Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Restructured University Communications Department: A case study of American University of Nigeria.

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A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO COMMUNICATIONS AND MULTIMEDIA DESIGN PROGRAM, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, YOLA.

Spring 2018
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God to thank him for his continuous support in my life. I also want to appreciate my family and friends for their contributions towards my success story. Last I congratulate myself for working hard to achieve my dream.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to my family, friends and well-wishers who contributed to my achievement of this great foot because it was made easier with you on board. A special thanks to the chair of my program and faculty chair Dr Presley for his advices and counselling. Finally I wish to thank my supervisor professor Suleiman for his guidance and support towards me achieving this objective.
CERTIFICATION

I certify that this project was conducted by me Charles Chibuike Ilomuanya, ID NOS: A00017023, of Communications and Multimedia program of the American University of Nigeria, under our supervision.

Charles Chibuike Ilomuanya

A00017023

(Supervisor)

Date…………………………………………

Chair, Communications & Multimedia Program

Date…………………………………………
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ABSTRACT

This proposal is to conduct a research on the impact of the restructuring in the communications department of the American University of Nigeria (AUN). There is a need to understand to what extent the changes have affected the employees in the departments of Events and Ceremonies, Public affairs, university relations. By using communication theories, the impact of the change in communications to the employees, and graduating seniors will be assessed.

This change in organisational structure has affected the communication and decision making process of the organisation. The employees of the organisation are major stakeholders to its success and how employees react to change could be beneficial to its success. My research questions try to find out how the change has affected the organisation and how the general perceptions feel about it.

By using theoretical framework, articles and books, the evaluation of the restructuring will explained further. Questionnaires would be used for this research to evaluate employee’s perception. The outcome of this research would show why there was a change in the organisation structure and how employees have adapted to the change.
1.1 Introduction

This research would enable to know why organisations made changes to their communication structure and how it is reacted to. For a change in structure there must have been problems. This paper also examines the issue that was being faced in department of an institution. During my research questions does it mean that the department could not thrive with the old structure?

Organisations go through changes in other to innovate or adapt to a new process. An example is the use of equipment for farming; although it might make the work easier for the farmers it does not necessarily mean it will make them more profit. The American university recently restructured its communications department by adding a unit called the University relations. This unit now handles the university internal affairs.

Elving talks about how communication is important between organisations and employees.

Elving states “effective communication reduces employee uncertainty and a negative correlation exists between uncertainty and employees willingness to accept change” (Wittig)

Change is not something that is welcomed by everyone, employees might feel a certain way towards change and this could affect their effectiveness and communication. Change in communication strategy and processing is important for
organisations to grow and this affects how the departments in the organisation would function.

Wanberg & Banas talk on how without communication employees are not properly introduced.

According to Wanberg & Banas “The amount and quality of information that is communicated to employee can influence how employee react” (Wittig)

The American University of Nigeria recently made changes to the structure of its communication department, by adding a new unit called University relations. This department deals with the university relations, public affairs of the university to its stakeholders. The university might have made these changes to increase the efficiency of its operations and communication with the community and stakeholders.

Change is always constant for businesses to grow and keep up with the competition that is why new measures are put in place by organisations to keep up. An example is the change in technology to improve effectiveness. Sometimes employees might see change as being negative an example could be the refusal to start using computers for fear of job loss without thinking of the overall benefit of technology change.

Momina and Anna talk about how leadership is important to drive change.

According to Momina “Thus leadership not only influences change management efforts but also drives them” (Novitskaya)

1.2 Statement of the Problem
The restructured communication department of the American University of Nigeria has affected organisational performance of the department. The employee’s reaction and adjustment to new communication process is vital for the department success. This paper is to examine employee’s perception to the changes made.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

To find out if the restructuring of the department has had any impact on the organisation?

To analyse how the restructuring has affected employee attitude?

To find out if the restructuring has had any effect on employee performance?

To know the perception of staff involved after change.

1.5 Research Questions

1 How has the organisation reacted to the change in communications department structure?

2 How has the changes made affected the employee and graduating students perception at the communications department?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Employee’s perception towards changes has an effect the organisational performance. It helps make communication better between subordinates. This research is important because it could help the university with decision making in future endeavours through analysis of the new implementations to the organisation structure.
1.7 Scope of the Study

This research examines the effects of changes in communication structure of an organisation as well as employee views and perception to changes. With the use of questionnaires it will be possible to know how employees feel and this will lead to positive future outcomes.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The limitations to this study would just be the amount of access to employees as they are working. Getting true response from them might not be easy as they may need convincing to speak their true opinion. The time frame at which the change in the structure occurred is limited to carry out extensive research.

