



WORKPLACE CULTURE AND ITS IMPACT ON ORGANISATIONAL EFFICIENCY

BA LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR THE WORKPLACE

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1. Introduction

Workplace culture is a behavioural pattern supported by a particular management system, over a period (Simms, 2014). In addition, an organization that is both productive and profitable requires the presence of a positive workplace culture created beforehand. Workplace culture determines the quality of the work we do. And more positive environments tend to induce employee engagement and commitment.

The dynamics regarding acceptable norms and interactions dictated by the workplace culture mainly influence the conduct of employees and their superiors or colleagues in an organization (Blau 1964; Young 1990). Based on the scientific description of people's relationship with their cultures customs, habits, and mutual differences, dynamics around the proper functioning of a workplace and matters of equality may vary based on the norms, personnel and their history (Vallas, 2006).

Employee actions which are contrary to a specific workplace culture may lead to tension and mistrust between co-workers and or with their superiors (Stainback et al., 2011). Culture is the group's personality (Ramsey, 2004) and it is considered a code of conduct though not written, but socially transmitted behavioral patterns, comprising of beliefs, values, traditions, informal rules, priorities and organizational roles.

Ramsey (2004) argues that the middle managers and supervisors shape workplace culture throughout the organization structure from top to bottom; And that it is the culture that determines the organization's success. For anyone to succeed in the organization, they must learn and understand the workplace culture of that organization or else they tend to get ignored by both their superiors and those they lead.

To be able to make significant changes in the workplace culture of an organization, a shift in mindset and behavioural patterns is a fundamental requirement. A change in one's mindset is the best way to mirror beliefs, values, and assumptions acceptable in a workplace since culture has a lot to do with things that influence people's social norms and behaviours (Manley et al., 2011).

This report takes an in-depth look at the workplace culture and its impact on organizational efficiency, a discussion is made on the Smile telecom's organizational structure, culture, values, and ethos. The report explores the effects of policies, procedures, and legislation on workplace culture and how it relates to organizational performance. It analyses the Impact of external forces such as Political, Social, Economic, Technological, Legal, and Environmental factors on Smile Telecom.

The report evaluates relationships between departments and the people whether formal or informal; and the communication channels used in sharing information and building relationships. In addition, it examines Smile telecom's corporate social and environmental responsibility and how the culture of sustainability within the Smile Telecom's workplace. Lastly, it defines the role of personal ethical standards, values, and beliefs in the Smile Telecom.

2. Workplace culture and its impact on organisational efficiency and performance: a case study of smile telecom.

Smile Telecom holdings is a 4GLTE (mobile internet service provider), founded in Mauritius in 2007 and later established its presence in Tanzania, Uganda, and Nigeria. It provides mobile services such as Short Message services, Videos calls, voice calls through Smile voice and Voice over LTE.

Smile become the first company to Launch a 4GLTE network that was commercial in Africa in 2013. The company's objective of becoming the first choice whenever a broadband user thinks about Mobile broadband is that its services are super-fast, clear and essential beneficial. The company intends to make accessible their fast and reliable broad band services to their potentially estimated though slight above 300 million customers.

The company believes that if their potential customers get access to their services, there will be more wealth creation and accelerated growth in all its countries of operation. Part of the company's plan is to transform communities in its countries of operation by providing high quality, reliable, affordable and user-friendly services to its customers.

2.1. Smile telecom values, ethos and organisational culture.

Values are beliefs that are permanent when it comes to a particular way of conduct or results are socially or personally approved instead of other alternatives ways of conducts and results. Values by nature tend to be stable, deep-seated and to a certain extent permanently a part of one's inner self (Giacomino et al., 1999).

An implicit or explicit perception which is desirable and influencing a sense of choice from a variety of means, modes, final action is a value (Kiuckhohn, 1951). Values are beliefs related to norms regarding acceptable standards of conduct and desired or preferred results (Nystrom, 1990).

For smile telecom to succeed, management decided to conduct its operations under four central values namely, Humanity, integrity, Innovation, and humility. These would then form the core values upon which the smile telecom built its organization and workplace cultures.

Evidence of this is in their approach to their work, services, and products offered and their relationships with partners and customers.

Culture is thought to be a set of psychological inclinations which influence an organisation's members' behaviours based on fundamental assumptions (Schein, 1985). Although the complexity of culture as a concept is in the lack of consensus in its definition whereby there is more focus on organisational and corporate culture according to more general and health-related literature (Davies et al., 2000; Scott et al., 2003; Mannion et al., 2005) as opposed to local level culture.

