

**CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIC CHANGE AT
NATIONAL WATER CONSERVATION AND PIPELINE
CORPORATION, KENYA**

BY

RICHARD KAKAI KAMUTI

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other University or College for examination/academic purposes.

Signature _____

Date_____

RICHARD KAKAI KAMUTI

D61/72345/2011

This Research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor

Signature_____ Date _____

Prof. Peter K'Obonyo

Department of Business Administration

University of Nairobi

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DEDICATION

This Research Project is dedicated to my beloved wife Rael Kakai and my two daughters Brianna Mbithe and Blessing Musangi for their tireless support and encouragement offered to enable completion of this research project.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| Ag | Acting |
| CIC | Constitution Implementation Committee |
| COK | Constitution of Kenya |
| ERP | Enterprise Resource Planning |
| KIE | Kenya Institute of Education |
| NBK | National Bank of Kenya |
| NWCPC | National water Conservation & Pipeline Corporation |
| NWSA | National Water Storage Authority |
| OD | Organization Development |

ABSTRACT

Implementation of strategic change has been faced with a lot of challenges which are believed to hinder realization of the desired results. Like any other organization, the implementation of strategic change at NWCPC has not been a bed of roses but full of challenges. It is against this background that the need to conduct this particular study was conducted with objective of establishing the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change. The research study was guided by four theories of changing: Lewin Change Model; Action Research; Kotter's Eight Step Model and Kanter's "Ten Commandments" of successful change. The study applied a case study research design and used primary data which was collected by way of face to face interview using an interview guide. The researcher interviewed seven members of the management executive committee which comprises of eight members. The collected data was analyzed using content analysis technique. The research study finding established the following to be the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing the strategic change: Lack of team work, low level of trust, inwardly focused cultures, arrogant attitudes, lack of provision of enough resources, general fear of unknown, workplace politics, paralyzing bureaucracy, lack of training staff on areas of strategic change, lack of communication from the top management to the entire staff and failure to engage a change agent or putting together a team with enough power to lead and implement the strategic change. The study concludes that the findings are in support of the work of Kotter (1996) who argued that needed change can stall because of inwardly focused cultures, paralyzing bureaucracy, parochial politics, a low level of trust, lack of team work arrogant altitudes, a lack of leadership in middle management, and the general fear of unknown. The study recommends that NWCPC management should strive to embrace team work, work on building high level of trust among the staff, develop and implement a strategic change management policy and establish a unit under planning and design department to lead in strategic planning and organization development. This is believed to help mitigate the established challenges faced by NWCPC in the implementation of strategic change.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Strategic change management is the use of systematic methods to ensure that an organization change can be guided in the planned direction, conducted in a cost effective manner and completed within the targeted time frame and with the desired results (Davis and Holland, 2002). Kotter (1995) argues that guiding strategic change may be the ultimate test of a leader-no business survives over the long time if it can't reinvent itself. However, fundamental change is often resisted mightily by the people it most affects: those in trenches of the business. Thus managing and leading strategic change is both absolutely essential and incredibly difficult. He further argues that over the past decade that he has watched more than 100 companies try to make themselves into significantly better competitors. Kotter says that a few of corporate strategic change efforts have been very successful; a few have been utter failures and that most falls somewhere in between, with a distinct tilt toward the lower end of the scale.

According to Cummings & Worley (2001) the paced global, economic and technological development makes change inevitable feature of organizational life. Burnes (2004) argues that change is a constant feature of organizational life and that the ability to manage it is seen as a core competency of successful organizations. Arthur D. Little and McKinsey & Co. have studied hundreds of organizations that have entered into change initiatives and have found that two thirds fail to produce the results expected. According to recent surveys, CEOs report that up to 75% of their organizational change efforts do not yield the promised results. These change efforts fail to produce what had been hoped for yet always produce a stream of unintended and unhelpful consequences.

Goman, (1992) states that change is the most pervasive influence within our organizations and thus it is imperative that we manage change. The purpose of this would be to ensure that organizations and employees are able to identify areas of change and deal with the implementation of strategic change successfully.

The survival of organizations depends on their ability to change, and National Water Conservation & Pipeline Corporation is no exception. NWCPC has initiated a number of strategic changes at different levels within the Corporation which stemmed from

globalization, technological advancement, new government rules and regulations and integrating cultures. It is believed that NWCPC faced various challenges in implementing the above strategic change and therefore the need to conduct this particular study on the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing these strategic changes.

1.1.1 Strategic Change

Cummings and Worley, (2005) suggests that strategic change is a recent influence of OD's evolution. As organizations and their technological, political and social environments have become more complex and more certain, the scale and intricacies of organizational change have increased. This trend has produced the need for a strategic perspective from OD and encouraged planned change process at the organization level.

Strategic change involves improving the alignment among an organization's environment, strategy, and organization design. Strategic change interventions include efforts to improve both the organization's relationship to its environment and the fit between its technical, political, and cultural systems. The need for strategic change is usually triggered by some major disruption to the organization, such as the lifting of regulatory requirements, a technological breakthrough, or a new chief executive officer coming in from outside the organization (Cummings and Worley, 2005). Strategic change is one that involves fundamental changes in the business of the organization and its future direction. Successful strategic change is built on an overall strategic management system of the organization (Carnall, 2003).

Strategic change management is not a distinct discipline with rigid and clearly defined boundaries. Rather the theory and practice of strategic change management draw on a number of social science disciplines and traditions (Burnes, 2009). There are basically three schools of thought that form the central planks on which strategic change management theory stands namely; the individual perspective school; the group dynamics school and the open systems school.

