



IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT BY ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT: *The main objective was to examine implementation of strategic change management by organizations. The specific objective of the study was to critique the journal examining the implementation of strategic change management by organizations. The target population of the study was varied. The study targeted 106 respondents. Purposive sampling method was adopted to select the study sample size. Using Yamane formula for calculating sample size, the study sample size was 65 respondents. The study collected primary using structured questionnaires. The analysis of quantitative data was by use of descriptive statistics mean, standard deviation, percentages and frequencies. The analyzed information was presented in form of tables, 2-D figures, pie charts and graphs. This ensured an easy understanding of the findings by users. The open ended questions were analyzed by use of the narrative method. Ethical considerations will be adhered to by ensuring that the information of the respondent's is kept confidential. The study revealed that organization policies, employee commitment, organization culture, availability of resources and management commitment influences change management. The study recommends that organizations should ensure that the organization policies and cultures support the implementation of strategic change management. The organization should ensure that proper communication channels are adopted to allow free flow of information.*

KEYWORDS; *strategic change management, implementation*

INTRODUCTION-Change management often encompasses drastic conversions within an organization and includes strategy, structure, systems, processes and culture. A change management strategy is inclusive of the focused training and communication undertakings required to affect change across a firm (Naghibi & Baban, 2011). The strategy should be built taking into consideration a company's culture, values, and political landscapes at a high level, and individual roles and responsibilities and the environments in which they operate at a more micro level. Change management is a structured approach for ensuring that changes are thoroughly and smoothly implemented and for achieving lasting benefits of



change (Burnes, 2009). According to Nickols (2010) change management is a strategic activity aimed at effectively implementing new methodologies and systems in an organization and obtaining the best outcomes from the change process.

Change management is the effective management of a business change such that executive leaders, managers and front line employees work in concert to successfully implement the needed process, technology or organizational changes. The goal of change management is to implement business changes quickly in an attempt to improve organizational performance through minimizing the impact on productivity, avoiding unnecessary turnover or loss of valued employees, eliminating any adverse impact on their customers and achieving the desired business outcomes as soon as possible (Garber, 2013).

In an environment of accelerating change, increasing competition, and effects of the worldwide information revolution, organizations are constantly managing programs and resources to accommodate changing needs. Change by its very nature tends to be uncomfortable, disruptive and even painful (Hiatt & Creasey, 2012). Managers in various institutions have to manage this stress and uncertainty to be effective organizations. They have to counter their dynamic environment and competently convert threats and weaknesses from their internal and external environments into opportunities and strengths. Strategic Change management in organization is usually required when changes occur to the environment in which an organization operates (Burnes, 2009). Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2008) noted that strategic decisions are normally about trying to achieve some advantage for the organization over competition. Strategic management is all about identifying and embedding in the organization those changes that will ensure the long-term survival in the organization.

Change is inevitable. This reality demands that flexibility ought to be the guiding philosophy for companies operating in dynamic business environments. Company's flexibility in the form of change needs careful management for it to have positive impact. Companies have to embrace change and make the transition process easier (Garber, 2013). Creasey (2009) acknowledged that the goal of change and change management is to improve the main elements of organizations such as: processes, systems, organizations structure and job roles, and how organizations operate. The focus of any change management is to maximize the benefits that result from the change, while minimizing the risks of failure during the change



or transformational process. Successful management of change requires that firms develop the ability to anticipate, recognize and manage change imperatives in an efficient and effective manner.

