Achieving organizational goals through successful strategic change implementation in business organizations: a survey of selected banking firms in nigeria, West Africa

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Keys Words
Organizational Goals, Strategic Change, Implementation, Barriers to Change, Restraining forces, Quality Leadership, Banking Firms.

Abstract

The main objective of the study is to examine how Executive Management of banking firms manage barriers/restraining forces in the process of introducing and implementation of strategic change as they frustrate the attainment of organizational goals. Data were obtained from a total sample size of 204 from 5 banking firms namely First Bank Plc, Skye Bank Plc, Diamond Bank Plc, Access Bank Plc and Ecobank Plc branches in Makurdi metropolis of Benue State, Nigeria using Likert scale questionnaire.

The research adopted purposive or judgmental sampling procedure. Data presentation and analysis was done through the use of tabular presentation. Ten most frequently strategy implementation problems were evaluated. The findings revealed that 6 implementation problems occurred on a constant basis to a degree of 100% in the banking firms operations/transaction. They are; implementation took more time than originally allocated by 100%, coordination of implementation activities was not effective enough by 100%, competing activities and crises distracted attention from implementation by 100%, leadership and direction provided were not adequate by 100%, training and instruction given were not adequate by 100% and key implementation tasks and activities were not defined in enough details by 100% too. The remaining four (4) implementation barriers/problems frequency of occurrence were slightly lower. These are, capabilities and skills of employees involved were not sufficient recorded 98.52% frequency of occurrence, uncontrollable environmental factors recorded 98.52% frequency of occurrence, unexpected problems surfaced during implementation recorded 97.55% degree of occurrence while information systems used to monitor implementation were not adequate in Nigerian banks recorded 95.08% frequency of occurrence. Pearson chi-square test was used in testing the formulated hypothesis. The finding indicated that there are frequently occurring barriers/restraining forces to strategic change implementation that frustrate goal attainment in the survey banks hence the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the table value i.e. (26.14 > 16.92), the null hypothesis is rejected.

The study recommends that for correcting implementation barriers/problems in the banking firms, the quality assurance managers/supervisors should monitor and evaluate periodically the cause, problems, barriers and difficulties encountered in the process of implementation of strategic change such as poor leadership, ineffective coordination of implementation task, poor task definition amongst others. Additionally, competent personnel be trained specifically for purposes of identification of problems and problem solving. Quality leadership and direction that will ensure developing a comprehensive implementation task plan for banking firms is also pertinent.

1.1. Introduction

Goals are important features of work organizations. To be effective, goals should be emphasized, stated clearly and communicated to all members of the organizations. Yalokwu (2006) defined organizational goal as an expectation. It is the something the organization is trying to accomplish. It is the overall purpose of an organization. Mullins (1997) observed that, the goals of an organization will determine the nature of its inputs and outputs, the series of activities through which the output are achieved and the interactions with its external environment. The extent to which an organization is successful in attaining its goals is a basis for the evaluation of organizational performance and effectiveness. Strategic change implementation becomes pertinent if set performance standards are not met and deviations are noticed.

According to Buchanan and Huczynski (2004), strategic change is an organizational transformation that is radical, frame-breaking, mould-breaking or paradigmatic in its nature and implications. This definition is implying that, strategic change in organizations are deep changes that denotes scale, magnitude or depth in respect of accompanying problems and circumstances of organizations. They are major, long-term, expensive and risky changes that require extensive strategies by organizational managers before they can be managed in order to get rid of unsatisfactory performance. Mcshane and Glinow (2000), Ezigbo (2006), Armstrong (2009), noted that, they are changes that deals with broad, long-term and organizational-wide issues. It is about moving to a future state, which has been defined generally in terms of strategic vision and scope. It will cover the purpose and mission of the organization, its corporate philosophy on matters of growth, quality, innovation and values concerning people, the customers needs served and the technologies employed. This change takes place within the context of the external competitive, economic and social environment and the organization's internal resources, capabilities, culture, structure and system. It is transformational in nature.

It goes to show from the above perspective that strategic changes involve radical changes in organizational structures, culture and processes of the organization and it may be in response to competitive pressure, mergers, acquisition, investments, changes in technology, product lines, markets, costs reduction exercises and decisions to downsize or outsource works, business process reengineering, benchmarking change strategy, corporate restructuring. These changes are far reaching developments planned and implemented in corporate structures and organizations-wide processes. It may be initiated by the Managing Directors/Chief Executive Officers and top management teams with a remit to turn around the businesses.

Effective strategic leaders understand that change in the strategic environment is a continuous process and is about survival which will eventually lead to attainment of organizational goals. It is especially necessary in organizations that wish to prosper in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment. Ezigbo (2006) observed that, powerful forces in the environment such as technology, competitors, regulators amongst others are pressuring public and private sector organizations including banks to alter permanently existing structures, policies and practices.

A significant element of change is implementation of strategies. Implementation is a key concern in the management of strategic change (Carnell, 1986; Chebat, 1999; Stephen, 2004). Pfeffer (1992) suggests that, the inability to get things done, to have ideas and decisions implemented is widespread in organizations today. Most banking organizations spend much time in strategic planning process of change, but do not see the benefits of planning flowing through to the operational levels as quickly as they anticipate.

Linton (2002), succinctly captures that implementation of strategic changes in business organizations including banking firms has been acknowledged as a business problem for decades and is still a problem today. Achieving strategic change implementation is not easy and implementing it successfully places considerable demands on managers in business organizations. This calls for a more serious and critical assessment and appreciation of the reality on ground. This reality is that having skillful employees to enhance formulation and implementation process of strategic change process to help improve the outcomes of the implementation strategy is high a problematic endeavour in organizations.

