

**MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC CHANGE AT ALIBHAI
SHARIFF & SONS LIMITED**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for any academic award in any other institution of higher learning.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To my Father, Philip and my mother Julianah without their caring support it would not have been possible. To my family for being very generous in their support of my academic pursuits and many of my friends who have contributed ideas, feedback and advice. Finally, I would like to thank my love, Dunn, for his support and encouragement; I could not have completed this effort without his assistance, tolerance, and enthusiasm.

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I would like to appreciate and thank the ABSS management for granting me the authority to conduct this research. My gratitude goes out to my respondents who spared their valued time from their tight schedules to accommodate and support my research initiative.

I thank God for giving me all the good things in life and to all the people who played a vital role in one way or another during my studies.

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Figure 2.4: The Change Management Model

ABSTRACT

Economic and social forces such as globalization, social/cultural, political/legal, competition, technology, liberalization, unstable financial markets and advance in technology are among the many business environmental factors driving the escalating pace of change evident within organizations today. The need for change early enough and pulling together the resources required human, technological, financial and information on time to implement the change is usually seen as differentiating core competence for competitive companies and the only way out for orgs to survive the onslaught of a changing environment. Determining the need for change and having resources to implement is one thing but the process of implementing the change is what determines the eventual out come of the whole change process. Therefore it is becoming evident that to put strategic change in a volatile environment, good strategic change management practices must be adopted.

The objectives of the study were to establish the strategic change management practices and the challenges of managing strategic change management practices at ABSS. The research design employed in this study was a case study method and collected primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using interview guide. The collected qualitative data from the interview guide was analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis generated qualitative report which was analyzed in continuous prose.

The study revealed that the management of ABSS has adopted strategic change management practices due to external forces such as competition, globalization, and technology among other factors. The need for the organization to implement major

corporate changes such as diversification in new products, adopt focus strategy in offering their products to specific groups in the markets and differentiation of their products to serve all the categories of the customers. Change can impact on issues such as the corporate culture, organizational culture, financial, communication, productivity, performance and the future outlook of the organization.

ABSS was currently responding to resistance to strategic change management practices through adoption of effective strategic top management communication and demonstrative and regular monitoring through encouraging the employees to be positive on change process as a priority, beneficial and is permanently present and that key information is not lost within the chain

The company has to sustain its profits despite threats emanating from reduced volumes and declining margins and competition from new entrants in the market though product innovation, market segmentation and other strategies. Managers should also be able to act as change agents, identify the need for change, open to good ideas for change and be able to successfully implement change.

ABSS should enter new market segments to develop new products so as to attract both current and potential customers. ABSS should also modify current products to match the needs and expectations of an increasing, more demanding and discerning clientele as well as expanding the range of products offered to current customers. It should enhance customer loyalty by intensifying and consolidation approach of walking with its customers.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The modern business environment is continuously changing. In this changing environment organizations have had to constantly adopt their activities and internal configurations to reflect the new external realities, failure to do so may put the future success of the organizations in jeopardy (Aosa, 1994). Change initiatives are driven by the need for organization to reposition themselves in the face of changing competitive conditions. Firms have to make organizational changes when business environment demand them (Vermeulin, Puranam & Gulati, 2010).

An effective change management system requires that the organization set a side and define the fundamentals that need to be changed. Which of the key business need to be changed? It needs developing crisp vision statements that define how the key business needs to be changed over time. This requires that the organization to have an excellent understanding of what its business is and how they operate. Change is inevitable and we must all embrace it if we are going to be successful in our challenging world (Harrington, 2006).

The Building and constructions industry is currently on an upward trend following rehabilitation and reconstruction of roads and bridges under the Kenya Urban Transport Infrastructure Program. With increase in population, opportunities exist in the construction of residential, commercial and industrial buildings, including prefabricated low-cost housing. Alibhai Shariff & Sons Ltd is a supplier of building and construction

materials made its reputation for not only stocking good quality products sourced from all over the world, but also providing excellent service.

1.1.1 Strategic Change Management

Strategic change management is a structured approach to shifting/transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. It is an organizational process aimed at helping employees to accept and embrace changes in their current business environment. As a multidisciplinary practice that has evolved as a result of scholarly research, strategic change management should begin with a systematic diagnosis of the current situation in order to determine both the need for change and the capability to change (Filicetti, 2007). The objectives, content, and process of change should all be specified as part of a change management plan. According to Mintzberg & Quinn (1991), strategy is the pattern or plan that integrates an organization's major goals, policies, and action sequences into a cohesive whole. Mintzberg contends that a well-formulated strategy help to marshal and allocate an organization's resources.

Successful companies are those that focus their efforts strategically. Strategy should be a stretch exercise, not a fit exercise. To meet and exceed customer satisfaction, the business team needs to follow an overall organizational strategy. A successful strategy adds value for the targeted customers over the long run by consistently meeting their needs better than the competition does. Change management is a structured and strategic approach to initiate and manage the change process in the organization structure and culture as well as

the individuals/teams behavior and attitude towards the change transition in the field of the business processes, technology implementation or any other policies of an enterprise.

The change management process involves the task of managing change using a ethical and professional approach with an appropriate knowledge and common sense with a control mechanism and layout of a well planned organizational communication system. On the Management part , It is imperative to estimate what impact a change will likely have on the employee behavior patterns/motivation, work processes, technological requirements and finances. Management strategies the change process by assessing the reactions of the human resource to seek their co-operation and accesses the financial as well as technology resources so as to make appropriate arrangements such that the change process is implemented as per the vision of the enterprise and can be appropriately monitored for effectiveness and adjusted, if and where necessary (Schartz, 1991).