1.9 Definition of Terms
Evaluation: an assessment of an amount, number or something.

Perception: to be able to see, hear and be aware of something.

Effectiveness: the degree to which something can produce the desired result.

Department: a division of a university devoted to a particular course.

Employee: a person employed for wages or salary.

Restructure: this basically means to change the way something is organised.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this section, the literature that will be used for this research on the perception of the restructured university communications department will be reviewed. In this part the concepts of effectiveness and perception, research works on employee perception and also the theories used to back up the perceptions and restructuring in organisations.

For an organisation to function it must ensure that there is a strong communication between the employees and the employee because structural changes to organisation practice should be mastered. In this chapter the opinion of employees and graduating seniors in the university relations department would be explored because this will be used to measure the effectiveness of the restructuring.

2.2 Review of important concepts
In recent years, scholars have researched on the different reasons for restructuring in organisation although they hardly mention the perception of people of that organisation towards change when there is an existing relationship between employees and the organisation. In analysis of most articles, employee perception to restructuring is yet to be further examined.

2.2.1 Perception

According to a study by Kocham and Useem organisation change or restructuring affects the attitude and view of the staff in an organisation.

“It is almost impossible to implement organisational change or restructuring without affecting the prevailing employee attitudes within the organisation” (Wilson).

This explains that the staff of an organisation would always be affected by the changes made irrespective of whatever kind. Employee perspective can also be a key factor in organisational success because it either motivates the staff or causes stress.

Employees always have a perception towards organisational changes and this view gives those new ideas and mind set to do their work. Mishra and Spretzs states that

“Survivor responses to downsizing differ in that these responses may either be positive, neutral or negative and are dependent on how survivors believe the organisational change will affect them” (UYS).

The human resource of an organisation is a viral component for the success of its activities. Although some will argue that the financial institution of an organisation is
important because of the decision makers of the organisation and business aim of maximizing profit.

Restructuring

Many organisations have to change their structure so they can keep up with their competitors and stay relevant. That is why major market forces affect the result of downsizing or operational restructuring. According to a study by Vikas Chaddha the demanding market contributes to the challenges organisations face.

Vikas Chaddha states “During the economic recession, many companies started to restructure their legal, ownership or operational structure in order to be more profitable, competitive and efficient” (Chaddha).

Sometimes businesses change their management process in order to meet up with the constant changing environment and operational structure.

Vikas Chaddha states “Operational restructuring is an on-going process which includes improvement in efficiency management, reduction in staff and wages, sales of assets, enhanced marketing efforts and so on with the expectations of a higher profitability and cash flow” (Chaddha).

Organisations mostly focus on being efficient and effective in their activities. Their objective is to remain relevant and to survive so they focus more attention on other key areas than their human resource department and employee state of mind. When employee state of mind is not right, it affect how they perform and this affects the relationship with their customers and shareholders.
Armstrong-Stassen, Kozlowski, Chao, Smith and Hedlum says “This is even more astonishing that it is well recognised that the success of organisational changes often rests on the motivation and commitment of employees themselves” (V).

Dzawanda says how organisations change affects an organisation.

According to Dzawanda “in other words, it is directed at altering the key organisational variables that can affect the component of the management social structure and organisational members’ workers behaviour and attitudes in the workplace” (Olukayode)

Organisational change affects the state of mind of employee and this could affect the organisational performance as well as its service to its customers.

“This is even more astonishing that it is well recognized that the sources of organisational change often rests on the motivation and commitment of employees themselves” (V).

According to a study by Armenakis and Bedeian Organisational changes are meant to improve or change a situation although sometimes changes could also bring out negative responses from the employees.

Armenakis and Bedeian states that “This negative reaction is largely because change brings with it increased pressure, stress and uncertainty for employees” (Jones).

When changes are made to a department, it could lead to the solution or bring about new challenges.an example is if the employee are not happy with the change or have not adjusted to the changes, this could cause a negative reaction by having a direct influence on their performance and thus affecting services and customer satisfaction.

Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder states “Thus, building positive employee beliefs, perceptions and attitudes is critical for successful change intervention” (Jones).
2.3 Review of related Studies

Many researchers have conducted researches on restructuring in organisations, employee perceptions to restructuring and its curious effects. (Chaddha), Analysed how restructuring affects the morale of employees before and after. He found out that, “Restructuring affects the employee morale adversely if it is not implemented with proper communication and consultation with the employees”

Perception can also be called attitude because it reflects on how employees perform over a period of time. Some scholars have looked into the causes and implications of employee attitudes to organisational decisions. An attitude is how a person reacts to a change or situation and this can either be good or bad.