Some of the greatest strategic change management obstacles are include, employee resistance, middle management resistance due to perceived loss of power and or limited involvement in the strategic change process, poor executive sponsorship when the executive sponsor either does not play a key and visible role in supporting the strategic change effort, or shift their support too soon after the process of strategic change, limited time budget and resources and corporate inertia and politics where the organizational culture pushes back the strategic change initiative. The embedded culture can become an obstacle particularly where there are too many long tenured employees (Boomer, 2007)

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Increased competitiveness is one of the major drivers for change, after the primary change driver behind change initiatives, most frequently the customer; the actions of competitors provide a major impetus behind organizations' attempts to implement innovation and change practices' (Kiilu, 2012). Strategy implementation is an enigma in many organizations. The problem is illustrated by the unsatisfying low success rate of intended strategies. In recent years organizations have sought to create greater organizational flexibility in responding to environmental turbulence by moving away from hierarchical structures to more modular forms (Rees& French, 2013). Given an intensifying competitive environment, it is regularly asserted that the critical determinant in the success and, doubtlessly, the survival of the firm is the successful implementation of strategic change management. Challenges in the implementation of strategic change management include; conflicting priorities, insufficient top team functions, a top down management style, inter-functional conflicts, poor vertical communication to inadequate management development. Organizations operate in a complex environment; which is more unpredictable and less stable. This study examines the implementation of strategic change management by organizations.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

General Objective

The general objective of the studies reviewed was to examine implementation of strategic change management by organizations.

Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objective;

- To critique the journal examining the implementation of strategic change management by organizations

Significance of the Study

The study findings will provide an understanding on factors influencing implementation of strategic change management. Organization will be able to utilize the positive factors to ensure efficient implementation. Also the organization will be able to come up with policies on how to deal with challenges that may arise during the implementation process. The expected results would be effective for implementation of strategic change management. The study findings will also provide an understanding on implementation of strategic change management for academic purposes. It would add to the body of knowledge on implementation of strategic change management.

Conceptual Framework

- Strategic change management was the independent variable while implementation was the dependent variable
- The relationship is as below;

Independent Variables

Factors influencing implementation

- Organization culture, organization policies, employee commitment

Dependent Variable

Strategic change management



Theoretical Framework

The critique was guided by the Open Systems Theory, Lewin's Change Model and Kotter's 8-Step Change Model

Open Systems Theory (OST) refers simply to the concept that organizations are strongly influenced by their environment (Harvey, 2005). OST is a modern systems-based management theory designed to create healthy, innovative and resilient organizations and communities in today's fast changing and unpredictable environments. As organizations and communities conduct their business they influence and change their external environments, while at the same time being influenced by external changes in local and global environments in a two-way influential change known as active adaptive change (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). The environment consists of other organizations that exert various forces of an economic, political, or social nature. The environment also provides key resources that sustain the organization and lead to change and survival. Organizations and communities are open systems; changing and influencing each other over time

Change comprises a structure of organizational practices that ensues over a period of time (Lunenburg, 2010). And the Lewin's model offers a broad structure for understanding this change. Lewin viewed this change process as consisting of a simple and easy-to-understand framework for managing change known as Unfreeze–Change–Refreeze (Lewin, 1951). The first step, unfreezing, typically involves decreasing those powers upholding the organization's behavior at its present level. Unfreezing is occasionally achieved over a route of psychological disconfirmation (Lunenburg, 2010). By introducing material that shows inconsistencies amid behaviors preferred by organization members and those behaviors currently displayed, participants can be inspired to participate in change undertakings. Change step modifies the activities of the business, section, or individual to a new level. It comprises superseding in the organization to cultivate new deeds, standards, and outlooks through variations in organization structures and practices. The final step, refreezing, steadies the business at a new state of balance. It is often accomplished through the use of ancillary mechanisms that strengthen the new organizational equilibrium, such as organizational culture, rewards, and structures (Cummings & Worley, 2009)



John Kotter developed 8 Steps for Change in a response to observing more than 100 companies trying to remake themselves into significantly better companies. Step 1 involves establishing a sense of urgency to prompt action (Kotter, 1996). Step 2 is to form a powerful guiding coalition of at least 3 to 5 powerful people within the organization leading the effort. Step 3 involves creating a vision of what the future with the change will look like. The vision serves to illustrate the general direction of the change, motivate people to take action and coordinate the actions which individuals will take (Kotter, 1996).