Drucker (1969) coined the phrase Age of Discontinuity to describe the way change forces disruptions into the continuity of our lives. In an age of continuity attempts to predict the future by extrapolating from the past can be somewhat accurate. But according to Drucker, we are now in an age of discontinuity and extrapolating from the past is hopelessly ineffective. We cannot assume that trends that exist today will continue into the future. He identifies four sources of discontinuity: new technologies, globalization, cultural pluralism, and knowledge capital. Abell (1978) described strategic windows and stressed the importance of the timing (both entrance and exit) of any given strategy. This has led some strategic planners to build planned obsolescence into their strategies.

Pascale (1990) wrote that relentless change requires that businesses continuously reinvent themselves. His famous maxim is that nothing fails like success, by which he means that what was strength yesterday becomes the root of weakness today, we tend to depend on what worked yesterday and refuse to let go of what worked so well for us in the past. Prevailing strategies become self-confirming. In order to avoid this trap, businesses must stimulate a spirit of inquiry and healthy debate. They must encourage a creative process of self renewal based on constructive conflict. There is no one universal approach to strategic change management.

1.1.2 Building & Construction Industry in Kenya

Kenya has a well-developed building and construction industry. Quality engineering, building and architectural design services are readily available. The industry is currently on an upward trend following rehabilitation and reconstruction of roads and bridges under the Kenya Urban Transport Infrastructure Program. With increase in population, opportunities exist in the construction of residential, commercial and industrial buildings, including prefabricated low-cost housing. Extensive opportunities for investment exist particularly in the area of upgrading slums and informal settlements, urban renewal, construction of middle and low income housing, manufacture and supply of building materials and components.

Possibilities also exist through participation in concessioning and dualing of the Mombasa-Malaba-Busia highway on the North Corridor Programme. Transport linkages

are set to be established with the Northern neighbors of Sudan and Ethiopia to open up markets for Kenyan goods. These initiatives provide opportunities for the provision of credit to construction companies. Some of the recent project opportunities are road construction and rehabilitation of Thika road super highway, urban housing development by private and public sector to meet the rising housing demand. Customer relationship management strategies have been widely adopted by B&CC in Kenya. This is in line with upholding customers as a valued business asset.

1.1.3 Alibhai Shariff & Sons Ltd

Established in 1927 in Nairobi, the first store was located in a tin hut on the then Bazaar Street, currently Biashara Street, and was the first store of its kind. Over the years, Alibhai Shariff & Sons Ltd, A supplier of building and construction materials made its reputation for not only stocking good quality products sourced from all over the world, but also providing excellent service. The company has always put its emphasis on quality, and it also has a reputation for offering great value for money. The core business of importing and distributing superior quality has not changed but expanded. They remain relevant; ABSS has consistently stocked the latest innovations & latest technology products. Building & maintenance mix of products and related services are specially designed to assist professionals, developers, facility managers and fundi spat up buildings countrywide.

Alibhai Shariff has an ultra-modern 70,000 sq ft showroom located strategically on Mombasa road -a booming business destination in Nairobi. They have experienced consultants in specialized fields like sanitary ware, wall finishes available at hand to advice you. Combined with over 87 years experience you are assured of advice on the best solutions for all projects -big or small. On top of emerging trends their partnerships are carefully chosen to ensure that they continuously stay ahead with new products, new developments, technological advancements and innovations. A good example of which, is Twyfords® and their revolutionary water saving solution.

The wide products range include Sanitary ware, bathroom accessories, tiles & flooring, electrical & accessories, general hardware, professional tools, construction materials , adhesives & decorative plasters, homecare & gardening equipment pumps & compressors, generators, swimming pool accessories, safety equipment security and building supplies. Some beautiful quality spaces ABSS has helped create include Olesereni Hotel, United Nations, Bamburi Special Projects, Serena Hotel Kilaguni Lodge Aga Khan Education Centre, Mombasa and Kenya Airports Authority among others. They balance their product & service offering to Institutions has been tailored to solve the balancing act between quality, cost and time.

1.2 Research problem

The need for strategic change management arises out of the need for organization to adapt to shifting conditions (Khamis, 2008). It is therefore important for managers to

appreciate where the greatest opportunities and threats lie at any time and to focus attention on those areas. Political, economic, social and technological changes do impose to their institutions to enable them deliver on their mandate efficiently and effectectively.

Changes in the structure of the economy due to globalization require that the organizations make changes to align with emerging issues (Nandwa, 2010). Strategic change management arises out of the need for organizations to position themselves to exploit opportunities and deal with threats in the environment because the environment is dynamic, these opportunities and threats shift all the time. Organizations seek to reposition themselves in order to create new competences and capacities to exploit and deal with new situations. Strategic change is inevitable and needs to be managed skillfully for its benefits to be realized.

Competitive market conditions and evolution of B&CC have necessitated adoption of change efforts and the need for a more objective look at institutional role ABSS is no exception, since its inception in 1927, ABSS has had frequent changes at corporate and strategy levels. This has led to both continuous changes of the corporate governance structures and discontinuity in policies and strategic direction.

Several studies have been carried out on change management in Kenya. Nyamache (2003) revealed the need for efficiency, economy, environmental protection, effectiveness, evaluation, ethics and the market as major forces of change in the public sector. Indeed, some scholars have reviewed aspects of strategic change, albeit in differing context. Bett (1995) found that due to economic reforms in the country, firms in

the dairy industry made substantial changes in the change management in order to survive the turbulent environment. This finding is supported by Njau (2000) who notes that there is need to change when environmental conditions change.

