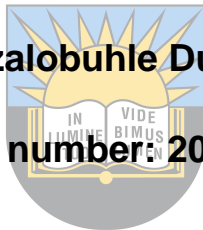




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**Billing System, Communication Strategies, and Organisation
Change in Zimbabwe: The Case of TelOne Customers' Postpaid to
Prepaid Migration**



Sizalobuhle Dube
Student number: 200909686

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April 2023



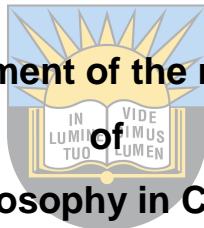
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**Billing system, Communication strategies, and Organisation change in
Zimbabwe: The case of TelOne Customers' Post-paid to Prepaid Migration**

BY

SIZALOBUHLE DUBE (MRS)

STUDENT NUMBER: 200909686



A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy in Communication

University of Fort Hare

Together in Excellence

Department of Communication

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

University of Fort Hare, Alice, South Africa

SUPERVISED BY

Professor O. O. Osunkunle

April 2023

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this study submitted to the University of Fort Hare for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Communication, is my work in design and execution and that it has not been previously submitted by me for the degree at this or any other University.

Signature:  _____

Date: 03/04/2023



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I, Dube Sizalobuhle with student number 200909686, hereby declare that I am fully aware of the University of Fort Hare's Policy on plagiarism and I have fully complied with the regulation. Other scholars' work used in this study has been appropriately referenced and duly acknowledged.

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Signature: _____



Date: 03/04/2023



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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my beloved mother who sacrificed a lot for my success. Without her support, I would not have gotten this far in this study. Mostly to my son Nhlosenhle Thrive Dube and my husband Engineer Mthulisi Dube who has always been supportive and encouraging in all the positive steps I have taken in my life, including this study.



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Firstly, I praise God for giving me strength and endurance in doing this study. I am indebted to my supervisor Professor O. Osunkunle for his guidance and patience throughout this study. This study has been successful due to his kindness and willingness to help, ever since the preliminary stage of the research up to the completion of the study.

My family and friends are also most acknowledged for their immense support throughout the writing of this thesis and the encouragement I got as they accorded me the title “Dr.” since the initiation of the study. I also appreciate the respondents for their contributions to the study.

Lastly, I am thankful that the Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre provided me with the financial assistance to carry out the study.



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ABSTRACT

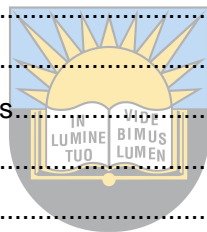
This study investigated the effectiveness of the communication strategies used to implement the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne Zimbabwe. This study adopted the Freeman's stakeholder theory and the Lewin's change model to analyse the factors that influenced the effectiveness of the communication strategies used by TelOne before, during and after the change implementation as a way to communicate the initiative with its stakeholders. A qualitative approach was utilised and the key research methods used included document analysis, participant observation, as well as 21 face-to-face and 79 telephonic semi-structured interviews conducted with respondents from among TelOne managers, employees and the customers. The documents and respondents were purposively sampled based on the researcher's knowledge of their relevance in the study. The findings revealed several factors that hindered effective change communication strategies such as company image, stakeholder recognition and communication centralisation. To curb these communication challenges, the study proposes Thrive organisational communication change model (TOCC) that encourages organisations to communicate the initiative to its relevant internal and external stakeholders considering their views and addressing factors that might hinder effective communication as a strategy to enhance successful change management.

