PROCESS OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN THE TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY IN IMPLEMENTING CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CASE STUDY: MTN NIGERIA)

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the implementation of the customer relationship software, in MTN Nigeria. The implementation process, that also included a good change management system, as well as the role of consensus and the role of empathy. Details about the CRM implementation process of MTN Nigeria was highlighted in the paper, an overview of the change management model was also highlighted. The paper also goes on to analyse the flow of information in MTN Nigeria and also the effective use of information in the organisation. Optimal structure of information delivery, is not left out on the course of this research. Thereafter, the results of the implementation process were drawn and a brief analysis of the whole change management process was outlined, as well as recommended for the organization and a general conclusion.

KEYWORDS: Customer Relationship Management, Change Management, Consensus, Empathy, Information, Decision & Organisation

INTRODUCTION

For an eloquent decision making process, information is vital. Vital in the sense that, it is not only needed, but its use and application is also important for good decision making. The information in our present day, is being managed with the use of information systems. These systems have aid in decision making, in various organisations providing easy and better manipulation process, including other aspects. In recent times, the importance of information systems has increased. As for this, different company spend money to improve their information system, so as to increase revenue because of the services these systems provide. Examples of such information systems include, Customer relationship Management Software (CRM) and The Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP). However, before the advent of these information systems mentioned above, different organisations indulge in the use of traditional information systems. These traditional systems include websites surveys, Emails and Telephone surveys. The essence of these systems is to mobilize gathering of data, for a better service and they also mainly provide information, influencing the decision making process in any organization.

In order for the telecommunication system, to provide the maximum amount of service to their customers' information and a good level of feedback is needed. As stated by Blery and Michalakopoulos (2006), a level of competition is being faced by the telecommunication industry. It is certain that, in our present day, almost every educated human acquire a mobile device and for this mobile device to be able to make call, it must posses a SIM-card. This SIM-card is provided by the telecommunication industry. The whole idea is that, the telecommunication industry, posses a large

number of user base, because of the kind of the industry it is. It is an essential part in our present lives today. For a better service to be rendered to customers, the telecommunications industry needs to gather information for their customers, to produce a good outcome, as a result of a good decision being made.

The traditional information systems could be used to gather this informations, for a better decision-making process, but to eliminate or reduced the factor of human error ; Customer relationship software was developed. This system enables the organization to gather information from the customers and pass them into the operational managers, thereafter the tactical managers and lastly the strategic managers in the decision making process.

In this report, a case study will be analyzed on how the use of CRM, and was implemented and how it enhanced decision-making process in the bank. The problems also faced by the bank and how the decision was made before the emergence of the system, will also be analyzed. The flow and use of Information on the organization will be examined. Also, stating the role of consensus and empathy in the decision making process, at the bank. Thereafter, findings and conclusion will be drawn.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In our present time, organisations must frequently evolve to be able to adapt to the harsh conditions of competition, in the business environment. This involves change in business procedures, to enable rendering of good quality to customers in question. According to Garber (2013), Telecommunication industries experience dramatic changes in all levels, related to the organisation, nowadays. These changes are driven by factors involving fierce competition, technological advancement and a need for new service development, in the telecommunication sector (Beshtawi et al, 2014).

However, change management can be described as a systematic approach to changes, in organisations (Reference). In more simple terms, change management can be described as the management of the change related factors in organisations, to produce positive output. According to Song (2009), change management is involved with three main activities, which involves; triumph over defiance to change by setting and inventing or propagating new attitudes, behaviours and values in an organisations, which enables new and positive ways of doing work. The second activity involves building or construction of consensus, among stakeholder of the organization, including customers on positive changes about to be implemented. Lastly, change management also involves planning, testing and the final implementation of the change, in all aspects of the organisation.

According to Beshtawi et al (2014), change management is a very important tool in the telecommunication industry, to maintain its growth as; the telecommunication industry needs razor sharp reflexes to accommodate the fast evolving technology systems and vast management skills.

According to Song (2009), there are various steps, necessary in the effective management of Information systems in an organisation. Firstly, it is to identify and evaluate the present behaviours in the organisation (Aladwani, 1998). Hultman (1979) also cited that, beliefs, facts and values presented or shown by employees, serve as a key indicator to what lies beneath the resistance to the organisational change. As changes in various organisations, including the Telecommunication industry has become more frequent and necessary for the survival of an organisation, employee resistance has become an important factor and a human resources management function, also making it a priority for top level managers, for the increase in the success chance of different projects (Tang and Gao, 2012).