In the light of this it was important to find out what are the approaches to managing change at ABSS and what the challenges are of managing change given the competition in the B&CC .This leaves a gap in knowledge as it relates to the overall drivers of strategic change management in organizations. As such, this research sought to fill this gap in knowledge by researching on organizational change. This research sought to answer what are the strategic change management practices at ABSS?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study had two main objectives

- To establish the strategic change management practices at ABSS
- To establish the challenges of managing strategic change management practices at

ABSS

1.4 Value of the study

The study will be useful to the management and staff of ABSS having been triggered by the inherent need to benchmark and to re-align itself with competition in the market. They will be able to recognize full potential resultant from adoption of appropriate strategic changes.

This study will also be of importance to similar organizations undergoing change process or that seek to improve organizations performance through strategic change management practices as it will be a source of information on strategic change management practices in the B&CC

For academicians and other researchers wishing to carry out further research, it will contribute to the existing literature in the field of strategic change management. The study will be a source of reference material for future researchers on other related topics; it would also help other academicians who undertake the same topic in their studies

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews different perceptions on strategic change by other scholars, and approaches to strategic change management, it also analyses managing change, the models of change and challenges for managing change. Change occurs mainly because organizations are open systems, must frequently cope with shifts in key environment domains. Thus organizations must change to cope with changes generated in their internal and external environments (Kagwe, 2008).

2.2 Strategic Change Management

Change management is a structured approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. In project management, change management refers to a project management process where changes to a project are formally introduced and approved (Filicetti, 2007). The field of change management grew from the recognition that organizations are composed of people. And the behaviors of people make up the outputs of an organization

A number of strategists use scenario planning techniques to deal with change. The way Schartz (1991) put it is that strategic outcomes cannot be known in advance so the sources of competitive advantage cannot be predetermined. The fast changing business environment is too uncertain for us to find sustainable value in formulas of excellence or competitive advantage. Instead, scenario planning is a technique in which multiple outcomes can be developed, their implications assessed, and their likeliness of occurrence evaluated.

Moncrieff (1999) also stresses strategy dynamics. He recognized that strategy is partially deliberate and partially unplanned. The unplanned element comes from two sources: emergent strategies (result from the emergence of opportunities and threats in the environment) and Strategies in action (ad hoc actions by many people from all parts of the organization).

Managing change is a continuous process of aligning an organization with its marketplace, by being more efficient and effective than competitors, and continuously collecting feedback from within the organization (L. A. Berger et al., 1994). Specifically, change management examines external and internal conditions affecting an organization and uses skills, knowledge and strategies to effectively plan and implement change as well as support continuous improvement following change ("Managing Change," 2003).

Change management is an effective tool for reducing motivational, incentive and environmental barriers while defining and improving the structure of an organization.

Managing change is a matter of transforming states within an organization, specifically, from a problem or opportunity state to the solution state. An organization chooses to implement a new method or system in a planned and managed or systematic fashion (Nickols, 2000). This is an "anticipative or proactive response" change. Either internal events within the organization or the external environment triggers the shift in change.

An organization is forced to make changes or implement a new system based on the external factors such as laws, societal issues or competitors. This is known as a "knee-jerk or reactive response" change (Nickols, 2000). The organization has little or no

control and must change in order to stay competitive and in business. Kotter (1995) argues that many change projects fail because victory is declared too early. Real change runs deep. Quick wins are only the beginning of what needs to be done to achieve long-term change for improvements. Each success provides an opportunity to build on right and identify what it can improve.

2.3 Models of change

The punctuated equilibrium model of organizational transformation is advanced by (Romarelli & Tushman, 1994). It depicts organizations as evolving through relatively long periods of stability (equilibrium periods) in their basic patterns of activity that are punctuated by relatively short bursts of fundamental change (revolutionary periods). Revolutionary periods substantially disrupt established activity patterns and install the basis for new equilibrium periods (Burnes, 2000).

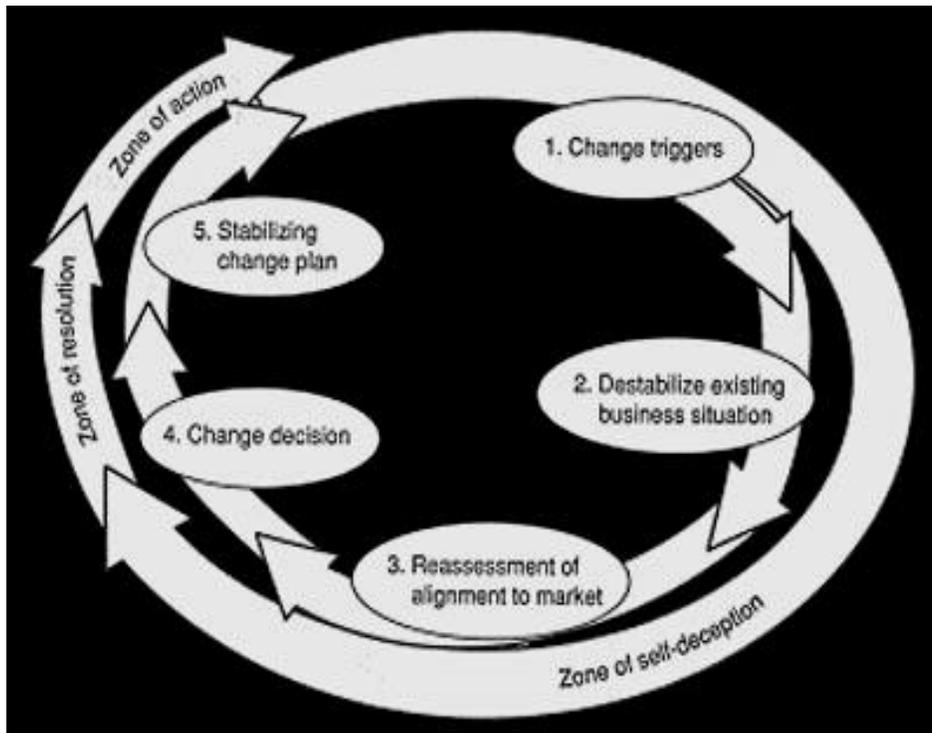
The continuous transformation model of change is another argument put forward by proponents of this model is that in order to survive, organizations must develop the ability to change themselves continuously in a fundamental manner. The underpinning rationale for the continuous transformation model is that the environment in which organizations operate is changing and will continue to change rapidly, radically and unpredictably. Only by continuous transformation will organizations be able to keep aligned with their environment and thus survive.