Keywords: change management; challenges; directive; effective communication; organisation; strategies.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ZPTC:	Zimbabwe Post and Telecommunications Corporation
BSAC:	British South African Company
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
ADSL:	Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line
ADKAR:	Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability and Reinforcement model
TOCC:	Thrive Organisational Communications Change model
SVC:	Shared Value Creation
KYC:	Know Your Customers
KENTRADE:	Kenya Trade Network Agency
ZBC:	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
Email:	Electronic mail
SMS:	Short message service
TV:	Television
DSTV:	Digital Satellite Television
HQ:	Headquarters
ZWD:	Zimbabwean dollar
USD:	United States dollar



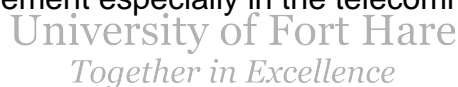
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

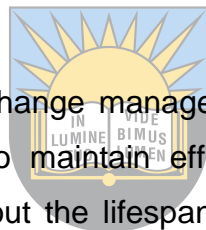
This study investigates the effectiveness of the communication strategies used to implement the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne Zimbabwe. Initially, TelOne used post-paid billing whereby bills were paid after accessing telephone services, however, the organisation enacted prepaid billing services whereby the system requires customers to purchase vouchers to access telephone services. Khoiri (2020) argues that organisations that desire to implement operational changes in the way it operates must know how to lead and manage change. This study therefore aimed at finding out if effective communication can successfully manage the change at TelOne.

Most studies have focused on the causes of organisational change, benefits of change management and factors affecting change management. Amongst others, the factors affecting change were argued as inappropriate organisational culture, change complexity, inadequate planning of change and non-empowerment of affected stakeholders (Feizi 2019, Thomas 2014 and Debrovic & Timkova 2017). However, little has been done to establish how effective communication impact successful change management especially in the telecommunications industry.



Debrovic & Timkova (2017) also attest to change as a challenging process that can be swiftly implemented through effective communication skills to pioneer organisational transformation without negatively affecting employees and customers. Akin to the researcher's position on the need for efficient organisational communication during change management, Feizi (2019) also argues that employees must be well informed and knowledgeable about the change, to have better leverage to assist customers. Frahm & Brown 2007 as cited in Shulga 2021, further argues that the success of any initiative process is determined by how effective the strategy of the change is communicated to those who are the targets of change. Thus, the current study contributes to the body of knowledge as it argues the centrality of effective communication strategy in organisational change management, instigating that the change communication strategies employed by TelOne during change management had a major positive or negative effect on the adoption rate of change by customers.

Inasmuch as it has been generally debated by various scholarship that effective communication affects change management, this thesis makes a critical scrutiny by firstly establishing the factors that impact effective communication towards successful change management. No studies have concurrently established factors determining communication effectiveness during change as well as its impact on the success of change management. Further, it appears this is the first study to explore how TelOne Zimbabwe communicated with its employees and customers concerning their major change of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing. Thus, this study wants to be distinctive as it does not merely discuss how communication affects change. Rather, it examines what affected communication effectiveness and how the nature of communication implemented during change management affects stakeholders' understanding of the change, their perception of the essence of that change, their willingness to adopt the change and ultimately their efficiency in adopting the change thereof.



This study views organisational change management as a process, not an event, meaning that there is a need to maintain effective and efficient organisational communication channels throughout the lifespan of an organisation to ensure that whatever changes arise can be swiftly implemented through the already existing communication system. This study thus examines the gap in the industry in terms of syncing organisational communication systems to effect organisational change management. In essence, this study investigates phenomena to design a change management model that embodies the principles of organisational communication and those of organisational change management, a model that can be adopted by organisations that need to implement change.

1.2 HISTORY OF TELONE

The origin of TelOne can be traced as the first Postal Services organisation in 1892, operating under the British South African Company (BSAC) in Zimbabwe and controlled by the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (Moyo 2003). At independence in 1980, the former Zimbabwe Post and Telecommunication Corporation (ZPTC) became TelOne. It was founded as a result of the creation of the Postal and Telecommunications Act which was promulgated as the Zimbabwe Postal services Amendment Act 175. Though the company started as the Post and

Telecommunication Corporation, the name was later disbanded resulting in the creation of TelOne, NetOne Zimbabwe (mobile telecommunications services), and ZimPost (a postal services company). Thus in 2000, the commercialization of the corporation was introduced under the Postal and Telecommunication Act [12:05] which enabled the unbundling of the Post and Telecommunication Corporation (PTC).