Step 4 requires communication of the vision through repetition, explanation, the use of multiple forums and leading by example (Kotter, 1996). Step 5 is empowering others to act on the vision. This may involve changing systems or structures within the organization and allocating more money, time, or support needed to make the change effective. Step 6 involves planning for short-term wins, Step 7 involves consolidating gains and producing more change and finally step 8 involves institutionalizing the new approaches. Change sticks when it becomes the way we do things around here (Kotter, 1995, pg. 67).

Change management is considered as the process of planning and implementing change projects involving individuals, teams and organizations. This practice is generally determined as problem solving which leads an organization from the current state to a desired future one (Oakland & Tanner, 2007). According to Johnson, Scholes and Whittington (2008) managers need to choose different approaches of managing change according on the circumstances they face and also create organizational context that will facilitate change. There is also need to translate strategic change into detailed resource plans, key tasks and how the organization is managed through control processes. Success is also determined by how the change is communicated through the day- today aspect of the organization.

Development of vision and strategy, Notification of change, Enhancement of the action at all levels, Achievement of short-term wins, Consolidation of gains and production more changes and Integration of new approaches in culture. A clearly defined vision supports employees to understand both the need for change and the implementation steps. The most important task of the change process is the definition of vision and strategy which guide the process. This is necessary because the first steps of change process are painful. The vision should signify the long-term interests of employees, customers, shareholders and others who are involved in change process (Appelbaum, *et al.*, 2012). When managers



communicate the vision, the mission and the goals of change management process they help employees to realize how these changes will affect those (Malek & Yazdanifard, 2012). According to Dasanayaka and Mahakalanda (2008), maximizing employee's values are considered as rational assets that required a culture to support their logical participation both for individual and organizational learning, new knowledge formation and readiness to share with others. Hartley and Bruckham (2002), state that effective communication is highly important in times of organizational change. They further stress that it affects how the employees accept the change and the implementation. It is, in addition, explained that the organization's management team must plan how to communicate strategically. If this fails, there is a large risk that the organization's planned change will not be successful. Mwikuyu (2009) notes that it is well-known that broad-based stakeholders' involvement and commitment are crucial for successful strategy and action plan implementation, thus, good for sustainable organizational development. An organization is an open system that has constant interaction with other players in the environment. The open system theory proposes that organizations behavior and structure are usually affected by the surrounding environment and also by the subsystems in the organization. Thus, organizations described as open systems are part of a much larger network rather than independent self-standing entities (Freeman and McVea, 2001).

Employees do not resist all change, only change that they do not understand or that they see as psychologically or economically threatening. Resistance to change introduces costs and delays into the change process that are difficult to anticipate but must be taken into consideration. Resistance may also be a helpful response to perceived unethical procedures that may not be in the best interest of the organization (Oreg, 2006). A number of challenges in change management relate to ineffective and breakdown of communication. Communication is very important from the initial point of assessing the need of change. Kotter notes that not establishing a sense of urgency is the first error leading to failure of transformational efforts. The need and urgency of change has to be communicated broadly (Kotter, 2007).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



a)Research Design

The study adopted a case study research method. This method of study is especially useful for trying to test theoretical models by using them in real world situations. Case study research, through reports of past studies, allows the exploration and understanding of complex issues. It can be considered a robust research method particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required. Through case study methods, a researcher is able to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioral conditions through the actor's perspective. By including both quantitative and qualitative data, case study helps explain both the process and outcome of a phenomenon through complete observation, reconstruction and analysis of the cases under investigation (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Hence, this method was suitable in examining the implementation of strategic change management.

a)Target Population and Sample Size

The target population of the study was varied. A population is a complete set of elements (persons or objects) that possess some common characteristic defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher (Creswell, 2013). The study targeted 106 respondents. Purposive sampling method was adopted to select the study sample size. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment, which will result in saving time and money (Black, 2010). Using Yamane formula for calculating sample size, the study sample size was 65 respondents. The sample size is an important feature of any empirical study in which the goal is to make inferences about a population from a sample.