Nmadu (2007), also noted that the most pressing concern is the "process of formulating and implementing decisions about the organizations future. Therefore, when the time for implementation comes, working out plans becomes problematic. This clearly manifests that with out effective implementation, the benefits of strategic plans such as goals attainment i.e. profit maximization, growth, survival continuity etc. are not realized.

Aboh (2011) emphasize that, the turning point in the history of Nigeria banking was the liberalization of the banking industry in 1986, followed swiftly by credit, interest rate and foreign exchange policy reforms. This culminated into rapid expansion of the banking sector from abut 40 banks with a combined branch network of about 1,655 in 1986. Subsequently, Nigeria witnessed a meteoric rise in the number of banks to 120 banks with 2,391 by 1993 during General Sani Abacha's regime.

The sector began to show signs of stagnation in the 1990s with two many small banks doing very little. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) revoked the licenses of 31 banks between 1994 and 1998 for reasons including inadequate capitalization, insider dealings and debt overhang. The advent of democracy in 1999 ushered in the next phase of reforms with the adoption of resolution programmes for the banking sector. Following the drastic reforms, only 89 banks with about 3,382 branches survived.

Upon the assumption of duty as CBN Governor, Professor Charles Soludo asserted that the financial system was characterized by structural and operational weaknesses and that its catalytic role in promoting private sector led growth could further enhanced through a more pragmatic reform. This led to the next round of reforms with the policy led banking consolidation in 2005. Banks were required to increase their capital base from N1 billion to N25 billion resulting in a wave of business combinations within the banking industry. The consolidation led to the creation of "25" mega banks with unprecedented asset base and branch network (Balogun, 2007).

Regrettably, the banks themselves as well as regulators were not adequately prepared to monitor and mitigate the risks inherent with the level of growth. Although the IMF endorsed the strength of the banking system to support this growth, the CBN, in 2009, pointed out critical factors that were out looked and led to the subsequent weakening of the financial system. Some of these factors include:

i. Macro-economic instability caused by large and sudden capital inflows.
ii. Major failures in corporate governance.
iii. Lack of investor and consumer sophistication.
iv. Inadequate disclosure and transparency, about financial positions of banks.
v. Uneven supervision and enforcement.
vi. Weaknesses in the business environment.
vii. Worst of it all was, the inability of the banks to implement the assessment criteria for granting bank credit to clients.

This disequilibrium caused Nigeria banking industry to have 24 banks with 5, 261 branches. Based on the weaknesses in the banking sector identified by the former CBN Governor, Professor Charles Soludo and acute liquidity challenges faced by key banks, Governor Sanusi Lamido, upon resumption of office as the new Governor of the CBN embarked on a “stress test” of the banking industry in August 2009. The results of the stress test led to the reclassification of banks not by balance sheet size or asset base, but along the lines of grossly endangered, in dangers and health. Eight banks fell into the grossly endangered category compelling the CBN to inject N620 billion as bail out funding into these banks to cushion additional shocks to the financial system. These banks includes: Intercontinental Bank Plc, Union Bank Plc, Oceanic Bank Plc, Bank PHB Plc, Afribank Plc, Spring Bank Plc, Fin Bank Plc of Unity Bank Plc.

All these were clearly a manifestation of banks inability to implement three strategic changes effectively (i.e. non adoption of prudential guidelines, mergers and acquisition, banking consolidation, outsourcing for staff, benchmarking for processes, products, innovations in products and services, inability to observed lending canons amongst others).

The CBN immediately replaced the management of the intervened banks with CBN-appointed management teams and also began the recapitalization of these banks (Sanusi, 2010).

The CBN, to forestall an ensuring domestic financial crisis, embarked on drastic reform initiatives aimed at restoring investors confidence in the system and improving the overall health of institutions operating within the system and improving the overall health of institutions within the system. These reforms were hinged on four pillars:

i. Enhancing the quality of banks.
ii. Establishing financial stability.
iii. Enabling healthy financial sector evolution.
iv. Ensuring that the financial sector contribution to the real economy.

The expectation of the reform was to facilitate the implementation of reengineering of processes, services etc in order to reposition the banking sector in terms of profitability attainment, product modification, service delivery amongst others. The pertinent question to address is that, have the banks adopted these strategic changes by implementing them as required?

Fred (2003), noted that, strategist can take up a numbers of positive action to minimize managers and employees resistance to change and implementation barriers. For example, individuals who will be affected by a change should be involved in the decision to make the change and in decisions about how to implement the change. Strategists should anticipate change and develop and offer training and development workshops so that managers and employees can adapt to these changes. They also need to communicate the need for changes effectively.

Waterman (1987) describes how successful organizations involve individuals to facilitate strategic change:

> Implementation starts with, not after, the decision – When Ford Motor Company embarked on the program to build the highly successful Taurus, management gave up the usual, sequential design process. Instead (it) showed the tentative design to the workforce and asked [its] help in devising a car that would be easy to build. Team Taurus came up with no less than 1,401 items suggested by ford employees. What a contrast from the secrecy that characterized the industry before. When people as treated as the main engine rather than interchangeable parts, motivation, creativity, quality and commitment to implementation go up.