The individual perspective school is split into two camps: the behaviorists and the Gestalt-Field psychologists. Burnes (2009) argues that behaviorists view behavior as resulting from an individual's interaction with their environment. In behaviorist

theory, all behavior is learned; the individual is the passive recipient of external and objective data. For Gestalt-Field theorists, learning is a process of gaining or changing insights, outlooks, expectations or thought patterns. In explaining on individual's behaviors, this group takes into account not only a person's actions and the responses these elicit, but also the interpretation the individual places on these (Burnes, 2009).

The group dynamic school as component of change theory has the longest history. It originated with the works of Kurt Lewin. Its emphasis is on bringing about organizational change through teams or work groups rather than individuals (Bernstein, 1968). Lewin (1947), noted that group behavior is an intricate set of symbolic interactions and forces that not only affect group structures, but also modify individual behavior. To bring change, therefore, it is useless to concentrate on changing the behaviors of individual, according to the group dynamics school (Burnes, 2009). The individual isolated is constrained by a group pressures to conform. The focus of change must be the group level and should concentrate on influencing and changing the group's norms, roles and values (Cummings and Worley, 2005, French and Bell, 1999, Smith et al, 1982).

According to Mullins (1989), the group dynamics school has been proved to be very influential in developing both the theory and practice of strategic change management. This can be seen by the very fact that it is now usual for organizations to view themselves as comprising groups and teams, rather than merely collection of individuals.

The open system school of thought sees organizations as composed of a number of interconnected sub-systems. It follows that any change to one part of the system will have an impact on other parts of the system, and, in turn on its overall performance (Scott, 1987). According to Burnes (2009), the open systems school's approach to change is based on a method of describing and evaluating these sub-systems, in order to determine how they need to be changed so as to improve the overall functioning of the organization. Miller (1967) argues that there are four organizational sub-systems namely, the organization goals and values sub-system; the technical sub-system; psychosocial sub-system and the managerial sub-system.

The open systems school is concerned with understanding organizations in their entirety; therefore, it takes attempts to take a holistic rather than a particularistic

perspective (Burnes, 2009). According to Burke (1980), this is informed by three factors, that is, Sub-systems are interdependent; Training as a mechanism of change, is unlikely to succeed on its own and In order to be successful, organizations have to tap and direct energy and talent on their workforce. This requires the removal of obstacles which prevent this, and the provision of positive reinforcement which promotes it. Given that this is likely to require changes to such things as norms, reward systems and work structures, it must be approached from the organizational, rather than on individual or group perspective.

The three theoretical perspectives on change focus on different aspects of organizational life and, therefore, each has different implications for what type of change takes place and how it is managed. Any approach to managing and implementing strategic change should be judged by whether or not it is applicable to all or only some to the types of changes covered by the individual perspective, group dynamics and open systems schools.

1.1.2 Public Sector

Public sector institutions in Kenya just as other public sector institutions in the world are experiencing changes brought about by globalization, technology advancement, competition, economic factors and new government rules and regulations. The Kenyan government has in the recent past initiated a number of strategic changes especially in the area of value adding public sectoral reforms which includes but not limited to attempts by the government to embrace private sector management practices, attainment of vision 2030 and embracing performance contracting in all the public institutions.

1.1.3 National Water Conservation & Pipeline Corporation

The National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation (NWPC) was established under the State Corporations Act Chapter 446 of the Laws of Kenya vide Legal Notice No.270 of 24th June 1988 as an autonomous agency reporting to the then Ministry of Water Development and became operational on 1st July 1989(Kenya Gazette,1988).

The following are the current mandates of NWPC: developing state schemes and spearheading dam construction for water supplies, flood control and other multi-

purpose uses, land drainage and construction of dykes; carrying out ground water recharge using flood water; developing new, retaining existing and expanding bulk water supply to water Service Boards and other Water Service Providers.

The Corporation's vision is to be a world class institution in water infrastructure development and management while his mission is to develop and manage water infrastructure towards enhancing water security and storage for multipurpose, mitigation of drought, and flood effects in a sustainable manner. The Corporation's core values are: integrity, accountability, transparency, professionalism, team work and innovativeness. The key strategic objectives of the Corporation are; to increase water storage capacity in Kenya; to increase accessibility, availability and reliability of water supply and water for multipurpose use; to reduce the risks of (mitigate the effects of) floods and drought; to strengthen and build the institutional Capacity of the Corporation; to improve performance and quality service delivery; to enhance financial Sustainability of the Corporation; to mainstream cross –cutting issues in the Corporation's activities.

Following the implementation of the Water Act 2002, NWCPC, who were previously retailing water in several water supplies across the country, is today the implementation arm of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. The Water Act, 2002 established a new institutional framework for the development and management of water resources. The Water Act, 2002 therefore redefined the roles of various institutions with NWCPC having the mandate as a Developer and Manager of state schemes, construction of dams, canals, dykes for flood control, development of boreholes and water re-charge facilities.

The new constitution, adopted in August 2010, has a number of provisions that have important implications for the water sector. With the enactment of the new constitution of Kenya (CoK 2010) all sectors / ministries are obliged to align policies and legislation. Therefore, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources has submitted a new water policy and a Water Bill 2012 to Constitution Implementation Committee (CIC) which will soon be forwarded to Parliament for adoption and enactment. Under the proposed water bill 2012 National Water Conservation & Pipeline Corporation will be transformed to National Water Storage Authority with aim of increasing focus in the water sector on increased water availability. Functions

of the NWSA according to the Bill will be to undertake on behalf of the national government the development of national public water works for water resources storage; maintain and manage national public water works infrastructure for water resources storage; collect and provide information for the formulation by the Cabinet Secretary of the national water resources storage and flood control strategies; make rules and enforce water harvesting strategies and advise the Cabinet Secretary on any matter concerning national public water works for storage.

