

Change as a Tool for Enhancing the Promotion and Advancement of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

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Received: 16 September 2020; **Accepted:** 14 October 2020; **Published:** 17 November 2020

Abstract:

The rate of competition in the education industry in Nigeria is moving at a jet speed due to the recent policies of the government to liberalize the sector. This has made educational administrators to emphasize on the importance of establishing institutional readiness for change and have crafted various strategies for creating it because successful management of change is crucial to any institution to survive in the present highly and continuously depressing economy. Change management is a planned tool for the transition of individuals, groups and organizations from existing position, usually precarious to a required better future state. Thus, managing a change process is as important as change itself. Therefore, this study examines empirically change management effects on institutional performance of Nigerian Federal Colleges of Education. In conducting this study, a total of 400 members of staff of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta was randomly selected from a staff population of 800. Using stratified random sampling technique for data collection. Four hypotheses were advanced to guide the study and data collected for the study were analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis. The result revealed that a change in strategy has a significant effect on institutional performance and that a change in structure has a significant effect on institutional performance. The result also shows that changes in system through expansion have a significant effect on institutional performance. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made that governing councils and management teams in Nigeria Federal Colleges of Education should be pro-active to changes in such a knowledge-based environment so as to experience smooth implementation of such changes, as they come. Therefore, the study concludes that nothing remains static in the world of knowledge as change is the only thing that is constant. Educational administrators as agents of change should therefore successfully manage the human side of change in order to avoid resistance to change using the appropriate change strategies, thus, enhancing overall performance of the colleges.

Keywords:

Change Management, Institutions, Organizational Performance

1. Introduction

The education industry is an integral segment of overall economic system of any nation susceptible to changes. In order to remain relevant, educational system must be flexible to quickly react and adapt to challenges. Due to the close interaction and relationship between employees and students, there can be direct effects on an institutional performance when internal and external changes occur. [15] state that rapid and unpredictable changes in students' attitudes make the need to manage changes inevitable and that the ability to manage is the key to the long-term survival of institutions. Also, [12] claims that factors such as uncertain economic and political conditions, changes in social attitudes, fierce competition, and governmental interventions create an increasingly volatile environment for the education industry and consequently they can only perform effectively through flexibility and responsiveness to change.

In today's academic world, nothing remains still. The rate of change which organizational processes face continues to increase more and more in the last five decades. This is as a result of advances in governmental policies of increasing democratization and liberalization in the education sector in Nigeria. Thus "change" now become inevitable and turns to be a regular feature of the education community. This necessitates the fact that it cannot be wished away but to give the necessary attention (inform of effective and efficient management of resources – human and non-human) in order to guarantee continual increased institutional performance. [7] suggest that those that fail to accept and embrace change will have a limited future. In his words "change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." [3]

Knowledge-based environment, across the globe has become increasingly volatile, charged and constantly changing in the last few decades. In Nigeria, the education industry has been the hardest hit of all because of its centrality to the developmental process and governmental involvement is getting dwindling by the day. However, at the coming of another democratic dispensation in 1999 {after several years of military rule in the country}, the industry became one of the areas that the then President, Olusegun Obasanjo and his party, People Democratic Party (PDP) focused attention into in order to deregulate. The deregulation of the industry brought into place the private participation and many faith-based organizations coming on board. The major ones that came on board in Ogun State, are Babcock University, Ilishan, Crescent University, Abeokuta, Crawford University, Yewa Central College of Education, Machperson University, Covenant University, Redeemers' University, Bell University of Technology and a host of others.

However, some of these private initiatives such as CETEP University has gone under the drain, while others like Chrisland University and University of Management Science now Christopher University have come on board. These Universities have had course to change their management and identity times. This is not unconnected with increasing volatility of the formative stage which necessitates change management. Others private investors in the industry are the owners of All-over Polytechnic, and lately Top-most and Christland Universities. The last two are less than five years old. Going by the increasing rate of the business environment, change management has become inevitable [9]. This is to address any or all of these issues – poor performance, adapting to changes arising from the external environmental pressures, achieve or maintain a competitive advantage (in terms of better pricing and

high quality of teaching) and explicit innovation. Fundamentally, organizational change emanates from two major sources, the external and internal sources. The external sources could be as a result of improved technology, pressure from interest groups from outside the organization such as government or competitors in the industry. The internal source of change could be from individual such as shareholders, parents, management, employees. Irrespective of the source, wherever change is obvious, the management is always faced with the question of how to respond to change? Do we change the objectives and strategies of the institution? Is it the process we change or human resource or institutional structure or environment?