Allport says “a psychological and neural state of willingness, organised through experience, exerting an instruction or active influence upon the individuals response to all objects and situations with which it is related” (Indradevi).

Thurston tell that businesses have to plan for change because employees have to be informed so as to create an environment that the agenda is understood thereby reducing stress.
Thurston says “To overcome resistance to change, organisations should prepare a clear arrangement and change awareness among employees in order to generate well planned work surroundings and in proportion work agenda to reduce pressure and insecurity” (Indradevi)

According to Ming- Chu Yu (2009) research which investigates that employee perception of organisational change and how individual’s perceptions are shaped by faith and stress management today.

Ming – Chu Yu concluded that “Organisational change had an important negative force on employee’s belief and work attachment. Though, stress management strategies and a perspective of organisational change can positively affect employee’s organisational recognition and job attachment” (Indradevi)

According to HE Brand and J Wilson research on the impact organisations restructuring on attitude of its employee’s climate. The study concluded that restructuring did in fact influence the organization climate and affected employee attitudes. (Wilson)

2.5 Theoretical Framework

For this study, the theory to be used to examine employee’s perception on restructuring is the social cognitive theory and theory of planned behaviour. This theory helps explain the factors that make employees react to change either positively or negatively.

According to Feldman cognitive skills help when there is knowledge on that area.

Feldman says “hence cognitive attainments require the acquisitions of domain-related knowledge along with the judgemental rules that apply to that area of activity” (A)
Theory of planned behaviour deals with being able to know the kind of behaviour to expect. In applying this theory to my study, the department can better prepare for changes.

2.6 Relevance of theory to the study

The theories above are important for this study as the method of research used will get information right from the responding employees. The method is to ask the staff with a survey about their opinions towards restructuring before and after.

Each person’s response will be recorded separately so as to avoid clash of interest and give the best evidence and results.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
This research looks at the perception of restructuring of a department in American University of Nigeria. This section is where practical’s will be used to explain the research further by looking at the sample size, techniques, population study, analysis method and data collection.

3.2 Research Design and Instruments

For this research, a survey and interview will be used to get first-hand information from the population about their perspective on restructuring. A survey and interview is used for a descriptive population as it in the case for this research. The sample population are identified as the employees of the department, final year students, and staff. This will be qualitative research.

3.3 Population of the Study

For this research, the employees of communications and graduating students of the American University of Nigeria community whom have been affected by these changes. Because graduating seniors and the staff that have been in the university during the changes.

The targeted participants are final year students and staff employed within the last one year whom have witnessed the old and new system. This target population cannot be influenced by external factors based on their ages and experience.

3.4 Sample Size and Population

For this research, the sample population is the graduating seniors whom are 140 in number, the employees of the communication department whom are about 20 in number. The sample size from the sample population was 103 questionnaires given because of the number of employees in the communication department as well as graduating seniors. For this
research questionnaires will be purposely given to selected participants who are affected by the restructuring process and can give a proper perspective for the study.

These are employees from the communications department, who have been working in the department for the last one year, graduating senior students and staff of the American University of Nigeria. The American University of Nigeria is the only private university in Adamawa State, Nigeria. An interview will be conducted between the employees to get first-hand information.

3.5 Description of Data Gathering Instrument

For this research questionnaires will be used to collect information from the participants. My questionnaire will be in two parts. Part A will focus on collecting information based on demographic while part B will get information on the objectives and research. Questions 1-4 will show evidence to solve the research questions while 6-13 will answer the second research question on perspective of the sample population.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The questionnaires will be handed out directly by me to the respondents. The questionnaire will be handed over to the students and staff as well as interview employees of the university relations department between 10am-5pm. Also questionnaires will be handed over to final year students as well as other department staffs.

3.7 Method of Analysis

The method of information analysis to be used will be the (SPSS) statistical package for social science because it can calculate how some variables correlate. After the result has
been shown on a frequency table and converted into percentiles; it will be checked at a significant statistic value.

3.8 Sampling frame

- The sampling frame for this research paper was,
- The graduating students of spring 2018 registered seniors.
- Employees of the communication department employed in the last one year.
INTRODUCTION

Dear sir/Madame

I am a final year student of Communication and Multimedia Design program. I am conducting a research on the perceptiveness of the general restructuring in the communications department for my class to fulfil the requirement for award of a bachelor’s degree in communication and multimedia design. I seek your opinion by honestly answering the questions below. Your reply will be treated with confidentiality and used for this research.

