing linear regression](image)

**Note:** variance = \( \frac{\sum f(x-\bar{x})^2}{\sum f} \)

Standard deviation (SD) = \( \sqrt{\text{Variance}} \) i.e. for frequency distribution.
SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2}{N}} \quad \text{i.e. for arrays}

SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N} - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{N}}

There are various methods of determining the values of \(a\) and \(b\). One of such methods is by using the relationship between coefficient of linear correlation and linear regression.

In the equation,

\[ Y = a + bx, \]

it can be shown by formula that

\[ b = r \frac{S_y}{S_x} \quad \text{................................. (1)} \]

Where, \(S_x, S_y\) are the standard deviations of the variables \(x\) and \(y\) respectively.

\[ r = \text{coefficient of linear regression and is given by} \]

\[ r \frac{S_{xy}}{S_x S_y} \quad \text{................................................ (2)} \]

Where \(S_{xy} = \frac{1}{n} \sum xy - \bar{x} \bar{y}\)

The regression equation can then be written as,

\[ y = a + r \frac{S_y}{S_x} \quad \text{................................................ (3)} \]

The constant term ‘\(a\)’ is determined from the relation,

\[ a = \bar{y} - b \bar{x} \quad \text{................................................ (4)} \]

The values of \(S_x, S_y\) and \(\bar{x}, \bar{y}\) are usually quickly determined using the scientific calculator.

Example: The historical demand for a product is given below as:

| Month    | Demand |
|----------|--------|
| January  | 1,850  |
| February | 2,000  |
| March    | 2,200  |
| April    | 2,300  |
May 2, 500

Using least square regression analysis to make a forecast for June. What the range of this will be forecast, using two standard errors of estimate?

**Solution:**

Let \( x = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 \) represent the months January to May.

Let \( y \) represent the corresponding demand \( n = 5 \).

From scientific calculator, we have, \( \sum x = 15; \sum y = 10,850; \)

\( \sum xy = 34,150; \sum y^2 = 23,082.500 \)

\( \bar{x} = 3 \text{ i.e. } \frac{15}{5} \)

\( Sx = 1.41 \)

\( \bar{y} = 2170 \)

\( Sxy = \frac{1}{n} \sum xy - \bar{x} \bar{y} = \frac{1}{5} \sum 34150 - 3 \times 2170. \)

\( = \frac{34150}{5} - 6510 = 6830 - 6510 = 320. \)

\( r = \frac{320}{1.41 \times 227.16} = \frac{320}{320.3} = 0.99 \text{ (i.e. very highly correlated).} \)

\( b = 0.99 \times \frac{227.16}{1.41} = 159.49 \)

Using \( a = \bar{y} - b \bar{x} \), we have

\( a = 2170 - 159.49 \times 3 \)

\( = 2170 - 498.486 \)

\( a = 1691.51 \)

Forecast for June is calculated at \( x = 6 \), using

\( y = a + bx \), we have,

\( y = 1691.51 + 159.49 \times 6 \)
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The standard error of estimate, $S_{yx}$ is calculated by the formula, $S_{xy} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum y^2 - a \sum y - b \sum xy}{N}}$

\[
S_{xy} = \sqrt{\frac{23,802,800 - 18,352,883.5 - 5,446,593.5}{5}}
\]

\[
= \sqrt{\frac{23,802,500 - 23,799,467}{5}} = \sqrt{\frac{3033}{5}} = \frac{24.63}{5}; \ S_{xy} = 4.92
\]

The range of forecast using two standard errors of estimate will be, $2648.45 \pm 2(4.92)$ i.e. 95% confidence interval for large samples, $Z = 1.96 \pm 2$ standard errors.

That is,

\[
2648.45 + 9.84 = 2658.29
\]

Or

\[
2648.45 - 9.84 = 2638.64
\]

Therefore, the range of forecast is:

2638.64 to 2658.29

Two General Purpose of Forecasting

- **To provide a basis for long-range planning:** Areas influenced by forecasting include, production planning, capital budgeting allocations (the allocation of large sum of money to various long term capital projects), determination of overall personnel requirements, financial planning, inventory needs, and so on.