This study seeks to enrich the understanding of change management by providing empirical evidence of the link between key components of change management and institutional performance in the education sector in Nigeria, with special focus on Federal College of Education, Abeokuta. The education industry is chosen as the preferred area of study because of its importance to the economic growth and development of the country, in breeding the needed manpower. Also, the sector depends on change management practice to survive and sustain students' enrolment, stakeholders' confidence and better utilization of resources which are core functions.

2. Statement of the Problem

The education industry is an integral segment of the service sector of any economy, which makes it very fundamental to serious and sustainable growth and economic development, but it is highly knowledgeably involving. As such, for tertiary institutions involve in this industry to remain surviving, it must be flexible to quickly react and adapt to external environmental changes especially those that relate to governmental policies. The Nigerian education industry, post liberalization regime is fast growing in the country and this is continuously necessitating dynamic changes in organizational activities relating to operational structuring. The managers of these institutions in this industry are continually working tirelessly by devising new strategies relating to institutional charges to raise substantial and sustainable internally generated revenue and at the same time minimizing costs. Going by the number of participating higher institutions in the industry as at Year 2000 when the sector was deregulated and the existing ones by now, one could not but be baffled at the astronomical growth. The concern one can easily draw is that many of these institutions, especially privately-funded may likely go under, due to changes that may likely occur in the industry. The poor survival rate is predicated on fundamentals of lack of a valid frame work of how to implement and manage institutional change. This indicates that there is much to change management that needs to be learn. It is on the basis of unassuming changes in the educational industry that this study is carried out to unveil the hidden roles expected of educational managers as agents of change. This is important because when change is not properly managed, there is tendency that it affects performance negatively which may result in total closure, loss of valued employees, and/or failure to meet financial objectives of stakeholders and may eventually degenerate into students' unrest and parents' disaffection, among other problems.

2.1. Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the effects of change management on organizational performance in the educational industry. In line with the main objective, the specific objectives are to:

- a. examine the extent to which increasing in strategic planning can affect institutional performance of members of staff of Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria;
- b. identify the organizational structure available for successful management of change;
- c. examine the effect of systematic parameters on institutional performance of Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria;
- d. examine the shared values that have facilitated or hindered effective management of change in Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

2.2. Research Questions

The study is poised towards providing answers to the following research questions:

- a. To what extent has implementation of strategic planning affect institutional performance of Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria?
- b. What are the effects of organizational structure on institutional performance of Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria since 1999?
- c. What are the effects of systemic parameters on institutional performance of Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria?
- d. What are the effects of shared values on institutional performances of Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria?

2.3. Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are tested and advanced in the course of this study:

H₀₁: Changes in college's strategies do not have any significant effect on institutional performance

H₀₂: Changes in college's structure do not affect institutional performance positively

H₀₃: Changes in college's systematic parameters do not have significant effect on institutional performance

H₀₄: Changes in college's shared value do not have significant effect on institutional performance

3. Review of Literature

3.1. Theoretical Review

[1,2] defined change management as, "the effective management of a business change such that executive leaders, managers and frontline employees work in concert to successfully implement the needed process, technology or organizational changes," while [4] defined change management as; the process of continually renewing an organization direction, structure and capabilities to serve the ever changing needs of external and internal customers. [3] like many others scholars, asserted that, "change is an ever present feature of organizational life, both at the operational and strategic level." Due to its importance, change management is becoming imperative and needs appropriate managerial skills and strategy. For an organization to survive, succeed and

remain competitive in today's highly volatile and continuously evolving business environment, it must be able to successfully manage change which is as a matter of fact a necessity. Even though there has not been a consensus as to the framework for organizational change management, there seem to be an agreement on two important issues. One, there is a consensus that change, being triggered by internal or external factors, comes in all shapes, forms and sizes [5,6] and second, it is agreed that the pace has greater than, than in the current business environment [8]. Despite the complexity of change management, [9] provides that as it does not have simple solutions, a number of key areas of focus were raised properly manage change management. These are:

a. effective leadership is a key enabler as it provides the vision and rationale for change. Different styles of leadership have been identified for example, coercive consultative and collaborative. These different styles may each be appropriate depending on the type and scale for change being undertaken, for example, when there is a larger scale organization wide change, a directive style has been identified as most effective;

b. appropriateness and timeliness are frequently identified as key to effective change;

c. organizational development is one approach or intervention used when trying to bring about change oriented to improving organizational effectiveness, and

d. two-way communication with employees and their active involvement in implementation has also been identified as a key enabler to change management.