During the 1990's, John Kotter studied the progress of over 100 companies who were trying to "Remake" themselves. He found that there were some general lessons that could

be learned about managing change, and in particular how to avoid big errors. His findings have been translated into eight steps. The first four steps may be likened to Kurt Lewin's 'unfreezing' process, helping to defrost a hardened status quo. They are: Establishing a sense of urgency, creating the guiding coalition, Developing a vision and strategy and communicating the change vision. The next stages introduce new practices: Empowering a broad base of people to take action generating short term wins consolidating gains and producing even more change. The final stage is required to embed changes within organizational culture that is, institutionalizing new practices.

Kotter asserts that all of these stages must be worked through in order, and to completion. Skipping even a single step or getting too far ahead without a solid base almost always creates problems. Failing to reinforce earlier stages results in the sense of urgency dissipating or the guiding coalition breaking up, without the follow through which takes place in the final step, the organization may never get to the finish line and make changes stick. Change management is a procedural based process. It starts with the detection of a change trigger and ends with the implementation of a new strategy within the organization (see Figure 2.4). Below is the complete lifecycle of change management.

Figure 2.4: The Change Management Model



Source: Berger, L. A., Sikora, M. J., & Berger, D. R. (1994). *The change management handbook: A road map to corporate transformation*. Burr Ridge, IL & New York, NY: Irwin Professional Publishing.

2. 4 Challenges of strategic change management

Deciding how to change an organization is a complex matter, not least since it disrupts the status quo and poses a threat prompting employees to resist attempts to alter work relationships and procedures. There are many managerial challenges in change management which require very specific and talented type of individual to successfully cope with them. It will require an individual who will motivate the different types of

people and character in a way that ensures the change management process proceeds as smoothly as possible (Rukunga, 2003)

The first managerial challenge likely to be faced in change management is getting the staff or employees of the company to buy in to the entire change program. It is vital that those who will be most affected by the change are made to see what benefits the change will bring to the business and to their daily working lives in the long term. If this initial managerial challenge can be successfully overcome, all future challenges are considerably more manageable.

A similar cognitive approach was described by Heller (1998) who used organization economics to explain resistance to change in terms of the evolution of organization routines. They suggested that organizations adapt operational, generic routines because these routines were initially accepted and implemented as the most efficient ways to achieve organizational goals. Changing routines normally result in a temporary decrease in production as the organization learns and adopts the new routines. The resulting effect is that organizations resist changing routines unless the superior benefits of new ones are evident to a broad spectrum of organizational stakeholders.

Senge (1990) also used a cognitive approach to resistance to change when he suggested that resistance to change is not capricious or mysterious organizations feedback systems resist change because they are attempting to meet objectives of old routines that are not relevant to the post change process. Change will be resisted until new objectives are set that require new routines. Kotter (1996) also advocated viewing resistance to change.

The second managerial challenge faced by those dealing with change management will be in identifying and implementing any training needs which will be appropriate to employees. This could be as a result simply of new administration procedures which have to be effectively communicated or it could be more technical in that training is required in new technology resources or software systems which are to be implemented in a business. A training needs analysis will have to be conducted for every role that is performed within the business and the appropriate practical activities scheduled and arranged. This could be a time when hands on management are particularly important to encourage individuals perhaps having difficulty with grasping the intricacies of technical systems.

Change effort may also fail if the pressure to overwhelm the opposing forces does not persist until the change effort is completed and all the necessary elements of refreezing Lewin (1947) have been accomplished. Lewin suggested that the change process requires unfreezing existing processes and procedures making the change and then refreezing the organization with new processes and procedures that support the change to prevent the organization from returning to the pre change state. Efforts to overwhelm resistance to change may pressure a system to operate at disequilibrium if the necessary processes and procedures are not in place. Operating at a point of disequilibrium requires greater resources than operating at equilibrium (Senge, 1990). The organizations ability to operate at disequilibrium over time depends on leaders' attention and willingness to allocate the necessary resources consistently and continuously (Lewin, 1951)

A change in the leaders' agenda or a change in leadership can permit forces promoting change to return to prior levels or lower allowing the resisting forces to have the upper hand. This loss of political pressure can occur anywhere in the change process because irrational and political resistance to change never dissipates (Kotter, 1996). When the training of the organizations personnel has been completed, the next managerial challenge will be to verify that the training received by each individual has been sufficient and successful.