a)Data Collection instruments

The study collected primary using structured questionnaires. The questionnaire had both open ended and close ended questions. Data of quantitative and qualitative in nature was collected. Open ended questions are used to allow the respondents to express their views in a free flowing manner. In Close ended questions the participant is restricted to answer their opinions through the options that are set by the surveyor. A pilot study was carried out to determine the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Validity is the extent to



which a test accurately measures what it is supposed to measure. The study adopted content validity. This involved consulting experts in the field of study who commented on the appropriateness of the research instrument. Reliability was determined by use of the test-retest method. Cronbach alpha threshold of 0.7 was used to explain the validity of the research instrument. The questionnaires were administered by the researcher with the help of trained research assistants. Drop and pick later method was adopted to ensure a high response rate.

a)Methods of Analysis

Collected data was edited and then coded using SPSS version 23. The analysis of quantitative data was by use of descriptive statistics mean, standard deviation, percentages and frequencies.. This ensured an easy understanding of the findings by users. The open ended questions were analyzed by use of the narrative method. Correlation was used to test the association between variables. Regression analysis was used to test the functional relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables. The analyzed information was presented in form of tables, 2-D figures, pie charts and graphs. Ethical considerations will be adhered to by ensuring that the information of the respondent's is kept confidential

Findings and Discussion

The study targeted 65 respondents from which 60 participated in the study. This formed a response rate of 92%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), a response is considered to be adequate if it is 50%, its considered good if it is 60% while it is regarded as excellent if it is 70% and above. This suggests that the response rate of this study was excellent for analysis and reporting. The study sought to determine the implementation of strategic change management as follows; scale 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- moderate, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree



Table 1: Implementation of Change Management

Category	Mean	standard deviation
Organization policies	4.00	0.96
Employees commitment	3.94	0.89
Organization culture	4.17	1.02
Availability of resources	4.04	0.99
Employees attitude	4.35	1.25
Management commitment	4.40	1.19
Organization communication	4.44	1.19

From Table 1, the results shows that the mean values are above 3.5, the respondent's agreed organization policies, employee commitment, organization culture, availability of resources and management commitment influences change management as shown by mean of 4.00, 3.94, 4.17, 4.04, 4.35 and 4.40 respectively. The success of change depends on the organization's ability to make all their employees participate in the change process in one way or the other. The executive team should participate actively and visibly throughout the change project, build a coalition of sponsorship, manage resistance and communicate directly with employees.

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on the statements below about strategic change management. Scale 1- strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3- moderate, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree. Results are as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Strategic Change Management

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
The organization communicates about a new strategy in the organization	3.734	1.000
The employees are informed about the implementation of a strategic change	3.841	0.810
The employees are meant to understand the importance of the change to the organization	3.940	0.825
The set organization policies support strategic change management initiative	3.893	0.873
The organization culture is tailored to accommodate strategic change	3.873	0.869



management

The management ensures that strategic change management does not violate the organization culture 3.869 0.810

Employees are trained to adopt to the implementation of strategic change management 3.940 0.845

Resources are acquired to support the implementation process 3.861 0.829

The management ensures maximum utilization of the resources to make the implementation a success 3.877 0.815

Management lead by example by being part of the implementation process 3.976 0.844

The management puts into consideration the opinion of employees so that they can work together as a team 3.857 0.935

There are well established communication channels in the organization to ensure effectiveness 3.897 0.871