Organisational culture is referred to as the way, things are done here (Lundy and Cowling, 1996). While ethos based on Aristotle are rhetorically said to come from wisdom and practical skills (Phronesis), goodness and virtue (arête) and goodwill towards others (eunoia) according to Rackham (1926). Although the organization's local and distinct social knowledge shearing (organisation culture) is unstable and varies depending on the different levels of the organization (Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983).

Smile Telecom's ethos are well represented in their key management comprised of professionals with a wealth of experience and knowledge. The key management has both the motivation and drive to deliver the best standard of service to their customers. Irene Charnley, their founder, and chief executive director is a well-respected telecoms entrepreneur with a history of growing telecoms such as MTN exhibiting expertise in strategic, operational experience and business development.

Venessa Naidoo, a chartered accountant, is part of the key management as the Chief financial officer with over 20 years' experience in investment acquisitions and disposals, entrepreneurial service and start-up of new ventures, forensics, and audit. Ahmad Farroukh, the executive director, has a well-rounded experience to drive profitability and strategy with commercial success in Africa. He is a certified public accountant and has experience as a CEO in MTN Nigeria and one of Saudi Arabia's telecommunications operator called Mobily.

2.3. Impact of personal ethical standards, values and beliefs on organisational culture.

It is a matter of either the absence or presence of a management skill that satisfies and balances any competing interests within an organisation; A process that requires neither inherent logic nor reason, but rather relies on the people's ability to control people, resources and choosing to grow and exercise autonomy (Boddy and Paton, 1998, p. 118). And hence the notion that people who are in positions of authority within the organisation tend to set the

morals of execution based on their personal values and external environments in which the organisation operates (Desai and Rittenberg, 1997, p. 3).

The argument that supposed idealistic values which are personal could be translated as some form of a psychological self-interest such as egoism (Baier, 1993) may not hold true as it is difficult to establish that fact that it is organisational values or personal values that one should acknowledge. And so is the question of whether it is an individual organisational conflict resolution causing changes in one's beliefs and values or that their rational choice may be a result of one's alignment of their personal values with those of the organisation (Festinger, 1957; Staw, 1980, Lovell, 2002).

In their research about business and values, Agle and Caldwell (1999) addressed the challenge of whether values should be attributed to an individual or organization, none the less, Jacob et al., (1962) supported the normative idea of value as a standard for guided human behaviour; hence the view that values are the standards against which individuals tend to make decisions on the course of action based on their perception (Cited in Harrison, 1975, p. 117).

On the other hand, beliefs such as religious beliefs tend to motivate philanthropy although often interpreted as self-interest, it is rather hard to find empirical proof to support this argument. It has been suggested that in addition to official objectives of the organisation, individual managers tend to make decision based on their personal values and interests (Hemingway and MacLagan, 2004).

There is however a difference between values, ranging from moral, religious, political, social, and sentimental values (Rescher, 1969, p. 16). And a change in individual values reflects the same in the goals of the society they are in (Kahle et al., 1988, p. 35). These changes in person values do have a bearing on the corporate and consumer values of an organisation (Robertson, 1991, p. 120). Thus, the argument that organisation's CEOs determine the organisation's ethical norms (Desai and Rittenburg, 1997, p. 796; Robin and Reidenbach, 1987; Agle et al., 1999), although concluding that Managerial values are inherent is a matter to contend.

2.4. Culture and organisational performance.

The increase in cultural diversity with in offices and employees of an organization is attributes to the globalisation of that organisation's operations (Kell and Ruggie, 2001, p. 326). Different organisations have different levels of organisational culture and just like communities' organisational culture is not any different (Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983).

The assertion that strong organisational culture is directly proportional to organisational performance (Deal and Kennedy, 1982). However, several organisational theorists and economists are of the view that culture is irrelevant and epiphenomenal when it comes to understanding organisational performance although in some organisation organizational culture is believed to be a dominant form of control and that to understand the performance of those organisations, one must be able to comprehend their organisational culture first (Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983).

As head of a sales department in Smile Telecom, the experience of undergoing constant performance reviews based on all the work place values, vision and mission to ensure compliance is prevalent. Some members on my sales team would have to consult with me as their sales team lead to validate any business decisions they would be making while out in the field.

3. Impact of policies, procedures and legislation determine work place culture.

3.1 Policies and procedures

Smile Telecom believes in the notion that business and good ethics go hand in hand to be able to produce long term good results for all Smile Telecom's stakeholders.