1.2 Research Problem

Organizations come in all shapes and sizes, provide a vast variety of products and face an enormous array of challenges. Organizations never stand still, though the speed and magnitude of change does vary from organization to organization over time.

It is now generally accepted that the ability to implement strategic change effectively is a crucial component of an organization's ability to complete successfully (Burnes 2009). Pettigrew and Whipp (1993), argues that there are no universal rules with regard to leading change rather it involves linking action by people at all level of business. Pettigrew and Whip developed a model of successfully managing strategic and operational change that involves five interrelated factors:-Environmental assessment leading change; linking strategic and operational change, Human Resources as assets and liabilities and finally coherence of purpose.

Kanter et al (1992) came up with ten commandments for executing change which include: Analyzing the organization and its need for change, creating a shared vision and a common direction, separating from the past, creating a sense of urgency, supporting a strong leader role, line up political sponsorship, crafting an implementation plan, developing enabling structures, communicating and involving people and being honest; and reinforcing and institutionalizing change. Kotter (1996) also came up with eight steps to successful change which he believes that if followed step by step change will be managed and implemented successfully.

All these models for strategic change have been developed to offer guidance for managing and implementing strategic change yet organization's change efforts fail. National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation is no exception as far as implementation of strategic change is concerned.

Mironga (2012) did a study on challenges of managing strategic change at the Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company and found that failure to recognize and implement changes, lack of understanding of strategy implementation, failure of customers and staff to appreciate change, corruption and incompetence are the main obstacles in managing strategic change in NCWSC.

Gwerigi (2010) did a study on strategic change management at Frigoken Kenya Limited and found out that various change management practices were used within the organizations. Resistance to change process was reported to be minimal and the factors that attributed to this resistance included fear of losing job among employees, strict time frame for change process performance, changes to their working status as a result of stressful works.

Ruoro (2010) did a study in role of leadership in managing change at Total Kenya Limited and found out that the top management was highly involved in managing the intended change. Msenya (2012) did a study of management of strategic change at Kenya Institute of Education and established that as much as K.I.E. had planned for these changes some challenges emerged since it was a new field being ventured into.

Maina (2012) did a study on Managing Change at National Bank of Kenya Limited and observed that numerous challenges were faced in change management process. The research findings showed that NBK has embraced reliable change management practices in its change process.

Based on the above studies conducted and their findings, it is evident that none of them discussed the challenges of implementing strategic change at National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation. This study will seek to answer the following research question: What are the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change?

1.3 Research Objective

To establish the challenges faced by National Water Conservation & Pipeline Corporation in implementing strategic change.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study is valuable to management of National Water Conservation & Pipeline Corporation and other organizations in understanding the challenges of managing and implementing strategic change and on how to effectively transform for improved performance. The government and policy makers will gain valuable information effective in managing and implementation of strategic change in the public sector.

To the academicians and researchers, the research findings will contribute to extension of existing body of knowledge in strategic change management. The study will provide a useful basis upon which further studies on implementing strategic change can be done. The study will also suggest areas for further studies on which researchers and scholars can research further.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the broad background of strategic change management by examining the various models of change management used to manage and implement strategic change effectively. It reviews the challenges faced in implementing strategic change.

2.2 Implementing Strategic Change

Cummings and Worley, (2005) argues that one of the first applications of strategic change was Richard Beckhard's use of open systems planning. He proposed that an organization's environment and its strategy could be described and analyzed. Based on the organization's core mission, the differences between what the environment demanded and how the organization responded could be reduced and performance improved. Since then, change agents have proposed a variety of large scale or strategic change models; each of these models recognizes that strategic change involves multiple levels of the organization and change in its culture, is often driven from the top by powerful executives, and has important effects on performance.

According to Cummings and Worley, (2005) conceptions of planned strategic change have tended to focus on how change can be implemented in organizations. The theories of changing describe the activities that must take place to initiate and carry out successful change. Under changing theories, the researcher described four theories of changing: Lewin's change model, the action research model, Kotter's eight step process and Kanter "Ten Commandments" of successful change.

2.2.1 Lewin's Change Model

Lewin (1951) introduced one of the earliest models of planned change known as the three step-change model. According to Lewin, change is as a result of modification of those forces keeping a system's behavior stable. Specifically, a particular set of behaviors at any moment in time is the result of two groups of forces: those striving to maintain the status quo and those pushing for change. When both sets of forces are equal, current behaviors are maintained in what Lewin termed as a state of "quasi-stationary equilibrium." To change that state, one can increase those forces pushing

for change, decrease those forces maintaining current state, or apply some combination of both (Cumming and Worley, 2005).

A successful change project, Lewin (1947) argued that it involves three steps as shown in Figure 2.1

Figure2. 1 Lewin Change Model



Unfreezing: This step usually involves reducing those forces maintaining the organization's behavior at its present level. Unfreezing is sometimes accomplished through a process of "psychological disconfirmation". By introducing information that shows discrepancies between behaviors desired by organization members and those currently exhibited, members can be motivated to engage in change activities.

Moving: This step shifts the behavior of the organization, department, or individual to a new level. It involves intervening in the system to develop new behaviors, values and attitudes through changes in organization structures and processes (Cummings and Worley, 2005).

Refreezing: This step stabilizes the organization at a new state of equilibrium. It is frequently accomplished through the use of supporting mechanisms organizational culture, rewards and structures.

Lewin's model provides a general framework for understanding organization change and can therefore be used to explain how different types of change can be implemented in an organization.