This paper will attempt and discuss the statement of the problem, research objectives, questions, and hypothesis. Relevant literature will be reviewed. Research methodology, research findings, conclusions and recommendations will form important sections of the paper.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The main problem this research seeks to address is that, despite various strategic change management initiatives applied and implemented in the Nigerian Banking Sectoral firms such as consolidation, merger and acquisitions, business process reengineering, outsourcing of services and operations amongst others there is still decline in performance and distress situations recorded in the banking firms. This trend of poor performance have call for a concern to the stakeholders.

Empirical evidence from research findings of Alexander (1997), Stephen Ligbourn (2004), and several others revealed that executive managers of business firms including banks face several difficulties and challenges in the implementation process. The challenge ranges from financial barriers, poor task definition, poor leadership, insufficient employee skills ineffective coordination, poor training and instruction, time overrun, key implementation tasks and activities were not defined in enough details, information systems used to monitor implementation were not adequate, amongst others, in the process of introducing and implementation of strategic changes. The outcome of this is that, organizational goals are not realized due to the fact that, many strategic initiatives may fail in organizations due to wrong diagnosis of the problem at the initial stage and some end up on the drawing board while other are simply poorly implemented. The call for a rethink since having a skillful employee to enhance the formulation and implementation process of strategic change to enhance goal attainment is highly a problematic endeavour in the banking industry. This have called for researchers attention and concern to be readdressed.

1.3. Research Objectives

i. To examine the barriers/restraining forces in the process of introducing and implementing strategic changes that frustrate the attainment of organizational goals in banking firms.

1.4. Research Questions

i. What are the barriers/restraining forces to strategic change implementation that frustrate goal attainment in the banking industry.

1.5. Research Hypothesis

Ho_1: There are no frequently occurring barriers/restraining forces to strategic change implementation that frustrate goals attainment in the banking industry.

1.6. Scope of the Study

This research survey is on goal attainment through successful strategic change implementation in the Nigeria banking firms. A survey of Diamond Bank Plc, First Bank Plc Skye Bank Plc, Access Bank Plc, and Ekobank Plc Makurdi Branches, Nigeria, West Africa.

1.7. Review of related literature

1.7.1. The concept of Goals in organization

The goals of an organization are the reason for its existence and its activities are directed to the achievement of these goals. Yalokwu (2006) and Mullins (1994) identified the following as the usefulness and importance of goals of organizations. These are:

i. Goals provide a standard of performance. They focus attention on the activities of the organization and the direction of the efforts of its members.

ii. Goals serve as guidelines for decision making and justification for action taken. They reduce uncertainty in decision making and give the ground for defence against possible criticism.
iii. Goals provide a basis for planning and management control related to the activities of the organization.
iv. Goals also influence the structure of the organization and help determine the nature of technology employed. The manner in which the organization is structured will affect what it will attempt to achieve.
v. Goals help mobilize commitment of individuals and groups for the activities of the organization. They focus attention on purposeful behaviour and provide a basis for motivation and reward system.
vi. Goals give an indication of what the organization is really like, its true nature and characters both for members and for people outside the organization.
vii. Goals serve as a basis for the evaluation of change and organization development.
viii. Goals are the basis for the objectives and policies of the organization.

In organization, goals can be classified as formal and informal goals, order goals, economic goals, cultural goals, production goals, inventory goals, sales goals, market share goals, profit goals, consumers goals, product goals, operations goals, secondary goals, satisfaction of interest amongst others.

1.7.2. The Concept of Implementation and Promoting Successful Strategy Implementation

Implementation is a key concern in the management of strategic change (Carnall, 1986; Pfeffer 1992; Chebat, 1999; Herner, 2001; Oni, 2005; Aluko et al, 2007; Nmadu, 2007). The inability to get things done, to have ideas and decisions implemented, is widespread in organizations today. Without effective implementation, the benefits of a strategic plan cannot be realized. It is also suggested that implementation may be linked with performance (Smith and Kofron, 1996). Thompson and Strickland (1990), observed that implementation is successful if it produces the intended results and level of performance. The implementation of goal is to unite the total organization behind strategy accomplishment and to fit organizations conduct of its operations to the successful strategy execution. An organizations Chief Executive Officer and head of major organizational units are the persons most responsible for implementation.
The following section detailed scholarly definitions of implementation.

Authors	Definitions
Ansoff and McDonnell (1990:308)	The process of causing the firm to behave in accordance with agreed purposes, guidelines, and strategies.
Mintzberg and Waters (1985)	Turning deliberate and emergent strategy into realized strategy.
Barnett and Wilsted (1989:175)	When the strategic manager selects a specific organizational structure and motivation system and allocates specific organizational resources to help create them.
Hill and Jones (1998:347)	The way in which a company creates the organizational arrangements that allow it to pursue its strategy most effectively.
Thompson and Strickland (1990:218)	Strategy implementation entails converting the strategic plan into action and into results.

Source: Stephen Leybourne (2004), project management and strategic change management. Ph.D Thesis Presented to Business Administration Department Boston University, U.K.

Hamilton Consulting Group (1988) a well respected strategic consultancy of based in U.S, defines implementation on its website as: - The focused daily work of accomplishing strategies through action plan projects.