The attitudes and behaviours of employees are affected by the organization culture and environment in terms of policies such as CSR as far as compliance and values and whether these policies are in alignment with the business processes of the organisation (Collier & Esteban, 2007).

3.1.1 Smile Telecom company policies

Privacy policy

Smile Telecom only maintains employees' personnel records necessary for legal, business and contractual purposes and limits access to these records for legitimate and business purposes only. Smile Telecom complies with the laws regulating the disclosure of personal information however the employee's entitlement to the privacy in terms of information technology is limited. For example, in cases of violation of Smile Telecom's code of conduct the Smile Telecom reserve the right to examine all the data for any reason with notice (Smile Telecom's talent policies & procedures manual/ Code of business conduct, 2016).

Privacy is thought to be rooted from the western part of the world where one's being autonomous of uttermost importance, to point that one has a claim to privacy. Although contrarily, appears to be of less importance in Africa though no supportive evidence has been

found. The belief that a group's due to the collectivism culture, interests precede those of an individual in the same groups is prevalent in Africa (Gutwirth, 2002).

Smile telecom works to protect and conserve the natural resources, encourage practices and environmental values, effectively manage solid waste and ensure proper accountability procedures for all its operations. This implies abiding with all the available environmental laws and regulations in the countries and communities where Smile telecom operates, by making health and safety an integral part of the design of all its products, services and processes (Smile telecom Talent policies and procedures manual, 2016).

One of the key concepts under public scrutiny in debates around policy – making, is Environmental sustainability. Because of its environmental sustainability provide a platform for trade offs when it comes to economic and social sustainable development (Goodland, 1995).

Discrimination

Despite the negative connotations that come with discrimination, it is a known reality (Patrinos, 2000). To Smile telecom, maintaining an environment that is free from any form of discrimination requires all Directors, employees, officers, representatives, consultants, agents, and independent contractors of Smile respect to maintain each other's integrity, dignity, right to privacy and equity in a work place (Smile telecom Talent policies and procedures manual, 2016).

3.1.2 Government legislation

There is a limitation in the implementation of policies by the government as explained by many of the employees of smile telecom in Uganda with social welfare being overrun by the economic policies. Urban authorities have not been able to re enforce some regulation regarding the environmental protection as well (Lwasa et al., 2007)

With most of the population below the poverty line, the best way to improve people's social welfare is by availing better income opportunities (Ministry of finance, Planning and economic development, 2004) and abandoning un achievable social welfare targets like the MDGs or SDG. However, this means that economic growth should be encouraged at the expense of social welfare (Brownbridge, 2004).

3.2. Figure 1. Smile telecom SWOT analysis



Source: Author

Figure 1. Above displays the SWOT analysis of Smile telecom Uganda.

3.3. Smile telecom PESTLE analysis.

Smile telecom's headquarters in Uganda are strategically located in the capital of the country particularly in the central business district. This represents opportunities for business expansion.

Political Factors Affecting Smile Telecom's Business

The political environment tends to influence how smile telecom carries out business. The presumption that political stability impacts business growth is logically correct. Considering other factors constant, stable political environment influences economic growth, increased investment, and the country's intellectual capital continues to evolve. On the other hand, political instability wrought a stunted economy. Politically unstable countries have very high chances of being obliterated especially because of the limited chances of proliferation and ingenuity in the system (Basoga, 2016).

The government through the ministry of finance is encouraging investment into the telecom industry. Despite the high levels of corruption and political unrest, there is still a certain level of protection for international investments ranging from provision of incentives such as increment of broadcasting licences. In 2015 the parliament tabled the data protection and Privacy Bill 2015, an improvement to the privacy protection of customers, which falls in line with Smile's values of integrity and humanity.

Economic Factors Important to Smile telecom.

The economic conditions with in Uganda present opportunities and threats which ideally affect the telecom industry in Uganda. Smile telecom accounts for the economic external factors its both its remote and economic environment. This includes the exponential growth of the developing markets with the east African region, stable economic growth in major markets (opportunity) and the rising demand for online products (opportunity).

The current existence of economic opportunities and social amenities (Matagi, 2002) although be lived to cause massive rural urban migration into Kampala -Uganda's capital and a strain both the social and economic development within the city because of the slum development that comes with it (MLHUD, 1993) For Smile telecom, Kampala residents who form 40% of the total country population represent a potential market for its products and services.

Despite the fact the economic trends maybe not be desirable. Companies like smile telecom are able to develop their operations in countries where there is stable economic growth. And the external factors such as exponential growth as seen in market growth with he in the telecom industry in Uganda via a strategy of market penetration. By targeting online market and demand, the company has the potential to grow.