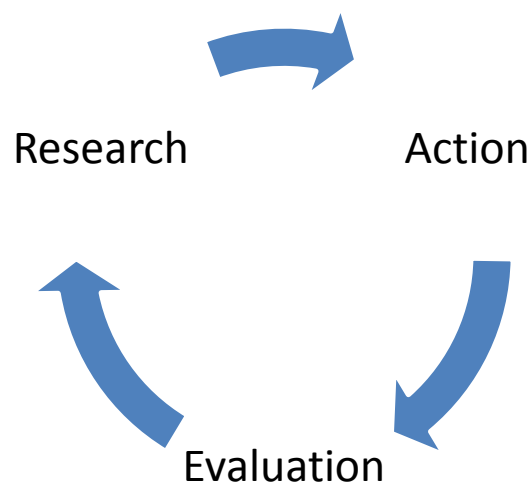
2.2.2 Action Research Change Model

The classic action research model focuses on planned change as a cyclical process in which initial research about the organization provides information to guide subsequent action. Then the results of the action are assessed to provide further information to guide further action, and so on. The interactive cycle of research and

action involves considerable collaboration among organization members and OD practitioners. It places heavy emphasis on data gathering and diagnosis prior to action planning and implementation, as well as careful evaluation of results after action is taken (Cumming and Worley, 2005). According to Cummings and Worley (2005), action research was traditionally aimed both at helping specific organizations implement planned change and at developing more general knowledge that can be applied to other settings.

There are eight main steps in the action research model namely, Problem identification; Consultation with a behavioral science expert; Data gathering and preliminary diagnosis.; Feedback to a Key Client or Group; Joint Diagnosis of the problem; Joint Action Planning; Action and Data Gathering After Action (Cumming and Worley, 2005). The Eight steps are summarized in the figure 2.2 below

Figure 2.2 Action Research

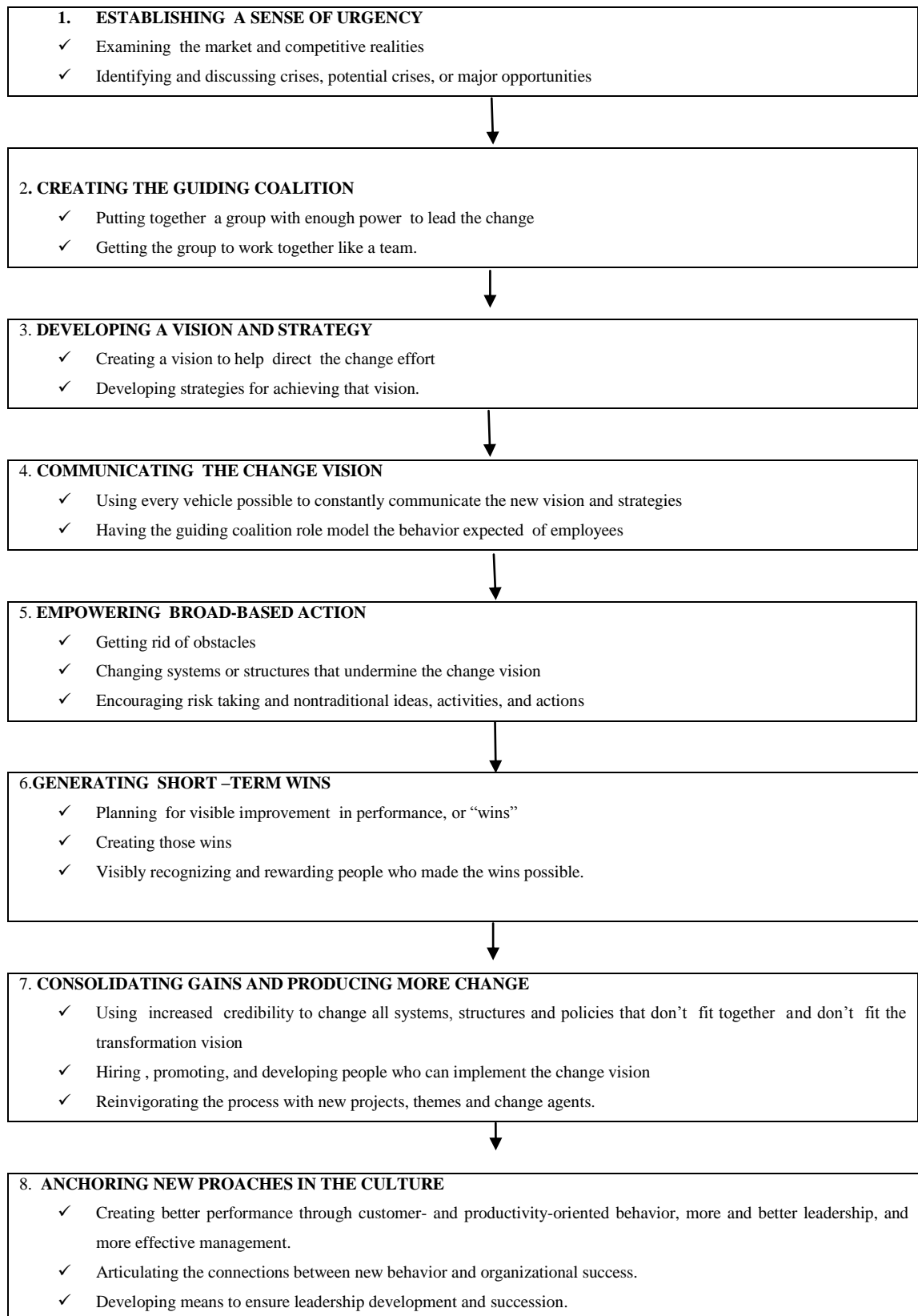


Source: Researcher, (2013)