3.2. Empirical Review

Change management as a phenomenon is not a new concept. Every organization is affected by change. Still, organizational change initiatives fail at an alarming rate. This is because most initiative fails to consider how changes affect the people in an organization. [11] in his work stated that to effectively manage change in an environment experiencing change dynamics, there is a need to adopt strategies for managing such changes so that people can embrace change and direct it towards positive contribution of a given organization. He therefore suggested the strategies for managing change. He further stated that when opting for a strategy, we should take into account not only the circumstances we face, but also the preferred managerial style.

[10] offered six highly situational dependent ways of overcoming resistance to change as discussed under the conceptual review. He concluded that the best tactics to be employed in order to overcome resistance to change is communication and participation. [12] agrees that it is important to freely discuss changes as possible in order to avert grapevine and rumor. [10] observe that employees tend to show resistance to change even when their environment threaten them with extinction.

Many authors, [1,7,9,14,15] stress that the reasons for the failure of many change initiatives can be found in resistance to change. Resistance is a phenomenon that affects the change process, delaying or slowing down its beginning, obstructing or hindering its implementation, and increasing its costs and generally reducing organizational performance [6]. On the other hand, resistance is any conduct that tries to keep the status quo, and thus avoid change [5]. Resistance has also been considered as a source of information; being useful in learning how to develop a more successful

change process therefore it is not a negative concept as it could show change managers certain aspects that are not properly considered in the change process [3].

[8,14,6,3] further explained that; changes in technology and physical setting to the ways change can be accomplished. Their model of the organizational change process has three phases:

- a, planned interventions which create changes in the organization work setting;
- b, these changes in the work setting lead individuals to change their behavior;
- c, these individuals behavioral changes impact organizational performance and individual development, the key to organizational outcomes.

Others involved in this discussion emphasized that the intervention strategy needs to be driven by vision and strategy [4,15] and that the arrows linking the components should be double-headed, reflecting the interactive nature of the components in the change process.

[13] noted that; organizational performance should be related to factors such as profitability, improved service delivery, customer satisfaction, market share growth, and improved productivity and sales. Organization performance is therefore affected by a multiplicity of individuals, group, and task, technological, structural, managerial and environmental factors. He claims that there can be no change management without a modicum of information as to performance information in basis period and, ideally, a targeted performance in a future time period. He refers to four dimensions of evaluating performance in hotels; the customer dimension, employees' dimension, internal process dimension, and the financial dimension. Different approaches used in managing change will result in either a decrease or increase in the variables under each dimension. Tertiary institutions should therefore aim to ensure the effective management of change so as to improve the overall organizational performance.

3.3. Conceptual Framework

Many studies, [6,12,3,5] indicate that change management has significant positive effect on the performance of organizations. The dimensions of change management are main sources of organizational competitive advantage and surviving performance [2,6]. The literature stressed that the one or several dimensions of change management can affect the performance of organizations. However, the effects of change management's dimensions have varying magnitudes [14]. Previous studies, [6,13,2] have found that change management has significant relationship with the organizational performance.

In order to identify the effects of change management on institutional performance of educational sector in Nigeria, four components of change management, namely: strategy, structure, systems and shared values were employed. Previous studies revealed that change management is positively associated with organizational performance [13]. The research model for this study is mainly based on four independent variables, namely: strategy, structure, systems and shared values and one dependent variable, institutional performance. The research model hypothesized that there is no direct and positive association between change management and institutional performance. The flow of relationship between the variables is depicted in Figure 1:

Figure 1 shows the four variables of strategies, structure, systems and shared values that are components of change management and becomes ‘explanatory variables.’ Right-sided element of stature illustrates the working of educational sector of Nigeria and become ‘explained variable.’ [14] work represented stature variable in enquiry, adapted and was also checked individually that they were not positively related or negatively related, when this study is applied in Nigeria context.

