External Stakeholder's Management Strategies and Goal Attainment of Construction Companies in Rivers-State

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Abstract

External Stakeholder's Management Strategies and goal attainment in companies in Rivers-state was studied. To ascertain the objectives of the study, two research questions and two (2) hypotheses were formulated and tested. A survey of technique was used to administer questionnaires to 322 respondents but only 120 respondents returned the questionnaires and was analyzed using packages in social sciences and the hypotheses were analyzed using SPSS software. Both the two hypotheses were rejected in their null forms. The findings showed that a significant relationship exists between external stakeholder's management strategies and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers-state. This study adopted two (2) dimensions of external stakeholder's management strategies and goal attainment concept. It has clearly shown that goal attainment in depended on external stakeholder's management strategies. Others researchers can as well study the remaining dimensions of external stakeholder's management strategies to ascertain the relationship to see if it is positive or negative. There is need for construction companies and government agencies to ensure their effectiveness and efficiency towards their external stakeholders to attain their goals and objectives for a sustainable infrastructural development in the society.

Keywords: Stakeholders; External Stakeholder; Persuasion; Give and Take; Goal Attainment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade research on stakeholder management has made enormous progress (Ruhli; sachas, 2005; Carrol 1996; freeman, 1994; post etal, 2002; waddoek, Bowell, 2002; Harrison, freeman 1999; freeman, mevea, 2006; Philips, 2003). Donaldson and Preston (1995) claimed that the management of stakeholder relations is one basic challenge facing organizations. The influence of stakeholders is a central issue as regards to organizational change (Mano, 2013). The aim of the stakeholder management is to maximize the benefits that can be derived from stakeholders while minimizing the possible downside that can arise by associating with them (Landin 2011). Stakeholder management creates a unique and valuable network of stakeholder relations which leads to the acquisition of know- how and competences, forming corporate culture and giving rise to benefits for key stakeholders in the long run. A good example for this situation is the well-known claim for customer focus.

There are numerous benefits enjoyed by organization that actively develop and sustain relationships with the affected communities and stakeholders. Such benefits include improved risk management, increased risk management, increased stakeholders support, better outcomes, business intelligence, idea generation for product and service, quality, reduced cost and maximized value like reputation, competitive advantage, corporate governance, risk management and social license to operate. Stakeholder management in the process by which one recognizes monitors and improves relationships with stakeholders. It involves systematically identifying stakeholders, analyzing their needs and expectation and planning and implementing various tasks to engage in them. Five basic external stakeholders are: customers, suppliers, creditors, local community (society) and government. Mega projects that involve managing external stakeholders with diverse interests are strategies such as: persuasion, deputation, give and take, extra work for stakeholders and flexibility, which this study adopted two of a strategy namely, persuasion and give-and-take strategies.

Organization's effectiveness has been refined in terms of attaining goals. Griffin (2008) said that organizations were viewed as rational institutions whose primary purpose is to accomplish objectives. It means the more efficiently and effectively an organization can achieve it, the more successful it becomes. It is according to this approach, quite often, the bottom-line goals of organizations are focused on profitability.

Market and non-market strategy relate to the management of the organization stakeholders. Market strategy is to with how an organization strategically interacts with its suppliers, customers, competitors and it more concerned with the immediate or task environment of the organization and the industry it places itself within a non-market. Strategy is about

stakeholder interaction outside of the immediate or market (task) environment that the organization competes within for example stakeholders such as pressure or activist groups, government and their agencies, legal and international counts, the social public and media. Vision statement is another strategy. It is the future state or mental picture of what the organization wants to achieve over the very long time. Forward- looking and provide guidance and inspiration to focus on what in important for accomplishment over the long term. Mendelow's stakeholders mapping of them in order to understand and resolve any issue or conflicts that may exist. Cyert and March proposed four approaches for managing stakeholders conflict. With so any pieces in play on the metaphorical chessboard of complex service-provider relationship to ensure success in achieving business outcomes, it is important to know how each will move. In order to understand stakeholder, these five keys should be considered: what is your stakeholder's political learning? What are your stakeholder's aspirations? How does your organization view its stakeholders? How influential are your stakeholders? And how should you approach stakeholder influence?