2.2.3 Kotter's Eight Stage Change Process

This change model was developed by John Kotter in the year 1996. Kotter (1996) argues that successful change of any magnitude goes through eight stages, usually in the sequence shown in Figure 2.3

Figure2. 3 The Eight Step Change Model



SOURCE- Adapted from John P.Kotter “why transformation efforts fail,” Harvard Business review (March –April 1995)

Although one normally operates in multiple phases at once, skipping even a single step or getting too far ahead without a solid base almost always creates problems. The steps are: establishing a sense of urgency, creating the guiding coalition, developing a vision and strategy, communicating the change vision, empowering a broad base of people to take action, generating short term wins, consolidating gains and producing even more change, and institutionalizing new approaches in the culture.

The first four steps in the transformation process help defrost a hardened status quo. If change were easy, you wouldn't need all that effort. Phases five to seven then introduce many new practices. The last stage grounds the changes in the corporate culture and helps make them stick (Kotter, 1996).

2.2.4 Kanter's Ten Commandments

In the challenge of organizational change, Kanter and her Co-authors (Kanter et al, 1992) proposed 'ten commandments for executing change. The commandments are as follows: Analyze the organization and its need for change; Create a shared vision and a common direction; Separate from the past; Create a sense of urgency; Support a strong leader role; Line up political sponsorship; Craft an implementation plan; Develop enabling structures; Communicate, involve people and be honest and Reinforce and institutionalize change.

Looking at approaches to change, Kanter et al (1992) distinguished between 'bold strokes' and 'long marches'. She said that 'bold strokes' relate to major strategic decisions a clear and rapid impact on an organization, but they rarely lead to any long-term change in habits or culture (Kanter et al, 1992). The long scale and operationally focused initiatives that are slow to implement and whose full benefits are achieved in the long term rather than the short term. The long march approach can impact on culture over time. Bold strikes are initiative taken by a few junior managers, sometimes only one; they do not rely on support of the rest of the organizations for their success. The long march approach, however, does. Without the involvement and commitment of the majority of the workforce, such initiative cannot success (Burnes, 2009). These aspects of the 'Ten Commandments' are summarized in Figure 2.4

Figure 2. 4 Bold Strokes and Long Marches

| | Bold strokes | Long marches |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Objective | Major strategic or Economic change | behavioral/cultural change Change |
| Timescale | Rapid, short term change | slow, long term change |
| Involvement | senior managers | the whole organization |

Source: Kanter et al (1992)

The OD literature has directed considerable attention at leading and managing change. Much of the material is highly prescriptive, advising managers about how to plan and implement organizational changes. Traditionally strategic change has focused on identifying sources of resistance to change and offering ways to overcome them. Other contributions have challenged the focus on resistance and have aimed at creating visions and desired futures, gaining political support for them, and managing the transition of the organization toward them. The diversity of practical advice for managing and implementing strategic change can be organized into five major activities as follows: Motivating change; Creating a Vision; Developing political support; Managing the transition and; Sustaining the momentum (Cummings and Worley, 2005).

2.3 Challenges of Implementing Strategic Change

Kotter (1996) suggests that the methods used in successful transformations are all based on one fundamental insight that major change will not happen easily for a long list of reasons. Even if an objective observer can clearly see that costs are too high, or products are not good enough, or shifting customer requirements are not being adequately addressed, needed change can still stall because of inwardly focused cultures, paralyzing bureaucracy, parochial politics, a low level of trust, lack of team work, arrogant attitudes, a lack of leadership in middle management, and the general human fear of the unknown (Kotter, 1996). To be effective, a method designed to alter strategies, re-engineer processes, or improve quality must address these barriers and address them well (Kotter, 1996).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter describes the research design, data collection and data analysis methods and techniques which were used by the researcher to answer the research question.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used a case study design. The design was chosen because the objective of the study required one to collect in depth information for the purpose of understanding the challenges of implementing strategic change at NWPC. Yin,(1984) defined the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. According to Yin, (2009) a case study is a preferred strategy when “how” and “why” questions are being posed, the researcher has little control over events and the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher used primary data. Primary data refers to the data which was collected by the researcher specifically for the research project from the field using face to face interviews.

An interview guide was prepared to help in collecting data based on the research question. The interview guide was pre-tested in order to determine its validity and reliability before face to face interviews were conducted by the researcher.

The researcher targeted the management executive committee (MEC) of the Corporation which comprises of eight members as follows: The Managing Director, General Manager Finance, General Manager Human resources & Administration, General Manager Planning & Design, General Manager Corporate & Legal Services, General Manager Construction & Electro-Mechanical, Chief procurement Officer and Chief Internal Auditor.

3.4 Data Analysis

The researcher used content analysis to analyze data collected by use of the interview guide. According to the American Heritage Dictionary (2000), content analysis is a systematic analysis of the content rather than the structure of a communication, such as a written speech, or film, including the study of thematic and symbolic elements to determine the objective or meaning of the communication.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and findings of the study as set out in the research objective and methodology. The results presented are on the challenges of implementing strategic change of National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation. The chapter also discusses the findings of the study.

4.2 General Information

The interview guide constituted two parts i.e. the general information and the challenges of implementing strategic change at National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation.

Out of the eight targeted management executive committee members, seven were interviewed giving a response rate of 87.5%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of over 70% is excellent.