This is the best approached not as setting any form of formal examination which can prove daunting but simply by taking through procedures and checking understanding in a conversational fashion. It is a fact that changes bring hiccups and very often large scale and unanticipated problems. The principle managerial challenge in this aspect of change management will be a balance reassuring the staff with ensuring the cause of the problem is identified and eliminated in a timely manner.

Christensen (1997) took the position that great companies can fail precisely because they do everything right since the capabilities of the organization also defines its disabilities. Christensen's thesis is that outstanding companies lose their market leadership when confronted with disruptive technology. He called the approach to discovering the emerging markets for disruptive technologies agnostic marketing, i.e., marketing under the implicit assumption that no one - not the company, not the customers - can know how or in what quantities a disruptive product can or will be used before they have experience using it.

A number of strategists use scenario planning techniques to deal with change. The way Schartz (1991) put it is that strategic outcomes cannot be known in advance so the sources of competitive advantage cannot be predetermined. The fast changing business environment is too uncertain for us to find sustainable value in formulas of excellence or competitive advantage. Instead, scenario planning is a technique in which multiple outcomes can be developed, their implications assessed, and their likeliness of occurrence evaluated.

Schermerhorn (2005) maintain that when employees resist change they are protecting/defending something they value and which seems threatened by the attempt at change. reasons for resistance include, fear of the unknown, lack of good information, fear of loss of security, no reasons to change, fear of loss of power, lack of resources, bad timing habit.

There is no right or wrong model to change management. It is not an exact science. However through the ongoing research and studies, a clearer picture of what it takes to lead a change effort effectively will continue to emerge. It is important that we must continually review and consider how our changing environment will require fresh insight on the appropriate change process.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provided a discussion of the research methodology that was used in this study. Research methodology as a specific plan for studying the research problem and constituting the blue print for the proposed collection, measurement and analysis of data .It discussed the research design especially with respect to the choice of the design. It also discussed data collection as well as data analysis methods employed in the study.

3.2 Research Design

The case study method was adopted with the intent of creating a deep understanding of change management at ABSS. Case studies according to Merriam (1988) are used to study a phenomenon and investigate processes or causes of events in present time without manipulating the relevant variables. It aims to get detailed information in order to find out how ABSS was managing change and the challenges it was encountering.

Based on information required for the study, a case study was more appropriate design since it gave a full contextual analysis of events. Case study is a powerful form of qualitative analysis that involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, irrespective of what types of unit is under study.

3.3 Data Collection

This case study focused on carrying out an intensified study on the approaches to change management and the challenges encountered. To achieve this, discussions and interviews were conducted and an interview guide used (see appendix 1). The procedure involved personal interviews which helped determine the approaches to change and challenges.

Ten people were interviewed and they included top level managers who managed the overall organizational goals, strategies, operating policies and represent the organization to other external environment such as suppliers and middle managers who were primarily responsible for implementing policies and plans developed by the top managers supervising and coordinating the activities.

3.4 Data Analysis

The content analysis technique was used to analyze data. Content analysis is used in making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of information (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). It does not limit the respondents on answers and has potential for generating more information with more details. This approach has been used previously in similar research papers.

The qualitative method can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind a phenomenon study. The data was first sorted out around key central questions and used pattern matching and explanation building techniques an examination of the data was done to see whether it fits or failed to fit to the research question. Content analysis gave a clear understanding of the respondents answer.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS/ FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings, analysis, interpretation and presentation of the study on the strategic management practices at ABSS. The data was collected using an interview guide. The interview guides were designed in line with the objectives of the study and were used to collect qualitative data.

4.2 Respondents profile

The respondents were drawn from middle and senior level management of ABSS. The respondents were long serving in the organization and had a wealth of knowledge in the study of ABSS strategic responses to its operating environment. They exhibited a good grasp of issues under study, having been actively involved in strategic change management in the organization. The respondents have on average worked for the company for more than five years.

4.3 Strategic change management practices

Environment influences the operation of ABSS in terms of strategic alignment. From the findings, majority of the respondents indicated that change in external environment influences the firm to adapt to external environment. The respondents indicate that rapid and constant changes in the environment require appropriate response from management in ABSS in deciding upon appropriate original responses to the environmental changes. The study further found that environmental factors make ABSS to adopt new strategies

so as to remain relevant in the face of financial distress for the purpose of breaking the critical situations. This implies that the environment influences the performance of ABSS as its strategic adoption to volatile markets make the company to implement major corporate changes such as diversification in new products, adopt focus strategy in offering their products to specific groups in the markets and differentiating the products to serve all the categories of the customers.

The study investigated the processes that were employed to ensure significant changes are implemented in an orderly manner at ABSS. From the findings, the respondents indicated that the management of ABSS created awareness by developing an informal network of relation to get information and commitment, solidifying progress and integrating process and integrating processes and interests, using formal analytical techniques for establishing, measuring and rewarding key initiatives to ensure significant changes are implemented.

The strategic change management that has taken place at ABSS over the last years included established structured methodology for responding to changes in the business environment such as fluctuations in the economy, or a threat from a competitor for example offering of effective products in the market formulation and retailing at cheaper prices. The study further found that the company had established coping mechanism for responding to change in the work place such as new policies and technologies.

The study requested the respondents to describe the pace of the strategic change that has taken place at ABSS from the findings, majority of the respondents indicated that the management of ABSS has acted swiftly to change in the market due to influence of

competitors in the markets, political and government influence, customer need by offering products that create competitive advantage by supplying quality products from Germany, South Africa and bargaining on excellent customer service.