TelOne is the sole operator which provides a fixed telephone facility in Zimbabwe and is a key player in the information communication technology (ICT) industry. The company's network has the widest coverage in the country with a massive commercial and individual customer base. During its monopolistic era as PTC, customers would apply and wait for years to receive landline connection services with no other option of connectivity (Vedantham 1990). The company is considered a telecommunications giant, the second-largest fixed-line network provider in the region after Telkom South Africa. However, like other players in the telecommunications industry, amongst others, TelOne is not exempt from challenges caused by technological developments and environmental factors.

The unbundling of PTC activated competition from other mobile operators, namely Telecel and NetOne. However, mobile phones were an expensive asset during that era and afforded by the wealthy populace. Initially, mobile phones were primarily for talking and texting (SMS) as developments continued to emanate over the years. In the mid-1990s, Zimbabwe connected to the World Wide Web widely known as the internet. At the advent of the internet, PTC introduced internet services that were accessible through dial-up modems. This enabled PTC to connect various people on a global scale and up to date, TelOne strives to connect Zimbabwe to the world through its voice, data, internet products, and services.

For TelOne, competition with mobile network providers continues to rise owing to the emergence of smartphones, a likeness to portable computers that provide high-speed internet access anywhere at any time through mobile networks. Hence, the way ICT is evolving calls for TelOne to keep abreast and improve its products and services as a competitive vibrant multimedia and Telecommunications company. As a participant observer, the researcher noted that the sentiments of the organisation ahead of the migration process was that prepaid billing enables the company to

obtain valuable financial capital. The organisation can invest in technological upgrades to boost the diversity and quality of its services, thus transforming its telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.

TelOne preliminary revealed that prepaid telephone services came with a nationwide upgrade to enhance voice services and internet speed, more specifically ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) connection. ADSL uses copper telephone links to send and receive data, thus making it faster than the formerly used dial-up modem (also termed asymmetric because the upload speed is slower than the download speed). Although TelOne offers a wide range of telecommunications services that are reliant on each other, the main focus of this study is on its migration from post-paid to prepaid service.

In the telecommunications industry, post-paid billing is when customers have free access to making telephone calls at a fixed charge with a bill that accumulates according to the calls that are made. This bill is due for payment at the end of every month. Alternatively, prepaid billing is when the client cannot make a call until they buy airtime, upon which deductions occur with every call that is made. The process also came with changes in area codes and telephone numbers countrywide. Seemingly, customers were not informed about the intention to change telephone billing services, evidenced by continuous complaints that they were failing to make calls using their landlines. Some of the complaints were based on a lack of awareness of the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing. This lack of awareness meant that they did not know that telephone codes have changed and that they are now expected to fund their accounts to enable outgoing voice calls. Even those who were aware of the system change also complained that they were facing difficulties accessing telephone services that were now prone to technical faults.

TelOne has multitudes of ADSL internet subscribers accessed through landline connections, thus telephone numbers are used as account numbers meaning that customers use them to top up their ADSL data. As a result, employees and most customers were confused as they were not aware of how they would top up their ADSL internet data considering that the network upgrades changed the area codes thus, further changing client account numbers. All these ripple effects emanating

from change management meant that a massive lot of high-value corporate and individual customers with faulty lines also complained of an inability to access internet services from the sole supplier of ADSL broadband services in the country. Such complaints gave the researcher, who was an employee during the change process an impression that some employees and customers misunderstood the various aspects of the change, its ripple effects, and thus, making it burdensome.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Kabweza (2014) argues that TelOne conflicted with its stakeholders due to poor communication concerning the year 2009 dollarization. This poor communication might have caused subscribers to unconsciously use TelOne services at high rates not knowing that billing currency had changed from ZWD to USD, thus receiving costly bills. TelOne could have educated its customers on how the USD billing differs from the previous ZWD billing in the sense that USD value was not subject to the hyperinflation that made TelOne services cheaper over time. Likewise, this study investigates whether TelOne analysed the stakeholder perceptions and experiences with telephone service billing before migration. This would have helped the organisation to learn and apply effective communication as a strategy to successfully motivate its stakeholders to accept the migration.