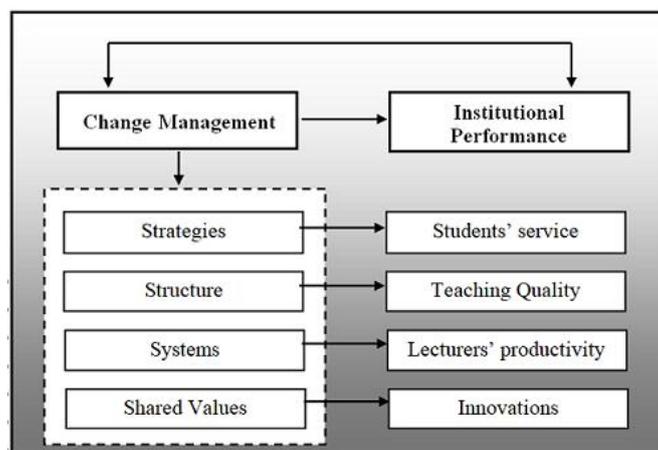


Figure 1. Change Management and Organizational Performance Framework.

Sources: [6], [14], [1].

3.4. Research Methodology

The study was carried out in Abeokuta, Ogun State of Nigeria using descriptive survey research design. The target population was 800 members of staff of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta. A sample size of 400 comprising academic and non-academic members of staff formed the respondents for the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents according to their designation. Questionnaires were used to collect data which were validated through a pilot study, using Federal University of Agricultural, Abeokuta. The questions were closed ended on a five point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data with the help of SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Sciences).

To test the reliability of the instrument, the researcher administered the instrument to ten senior members of staff and for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of the instrument employed. After a period of two weeks, the same instruments were re-administered to the same respondents to determine its reliability. The result of reliability analysis using SPSS, a statistical software package, are shown in Table 1. Their Cronbach’s alpha is above the 0.7 threshold [1]. This indicates that the consistency instrument (questionnaire) can be a reliable tool to measure the two concepts (change management and institutional performance) consistently.

Table 1. Internal Consistency Reliability Result.

S/N	CHM/IP components	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
1	Strategies	5	0.818
2	Structure	5	0.763
3	Systems	5	0.825
4	Shared values	5	0.914
		20	
5	Students’ Services	5	0.919

6	Teaching Quality	5	0.831
7	Teaching Innovation	5	0.736
8	Lecturers' Productivity	5	0.845
		20	

Source: Field Survey, August, 2017

There was 35-item statements slated for loading under each of the instruments for reliability test. Item statements with loading (≥ 0.70) were retained in the respective scales and insignificant statements (≤ 0.70) were removed from their respective scales and were not used for data analysis. Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.70 indicates acceptable reliability of the data in Social Sciences [5]. This was in consonance with the recommendation by [3], who argues that "at early stages of scale development, loadings of 0.70 or greater may be acceptable if there are additional indicators for describing the latent construct" (p.13). Other authors, [7,8,11,12,14] have also followed this criterion in exploratory studies. The value of ∞ depicts the Cronbach's alpha.

3.5. Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation

Data collected during the research were analyzed, the data from the questionnaire were coded and fed into excel spread sheet. The data were then exported into Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software version 23.0. Furthermore, the formulated hypotheses were subjected to empirical test using one-way repeated analysis of variance. The results of the findings are as follows:

Data analysis was undertaken at five percent level of significance. The results of the analysis are presented beginning with the presentation of demographics (bio-data) of the respondents which revealed that majority of the respondents were male which constitute 53.4%, while their female counterparts were 46.4% (Table 2).

Table 2. Analysis of Variance of College's Strategies.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	15.3026	3	14.3026	3.586	.000
Residual	1741.1208	383	2.5486		
Total	1757.4234	382			

Source: SPSS version 23.0 Output, field survey 2017

a. Dependent Variable: IP

b. Predictors: (Constant): CSs

The analysis showed that change in college's strategies significantly enhances institutional performance in Federal College, Abeokuta at ($P \leq 0.05$) confidence interval. This revealed that statistically the values of the responses were different at F-probability value of 0.000 hence the null hypothesis was rejected, research question answered and objective one achieved.