Social Factors Influencing Smile Telecom's External Environment.

External and internal migrants have been attracted by social, economic, political, industrial and commercial activities into Kampala stimulating development through the increasing population growth within the city and country, by providing market and labour for both goods and services from the tertiary and industrial sectors. (Lwasa et al., 2007).

The social environment brings challenges in Smile telecom's operations and determine the micro environment's general condition. This part of the analysis indicates changes and social trends affecting how employees and customer interact with the telecom business and its products. Rising purchasing capacities country wide (opportunity). These include the rising population within the city, evaluating business and product quality through customer service and online services.

Technological Factors in Smile telecom's Business

The increased access to mobile technology within the last 10 years has increased business opportunities within the region (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). Equipment and business tools used in the telecom are determined by the technological change in that very industry. Integration with other industries in terms of technology affect smile telecoms' business potential and so do other changes such as cybercrime which is an eminent threat to their customer's data security.

Environmental Factors

The informal sector within Uganda is constantly expanding because it is somehow able to provide jobs and accommodation for those that have failed to acquire decent accommodation and formal jobs. The problem with the informal sector is that it tends to have no regard for the environment. It involves activities such as contamination of water, wetland degradation and failure to manage waste (Lwasa et al., 2007).

Smile telecom has an opportunity to improve its sustainability by utilizing more recyclable products. This is done in the bid to contribute to the global sustainability goals. These actions can contribute to the success and effectiveness of the goals in smile telecom's corporate social responsibility strategy. And most importantly, it has been able to provide jobs in the formal sector and this does have a contribution to the overall solution to the environmental problem.

Legal Factors

The institutional strength of a country is entirely depended in the level of bureaucracy with in the country. The quality /level of bureaucracy of the country is determined by how law and order is enforced, a reduction in corruption levels and in essentially determining good governance (Kaufmann et al., 1999).

The legal requirements and constraints on business are assessed in this element of the PESTEL/PESTLE analysis of smile telecom. Legal systems of the country affect the Smile telecom through regulations. Therefore, smile telecom must address legal factors relevant in the telecom technology industry within Uganda such as weak data protection policies in Uganda and waste regulation which is both a threat & opportunity).

4.Organisational structures.

Organisational structures define the way employees of the same organisation relate and work together. This is often demonstrated by an organisation chart, displaying the distribution of authority across the company. The organisation structures vary depending on the type of organisation, size and image. Often at times, its affected by some external factors such as cultures (UNISON,2018).

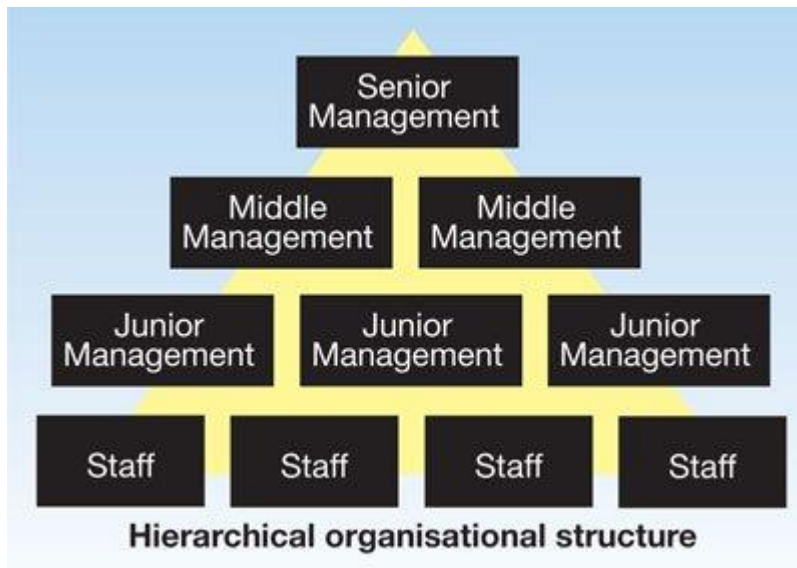
4.1. Types of structures

To be able to achieve the company's aims and objectives, the company must choose the most suited organisation structures to optimise human and other resources and the main organisation structure according to UNISON (2018) includes:

Hierarchical Organisation structure.

In this case, see figure 2. Below, the layers of business represent levels of authority form the top , clearly defining roles and duties which determines the course of action to be taken in case of a decions. However, when it comes to communication, there may be delays since information has to go through many layers(nidbusinessinfo,2018).