Kindly tick your answer in the boxes provided and write your answers where necessary

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Gender
   - Male or Female

2. Age Group
   - 18-20
   - 21-25
   - 26-30
3. Name of Organisation/Department

________________________________________
________________________________________

4. Occupation

________________________________________
________________________________________

Section B: ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

5. Are you in support of the new communications department re structure?

Yes/No/MAYBE

6. Has the restructuring improved organisational performance?

Yes/NO/MAYBE

7. How have you been affected by the new structure?

Positive or Negative?

8. Have the restructuring improved your work? Yes/No
9. Has the changes caused you stress to adjust?

Yes/NO

10. Has the new structure made your work more effective? Yes/No

11. Were you aware of the changes? Yes/No

12. What is your perception of the restructured communications department?

Good/Bad

13. Were you consulted before changes were made?

Yes/No
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will be using the theories and literature review to explain the outcomes. In this chapter, tables and graphs would be used to describe the results.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Gender of sample population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>67.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data shows that 70 males answered the survey which makes for 67.96% while 33 females answered the questions making for 32.0%.

Table 2: Age Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>70.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above says that seventy per cent of the sample sizes are between ages 21-25 while the lowest age group accounts for five per cent. This shows that the sample size that responded are matures and significant.

Table 3: Organisational respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American University</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that all my respondents are from the American University of Nigeria. They accounted for 100% of the sample size that was selected.

Table 4: Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, 100% of the sample size have been positively affected while 0% have been affected negatively by the changes made. There is nobody that was neutral.

Table 6: if changes have caused stress to adjust?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above, the sample population have had no stress in adjusting to the new communication structure.

Table 7: if the new structure has improved work effectiveness and efficiency?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>97.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above 97% of the sample size said yes to the question, 0% said no while 2.9% have been neutral on the change.

Table 8: Perception of the restructuring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the table above 100% of the sample population have good perception of the changes while 0% of the sample population had bad perception of the changes made.

Table 9: if the restructuring has improved organisational performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above shows the population size view on how the restructuring has affected their organisations. 85.7% said yes, and both 7.1% either said no or maybe.

Table 10: if consulted before changes were made

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows if the sample population were consulted before changes were made. 20% agree that the positions were advertised while 80.5% were not consulted.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The first table shows the gender of the sample population. The table shows that 67.96% of the population were males while 32.0% of the population were females. Gender is important while conducting a research this means that more males were surveyed.

The second table shows the age group of the population size. From the results the majority of the sample population were between the ages off 21-25 making of 70.8% of the total population. 19.4% of the population are between the ages of 26-30 while the least age group
are 40-50 with 9.7%. The majority of the sample sizes are students compared to the employees.

The table three and four are also general questions on the occupation and the organisation. With majority of respondents are students and employees from the American University of Nigeria.

Table five and six questions attempt to answer the research questions on the perception of the changes made to the sample population. This table shows if it caused any stress to adjust and the entire sample size said no. To summarize, majority of the population were affected positively at 100% while none of the respondents had any stress in adjusting to the new structure.

Tables seven, eight, nine and ten attempted to find out how the change has affected the organisational performance or improved work efficiency and effectiveness. 100% of the sample size is happy with the new structure. 19.4% of the population were not consulted while 80.5% were consulted before the changes were made.

Research question 2:

How has the changes made affected the employee and graduating students perception at the communications department? According to the results, it shows that they have a positive perception on the changes made since 100% of the sample size responded positively in table five and six.
Research question 1:

How has the organisation reacted to the change in communications department structure?

In interviews conducted with administrators and director of the communication department/events and university relations, they all agreed that the change has been positive because.

“It has helped to reposition the communications apparatus of the university in a manner that there is cacophony of voices anymore. I think it is a positive development” (Presley)
CHAPTER FIVE

4.4 SUMMARY

Knowing the perception of the sample population of an organization, could help detect if organisational change has affected the organisation. Change is important to guide them into making further decisions. The general perception is an issue that must be considered to protect the image of the organization. Organizational change can affect the perception of a department depending on how and why the changes are made.

CONCLUSION

This research results has proven that there was a positive effect of the department restructuring to the communications department of the American University of Nigeria however, there are a few improvements that could be made for better awareness towards changes for future purposes.

RECOMMENDATION

- General updates should be made available to the population when changes occur.

- Responses should be recorded for future practices.
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