According to Jansson (2013), management of employees' resistance, during an occurrence of organisational change requires an effective type of change management process. However, Communication from the right entity in an organisation, helps to improve the response of staffs and employees, for organisational change about to be implemented (Kotter and Schilesinger, 2008). O'Neil (2012) enlightened that, practices in management related to a change in an organisation, should be clear and consistent based on what the change is about, for the individual to improve their perception and cognitive judgment, about the change.

A framework also classifying resistance to change was provided by Sheth (1981). This framework involves two main resistances to change, which include habit and perceived risk. Basically, Habit refers to familiarity with the routines in simple terms. On the other hand, perceived risk involves the apprehension, associated with the process of making a decision for change implementation. This can be further explained, using an example of employees being afraid of losing their jobs, as a result of an organisational change to be implemented. To avoid later issues in the process of change management, these issues should be attended to. Communication is also an important factor in the course of managing change. According to Al-Mashari and Zairi (2000), many change management processes in different organisations have failed, due to lack of proper communication in the organisation. In an attempt to build anticipation of the envisioned system, should reduce perceived risk in the organisation, due to proper and effective communication system (Williams, 1982).

As identified by Lawson (2003), for conditions are involved in changing the perception of an employee. First and foremost, there will be a change in an employee's perception, if they understand fully the reason for the envisioned change and they agree with it. Secondly, A new behavior, by implementing rewarding structures to be in tune with the new behavior of the employees, should be adopted through the refining of surrounding structures. Thirdly, employees should also pose skills to compliment the envisioned change in the organisation. Lastly, employees should see positive modelling of the change from people they look up to and respect. Lawson concluded that, these conditions, when adhered to strictly would change the behaviour and perception of employees, in regard to the envisioned change.

Song (2009), also highlighted Consensus as the next activity in the change management process. The whole idea in this activity is to develop an understanding regarding the envisioned change in the organisation, among stakeholders and customers. However, consensus can best be described as the process of arriving or agreeing to a decision, among a group of people, by seeking the consent of the people present in the gathering. As highlighted by West and Schwenk (1996), Consensus is a key to any change management process.

According to Laquinto and Fredrickson (1997), it is believed that, an accord among stakeholders and customers of an organisation develops benefits to the organisation, thereby reducing ambiguity and uncertainty, also on the other hand, increasing growth and profitability. Consensus as an important factor in the change management process is being perceived from different views by different researchers. Research done by West and Schwenk (1996) puts forward a case of a null effect of consensus, on the performance of an organisation. However, Homburg et al (1999) puts forward a case of a mixed effect on the performance of an organisation. Lastly, Bourgeois (1985) puts forward a case of a negative effect on the performance of an organisation. However, it cannot be concluded on which of this argument is a clear trend of the work, pertaining to consensus to date. Consensus however, at a later stage of practice, has different effects on different organisations and projects. It cannot be clearly stated on what best suits the telecommunication industry.

In recall of the step-by-step process of change initiators, analyzing probable reactions to change is a critical step to be recalled. Empathy, is also a key factor in the process of change management, in an organization. The ability for people to change their reaction is not logical, generally from outsiders (managers). Their reaction is being propagated by their own need, at their specific time in the organization.

Empathy can best be described as, the ability to walk in another person's shoes, having their insight and their thoughts and also experiencing their emotional reaction and knowing its consequences (Stephan & Finlay, 1999). According to Vetlesen (2010), Empathy basically involves suspension of current actions and judgment, in accordance with trying to understand them. This means understanding and also reading between the lines in the statements of employees. Also questioning and probing can be a useful tool, for understanding the emotions of employees (Stephan & Finlay, 1999). During periods of change, it is critical for top-level managers, to understand the concerns of the employees.

Empathy helps the top level managers to anticipate resistance, that may occur during change, providing insight for managers to provide tools and services, that will make the employee feel valued, understanding the direction of the employee and lastly, development of an empathetic relationship, loyalty and commitment (Lee Marks, 1997).

According to Research being made by various researchers, it can be said that, the role of empathy in an organization has no negative impact on the process of change management, unlike the role of consensus, which can produce different outcomes in different situations. Empathy is about creating a good relationship with the employees of the organization, and sometimes this relationship can affect their decisions and perception in the organization.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research aims to discover the change management effect, Role of Consensus and the Role of Empathy in the Telecommunication industry (Case study MTN Nigeria). The research methods used include, exploratory and descriptive methods. However, exploratory research was used in the literature review to gather information on change management in an organisation, effect of Consensus and Empathy.