The respondents concurred that planned approach to change management was dominant in the initial stages. The top bottom approach, where change activities are decided at the top. Emergent approach emphasis is on the four feature in the change management; structures, culture organization learning and managerial behavior. This creates an enabling environment for the organization to be change ready.

The study sought to know the impact of strategic change management in the ABSS. From the findings the respondents indicated that strategic change management helps the management of the company to recognize power of human dynamics in a change process, recruiting qualified staff. It also acts as a map for guiding action and helping in staying on course. The study further found that strategic change management helps the company members develop a relationship necessary to maximize effectiveness of change effort.

The need for performance improvement influences the strategic change process. It was found that the level of employee involvement in the process, technological advancement, training of employees strategic choice influence strategic change in a company. This clearly implies that the above influence strategic change in ABSS so as to suit and continue achieving high performance and create competitive edge over its rival in the market.

The study sought to know the major outcomes of strategic change management at ABSS. From the findings, the major outcomes of the strategic change in management adopted by the company were better management practices of which include improved and wide range of products, for instance Conmix used in constructions and Fischer products for anchoring and fixings. The study also found that due to improvement of strategic change management the company has been able to improve in efficiency leading to improved supply and product development management.

The study sought to know the major successes of ABSS strategic change management process. From the findings, majority of the respondents indicated that the firm members have seen the importance of decisions right and information flow in driving effectiveness and how the company succeed or fail in the execution of the strategy.

The company has adopted a narrow organization structure with departments focusing on each market segment for effective management of its customers in terms of market performance, The company has continued to be one of the top players in the BCC supplies industry and it has consistently defended its market share over the years due to adoption of focus on profitability and efficiency in service delivery.

The respondents also indicated that the company has invested heavily in quality equipment and ongoing training of the personnel to adapt to effectively due to change in technology. From the findings most of the respondents indicated that the company has opened branches across the country to reach as many customers as possible. Developed effective marketing strategies and offering better training of marketing staff to effectively market the products of the company in more strategic approach.

The study sought to investigate whether the strategic change management practices are affected by the firm structure. From the findings the respondents indicated that the failure of the organization structure to design according to the needs of the strategy and the relationships among various positions and activities are not well prescribed, the strategic change management does not succeed. The study further found that the lack of organizational structure to fit the strategy affect the strategy implementation. This implies that there is need to take a very close look at the organization structure and evaluate it if supports your strategy.

4.4 Challenges to strategic change management

The study requested the respondents to indicate the resistance to strategic change management practices faced at ABSS. From the findings, respondents indicated that the firm members resisted change due to fear of unknown outcome, the possibility of economic insecurity, threats to social relationships and failure to recognize the need for change. This implies that firm members restrict the meaning of change management to the need to improve organization performance.

Management styles influenced strategic change management due to development of strategic intentions and conflicting priorities, formulation of an effective senior management team, improving vertical communication and enabling effective coordination among functions. The study further found that managerial decisions cause changes of environment conditions whereby they result to participants in the environment

in order to legitimize their actions and obtain the managers strategic decisions at their disposal is partial so as to foresee trends in the changing environment influence strategic change in the company, with regard to other environmental aspects like technology , more efficient actions are actually carried out, such as forming associations and attending to professional publications to enhance better management in the company for effective and efficient strategic change management practices to be adopted for better performance.

In response to resistance to strategic change, management should include effective reforms, top management communication, training, rewarding and positive reinforcement, demonstrative and regular monitoring. The respondents also indicated that the management encourages the employees to see the change process as a priority, beneficial and is permanently present and that the key information is not lost within the chain. The study further found that the management of the company carries out training through seminars and workshops adopt an effective and attractive motivation programs, engaging the staff in strategic decision making and rewarding those staff who have exemplary performance.

4.5 Discussion

The objective of the study was to establish the strategic change management practices and the challenges of managing strategic change management practices at ABSS. The study found out that change in the external environment results to the building and

construction industry especially ABSS to make changes to align with emerging issues. According to Nandwa (2010) strategic change management arises out of the need for organizations to position themselves to exploit opportunities and deal with threats in the environment because the environment is dynamic, these opportunities and threats shift all the time. Organizations seek to reposition themselves in order to create new competences and capacities to exploit and deal with new situations.

Change is inevitable and needs to be managed skillfully for its benefits to be realized. The study too revealed that managing change is a matter of transforming states within an organization, specifically, from a problem or opportunity state to the solution state. An organization chooses to implement a new method or system in a planned and managed or systematic fashion.

The study presents findings similar to other studies and is thus consistent to previous studies Gathua (2006) on her study contends that the need for performance improvement influences the strategic change process. It was found that the level of employee involvement in the process, technological advancement, training of employees strategic choice influence strategic change in a company. This clearly implies that the above influence strategic change in ABSS so as to suit and continue achieving high performance and create competitive edge over its rival.

Nyamache (2003) revealed the need for efficiency, economy, environmental protection, effectiveness, evaluation, ethics and the market as major forces of change in the public sector. Indeed, some scholars have reviewed aspects of strategic change. Bett (1995) found that due to economic reforms in the country, firms made substantial changes in the

change management in order to survive the turbulent environment. This finding is supported by Njau (2000) who notes that there is need to change when environmental conditions change.

The study revealed that an organization must adopt core values in all aspect of work and therefore must adapt to changes. Communication on key aspects of change benefit associated with the change form a significant part in appreciation of strategic change management practices by the organizational. Senior management must continue to communicate and possibly involve the staff in drawing up prospective strategic changes in order to remain competitive.