Under general information, the interviewees were asked to indicate the positions they were currently holding. From their responses, it was clear that the interviewees held the following positions: Ag.General Manager Finance, General Manager – Planning and Design, General Manager – Construction and Electro-mechanical, Head of Business Unit (BDU), Chief Procurement Officer, General Manager – Corporate and Legal Services and Chief Internal Auditor.

The interviewees were further asked to indicate how long they had served in their current position. From their responses, it emerged that they had worked in their current position for varying periods ranging from 3 to 5 years. They attributed this shorter period in their current positions to strategic changes that have happened to the Corporation for the last five years and also due to the fact that the top management i.e. General Manager serve on contractual period of three years which is subject to renewal based on the performance.

The study further sought to establish in what areas NWCPC had experienced strategic changes in the past five years. From the interviewees' responses, NWCPC has

experienced the following fundamental changes since 2009: change of guard in the top management, working process, culture change, Automation (Enterprise Resource Planning) ERP, Layoffs, and management systems.

The study sought to establish whether the implementation of the various strategic changes experienced by NWCPC was successful. From the interviewees' responses, it was evident that the implementation of the strategic change was successful despite the challenges faced during implementation process.

The study further sought to know what hindered the successfully implementation of the strategic change from the interviewees who felt that implementation of strategic change was not successful. The interviewees indicated that the following hindered successful implementation of strategic change at NWCPC: the approach used which is believed to have been un-procedural layoffs, lack of training, downward communication only, lack of team work, mindset as opposed to process/objective led process.

4.3 Challenges of Implementing Strategic Change at NWCPC

In the second part of the interview, the researcher focused on establishing the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change by asking the interviewees the questions presented in **appendix I**. The following were the responses.

4.3.1 Putting Together a Group of Staff with Enough Power to Lead and Implement Strategic Change

From the interviewees' responses, the researcher established that NWCPC did not put together a group with enough power to lead and implement strategic change. It used the top management to lead and implement strategic change though there were no clear terms of reference for them. The implementers of the strategic change therefore lacked direction, key competencies and skills required in leading and implementing strategic change. This is believed to have lead to poor implementation of the strategic change and as a result there was a lot of resistance to the proposed strategic changes.

4.3.2 Lack of communication

Most of the interviewees indicated that there was a bit of communication from the top management to the entire staff of the proposed strategic changes though they felt that it was not done in the right way. The interviewees indicated that the top management did not use the right channels of communication. The findings noted that the top management used only downward communication channel which was not effective. This is believed to have hindered the top management from getting the required feedback in the implementation of the strategic change. The interviewees' responses indicated that the management used emails, circulars, internal memos and board room power point presentations to communicate to the staff a channel which did provide room for feedback. The findings noted that the management should have used a more effective channel of communication such as face to face conversation and virtual candid meetings.

4.3.3 Lack of Training of Staff on the Areas of Strategic Change

The findings indicated that majority of the respondents felt that training on the area of strategic change was not done. Only one of the respondent indicated that training was done on the area of strategic change implemented by NWCP. Failure by the top management to train staff on the areas of strategic change is believed to have been a great challenge in the implementation of the strategic change at NWCP. This is so because the staff did not understand what the management was up to and hence being suspicious on the proposed strategic changes. The findings noted that training staff on the areas of strategic change is essential for effective implementation of strategic change because it creates awareness and equips the implementers and the entire staff with key competencies and skills. Responses showed that NWCP did not train its staff before implementing the strategic changes hence this hindered effective implementation of the proposed strategic changes.

4.3.4 Lack of Team Work

In response to this question, the interviewees indicated that there was no team work in the implementation of the strategic change. The findings indicated that there was a great disconnect between the top management and the other cadres in the Corporation. It was also revealed that there was no team work at the top management. This is believed to have hindered the successful implementation of the strategic change.

4.3.5 Inwardly Focused Cultures

The interviewees indicated that inwardly focused cultures had a negative effect in the implementation of strategic change. The findings showed that staffs were fighting to have the status-quo prevail.

4.3.6 Low Level of Trust

The interviewees indicated that trust was not used as a tool in the implementation of strategic change. The findings indicated that the top management did not have trust amongst themselves and also in the entire staff. This they believed affected the implementation of the strategic change. The interviewees indicated that the low level of trust was as a result of the top leadership inserting their own point of views and rationalizing into situations and then trying to convince the staff why it was right. The top leadership always assumed that the other people were wrong and that they were always right. This is believed to have resulted to low level of trust. This approach only reinforces the command-and-control hierarchy, which is highly ineffective in implementing strategic change.

4.3.7 Paralyzing Bureaucracy

The interviewees indicated that the bureaucratic process had a negative impact on the implementation of the strategic change. The findings indicated that the bureaucratic process slowed the implementation of the strategic change, frustrated the process and that it paralyzed the entire implementation of the strategic changes. To address this menace brought about in by the bureaucratic processes, the management used the famous Lewin change model process which involves unfreezing, moving and refreezing.

4.3.8 Workplace Politics

The findings indicated that workplace politics had a negative effect on the implementation of the strategic change. The interviewees indicated that workplace politics accelerated the red tape, slowed the process and sabotaged the implementation effort. The findings showed that workplace politics led to social groupings with a common objective of fighting to have the status quo prevail. The interviewees noted that the management was able to use the full support it got from the middle

management as outlined in earlier findings to overcome the effect of work place politics in implementing strategic change at NWCPC.

4.3.9 Support for Top Management by the Middle Management

The interviewees indicated that the top management got full support of the middle management in the implementation of the strategic change. The study findings showed that there was support from the middle management towards the implementation of the strategic change at NWCPC. The support was as a result of the creation of guiding coalition by the top leadership as advocated by the works of Kotter (1996). The top management established a relationship with the middle level management by use of face to face and virtual candid meeting. In the said meetings the top management was able to share their ideas and plans of how those proposed strategic changes was able to meet their urgent objectives and seek their constructive feedback that can be incorporated successfully. This approach was able to guarantee total support across the middle management.