Alexander (1997) and Odoala (2007) maintains that, promoting successful strategic implementation of decision in organizations may entail the following:

a. **Communication**: This entails two way communication process between the Chief Executive Officers and the subordinates throughout the implementation process to monitor what is actually happening, analyze how to deal with emerging problems and in deciding what modification might be needed in the program to make it work.
b. **Start with a good concept or idea:** The need to start with a formulated strategy that involves a good idea or concept is pertinent hence it helps to promote successful implementation. In a nutshell, what this idea suggests is that no amount of time and effort spent on implementation can rescue a strategic decision, that is not well formulated to begin with. More than being thoroughly planned out, the idea must be fundamentally sound. These suggest that strategy implementation can fail for one of two reasons;
   One is caused by a failure to do things required during implementation to insure that a well formulated strategy is successful. The second cause of failure is due to a poorly conceived formulated plan that no amount of implementation effort can help rescue.
c. **Obtain Employee Commitment and Involvement:** CEO's suggested that one way to accomplish this is to involve affected employees and managers right from the start in the strategy formulation process.
   Involvement and commitment should be developed and maintained through out the implementation process. If middle and lower level managers and key subordinates are permitted to be involved with the detailed implementation planning, their commitment typically will tend to increase.
   The workability of the specific action plan should also be improved simply by getting the affected employees involved and committed, early on as well as throughout the implementation process.
d. **Allocating sufficient resources/finance, personnel, technical expertise and sufficient time to ensure success:** CEO's suggested at least four (4) different kinds of resources. Adequate funding/financial resources may contribute to success of implementation process.
   Manpower is another key resource which can have either a positive or a negative affect on the implementation process. Technical expertise (or knowledge) is also pertinent. Sufficient time to accomplish the implementation is necessary.
e. **Develop an Implementation Plan**: It is important to develop specifics to be done during implementation. In essence, this details who is to do what and when it is to be accomplished. If the implementation plan is too vague, it is of little practical use. Conversely, if the plan is too detailed, it may tend to force various functional departments to follow it precisely even when it clearly needs to be modified.
   Several CEO's mentioned that a part of that plan should be to identify likely implementation problems. Instead of being blindly optimistic that nothing will go wrong while implementing a strategic decision, do just the opposite. Try to identify the most

likely problems that might occur and then develop contingency response for the eventualities.

1.7.3. Barriers/Restraining Forces to Implementation of Strategic Change in Banking Organizations

Obstacles or barriers are often placed in the path of successful implementation. Alexander (1985) indicated that successful implementation is about preventing various implementation problems from occurring. This view was supported in Reed and Buckley (1988). The empirical analysis of 93 private sectoral firms in the United States of America by Alexander (1985) identified ten problems that were encountered during implementation by over 50% of the sample firms. These problems were; *time over-run unexpected problems surfacing during implementation, ineffective coordination activities distracting attention from implementation, insufficient employee skills, poor training and instructions, external environmental factors, poor leadership, poor task definition and inadequate monitoring systems.*

Alexander also advocated doing things to help promote success. Five suggestions were made to promote success in implementation (Alexander, 1985). These were; a good concept or idea; communication, employee commitment and involvement, sufficiency of resources and implementation planning.

Alexander study was repeated in Al-Ghamdi (1998), replicating the original 1985 study with the intention of finding recurring implementation problems. Nine of the ten original problems still occurred. This issue of training and instruction has been superseded by a problem related to top management involvement in prompt decision-making. Three strategy maintenance issues (Goodwin and Elliot, 1995) were identified to assist in the implementation of strategy. These were; emphasis on good communication, updating of information systems and a good system for control over quality and cost. Al-Ghamdi (1998) also suggests that good information is needed and supportive structures are required to assist in the implementation process.

Beer and Eisentat (1996) also identified six (6) recurring barriers to strategy implementation. In order of frequency of occurrence, these are: poor inter-functional and divisional coordination; unclear or conflicting strategic priorities, top-down management styles, difficulties in how the top team interacts, poor vertical communication and deficiencies in career development and management competences.

They identified and examined the principle that in their view characterized change process in order to allow effective implementation. They identify three (3) key principles. Firstly, the change process should be systemic in that alignment is required between the softer elements of people, leaders and values and the harder, elements of technology, strategy and structure.

Secondly, the change process should encourage open discussion of barriers to effective strategy implementation and adoption. Thirdly, a change process should develop a partnership among all relevant stakeholders.

1.8. Banking Firms Surveyed:

Five (5) banking firms in this survey were sampled at the branch level in the Makurdi metropolis, state capital of Benue State. These banks include;

1. First Bank Plc, Makurdi Branches - 128
2. Diamond Bank Plc, Makurdi Branch - 78
3. Skye Bank Plc, Makurdi Branch - 47
4. Access Bank Plc, Makurdi Branch - 65
5. Ekobank Plc, Makurdi Branch - 98

Total Employee population - 416

To scientifically generate a sample size, the Yamane's (1964) formula was applied. According to Baridam (2001), this formula can be used for a homogenous population like the one used in this research. The formula is stated below;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = the sample size

e = level of significance (proportion of sampling error)

I = constant value

N = the finite population size.

The sample size is therefore:

$$n = \frac{416}{1 + 416(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{416}{1 + 416(0.0025)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{416}{1 + 1.04}$$

$$n = \frac{416}{2.04} = 203.9$$

$$n = \underline{\underline{204}}$$

The researcher adopted purposive or judgmental sampling technique to obtain employee responses. For First Bank Plc Makurdi Branch he sampled opinion of 50 employees, for Ekobank Plc 45 employees, 40 employees for Diamond Bank Plc, 37 employees for Access Bank Plc and 32 respondents employees for Skye Bank Plc. The Likert rating scale questionnaire were generated and formulated hypothesis was tested.