- **Short-range scheduling decisions:** It involves production scheduling, adjustment in personnel actions, and procurement management (the determination of supplies which the organization needs to function effectively).

Four Basic Purposes in Forecasting

- To predict future demand for the organization’s goods and services.
- The determination of future trends in demand.
- The prediction of future changes in trends
- To assess the magnitude of changes in these trends.

These four basic purposes are very important when considering forecasting. In event, when forecasting is inadequate or inaccurate, the
result is sometimes an outstanding failure to achieve one or more of these four purposes. For example, the fashion industry may underestimate the strength of customer’s resistance to certain types of wears, to the extent that dozens of firms in such production may go bankrupt in the resulting downturn.

### Types of Forecast

In some general terms, forecasts are of three basic or major types: the long-range, the short-range and the rolling forecast.

- **The long-range:** This refers to the long-term planning needs of the organization. In this case, managers examine information that has traditionally indicated changes in business and economic conditions in the distant future. For example, the general state of the economy.

- **The short-range forecast:** This type describes the firm’s immediate needs. It is usually more detailed. It ranges from days to a few months.

- **The rolling forecast:** This is constantly updated as the time for accomplishing an objective approaches and a new information becomes available. It tries to accommodate both the past, present and future, and rectifies the shortfalls or mistakes. It integrates the long-range and short-range forecasts into one comprehensive forecast that is constantly revised. If goals are not met, or if conditions change, management alters its rolling forecast.

In general, the rolling forecast seems to be more useful than either long-range forecasting alone. It is flexible and sensitive to economic changes, and it can be used for short-range and long-range planning. The rolling forecast also encourages managers to focus attention constantly on how effectively their planning is working.

### Budgeting

Budgeting is another planning technique in which specific amounts of revenue and costs are planned for a given period of time. A budget according to Garrison (1979) is a detailed plan showing how resources will be acquired and used over some specific time interval. It represents plan for the future expressed in formal quantitative terms. Budgeting itself therefore, is the act or process of preparing a budget. In many activities, planning your time is critical. Business budgets are the principal financial means by which the manager can formalize and express his plan in terms of revenue and costs.

Virtually, everyone prepares and makes use of budgets of some kind, even though they may not for certain, realize what they are doing as budgeting. For example, most people draw estimates of the expected income over some near or future time period, and accordingly, plan expenditures for food, clothing, housing, and so on. Accounting data generally give the manager a foundation of his historical costs and revenue upon which he builds his projections into the future. Budgets also serve as control mechanism for activities of various functions and operating segments of the firm. Budgets reflect joint planning of all operating segments, and so, budget committees usually develop plans in order to ensure the cooperation and understanding of all principal parties, who will later be affected by the budget. The period of time for the budget is an
important issue for a manager to resolve. Two factors provide a range for the length of time:

1. First, it should be short enough to permit the making of fairly accurate predictions.
2. It should be long enough to identify significant problems of policies, strategies, and procedures.

A number of factors can affect the length of the budget period:

(a) The availability of factual information;
(b) The ability of the market faced by the firm;
(c) The rate of technological progress;
(d) The seasonal characteristics of the industry;
(e) The length of the production cycle;
(f) The customary credit extension time for customers;
(g) The delivery times of both raw materials and finished products.

In addition, the budget period must coincide with the accounting period so that the comparisons between actual results and budget amounts can be made routinely. A budget for a stated future period of time that does not make allowance for cost changes due to possible changes in the amount of output is called a fixed budget. A flexible budget shows expected cost of production at various levels of production. The prerequisite for flexible budgeting is the separation of fixed and variable costs. Once the flexible budget is formalized and reports are flowing to management, opportunities for analysis is open.

Advantages of Budget

Some advantages of budgeting as opined by Garrison (1979) include:

- Cost variations due to output changes are indicated.
- The segregation of fixed and variable costs is useful for other management functions.
- The standard costing is more easily implemented.
- It requires managers to bring planning to the forefront of their minds.
- It provides a vehicle for communicating these plans in an orderly way throughout an entire organization.
- It forces managers to think ahead by requiring them to formalize their planning efforts.
- It provides definite goals and objectives which serve as benchmarks for evaluating subsequent performance.
- It uncovers potential bottlenecks before they occur.
- It coordinates the activities of the entire organization by integrating the plans and objectives of the various parts. By so doing, the budget ensures that the plans and objectives of the parts are consistent with the broad goals and objectives of the entire organization.