CASE-STUDY APPROACH

Sampling Methods

For learning important issues, relevant to this case study information, purposely sampling will be used. Criterion sampling from the purposely sampling was chosen. According to Schatz (2014), It basically involves locating criteria and milestones and deciding one sample, that meets this set criteria, providing a good quality for assurance. For sampling, two criteria were used, a telecommunication industry that successfully implemented CRM and some others that completely failed. For example, Zain Nigeria.

Data Collection Method

Primary and Secondary data collection was used in the course of this research. Primary data were gotten through focus groups and interviews. According to Lincoln & Guba (1985), the most valuable data collection method is through interviews because, it involves a phenomena and a complex process. The overhaul workings of MTN Nigeria and the implementation of the CRM system were gotten through an interview. This interview was done based on questionnaires.

However, Secondary data involve the general information of MTN Nigeria, from websites, press articles, GSM articles and the MTN Nigeria webpage.

Information gotten was also being analysed, with the qualitative content analysis to develop substantial results for the paper, success basis and failure factors. This analysis was also used to develop recommendations for the MTN Nigeria.

CASE STUDY – MTN NIGERIA

Among all other four major Telecommunication Industries, which include MTN, GLO, Etisalat and Zain, MTN is considered to be the most popular, largest and most successful of all. MTN Nigeria was established as a part of the original MTN South African group of company. It was launched on May 16th, 2001 and operations started in August 2001. Across a population of 140 million people in Nigeria, MTN Nigeria poses a subscriber base, of over 32 million people. MTN Nigeria's was the first organisation to commission the largest transmission backbone networks in January 2003, with operations deployment over 10,000 villages, 2148 cities and across 36 states in Nigeria.

MTN Nigeria also posses a large base of employees, across the country over 20,000, having over 5290 permanent staff and casual staff. MTN Nigeria is 82 percent owned by the MTN International Limited and 15 percent owned by Nigerian partners, with the International Finance Corporation. And 3 percent owned by the infrastructure investment arm of the World Bank, with Mr. Pascal Dozie as the current Chairman of MTN Nigeria (Farrouk, 2006).

CRM IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

QMTN Nigeria needed a system to help assist the customer service employees and hasten customer and employee interaction. Before the idea for the CRM system, the organization failed to understand the value of a customer's value at that time, there was no competition for them. They failed to note that, care and concern is above the quality of a product. In order to retain customers and increase their value, Customer relationship software had to be implemented. This will place an advantage over competitors because, the services rendered by everyone of them are not that different from each other.

The NCC was also a reason of the CRM implementation, imposing telecommunication regulatory policies for CRM management and services, associated with the system. This CRM system was adopted by MTN Nigeria in the year 2009. This implementation was for the main purpose of growth and maintenance of business values. The CRM system was being set, to create a quick communication means of the organisation and its employees. The CRM system will also enable the organisation, to assess the gains and losses of customers to their competitors, also retaining them by creating a strong relationship, leading to the success of the business.

USE OF INFORMATION ASSETS IN STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING

Acquisition of information assets enables operations to be run, at different levels of an organisation. Boddie (1993), defined information assets, as sets of information, managed as a single or one unit. Information assets that include documents, data, content and knowledge are essential for the operation, of an organisation. According to Steenkamp and Kashyap (2010), information assets help top managers to make decisions, to improve customer acquisition or retention, also enhancement of employee loyalty and motivation.

MTN Nigeria as known is divided into three levels of management. These levels include the strategic manager, Tactical manager and operational manager.

The main acquisition of information is done by the operational managers in the organisation (Customers service unit). This unit is given daily tasks of summing up reports about customers in different regions, where services are being

given by MTN Nigeria. This kind of report is generated from a call detail data; the call detail data are a combination of employee demo graphs. After being performed some surveys, about the services and information is stored in the general database of the organisation. The Customer service unit, gathers the information from the database and complies the report. This report is summed up and sent to the Tactical managers (Manager in the Customer Service Unit).

In preparation for a briefing with the board of directors by the tactical manager, all these information and analysis done by the operational managers are put in a concise format or in summary. The Tactical manager is also able to make a suggestion from his level of experience to the board of director concerning the report, research and analysis that are being made. This concise information is being delivered to the board of directors, during the meetings. However, from hearing the information, the Tactical managers have given in a concise format, the Strategic managers are able to make strategic decisions that will better serve the organisation. The table below illustrates the use of information assets in a concise format.