As a prerequisite to the successful strategic change management both financial support and human resources are necessary. A commitment on the availability of these resources should be attained before rolling out strategic change program. Management has the responsibility of ensuring that the entire process is well managed. Organization structure and capacity is not adequate to carry the strategic change management through organization re-engineering in terms of human resource knowledge base, morale, commitment & process rationalization has to be carried out.

A change in the leaders' agenda or a change in leadership can permit forces promoting change to return to prior levels or tower allowing the resisting forces to have the upper hand. This loss of political pressure can occur anywhere in the change process because irrational and political resistance to change never dissipates (Kotter, 1996).

There are many managerial challenges in change management which require very specific and talented type of individual to successfully cope with them. It will require an individual who will motivate the different types of people and character in a way that ensures the change management process proceeds as smoothly as possible (Rukunga, 2003)

Schermerhorn (2005) maintain that when employees resist change they are protecting/defending something they value and which seems threatened by the attempt at change. reasons for resistance include, fear of the unknown, lack of good information, fear of loss of security, no reasons to change, fear of loss of power, lack of resources, bad timing habit. He argues that with use of appropriate change strategies, an organization can achieve the desired results effectively and with minimal resistance. Further noted that the relevant departments should be involved to facilitate sustainability and adapt improvement of the process.

Christensen (1997) took the position that great companies can fail precisely because they do everything right since the capabilities of the organization also defines its disabilities. Christensen's thesis is that outstanding companies lose their market leadership when confronted with disruptive technology.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provided a summary of the findings from chapter four and also gives the conclusion and recommendations of the study based on the objectives of the study. The objectives of this study were to establish the strategic change management practices at ABSS and the challenges of managing strategic change management practices at ABSS.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The first objective of the study was to establish the strategic change management practices at ABSS. The environment influence the operations of changes ABSS in terms of strategic alignment. From the findings, change in the external environment influences the firm to adapt to the external environment. The respondents indicated that rapid and constant changes in the external environment require appropriate responses from management in ABSS and changes the strategy in response to the environmental changes.

The respondents concurred that planned approach to change management was dominant in the initial stages. The top bottom approach, where change activities are decided at the top. Emergent approach emphasis is on the four feature in the change management; structures, culture organization learning and managerial behavior. This creates an enabling environment for the organization to be change ready.

The study further found that environment factors make ABSS to adopt new strategies in the face of financial distress for the purpose of breaking the critical situations. This implies that environment influences the performance of ABSS as its strategic adoptions to volatile markets make the company to implement major corporate changes such as diversification in new products, adopt ABSS strategy in offering their products to specific groups in the markets and differentiation of their products to serve all the categories of the customers. This concurred with Thompson and Strickland (1999) who indicated that with important changes taking place in the social fabric within which organizations operate are vital forces impacting organizations within the context of their business operations.

The management of ABSS creates awareness by developing an informal network of relation to get information and commitment, solidifying progress and integrity processes and interest, using formal analytical techniques for establishing; measuring and rewarding key initiatives to ensure significant changes are implemented. This was in line with Dent and Barry (2004) adopting different strategic approaches. It has become competitive in the market. The study established the strategic change management that has taken place at ABSS over the last years structuring methodology for responding to changes in the ABSS environment such as threat from a competitor like Tile and Carpet centre offering of effective products.

The study found out that the importance of selecting solutions to address issues that confronts the company and this enabled the company to adopt very well in the

competitive market .The study found that the benefits of strategic change management in ABSS are helping the management of the company to recognize the power of human dynamics in a change process recruiting qualified staff .It also acts as a map for guiding action and helping stay on course rather.

Strategic change management helps the company members develop a relationship necessary to maximize effectiveness of the change effort, products that are in need in the market supply create a competitive edge over its rival in the market by supplying quality products. The study further found that benefits of strategic management practices in the company also includes new and well implemented strategies, acquisition that lead to achieved expected synergies, ABSS re-engineering leading to short and less costly processes; downsizing that lower costs and quality programs that deliver expected outcomes.

The study established factors that favor the strategic change processes .In ABSS included need for performance improvement cost reduction and communication means influence favor the strategic change process. The study further found that level of staff involvement in the process technological advancement and training of the employee's strategic choice and employee institution influence strategic change in the company.

ABSS was responding to changing environment through adoption of a narrow organization structure. With departments focusing on each management segment for effective management of its customers, becoming top players in building and construction suppliers industry and adopting hi technology and of focusing on portability and efficiency. The study also established that the company had opened branches across

the country to reach as many customers as possible, developed effective marketing strategies and offering better training of marketing staff to effectively market the product of the company in more strategic approach.

Management structure affected strategic change management through designing according to the needs of the strategy and the relationships among various positions and activities unwell prescribed the strategic change management does not succeed. The study also found that lack of original structure to fit the strategy affect the strategic implementation. The study found that ABSS staff resisted change due to fear of unknown outcome due to adoption of strategic change, the possibility of economic insecurity, threats to social relationships and failure to recognize the need for change and fear of loss of their sources of income.

The second objective was to establish the challenges of managing strategic change management. It was observed that there was resistance to change amongst some staff of ABSS. The organization must adopt core values in all aspect of work and therefore must adapt to changes. Some staff were found to be adamant to accept change processes. Inadequate communication of changes in the institution was attributed to rigidity to change by staff members. Decision making sometimes tend to take rather long and stretching process. The challenge of delays in decision making usually occurred due to long procedures followed. Strategic change management practices are inevitable for any organization to survive. Management has the responsibility of ensuring that the entire process is well managed. Organization structure and capacity is not adequate to carry the strategic change management through organization re-engineering in terms of human

resource knowledge base, morale, commitment & process rationalization has to be carried out.