Zero-Base Budgeting

The zero-base budgeting derives its name due to the fact that managers may be required to start a zero budget levels every year and justify all costs as if the programmes involved were being initiated from the same time or beginning of every accounting period. What this really implies is that, no costs are viewed as being ongoing in nature. That is, the manager
must start at the ground level each year and present justification for all costs in the proposed budget, regardless of the type of cost involved. For example, in most State Government Ministries in Nigeria. This means that no department or agency can assume the continued existence, much less the expansion and funding of its programme beyond the accounting year.

In sum, budgets are important planning techniques available not only to the strategist or manager, but also, to individuals and heads of households. Such estimates improve one's approach to the future, and allow less hesitancy in strategic decisions than would be time otherwise.

**Scheduling and Sequencing**

Scheduling and sequencing activities constitute a specific form of planning and planning technique, just as forecasting and budgeting. The operation of an office, store or plant usually involves working with a definite space constraint. Such activities as plant location, plant layout and channels of transportation, involve pictorial diagrams using general concepts similar to those for mapping of geographical areas. Scheduling usually is the term used for planning the time for the use of physical and human resources, and for the various activities of an organization.

Sequencing is the process of determining which job to start first, and such can be achieved by the application of priority rules. It requires that jobs should be sequenced according to one piece of data such as, processing time, due date or order of arrival (Chase, Aguilano, and Jacobs, 2001)

Scheduling seeks to provide the answer to the question of “when to produce” and involves relating production to time. It calls for establishing time limits on which individual operation is to be performed in the manufacturing, or other productive activity process, so that goods and services are produced when they are required. Scheduling also ensures that the different operations comprising the production process will be coordinated (Clarke, 1989).

Scheduling requires information about the following:

- Quantities of finished goods to be manufactured, their delivery dates and delivery requirements e.g. place of delivery.
- Production capacity available.
- Existing and forecast future workloads
- The quantities of raw materials required i.e. that which is in stock and that which must be acquired
- The time needed to acquire the raw materials and components required from outside suppliers.
- The standard times allowed for each operation.

**Types of Schedules**

- **Production schedules:** This involves a weekly or monthly breakdown of production requirements for each product for a definite period, as shown in the master schedule. The specific product schedules are released for a manufacturing schedule for production lines or manufacturing orders for job-lot production. Production schedule is a subset of master schedule.
Master schedule: This is also called overall since it connects other activities. Master schedule points out weekly or monthly figures of production requirement of all the products or job-lots to be manufactured. It denotes that plant capacity is booked for a certain period, and that new orders can be accepted only after that period.

Scheduling Techniques
Numerous scheduling techniques are available, ranging from simple everyday devices, such as:

- Appointment books
- Reservations for use of space and equipment
- Rough notes on a memo pad
- Complex sophisticated activities of the traditional moon shots in most rural or urban communities.

In addition, there are other proven, simple graphical devices in use for scheduling. A calendar is of course, the basic aid for planning time. As the expected use of equipment, space or human resources approaches capacity, the manager needs better scheduling devices. Moreover, when one operation cannot start until a previous operation is completed, scheduling tends to become tighter.

CONCLUSIONS
Attempts have been made to explore the evaluation of relevance of planning techniques and contingency strands in strategic management architecture. The study has established in specific terms, the characteristics of planning, the patterns as well as the relevance for every manager or organization to have contingency planning. The need for planning tools and associated techniques has also been made explicit and cannot be overemphasized. Practical examples of the planning techniques explored in the paper have demonstrated the need for adoption of relevant techniques in firm’s business management. The paper has also revealed that in predicting the future and effective strategic management feasibility, various techniques of forecasting are pertinent and such include the forecasting of economic conditions, specific product sales arrangements, supply of scarce resources as well as issues relating to the availability of skilled workers.

RECOMMENDATIONS
It is therefore recommended that organizational members should of necessity, adopt relevant planning techniques as well as the evaluation of the feasibility with time and space. The study further recommend the need for every firm to maintain contingency plans with time and space.

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