Table 1

S/N	Level of Management	Source of Information and Type	Use of Information
1	Operational managers	Raw data and information gotten from customers through websites, surveys and feedback forms, Telephone conversations and Face to Face meetings	Gathered stored in the database for feature reference and also complied in reports to send to the Tactical manager.
2	Tactical managers	Information gotten from the operational managers in a detailed format	Arranged in a Concise format to be presented to the Strategic managers.
3	Strategic managers	Information gotten from Tactical managers in a Concise format mostly in presentations	Use to make strategic decision in the organisation.

Information Delivery and Optimal Structure of MTN Nigeria

Information is delivered in different formats and structure, at different levels of management in an organisation, due to the difference in the scope of responsibility. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that, data collected is analysed properly and presented in formats, that can be easily understood at different levels of management, for appropriate decision making. With the advent of information technology, the structure of information delivery has also improved. According to Tushman et al (2003), organisations utilise different information system tools to collect, process and present information. The table below depicts the optimal structure of information, delivered at every level of MTN Nigeria.

Table 2

S/N	Level of Management	Structure of Information Delivered	Presented Structure
1	Operational managers	Information is gotten in raw formats from customers through websites, surveys and feedback forms, Telephone conversations, Customers Call statistics Customers billing information Customer, Customer demographics and Face-to-Face meetings. In some case data mining from already stored information. Questionnaires, Word Document surveys.	The Information gathered and processed, presented in word document reports, excel spreadsheet files to the Tactical managers.
2	Tactical managers	Analysis is done on the Word documents, spreadsheets files, creating charts, graphs depicted in the power point file for presentation in a concise format.	Concise Slide show presentation, Video conferencing to the Strategic managers.

Table 2 : Contd.,			
3	Strategic managers	Information just for decision-making gotten in mostly graphical representations in power point slideshows depicting charts and graphs.	

STRATEGIC DECISION MADE BY THE TOP MANAGERS

The Customer relationship management software is known as Averiware. The decision to implement this software was done, by the Board of Directors of MTN Nigeria. However, the Software vendor was not disclosed. The organisational change was effected in 2004 and request for proposal was released, to find the software developing company, suitable to meet the needs of MTN Nigeria.

The Customer Relationship management software, that was envisioned by the management of MTN Nigeria will empower employees with the tools they need to enhance customer experience and keep customer relationship. However, it will consist of an automated service, for integrating quick customers and employee interaction, displayed in an in-screen user-friendly format.

MTN Nigeria adopted the eight-step process of implementing in change by **Kotter in 1995** in his book, **"Leading change".** These processes include;

Increase urgency: The MTN Nigeria top managers ensured the CRM system was implemented immediately the decision was made and for a specified period of time which was stated.

Communicate the vision: MTN Nigeria top managers provided a memorandum, which was distributed among employees.

Enable action: MTN Nigeria however, did not provide an avenue for employees who resisted the change to give their thoughts on the implementation.

Build guiding team: According to Kotter (1995), change needs leadership. The implementation of the CRM system was the responsibility of 3 different managers, which include the Customer service manager, the CEO and the Information technology manager.

Create Short-term wins: MTN Nigeria was able to create short-term target by meeting each milestone set out in the CRM implementation process.

Consolidate gains: All three managers responsible for the CRM implementation had visions and checklists to achieve. A regular evaluation was done during the implementation phase and also after the implementation phase of the CRM.

Develop a vision and strategy: The vision was to ease customer service, by developing Customer relationship management software. However, MTN Nigeria adopted the "Directive Strategy", for management of change.

Anchor it to culture: The overhaul implementation process was a gradual one in MTN Nigeria. Their culture was still maintained.

ROLE OF CONSENSUS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS IN MTN NIGERIA

Wang (2011) highlighted that, the human factor is an important entity, during the course of a change concerning

information system. He also went on to define Consensus, as a general accord among stakeholders, in order to implement an idea or proposition. Considering the people factor in change management is essentials to its success. To an extent, the top managers of MTN Nigeria effected Consensus.

Before the implementation of the Software, the CEO of MTN Nigeria had a meeting with other members of the board and the customer service manager, about the idea of a new CRM system.

However, the CEO did not seek the consent of the Customer Service unit employees, before meeting the designing team of the CRM software. As a result of this, the CRM software was not suited to the needs and problem solving, for the Customer service workers. It took some time for the employees, to adapt to the new system because, consensus was not properly effected. Not properly informing the employees was one issue, but after the implementation of the software, employees had to go through training, in order to use the system. The management of MTN Nigeria organized this training.