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Every construction company operates in a community or society. And every construction company has its internal and external stakeholders. The effectiveness of the company shows that all the internal and external stakeholders are satisfied and terms of contractual agreement are satisfied. So many companies having gotten issues with the stakeholders failed to attain the goals and visions of the companies. So many companies or businesses fail to adopt the highlighted external stakeholder's strategies and eventually fail to attain the set objectives and goals. There have been several problems emanating between stakeholder and companies. So, companies having agreed to the terms in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) wickedly object afterwards and even make these communities to fight themselves. Some companies even failed to identify the numerous external stakeholders; some don't even classify the stakeholders as such. Littau et al (2010) noted that stakeholders can be classified. Mitchell et al (1997) said that stakeholders can impact on the organization and every stakeholder is in position to influence the wellbeing of an organization. Effectiveness of an organization can be defined in terms of its capacity to achieve goals. The organization often fails to attain the set goals hence this study to enlighten construction companies, private and the public sectors to adopt the dimensions noted in this study to ensure success of their organizations.

1.2 Conceptual Review

External stakeholders
Management strategies ————————————————→ Goal attainment

Persuasion
Give and take
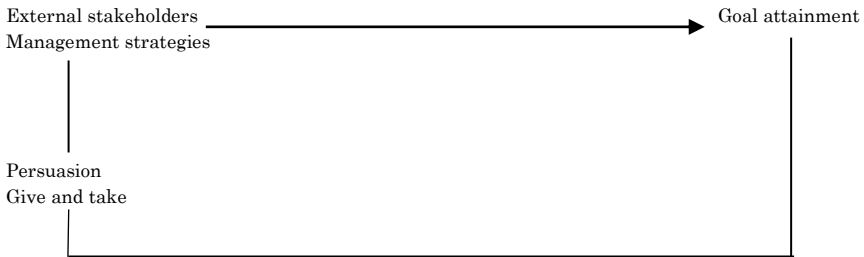
The Dimensions of external stakeholder's management strategies were adopted from the work of Yuki & Tracy (1992)

1.3 Objectives:

1. To ascertain if any relationship exists between persuasion and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers state.
2. To find out if any relationships exist between give and take strategy and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State.

1.4 Research Questions

1. Does persuasion relate with goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers- state?
2. Does give and take strategy relate with goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State?

1.5 Hypotheses

1. **Ho$_1$:** There is no significant relationship between persuasion and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers-state.
2. **Ho$_2$:** There is no significant relationship between give and take strategy and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Michel et al (1997) said that stakeholder is anyone that can have an impact on the 'organizations' action or who experiences an impact as a result of that. Stakeholders is in position to influence the well-being of an organization, defined in terms of its capability to achieve goals (freeman, 1984); thus, they are significant in the project contests (Achterkamp & Vos, 2008). Littau et al (2010) noted that stakeholders can be classified into three ways. Those who have an interest in the organization; those who can affect the organization and those that both have an interest in and can affect the organization. Mok et al (2015) stressed that stakeholders' management in mega projects is more complex than in small scale projects because there are numerous stakeholders. They are not easy to identify due to the limited cognition of

project managers in regard to the boundaries of stakeholder inclusion. External stakeholders which are outside the organization present more complexities than internal stakeholders who in principle will be subject to contractual regulation. These diverse external stakeholders may articulate conflicting representation of many of the specific of the planned projects (szylwicz & Goetz, 1995; Hander & Landin, 2008). Stakeholders which spread across different organizations will have different interpretations of the specific strategies, goals and practices. These representations occur during all stages in the project lifecycle (Aaltonen & kuljala, 2010) and may be enacted through a range of measures that include lobbing, political action petitioning, negotiating and influencing as well as direct action (flyvbjerg, 1998; Aalteronen et al, 2008). These actors are also referred to as "stakeholders of the shadows" (winch, 2017) as they seek to specific vested interests, sometimes subtly, other times less so. Thus, mega projects present ample opportunities for capturing and demonstrating individualized forms of public benefits rather than ones that are collective (Lehrer & Laidley, 2008). Yukl & Tracey (1992) came up with five strategies as influential tactics to manage projects such as persuasion which the managers use to convince the legal land holders who refused to move, even after providing market rate compensation through referring to a public good and using "inspiration appeals" (Yuks Tracy,1992). The project team combined the inspirational appeal with some "pressure" (Yukl & Tracy 1992), "rational persuasion" (Yukl & Tracy, 1992) and consultation (Yukl & Tracy 1992) to convince these landholders. The second is deputation which is the co-ordination of the project with external stakeholders such as government agencies such as the electricity, highways, railways, telecommunication and police and police departments etc.