ABSS was currently responding to resistance to strategic change management practices through adoption of effective strategic top management communication and demonstrative and regular monitoring through encouraging the employees to be positive on change process as a priority, beneficial and is permanently present and that key information is not lost within the chain. The study further found that the management of the company carry staff training through seminars and workshops, adopt effective and attractive motivation programs, engaging the staff in strategic decision making and rewarding those staff that has exemplary performance.

5.3 Recommendations

From the data collected the levels of resistance is very low and the willingness to adopt to the changes is quite high given the fact that most staff can see the need for change from their daily operations.

It was further noted that the relevant ABSS departments should be involved to facilitate sustainability and adapt improvements of the process. It was also noted that lessons learned during the process should be documented. Project reviews should be coordinated by programme coordination team in collaboration with the respective. Consultants and other stake holders to ensure everyone was in the loop

The study also identified that for any change to be achieved its intended goals managers should have the following: identify the change required, determine the major issues, identify and assess the acceptability by key stakeholders, win the support of the key individuals which was in the area strength for ABSS. It's also important to ensure the possible obstacles are identified in advance. It is important that a buffer of resources is maintained to cater for sudden needs and changes in the operating environment.

Managers should also be able to act as change agents, identify the need for change, open to good ideas for change and be able to successfully implement change. This study also identify major strides for acquiring desired results in change management as having to consider each party involved will be affected, involve all the change programs ,consult and inform frequently be firm but flexible ,make controversial changes as gradual as possible ,monitor the change and develop a change philosophy.

With use of appropriate change strategies, an organization can achieve the desired results affectively and with minimal resistance. ABSS has no the whole adopted change management approaches. There is still need to improve involvement of staff and relevant stakeholders from the initiation of reforms to the implementation .In order to forester acceptance, commitment and full realization of the ABSS vision and goals.

This study can be used by academicians to conduct further research on approaches to strategic change management in other firms in BCC industry. ABSS can use the study to improve change management approaches in future and to minimize challenges encountered in order to ensure smooth implementation of change.

The company has to sustain its profits and remain profitable despite threats emanating from reduced volumes and declining margins and competition from new entrants in the market. Product innovation, customers are increasingly demanding solutions and not just products. Personalized services will go a long way in addressing individual customer requirements. ABSS may have to provide tailor made services due to the industry's increase in customer sophistication. This will assist in addressing instances where the customer shift to other institutions that accord them facilities that are lacking at ABSS.

Market segmentation; ABSS should enter new market segments to develop new products so as to attract both current and potential customers. ABSS should also modify current products to match the needs and expectations of an increasing, more demanding and discerning clientele as well as expanding the range of products offered to current customers. It should enhance customer loyalty by intensifying and consolidation approach of walking with its customers.

Market awareness needs to be created; a critical aspect of to the success depends strongly on customer awareness. People do business with those they can identify with at corporate level and most importantly at product level. To create trust, ABSS should embrace an aggressive marketing strategy comprising advertising and promotional activities

5.4 Limitations of the study

The main limitation of the study was inability to include more organizations .This study only was limited to a case study and would have included more B&CC suppliers companies so as to provide a more broad based analysis. However, resource constraints placed this limitation.

The study also face that challenge of time resources limiting the study form collecting information for the study particularly getting the respondents to interview due to their tight schedule .The study also faced challenges on distorted responses due to sensitivity of the information required for the study to achieve its objective.

The study was further limited due to generalizing the study as it only focuses on a case study of ABSS. The responses were based on the judgments of the interviews and this could be subjective. In addition to this change management is large area thus not all aspects could be considered.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

The study investigated the strategy management practices at ABSS of further study should be carried to investigate the effects of strategic management practices on the performance of ABSS .The study suggest that a study should also be done on the approaches to strategic change management in other BBC and thus will contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by these other companies in this industry.

The study would also guide organizations on the viability of assessing the environments in which they operate. Given that the study indicates significant contribution from the environment towards strategic change management at ABSS, most institutions may be facing similar challenges which are worth undertaking further research to find out levels of contribution to their success or failure.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1-Interview Guide

SECTION A: General Information

1. What is your position in the organization?
2. How long have you worked in the organization?

SECTION B: Strategic Change

3. Have there been any changes in the organization in the past?
4. Have the changes affected your operation; please Indicate the cause of change?
5. How is your organization structured?
6. Where the changes anticipated?
7. How did you handle the change?
8. How did the change impact on the general performance of the organization?
9. What are your views on the changing practices that were undertaken?
10. Were you part of the change management implementation?
11. Who was the change leader?
12. Was there resistance in the process of implementing the change, how did you handle them?
13. Were there changes anticipated and were you prepared and informed about the change?
14. Did you have short term targets to monitor the changes? Please provide details

15. What steps have you taken to ensure that the change momentum is achieved and maintained?
16. What lessons have you learned from change management so far?
17. Where those who achieved such targets rewarded?
18. Has the change programs affected structure, systems, processes, services or behaviors?
19. As a change agent of ABSS'S strategy, what would you list as ABSS position in terms of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
20. Do you have any recommendations on how changes should be?
21. What would you do differently as part of the strategic management team in ensuring the organizations strategies are aligned to the organizations objectives?

Thank you for your cooperation