1.9. Data Presentation and Analysis on Most Frequently Occurring Problems

A total of 204 questionnaire were distributed to managers of 5 banking organizations, namely; First Bank Plc, Skye Bank Plc, Diamond Bank Plc, Access Bank Plc and Ecobank Plc of Makurdi branches. All the questionnaires were filled returned indicating high response rate of 100% on the subject matter of problem/barriers to implementation of strategic change decisions and type evaluated in these organizations.

Table 1.0: Response on whether implementation of strategic change took more time than originally allocated frequently

Category of organization	**Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	98	48.03%
Agree	94	46.08%
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	7	3.43%
Strongly disagree	5	2.45
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

In deciding whether implementation of strategic change took more time than originally allocated constituting a barriers, 98 respondents representing 48.03% strongly agreed, 94 respondents agreed representing 46.08%. 7 respondents standing for 3.43% disagree while 2.45%

standing for 5 respondents strongly disagree. No respondent opted for undecided. This clearly indicates that it occurs frequently.

Table 2.0: Response as to whether unexpected problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified before frequently

Category of organization	**Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	95	46.6
Agree	89	43.6
Undecided	5	2.45
Disagree	10	4.90
Strongly disagree	5	2.45
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

Table 2.0 shows the response on whether unexpected problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified before. 46.6% (95) respondents strongly agreed, 43.6% (89 respondents) agreed. While 2.45% standing for 5 respondents were undecided. 10 respondents standing for 4.90% disagreed while 5 respondents representing 2.45% strongly disagreed. This is revealing that this problem occurs frequently.

Table 3.0: Response as to whether coordination of implementation activities was not effective enough in banking organizations frequently

Category of organization	**Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	100	49
Agree	97	47.5
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	3	1.47
Strongly disagree	4	1.96
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

Table 3.0 exhibit response rate as to how frequently the problem of coordination of implementation activities in banking organizations is not effective enough. About 100 respondents representing 49% strongly agreed that coordination of implementation problem is frequently among. 97 respondents standing for 47.5% agreed No respondent opted for undecided. 3 respondents standing for 1.47% disagreed that coordination of implementation is not a frequent problem while 4 respondents representing 1.96% strongly disagreed that coordination is not effective in most implementation programs but not too frequent.

Table 4.0: Response rate as to whether competing activities and crisis distracted attention from implementing decision on strategic change frequently

Category of organization	**Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	87	47.54
Agree	95	46.56
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	6	2.94
Strongly disagree	6	2.94
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

Table 4.0 show the response rate on the frequency of competing activities and crises distracting attention from implementing decision on strategic change. 97 respondent representing 47.54% strongly agreed, 95 respondents standing for 46.56% agreed. 2.94% (6 respondents) however disagreed while 2.94% (6 respondents) disagreed strongly. This is revealing, there is high frequency of competing activities and crisis distracting implementing change in these organizations.

Table 5.0: Response rate as to whether capabilities and skills of employees in implementation is frequently not sufficient

Category of organization	**Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	80	44.12
Agree	90	44.12
Undecided	2	1.47
Disagree	11	5.39
Strongly disagree	10	4.90
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

In considering whether capabilities and skills of employees in implementation process of change is frequently not sufficient in the banking organization, table 5.0 reveals that up to 44.12% represented by 90 respondents strongly agreed and 44.12 standing for 90 respondents also agreed. However, 1.47% standing for 3 respondents was undecided. 11 respondents representing 5.39% is seen to have disagreed while 4.90% representing 10 respondents strongly disagreed. This shows that capabilities and skills of employees are frequently not sufficient in implementing strategic change in Nigerian banks.

Table 6.0: Response rate as to whether training and instruction given to lower level employees were not adequate

Category of organization	**5 Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	89	43.63
Agree	93	45.59
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	12	5.88
Strongly disagree	10	4.90
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

Table 6.0 reveals responses on the opinion of respondent managers concerning the impact of training and instruction given to lower level employees whether adequate or not. 89 respondents standing for 43.63% strongly disagreed to the fact that training and instruction given to lower level staff is not adequate to facilitate success of implementation of change. 45.59% representing 93 respondents views agreed. 12 respondents (5.88%) disagreed while 4.90% standing for 10 respondents strongly disagreed on the subject matter.

Table 7.0: Response rate as to whether uncontrollable environmental factors has an adverse effect on implementation of strategic change

Category of organization	5 Banking organizations	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	98	48.04
Agree	89	43.63
Undecided	3	1.47
Disagree	7	3.43
Strongly disagree	7	3.43
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

The result of the analysis as shown in table 7.0 above reveals that uncontrollable environmental factors had an adverse impact an implementation of strategic change. 48.04% representing 98 respondents strongly agreed, 89 respondents standing for 43.63% agreed. 3 respondents representing 1.47% were undecided. 7 respondents (3.43%) disagreed and 7 respondents (3.43%) strongly disagree.

Table 8.0: Response rate as to whether leadership and direction provided by departmental bank managers were not adequate enough

Category of organization	5 Banking organizations	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	98	48.03
Agree	92	45.09
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	9	4.41
Strongly disagree	5	2.45
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

In considering whether leadership and direction provided by departmental bank managers were not adequate enough, table 8.0 reveals that 48.03% representing 98 respondents strongly agree. 92 respondents standing for 45.09% agreed on the notion. 4.41% standing for 9 respondents disagree while 2.45% representing 5 respondents strongly disagreed. This is revealing that leadership and direction to enhance implementation of strategic changes is not adequate enough in surveyed banking firms.