2.1 Empirical Review:

Adetunji and Wahab (2015) did research on the cause of conflict and resolution strategies employed in the management of community Driven projects (CDPs) in selected public and private estate in Lagos state. The study concluded that resolution of conflicts would always bring about peaceful co-existence in housing areas. Ampomah and Gyan (2016) explored the effect of stakeholder conflicts on community development. The study revealed that financial and technical investment without adequate social capital will not impact positively on the organization or community driven projects. The advised that project managers should pay attention to stakeholder relationships in project initiation, design and implementation.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey design as it allows the use of questionnaires. A total population of two thousand employees was tenured.

However, krejice and Morgan (1990) table was used to determine the sample size of 322 from 2000. The 322 questionnaires were administered but only 120 respondents returned the questionnaires. The primary sources were questionnaires, oral interviews and discussion with employees while the secondary data included journals and text materials. The responses were examined and analyzed to show validity. The coefficient value of 0.91 showed reliability. The spearman Rank order statics was used to analyze the data inferentially using the SPSS software. Ten construction companies were captured in this study.

4.0 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA.

Table 1:

TEN COMPANIES	Total No questionnaires Administered	Questionnaires Returned
i	10	NIL
ii	30	20
iii	50	30
iv	60	20
v	30	10
vi	20	nil
vii	40	10
vii	22	10
ix	30	10
x	30	10
	322	120

4.1 Testing of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between persuasion and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State.

Correlation Outcome on The Relationship Between Persuasion and Goal Attainment In Construction Companies In Rivers State.

Table 2:

			Persuasion	Goal Attainment
Spearman's Rho	persuasion	Correlation Coeff.	100	.711**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
		N.	120	120
	Goal Attainment	Correlation Coeff.	.711**	100
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.0000	
		N.	120	120

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 – tailed)*
Source: SPSS output from survey Data 2021.

The table above indicates the correlation result in the relationship between persuasion and goal attainment. As indicated in the table, correlation is .711 and it is significant at $p = 0.000 < .01 < .05$. This result shows that there is a

significant relationship between persuasion and goal attainment. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between give and take strategy and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State.

Correlation outcome on the relationship between give and take strategy and goal attainment in construction companies in rivers state.

Table 3:

			Give And Take Strategy	Goal Attainment
Spearman's Rho	Give And Take Strategy	Correlation Coeff.	.100	.811**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.0000
		N.	120	120
	Goal Attainment	Correlation Coeff.	.811**	100
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.0000	
		N.	120	120

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 – tailed)*
Source: SPSS output from survey Data 2021.

The table above indicates the correlation result in the relationship between give and take strategy and goal attainment. As indicated in the table, correlation is .811 and it is significant at $p = 0.000 < .01 < .05$. This result shows that there is a significant relationship between give and take strategy and goal attainment. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study empirically examined the relationship between external stakeholder management strategy and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State. It used both primary and secondary data. A population of 2000 and sample size of 322 constituted other framework of the study. The data were analyzed using simple percentages weighted total scale, the mean, and spearman's Rank Order statistics using the SPSS software. Both hypotheses were tested to examine the significant relationship between external stakeholder management strategy and goal attainment in construction companies in Rivers State. These hypotheses were tested at 0.09 significant level and 16 SPSS version 20 output from research instrument.

For hypothesis one (Ho1), which was tested between persuasion and goal attainment, the correlation .711, thus, the Ho1 was rejected in its null form. In testing Hypothesis two (Ho2) the analysis, the correlation showed .811 for give and take and goal attainment. A significant relationship exists between give and take and goal attainment. Thus, the null hypothesis (Ho2) was rejected.

5.1 Conclusion

Having noted that a significant positive relationship exists between the two concepts, organization should take the highlighted ideas seriously to ensure smooth relationship between external stakeholders and the organization. To manage the mentioned affair of the external stakeholders, the construction companies should adopt the two or five of the strategies noted above. This study concentrated on persuasion and give-and-take strategy. Every company, want to achieve its set goals and objectives to be profitable and remain in business. No organization would want to start a project and stop half way. From the strategies noted others are negotiation, trade-offs, incentives land concessions (Chinyio & Akintoye, 2008; yang et al, 2014).

5.2 Recommendation:

This study is necessary for every business owner, leaders of companies, political institutions, governmental agencies etc. No organization should take external stakeholders for granted. I strongly recommend this study to all managers because effectiveness cannot be complete without the satisfaction of its stakeholders, (Internal and external).

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