4.3.10 Lack of Provision of Enough Resources

The findings showed that the NWCPC top management did not provide all the necessary resources needed for effective implementation of the strategic changes. The interviewees indicated that the top management did not allocate enough budgets for implementation of the strategic change. From the responses, lack of provision of the necessary resources emerged to be a major challenge in the implementation of the strategic change. This is so because the implementation of the strategic changes involves altering processes and changing the status quo which is believed to be accompanied by an element of cost. For effective implementation of the strategic change, the management is therefore required to provide all the necessary resources. The Interviewees indicated that the NWCPC management did not provide enough resources necessary for the implementation of the various strategic changes initiated as outline previously. The findings revealed that the management did not provide monies to engage change agents to lead in the implementation of the strategic change and training of staff on areas of strategic change. This is believed to have slowed the strategic change implementation process.

4.3.11 Arrogance among NWCPC Staff

The interviewees indicated that arrogant attitudes among NWCPC staff had a negative effect on the implementation of the strategic change. The study findings indicated that the 'god father syndrome' affected the implementation process of the strategic change. The findings indicated that some members of staff felt that there was no need of 'wasting time and money' implementing strategic changes when the Corporation could at the end either shape up or ship out. These attitudes are believed to have slowed the implementation of the strategic change at NWCPC since more time was consumed trying to bring in the staff with arrogant attitudes. The interviewees indicated that though this was a challenge in the implementation of the strategic change at NWCPC, it did not completely hinder successful implementation of strategic change. The findings noted that the top management was able to overcome the challenge by creating a guiding coalition.

4.3.12 General Fear of Unknown

The findings indicated that a few of the staff were suspicious of the proposed strategic changes initiated by the top leadership and were not sure whether to buy-in the ideas or reject them. The interviewees noted that the general fear of unknown affected the implementation of the proposed strategic changes at NWCPC by slowing the implementation process. However, the top leadership managed to overcome the challenge by taking full advantage of the full support it was enjoying from the middle level management to deal with the fears for loss of job, uncertainty, victimization and restructuring.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

As outlined previously, the objective of the study was to establish the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change. The findings indicates that NWCPC was faced with the following challenges: Lack of team work, low level of trust, inwardly focused cultures, arrogant attitudes, lack of provision of enough resources, general fear of unknown, workplace politics, paralyzing bureaucracy, lack of training staff on areas of strategic change, lack of communication from the top management to the entire staff and failure to engage a change agent or putting together a team with enough power to lead and implement the strategic change. These challenges are believed to have affected the successful implementation of the strategic

changes at NWCPC and therefore the management need to address them well for successful implementation of strategic change.

These findings support the work of Kotter (1996) who suggested that the methods used in successful transformations are all based on one fundamental insight that major change will not happen easily for a long list of reasons. Kotter (1996) argued that needed change can stall because of inwardly focused cultures, paralyzing bureaucracy, parochial politics, a low level of trust, lack of team work arrogant attitudes, a lack of leadership in middle management, and the general fear of unknown.

These findings mean that the implementation of the strategic changes initiated by NWCPC was faced with various challenges as outlined above. This is a clear indication that the top management did not follow the strategic change models as discussed under the literature review. Kotter, (1996) suggested that a successful strategic change of any magnitude should go through the eight stages change process which he believed that they should be followed step by step. According to these findings, NWCPC failed to create a guiding coalition to lead in the implementation of the strategic change. This oversight is believed to have been the reason behind the failure to putting together a group with enough power to lead the strategic change and getting the group to work like a team. The findings also indicated that there was lack of effective communication between top management and the entire staff at NWCPC. This was as a result of failure by NWCPC in communicating the change vision as advocated in the Kotter's Eight Stage Change Process.

The findings clearly show that NWCPC does not have a strategic change management policy which is believed to be a very important document for effective implementation of strategic change at NWCPC. Having a strategic change management policy that is aligned to project timelines and objectives allows the endeavor to be responsive to the people side of the strategic change. A well –drafted strategic change management policy usually identifies key-stakeholders, communication and training strategies, provides a readiness monitoring and change management strategies. The challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change can be addressed effectively by coming up with a strategic change

management policy which should be based on Kotter's Eight Stage Change process as outlined in figure 2.3 in the chapter two.

Kanter et al, (1992) proposed the 'ten commandments' for executing strategic change to be followed as follows: Analyze the organization and its need for change; Create a shared vision and a common direction; Separate from the past; Create a sense of urgency; Support a strong leader role; Line up political sponsorship; Craft an implementation plan; Develop enabling structures; Communicate, involve people and be honest and Reinforce and institutionalize change. From the findings it is clear that the top management at NWCPC did not follow the guidelines for implementing strategic change as outlined by Kanter et al, (1992). This is so because the findings indicated that workplace politics, low level of trust, lack of communication, lack of team work and inwardly focused cultures were some of the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing the strategic change. The findings that suggest that NWCPC management should strictly adhere to the 'ten commandments' of executing strategic change. The findings also suggest that the management needs to consider training the staff on areas of strategic change since this will build trust, enable build team work, and motivate the middle level management to give full support to the top management.