Table 9.0: Key implementation tasks and activities were not defined in enough details

Category of organization	5 Banking organizations	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	90	44.11
Agree	95	46.57
Undecided	-	-
Disagree	10	4.90
Strongly disagree	9	4.41
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

Table 9.0 reveals response rate on whether key implementation tasks and activities were not defined in enough details. 44.11% representing 90 respondents strongly agree while 46.57%

standing for 95 respondents agreed. No response option for undecided. 10 respondents standing for 4.90% disagree while 4.41% representing 9 respondents strongly disagree.

Table 10.0: Response rate on information system used to monitor implementation were not adequate in Nigeria banks

Category of organization	**5 Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	85	41.67
Agree	79	38.73
Undecided	10	4.90
Disagree	13	6.37
Strongly disagree	17	8.33
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

Table 10.0 reveals response rate on information system used to monitoring implementation whether adequate in Nigerian banks or not. 85 respondents (41.67%) strongly agreed that they are not frequently adequate. 79 respondents standing for 38.73% agreed. 10 respondents representing 4.90% were undecided. 6.37% representing 13 respondents disagree while 17 respondents standing for 8.33% strongly disagree on the notion.

Table 11.0: Strategic change ranging from implementation products and services changing of strategy, acquiring or merging of firm and expanding of operations to enter new markets and discontinuity of products are implemented by these banks

Category of organization	**5 Banking organizations**	
Response option	No of respondents	% of respondents
Strongly Agree	80	39.2
Agree	82	40.2
Undecided	5	2.45
Disagree	18	8.82
Strongly disagree	19	9.31
Total	204	100

Source: Field survey, (2013).

In considering the type of strategic change implemented ranging from implementation of products and services, changing of strategy, acquiring or merging of firms and expanding of operations to enter new markets and discontinuity of products by these 5 banks, respondents view were obtained. 39.2% representing 80 respondents strongly agreed that these changes are implemented frequently, 82 respondents standing for 40.2% agreed. 5 respondents standing for 2.45% undecided. 8.82% disagree on this notion representing 18 respondents while 19 respondents representing 9.31% strongly disagreed. This is revealing that these strategic decisions are implemented by the banks.

1.10. Ten most frequent strategy implementation problems

S/No	Potential strategy implementation problem	Mean	Frequency of minor problems	Frequency of major problems	Frequency of any degree of problem
1	Coordination of implementation activities was not effective enough	4.40	7 (3.43%)	197 (96.57%)	204 (100%)
2	Implementation took more time than originally allocated	4.338	12(5.88%)	192(94.12%)	204(100%)

3	Competing activities and crises distracted attention from implementing this decision	4.328	12(5.88%)	192(94.12%)	204(100%)
4	Leadership and direction provided by department managers were not adequate enough	4.319	14(6.86%)	190(93.14%)	204(100%)
5	Key implementation tasks and activities were not identified in enough details	4.211	19(9.31%)	185(90.69%)	204(100%)
6	Training and instruction given to lower level employees were not adequate enough	4.170	22(10.78%)	182(89.22%)	204(100%)
7	Capabilities and skills of employees in implementation is frequently not sufficient	4.127	21(10.29%)	180(88.23%)	201(98.529%)
8	Uncontrollable environmental factors had an adverse effect on implementation of strategic changes	4.106	14(6.86%)	187(91.66%)	201(98.529%)
9	Unexpected problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified before frequently	4.105	15(7.35%)	184(90.20%)	199(97.55%)
10	Response rate on information system used to monitor implementation were not adequate in Nigerian banks.	3.843	30(14.71%)	164(80.39%)	194(95.098%)

Test of Hypothesis

Ho_1: There are no frequently occurring barriers/restraining forces to strategic change implementation that frustrate goal attainment in the banking industry.

Data generated from table 1.10 were used in testing the hypothesis using pearson chi-square test.

Question type	**Minor**	**Major**	**Total**
1	7	197	204
2	12	192	204
3	12	192	204
4	14	192	204
5	19	185	204
6	22	182	204
7	21	180	201
8	14	187	201
9	15	184	199
10	30	164	194
Total	166	1853	2019

Expected frequencies (fe)

$$\frac{R \times C}{N}$$

For 7 = $\underline{204 \times 166}$ = 16.77

2019

$197 = \frac{204 \times 1853}{2019} = 187.23$

$12 = \frac{204 \times 166}{2019} = 16.77$

$192 = \frac{204 \times 1853}{2019} = 187.23$

$12 = \frac{204 \times 166}{2019} = 16.77$

$192 = \frac{204 \times 1853}{2019} = 187.23$

$14 = \frac{204 \times 166}{2019} = 16.77$

$190 = \frac{204 \times 1853}{2019} = 187.23$

$19 = \frac{204 \times 166}{2019} = 16.77$

$185 = \frac{204 \times 1853}{2019} = 187.23$

$22 = \frac{204 \times 166}{2019} = 16.77$

$182 = \frac{204 \times 1853}{2019} = 187.23$

$21 = \frac{201 \times 166}{2019} = 16.53$

$180 = \frac{201 \times 1853}{2019} = 184.47$

$14 = \frac{166 \times 204}{2019} = 16.53$

$187 = \frac{201 \times 1853}{2019} = 184.47$

$15 = \frac{199 \times 166}{2019} = 16.36$

$184 = \frac{199 \times 1853}{2019} = 182.64$

$30 = \frac{194 \times 166}{2019} = 15.95$

$164 = \frac{194 \times 1853}{2019} = 178.05$

Chi-Square Table

Fo	FE	Fo-Fe	(Fo-Fe)2	(Fo_Fe)2/Fe
7	16.77	-9.77	95.45	5.69
197	187.23	9.77	95.45	0.51
12	16.77	-4.77	22.75	1.36
192	187.23	4.77	22.75	0.12
12	16.77	-4.77	22.75	1.36
192	187.23	4.77	22.75	0.12