Table 3. Analysis Variance of College's Structure.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.3356	3	9.7356	3.2962	.000 ^b
Residual	1317.8540	383	1.4409		
Total	1331.3968	382			

Source: SPSS version 23.0 Output, field survey 2017

a. Dependent Variable: IP

b. Predictors: (Constant): CS

The hypothesis was intended to identify the strength of the effect of change in college's structure on institutional performance in Federal College of Education, Abeokuta. The Analysis of Variance table shows that change in college's structure strongly affect institutional performances in Federal College of Education at ($P \leq 0.05$) since the F-probability value is 0.000. The null hypothesis was rejected, research question two answered and objective two achieved.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance of System.

Model	Sumof Squares	df	MeanSquare	F	Sig.
Regression	24.7544	3	6.1086	1.3654	.000 ^b
Residual	1733.1806	383	2.5253		
Total	1757.9352	382			

Source: SPSS version 23.0 Output, field survey 2017

a. Dependent Variable: IP

b. Predictors: (Constant): SY

The analysis showed that change in college's system significantly affects institutional performance in Federal College of Education, Abeokuta ($P \leq 0.05$) confidence interval. This revealed that statistically the values of the responses were different at F-probability value of 0.000 hence the null hypothesis was rejected, research question three answered and objective three achieved.

Table 5. Analysis of Variance of Shared Values.

Model	Sumof Squares	df	MeanSquare	F	Sig.
Regression	22.7634	3	3.1086	1.3654	.000 ^b
Residual	1654.1906	383	2.3190		
Total	1554.8256	382			

Source: SPSS version 23.0 Output, field survey 2017

a. Dependent Variable: IP

b. Predictors: (Constant): SV

The analyses showed that change in college's shared values significantly affect institutional performance in Federal College of Education, Abeokuta ($P \leq 0.05$) confidence interval. This revealed that statistically the values of the responses were different at F-probability value of 0.000 hence the null hypothesis was rejected, research question three answered and objective three achieved.

4. Conclusion

“Change” has now become a regular feature of business life as part of the desire for increased organizational performance and the ever important need to satisfy stakeholders. However, successful management of the changes in technology is a critical factor to achieve any degree of long-term and lasting success as well as sustainability of strategy to manage change. Also, effective management of change in students' attitude would result to overall growth in the performance of the institution because students are the reasons and/or institutional establishment. Therefore, for change to succeed, the human aspect to change management must be successfully addressed in order to avoid resistance to change. Implementation of change often results in periods of institutional tension because it involves moving from the known

to the unknown and therefore risky, stressful and complex. However, it can be effective with participative style of management such as training employees on change during implementation which gives them knowledge, skills and expertise needed during the change process, hence, fostering quick and smooth implementation of the change. To improve performance, changes must be made to the institutional processes, mission and vision statements, philosophical thoughts, condition of service, scheme of service, staff evaluation system and system structures or job roles and responsibilities. However, management should demonstrate strong leadership throughout institution by spreading leadership and decision-making responsibilities in order to inspire and motivate employees to play an active role in implementing change by improving the institutional performance. Lastly, this study has provided some discussion on some issues which need to be considered and suggested programme for implementing major change, based not merely on theoretical studies but on practical experiences.

Recommendations

Based on the statement of the problem, the objective of the study and the result of the findings, the following recommendations are made:

The education industry is usually knowledge-driven and sensitive to change such that the institutions should be ready to accept change which would eventually lead to change in plan in order to achieve predetermined performance. Institutions in the industry should take cognizance of their environment through environmental scanning mechanisms, as this is the only way by which pressure on it can be reduced during change. For successful change implementation, staff should be properly informed and trained on change programmes and should be educated on the reasons for change. To avoid resistance to change, appropriate change strategies should be put in place by change managers the participative strategy is recommended for change managers. Also, organizations should employ the services of internal change managers to work hand-in-hand with expert employed externally so as to facilitate growth in performance and smooth change implementation. Managers are advised to anticipate for change especially in the government-funded institutions where changes occur very often. Thus, proactive measures in approach should be encouraged in managing change. This will reduce the negative effects on institutional performance.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

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