ROLE OF EMPATHY IN MTN NIGERIA

In the change management process of the MTN Nigeria Telecommunication industry, there were uncertainties pertaining to the staffs and even the management. The employees were yet not sure, if the Customer relationship management software to be implemented, would enhance their jobs or even reduce their performance or even eliminate them. As known, one important entity of a management is to curtail uncertainties in the mind of employees. This can be done through showing of empathy by the management. According to Decety and Lekes (2009), Empathy simply means, the ability to understand and support others, with compassion or sensitivity. In a lot simpler terms, it can be said to be putting oneself in the shoes of others.

The management, however of MTN Nigeria did not handle this change management process very well. They did not plan for any resistance, that may occur from the employees, as a cause of the software implementation. They were not focused on building the software to ease the work of the customer care employees; rather the software was being used, because of the technological advancement features it posed to the outside world (Customers). The management of MTN Nigeria did not perform any form of assurance to the employees of the company. The employees were afraid to use the new software because, a lot of them were not skilled to use it. A training process was organized after the implementation of the software. And, employees were being evaluated on their use of the software and this also cause a fear of Job loss for the ones who could not operate the software properly.

IMPLEMENTATION RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Since, the adoption of a CRM system and a new strategy has been created by the implementation of CRM in Nigerian mobile firms. The CRM performance measure has been used, to analyze the growth of business and market value. This performance measure, developed by the use of CRM was also adopted by MTN Nigeria. According to Reichheld (1996), "measurement enables top managers to harness business vision as a result of business practices, which includes value creating processes." However, the balance scorecard model enables organisations, to know their failures or success through the financial and human capital of mobile organisation's assets, linking the business relationships into cash flow (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

The financial and human capital covers customer's net present value (NPV) and the market share of the organisation (NCC, 2015). After the implementation of the CRM system, the Net present value (NPV) was used to determine the success rate of the CRM system (NCC, 2015). Below, is a table showing the NPV of MTN Nigeria, from the period of CRM implementation in 2009.

Table 3

Year	Subscription Penetration of Population	User Penetration of Population	Prepaid Subscription as % of Total	Monthly Minutes of Use (MOU)	Annual Churn Rate
2005	13.8%	12.0%	99.6%	89	26.8%
2006	20.2%	17.4%	99.5%	70	27.9%
2007	28.2%	23.3%	99.5%	53	48.4%
2008	43.1%	34.5%	99.2%	51	44.0%
2009	48.7%	37.8%	99.1%	46	41.8%

NPV Table of MTN Nigeria from 2005 to 2009 (NCC, 2015).

From the table shown above, it shows that, the implementation of the CRM was a success in MTN Nigeria. There was an increase in Subscription penetration of population and also the amount of user penetration of the population. MTN Nigeria was able to keep their existing customers and also gain new customers. This was also due to the implementation of other information systems and advertisements platforms (Farrouk, 2006). This also increased the revenue of the organisation, across the years.

In analysing the mode of change management carried out by MTN Nigeria, despite the fact that the implementation of the CRM system was a success, there still were some flaws in the change management process, which would have lead to a catastrophic disaster. Some departments were consented before the change and other employees were left out during the decision-making process or suggestions. The Top-level management also did not put themselves into the shoes of their employees. This also caused difficulties for the employees, to adapt to the new system, despite achievement of the main purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having known that, the implementation of the CRM system was a success in MTN Nigeria, some management flaws were still determined. The role of Consensus and Empathy was not fully implemented in the organisation. In recommendation, there should be a general accord concerning every department, the change is going to affect. As the saying goes 'no man is an island', contributions and betterment of the whole process can be made by people in the different departments, to ensure full efficiency.

In the course of the research carried out, it was observed that, the managers responsible for change did not manage it well. In the recommendation, MTN Nigeria can select an experienced change management board, to handle change because of the nature of the organisation. Information systems advance daily and for the organisation to keep up with these advancements; changes must be made and also these changes must be managed. However, the directive strategy implemented by MTN Nigeria is authoritative and this would have increased employee resistance. This process will ensure well-enriched information about the change at hand to the employees and the expert strategy, also for a technological change like the CRM implementation.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has outlined the process of change management in the telecommunication industry (MTN Nigeria), implementing a CRM system, which was successful. Different reason can be attributed to the success of the implementation of the CRM system. Some of these reasons include, a good flow of information between different departments and the right use of information, by each department. The level of consensus and empathy implemented in the MTN Nigeri also attributed to some part of the success. Although, the flaws mentioned above could have lead to a catastrophic meltdown of the whole project, the Success story of MTN Nigeria was can also be attributed to the good effort put in, by other departments of the organisation. If the employees had input a level of resistance because of the fear they had, the issues would have arose.

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