The researcher, a participant-observer during the change management process, argues that ineffective communication between the organisation and its stakeholders was a major part of the technical challenges experienced by TelOne when implementing the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing. Employees did not receive enough information about the process and thus, were marred with a lot of uncertainty. More specifically, clerical officers were challenged by frequent incoming calls and walk-ins as customers inquired about their lack of telephone and internet services. Moreover, the technical team faced numerous challenges during the migration process as some telephone lines temporarily stopped working while others became a one-way transmission. This meant that customers could not access internet connectivity which is arguably the most demanded product customers need for productivity and leisure. The client service team were failing to assist the querying customers because the whole system was

experiencing faults while employees were drenched in confusion without certainty of what should be done.

Since the post-paid system allowed the customers to be offered telephone services on credit, most customers owed TelOne lots of money that were recovered by the Credit Control department that had been responsible for debt collection for the years. The adoption of prepaid billing meant that the Credit control department would potentially experience job insecurities. Kit et al. (2021) argues that organisations that compromise employee or client benefits are likely to experience massive internal and external resistance, thus, the need for employees to be fully involved during the change management planning and implementation process; making them feel secure enough to partake in the change process and support the necessary restructuring of operations.

Significantly, there is a dearth of research emphasising how effective communication impacts change management at TelOne. Scholars such as Chavunduka, Makwanya and Sifile (2015) conducted a study to find out the challenges faced by TelOne during the implementation of change programs. However, their study emphasised TelOne as a monopoly with a majority of longstanding employees. Hence, the majority of those employees resisted change because they felt secure with traditional operating models and likely preferred that system until retirement. Stemming from the above, this study probes whether effective communication strategy minimises resistance to change, even amongst long-serving employees.

Customers did not understand their role in the change process, hence the numerous inquiries and complaints during the process. This frustrated many customers and was not in cognizance of the fact that customer satisfaction contributes to customer retention which in turn determines the increase or decrease in revenue (Friedman and Miles 2006). It is important to investigate the cause of ineffective communication to prevent the recurrence of such crises. Currently, it is not known where exactly the communications glitch occurred, thus this study investigates whether the problem of inefficient change management was caused by the message, the channel or the technical process.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to look at the link between effective communication strategies and successful organisational change management in an organisation with a focus on TelOne's migration from post-paid to prepaid billing in Zimbabwe.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What communication strategies were used by TelOne to disseminate information about the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing to its management, employees and customers?
2. How effective was the information disseminated by TelOne to facilitate the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing?
3. What challenges were experienced by TelOne employees and customers during the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the communication strategies used by TelOne to disseminate information about the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing to its management, employees and customers.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the information disseminated by TelOne to facilitate the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.
3. To examine the challenges experienced by TelOne employees and customers during the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study significantly highlights the efficacy of organisational communication strategies in organisational change management. Furthermore, the results of this study are useful to TelOne Zimbabwe and other telecommunications organisations worldwide, regarding how best they can use communication in preparation for, during implementation, and after the change project. The TOCC model contributes to existing literature and theory on organisational communication and change management as it embodies the principles of organisational communication and those of organisational change management, a model that can be adopted by organisations that need to implement change.

1.8 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Phenomena in this study were best understood through deductive reasoning, thus the researcher employed the qualitative research design which allowed a clear understanding and interpretation of the communication strategies used by TelOne to communicate the change of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing to management, employees and customers. A representative sample of 100 respondents was chosen from a population comprising TelOne management, employees and customers. Respondents were carefully selected using the purposive sampling technique. The qualitative approach enabled the researcher to obtain detailed information about the communication strategies used during the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne. The data collection methods used included observation, telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis. The researchers' plans to use qualitative questionnaires for the customers was affected by the ravaging effect of Covid19; telephonic interviews were used. The face-to-face interviews were conducted with only 5 management and 16 employees. These data collection methods allowed respondents to fully articulate their feelings, perceptions, experiences, and understanding of the phenomena under study.