14	16.77	-2.77	7.67	0.46
190	187.23	2.77	7.67	0.04
19	16.77	2.23	4.97	0.20
185	187.23	-3.23	10.43	0.06
22	16.77	3.23	10.43	0.62
182	187.23	-5.23	27.35	0.15
21	16.53	4.47	19.98	1.21
180	184.47	-4.47	18.98	0.11
14	16.53	-2.53	6.40	0.39
187	184.47	2.53	6.40	0.03
15	16.36	-1.36	1.85	0.11
184	182.64	1.36	1.85	0.01
30	15.95	14.05	197.40	12.38
164	178.05	-14.05	197.40	1.11
				$X^2c = 26.14$

X^2 calculated is compared with the table or critical value of X^2 (X^2t). The table value is obtained under (2 – 1) (10 – 1) = 1 x 9 = 9df at 0.05 is = 16.92. Since the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the table value i.e. 26.14 > 16.92, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there are frequently occurring barriers/restraining forces to strategic change implementation that frustrate goal attainment in the Nigerian banking industry.

1.11. Discussion of Findings in Respect to Ten most frequent strategy implementation problems/difficulties:

Findings from table 1.10 revealed as follows:

The first six (6) listed implementation problems occurred on a constant basis to a degree of 100 percent in the firm operations/transaction. They are:

1. Implementation took more time than originally allocated by 100%.
2. Coordination of implementation activities (e.g. by task force, committee) was not effective enough by 100%.
3. Competing activities and crisis distracted attention from implementing the strategic decisions by 100%.
4. Leadership and direction provided by departmental managers were not adequate enough by 100%.
5. Training and instruction given to lower level employees were not adequate by 100%.
6. Key implementation tasks and activities were not defined in enough details by 100%.

The remaining four (4) implementation problems/barriers listed in table above occurred somewhat slightly lower but at a higher frequently too. This is stated below;

i. Capabilities and skills of employee involved were not sufficient recorded 98.527% frequency of occurrence.
ii. Uncontrollable environmental factors had adverse effect on implementation of strategic changes also recorded 98.529% frequency of occurrence.
iii. Unexpected problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified before frequently recorded 97.55% degree of occurrence.
iv. Information system used to monitor implementation were not adequate in Nigerian bank recorded 95.098% frequency of occurrence.

This clearly manifest that 6 barriers/problem are most frequently occurring while four (4) problem/barriers have slightly lesser frequency of occurrence in the sampled from as proved by our empirical findings above.

100% of the sampled banking firms found that their implementation efforts took more time than originally allocated. A follow up conversation in interviews revealed the explanations of business manager of the banks. First Bank business managers put it, we were highly optimistic in thinking now that much time it would take to implement strategic change decisions. We thought that everything would work fine which it never does.

From the empirical survey, this problem seems to occur because top management or business managers:

i. Understates how long various implementation tasks will take to complete.
ii. Downplays the likelihood of potential problems that may or may not occur.
iii. Are blind to other problems occurring altogether.

Convincingly, when all three of these occur during implementation, it can greatly lengthen the time it will take to implement strategic change decisions effectively. The presence of competing activities and crisis that distracted attention from implementing the strategic decisions was yet another frequently occurring problem. Absolutely, 100% of the firms experienced this implementation problem. For example the introduction of fashionable outstanding products by some banks in Nigeria which attracts reasonable market share in their favour may result to competition and crises to other banks that are yet to adopt such innovation. This may force their profit status downwards resulting to loss of market share and at the sometime hampering implementation success in the banks. At time such banks may need some good time to study clearly the applicability of such products. While in the interim put on hold the implementation of strategic decisions.

Major problems (and obstacles) surfaced during implementation that had been identified before hand were experienced by almost all the firm by 97.55%. These may include, insufficient advanced planning, strategy formulators not getting actively involved in the implementation, uncertainty involved with the products or market, uncontrollable events, legal/political complications introduced by new legislations or regulations amongst other.

All these barriers/restraining problems (forces) are frequently occurring and can frustrate goal attainment in the sampled Nigerian banks.

1.12. Discussion of Findings from Test of Hypothesis

The research finding in hypothesis 1 revealed that implementation of strategic change is hampered by several restraining forces/barriers which are frequently occurring in the banking firms. These forces result to non-attainment of organizational goals. They include; coordination of implementation activities was not effective enough, implementation took more time than originally allocated, competing activities and crises distracted attention from implementing these decisions, leadership and direction provided by departmental managers were not adequate enough, key implementation tasks and activities were not identified in enough details, training and instruction given to lower level employees were not adequate enough, capabilities and skills of employee in implementation is frequently not sufficient, uncontrollable environmental factors had an adverse effect on implementation of strategic changes, unexpected problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified before frequently and information systems used to monitor implementation were not adequate in Nigeria banks sampled.