From the findings the respondents agreed that employees are trained to adapt to the implementation of strategic change management as shown by a mean of 3.940, management lead by example by being part of the implementation process as shown by a mean of 3.940, there are well established communication channels in the organization to ensure effectiveness as shown by a mean of 3.897, the set organization policies support strategic change management initiative as shown by a mean of 3.893, the organization culture is tailored to accommodate strategic change management as shown by a mean of 3.873, the management ensures maximum utilization of the resources to make the implementation a success as shown by a mean of 3.877, the management ensures that strategic change management does not violate the organization culture as shown by a mean of 3.869, resources are acquired to support the implementation process as shown by a mean of 3.861, the management puts into consideration the opinion of employees so that they can work together as a team as shown by a mean of 3.857, the employees are informed about the implementation of a strategic change as shown by a mean of 3.842, the employees are meant to understand the importance of the change to the organization as shown by a mean of 3.940 and the organization communicates about a new strategy in the organization as shown by a mean of 3.734. Awino (2007) found out that corporate culture



requires collective identity and togetherness in order to determine day-to-day communications, acceptable/non acceptable behavior as well as power/status allocation. These are important aspects in implementation of strategic change management. Abok (2013) observed that knowledge resources, material wealth and coordination ability are key to successful implementation of strategy.

In this section the study sought to determine the challenges in strategic change management implementation. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on the statements about challenges in strategic change management implementation.

Table 3: Challenges in Strategic Change Management Implementation.

Statements	Mean	Standard deviation
Employee resistance is a problem in the implementation	3.726	0.793
Conflict of interest in the management	3.913	0.859
Unclear communication of organization goals during the change management process	3.802	0.753
Failure to leverage the skills of the employees to the organization resources in the change process	3.817	0.784
Lack of employee empowerment during the change management process	3.944	0.849
Lack of commitment from the workforce when an organization is undergoing change management process	3.849	0.776
Poor leadership delay the implementation process	3.976	0.865

From the results in Table 3 the respondent's agreed that poor leadership delay the implementation process as shown by a mean of 3.976, lack of employee empowerment during the change management process as shown by a mean of 3.944, conflict of interest in the management as shown by a mean of 3.913, lack of commitment from the workforce when an organization is undergoing change management process as shown by a mean of 3.849, failure to leverage the skills of the employees to the organization resources in the change process as shown by a mean of 3.817, unclear communication of organization goals during the change management process as shown by a mean of 3.802 and employee



resistance is a problem in the implementation as shown by a mean of 3.726. Ogong (2013) attributes the lack of proper management of resources to the frequent failure to implement well planned and documented strategic change management. According to Yabs (2010), the strategy implementation stage is often considered to be most difficult stage of strategic change management. It requires personal discipline, commitment and sacrifice. When implementing strategies there is need to cultivate development of a strategy supportive culture, creation of an effective organization structure, redirecting of market efforts and motivating individual into action.

DISCUSSION

The objective of the study was to ascertain the implementation of change management. The study revealed that organization policies, employee commitment, organization culture, availability of resources and management commitment influences change management. Organization policies guide the operations in the organization. The policies should be able to support the implementation of strategic change management. The management and employees should also be committed to accomplish the set objective. Diverse interests between employees and management may be a hindrance to successful implementation.

The study also sought to establish the challenges faced in the implementation of strategic change management. The study established that there are numerous challenges faced in the implementation of strategic change management. Big institutions have set routines and culture, resistance is also expected. This implies that the staff are used in their daily routine activities and any anticipation of change may result to resistance. A long standing organizational routine may delay or hinder change process. The organization also works under set policies and regulations by the government. This may have an effect on implementation since the funds for the projects are provided by the government

CONCLUSIONS

For successful implementation of strategic change in the organization the management must understand the factors influencing the implementation and the challenges that they may encounter during the implementation process. An understanding of the



implementation process is also essential for all employees. This will ensure an effective implementation of the strategic change management.

Strategic change management is very significant to every organization due to the dynamic nature of the business environment. Therefore, many organizations are working to ensure effective implementation of strategic change management for the good of their organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that organizations should ensure that the organization policies and cultures support the implementation of strategic change management. However, if there are conflicting interests then the implementation of the strategic change management will be compromised. The management and other stake holder's organizations should also commit themselves in the implementation. By doing this they would be leading by example hence the rest of the employees will feel free in engaging in the activity. The organization should ensure that proper communication channels are adopted to allow free flow of information. This will ensure that information gets to the right persons at the right time hence, improving efficiency.

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