These findings are consistent with the current existing strategic change models (Kotter's, 1996; Kanter et al, 1996; Lewin, 1951 and Cummings & Worley, 2005) and therefore it is critical for NWCPC to develop and implement a strategic change management policy which should be anchored on the current strategic change models. By doing so, NWCPC will have put in preventive measures and hence be able to effectively and efficiently implement strategic changes of any magnitude.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide insight into the summary of findings, conclusions drawn, limitations of the study, suggestions for further studies and recommendations. The conclusions made answers the research question of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

From the research findings presented in chapter four, the interviewees held the following positions: Ag. General Manager – Finance, General Manager – Planning and Design; General Manager – Construction and Electro-mechanical, Head of Business Unit, Chief Procurement Officer, Chief Internal Auditor and General Manager – Corporate and Legal Services. The respondents indicated that they had worked in their current position between 3 and 5 years.

The study findings revealed that NWCPC had experienced strategic changes on the past five years which included change of guard in the top leadership, working processes, culture change, automation, layoffs and change in management system. The implementation of the strategic changes according to the interviewees was not 100% successful. This meant that NWCPC was facing some challenges which are believed to have hindered the successful implementation of the strategic changes.

The study sought to establish the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change. It emerged that NWCPC faced many challenges in implementing strategic change which included: Failure by the NWCPC management in forming a group with enough power to lead and implement strategic change, failure of the top management to communicate about the proposed strategic change before implementation took place; failure to train staff on areas of strategic change, lack of team work, negative forces of inwardly focused cultures; lack of trust among the top and the middle management, paralyzing bureaucracy, negative effect by the work place politics, failure to provide the necessary resources, negative effect of arrogant attitude among the employees and the general fear of unknown.

5.3 Conclusion

From the study findings, the researcher concluded that National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation has been facing the following challenges in implementing the various strategic changes initiated in the last five years: lack of team work, low level of trust, workplace politics, poor allocation of resources, paralyzing bureaucracy, arrogant attitudes, general fear of unknown, poor communication, lack of training of staff on areas of strategic changes.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This study was a case study conducted at NWCPC in Kenya and therefore the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing strategic change might differ from the challenges faced by other State Corporations in Kenya. This means that the research findings cannot be generalized.

Strategic management being a pre-paradigmatic discipline, the study was faced with challenges of identifying universal paradigms guiding the research. The time allocated for conducting this study was too short and therefore the researcher could not have collected data through observation over a long period of time to assess impact of the challenges faced by NWCPC in implementing the strategic change.

The researcher, however, minimized these challenges by utilizing the exiting changing theories and conducting face to face interviews at the NWCPC Headquarters' with the management executive committee members who had substantive experience about the Corporation since they are directly involved in strategic planning and organization development and change.

5.5 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

To the management of National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation, the findings of this study would be of great importance since it informs the challenges faced in implementing the strategic change at the Corporation. The study findings should be addressed and come up with stringent measures to ensure that the established challenges are mitigated for effective and efficient implementation of the strategic change.

The management of NWCPC should particularly work to ensure that there is team work and high level of trust among the employees. Based on the research findings, it is recommended that the management of NWCPC should consider establishing a unit under planning and design department to lead in the strategic planning and organization development. There is also a need to engage a change agent whenever they want to implement strategic changes.

It is further evident from this research that an important tool in ensuring successful implementation of strategic change is that the employees receive feedback from leaders with regards to the strategic change process. It is therefore a recommendation that change leaders must ensure that feedback is given to the employees or those affected by the change. The study findings indicates that organizations must ensure that top management leadership and support is available for the effective implementation of strategic change and thus the researcher recommends that any activity related to implementation of strategic change must be led initially by senior managers who should also openly support the process.

To the policy makers, the study findings would be of great importance in guiding the development of policies and guidelines governing the implementation of strategic changes in the public sector. The study therefore should guide policy makers in formulating policies that would guide the public sector in the management of strategic change.

Researchers and academics should utilize this study as a basis upon which further studies on strategic change can be researched. The study has suggested areas for further research and therefore this study would be of great importance to the other researchers and academicians. The study findings would contribute to the existing body of knowledge on challenges of implementing strategic change in organizations by providing literature on challenges faced by National Water Conservation and Pipeline in implementing strategic change.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research

The study recommends that further research can be conducted on the leadership of strategic change as it was not the aim of this research to examine the concept of leadership. This would include research on the aspects of Chief Executive Officers involvement in the process of strategic change management.

Further research should be done to investigate the effectiveness of change management models utilized by state corporations in Kenya. The researcher also recommends a study to be undertaken to establish the strategic changes adopted by State Corporations in Kenya in response to the implementation of the new constitution.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What position do you currently hold?
2. How long have you served in your position?
3. In what areas has NWCPC experienced changes in the past five years?
4. In your opinion has the implementation of the strategic change been successful?
5. If your answer in the question above is No, what do you think hindered successful implementation of the strategic change?
6. Did the NWCPC management put together a group with enough power to lead and implement strategic change?
7. Did the top management communicate to the entire staff on the proposed strategic change before implementation took place?
8. Was training of staff on the areas of strategic change done?
9. Was teamwork used as a tool for implementing strategic change?
10. Did inwardly focused cultures at NWCPC have any effect in the implementation of strategic change?
11. Was trust used as tool for implementing strategic change?
12. What effect did the bureaucratic processes have in the implementation of strategic change at NWCPC?
13. How did workplace politics affect the implementation of strategic change at NWCPC?
14. Did NWCPC top management get full support of the middle management in the implementation of strategic change?
15. Did NWCPC top management provide all the necessary resources for the effective implementation of strategic change?
16. Did arrogant attitudes among the NWCPC staff have any impact on implementation of strategic change?
17. Did the general fear of unknown affect the effort of implementing strategic change at NWCPC?