This was determined using pearson chi-square test, since the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the table value i.e. 26.14 > 16.92, the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. This is confirming that, there are frequently occurring barriers/restraining forced (problems) militating against strategic change implementation success that hamper goal attainment in the Nigerian banking industry. These goals may be profit maximization, growth, survival, continuity, expansion, increase in market share, cultural goals, production goals amongst others.

As noted by Pellegrinell and Bowman (1994) (Godwin and Elliot, 1995), Pfeffer (1996) Sev (2011), in their respective empirical researches, they identify the following strategy maintenance issues as assisting in the implementation of strategic change in organization. These include;

a. Emphasis on good communication. (b) Updating of information systems (c) Good system for control, care, quality and cost (d) Using comparative data to benchmark performance (e) Changing the structure of the organization (f) Changing the physical workplace and the production systems (g) Aligning reward systems (g) Taking action to demonstrate results (h) Understanding competitive dynamics (i) Watching career paths and looking for long term owners of the implemented changes.

The implication for this is that the banking organization needs to allocate sufficient resources (financial, personnel and technical support) to ensure success. They need to manage the firms through monitoring, comparing benchmarks on implementation task, evaluation of implementation and feedbacks as well as making adjustments of significant variances that stand to hamper the success of implementation process is noticed.

Odalla (2007) and Alexander (1995) also confirm that assigning responsibility for specific tasks and processes to individuals or groups and establishing chain of command, development of implementation plan and obtaining employee commitment and involvement are several factors that can enhance success of implementation programmes of firms.

1.13. Conclusions

The study survey concludes that strategic change is an important element of successful business management today. The Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of banking firms should understand that the key element and concern of strategic change management is the implementation task. However, strategic change implementation has been known to be a problematic endeavour for decades and is still a problem today. Therefore, understanding and managing strategic change successfully should constitute the dominant theme of Executive Management. Associated barriers to implementation such as not defining tasks and activities of implementation in enough details, major problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified beforehand, capabilities and skills of employees in implementation is frequently not sufficient, key implementation tasks and activities were not identified in enough details, leadership and direction provided by departmental managers were not adequate enough amongst others should be adequately tackled to ensure successful implementation exercise. This can be achieved through starting with a good concept or idea, providing sufficient resources, employee commitment and involvement, developing an implementation plan amongst others.

1.14. Recommendations

The following should serve as critical success parameters in correcting implementation barriers/problems in banking firms. These are;

i. The quality assurance manager/supervisors of the banking firms should monitor and evaluate periodically the causes, problems, barriers and difficulties encountered in the process of implementation of strategic changes such as poor leadership, ineffective coordination of implementation tasks, poor task definition, time overrun, ineffective capabilities and skills to enhance implementation process amongst others; hence it is established that implementation task is a problematic endeavour over decades.

ii. Competent personnel be trained specifically for this purpose by organization. This is necessary because strategic change implementation by organization management requires that frequent opportunities be given to supervisors to take responsibility for problem identification and problem solving.
iii. Quality leadership and direction that will ensure developing a comprehensive implementation task plan for banking organizations is pertinent. This will ensure that problems are identified and sufficient resources are allocated (financial, personnel, technical support) to ensure successful implementation of task. This will go along way in goal attainment of profit maximization, sustainable competitive advantage, effectiveness and productivity.
iv. Having a good concept or idea as to what implementation entail and achieve if properly carried out is important. This will guarantee employee commitment and involvement.
v. Rewards and incentives utilized to get conformance of assigned employees.
vi. Support and backing by top management to regional offices, strategic business unit is pertinent.
vii. Roles and responsibilities of key employees should be properly defined.
viii. Structural changes of the organization should be effective.

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APPENDIX

Faculty of Management Science,
Benue State University, Makurdi
Benue State, Nigeria.
30th June, 2013.

Dear Sir/Madam,
Questionnaire on "Achieving Organizational Goals through Successful Strategic change Implementation in Business Organizations (A Survey of Selected Banks in Makurdi Metropolis, Benue State, Nigeria).
You have been chosen as one of the respondents in this study. You are therefore humbly requested to supply honest and sincere answers and responses to question by ticks [√] as appropriately as you can in the boxes/spaces provided. There is no right or wrong answers.

Your identity is not needed at all and the information provided will be treated with utmost confidence and solely for academic purposes.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully,
Sev, Joseph Teryima Ph.D.
Utor Victor and
Kwanum Isaac

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Implementation of strategic change took more time than originally allocated
   (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
2. Unexpected problems surfaced during implementation that had not been identified before (a) SA [ ]
   (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
3. Coordination of implementation activities was not effective enough.
   (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
4. Competing activities and crises distracted attention from implementing decisions on strategic change. (a) SA [ ]
   (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ]
   (e) SD [ ]
5. Capabilities and skills of employees involved were not sufficient.
   (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
6. Training and destruction given to lower level employees were not adequate
   (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
7. Uncontrollable environmental factors had an adverse effect on implementation.
   (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
8. Leadership and direction provided by departmental bank managers were not adequate enough (a) SA [ ]
   (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
9. Key implementation tasks and activities were not defined in enough details.
   (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
10. Information system used to monitor implementation were not adequate.
    (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]
11. Several strategic changes/decision are implemented by your banking organization ranging from:
    i. Introducing a new product or service
    ii. Acquiring or merging with another form
    iii. Changing the strategy in functional department
    iv. Discontinuity with a product, processes of operations.
    v. Expanding operations to enter new markets.
    (a) SA [ ] (b) A [ ] (c) U [ ] (d) D [ ] (e) SD [ ]