Figure 2. Hierarchical organisation structure



Source: businesscasestudies (2018).

Horizontal Organisation structures

This has a reduced number of layers as shown in figure 3 below, with more employees in each . Efficient in highly motivated and skilled work environments, where several groups within that layer make the decisions (nidbusinessinfo,2018).

Figure 3. Horizontal structures.



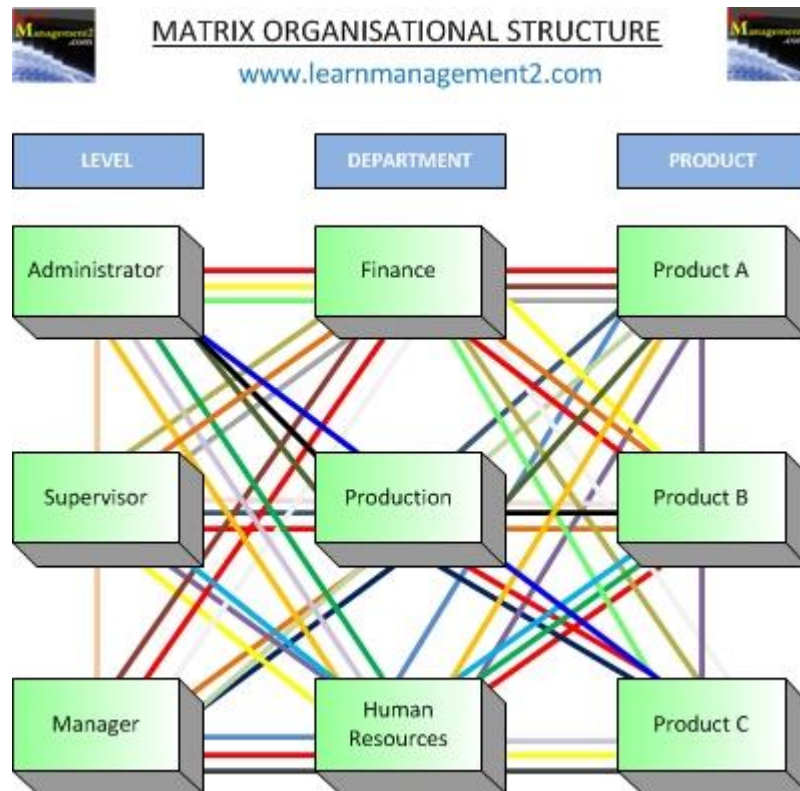
Source: Academy for leaders (2018)

Matrix organisational structures.

These kinds of structures are often setup depending on the needs of the project. They tend to involve people with multiples skills put together from other departments. Team work is emphasised for project delivery. An organisation structure is used to define the assignment,

power and responsibilities and the coordination of the roles as well as interdepartmental information flow (nidbusinessinfo,2018).

Figure 4. Matrix organisational structures.



Source: learn manegemen2 (2018)

To ensure effective and efficient management of an organisation, one has to invest time and resources into encouraging acceptable behaviours by allocating incentives, decision making, hiring and monitoring, firing, promoting, e. t. c (Ouchi, 1979; Williamson, 1975; Brickley et al., 2009).

4. The culture of sustainability within the workplace.

Some of the most popular concepts of discussion b the end of the 1981s were sustainable development and sustainability, via a Brundtland Report and remaining a challenge scientifically and for those in the policy making aswell (Ramcilovic-Suominen & Pülzl, 2018).

Regardless of the objective of doing CSR, whether for economic purposes of per induvial purses, there has to be a reason for doing it considering the growing attraction that it has been able to get over the course of the years on the global market (Hemingway and Maclagan (2004).

5. Recommendations & Conclusion

Africa is still a developing continent and as such companies attend to struggle along with the development constraints of any developing country and the work place culture of both the countries and the companies are evolving. This may require a company like smile telecom to technically identify multiple ways to be able to break through the culture of every aspect of the Uganda peoples' lives, economically, politically, socially and technologically. Recent social media tax imposed on the local population by the current government is negatively impacting the sales growth of Smile telecom. And there for I would recommend that smile telecom invest more time and resources into R&D ventures for future business in Uganda and Africa that may not necessarily be easily affected by culture of the populace. That way, the organisation structure of Smile telecom may be re adjusted to fit the current situation in Uganda focusing on neutralising the threats, improving to strengths and opportunities and converting the weaknesses of the organisation into strengths.

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