This study used thematic analysis to analyse and interpret respondents' perceptions and experiences of the communication strategies used during telephone service migration at TelOne. Specific to this study, Nowell et al. (2017: 2) define thematic analysis as "...a method for identifying, analysing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set". Accordingly, the data collected through telephonic and face to face semi-structured interviews, document analysis as well as observations, were separated and grouped according to their similarities and further analysed, interpreted and discussed under certain themes to determine how effective organisational communication influences stakeholder behaviour towards successful organisational change. A detailed discussion of the methodology is in chapter 3.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the thesis. It provides a brief overview of the literature, theoretical framework, research methodology and significance of the study. Also included here are the research aim, research questions and objectives, which are the core guide of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical framework

Chapter 2 gives an analysis of existing prominent scholarly literature about the phenomenon under study and also the gaps that this study bridges. This included a discussion of the types and the causes of organisational change. The nature of resistance to change is argued in line with communication as a significant change management strategy. In addition, this chapter provides a discussion of the relevant theoretical frameworks used to answer the research questions of the study.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 3 justifies the significance of the qualitative research design used for data collection and its applicability to answering the research questions. This included discussing details of the population selected for the study, its purposive sampling procedure and the data collection methods which included observation, telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis. The results obtained were analysed and interpreted using thematic analysis under themes to answer research questions, hence thematic analysis is also discussed in this section.

Chapter 4: Data analysis and discussion of findings

Chapter 4 gives a detailed analysis of available data and also discusses the findings of the study.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter 5 concludes the study by summarizing the findings. The researcher further outlined recommendations on matters that would have been raised and further proposed suggestions for future research.

1.10 SUMMARY

Generally, this chapter introduced the thesis. A brief overview of the literature, theoretical framework, research methodology, and significance of the study was discussed. Also included here are the research aim, research questions, and objectives, which are the core guide of this study. For rich findings, a thorough critique of the literature is required to understand and gain new insights concerning the study.



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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter reviews various scholarly views on organisational communication and change management and also discusses the relevant theoretical frameworks used in the study, more specifically Freeman's Stakeholder management theory and Kurt Lewin's change model. The researcher conducts an empirical analysis of how these theories have been applied in other studies and thus, gaining insight into the examination of the change management strategies used to manage the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne.

2.2 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

The organisations need to strive to constantly cope with the dynamic environments they operate in. Essentially, the environment influences the way organisations behave and operate. Bhaduri (2019) brings a better understanding of organisational environments by identifying and explaining how the temporary environment, internal environment and external environment all influence organisational change. Bhaduri (2019) argues that the temporary environment has a very long-term effect on the organisation. Furthermore, he says the external environment refers to issues of the outside world such as the economy, political setup or natural disasters while the internal environment refers to the diverse systems happening within the organisation such as the promotion of new leaders or the adoption of laws, policies or legislative adjustments.

Organisational change does not occur on a quarterly, seasonal, annual or fixed timeline, it is a phenomenon that occurs whenever an organisation realises and responds to push and pull factors in the environment. Sa and Serpa (2020) articulate that organisations' often experience periods of stability where transformation and alterations are unnecessary. However, the dynamic environment within which organisations operate, makes change an inevitable process. More so, an organisation that remains afloat in a competitive environment needs to stay compatible with the dynamic environment, thus the necessity for organisational change. Burnes (2021) argues that organisational change occurs when the driving forces for change are greater than the restraining or opposing forces. Forces that

push organisations to change emanate from the internal and external environment. In this regard, this study investigates whether the environment in which an organisation operates has a bearing on its survival; its decision to adopt changes or to remain the same.

Bhaduri (2019), Chatterjee et al. (2018), Dawson (2003) and Senior (2002) synonymously identified the forces that drive organisational change as internal and external forces. Internal forces are classified by Chatterjee et al. (2018) as organisational needs and individual initiatives. Changes in administrative structures, implementation of new operational systems and changes in HR policies are some of the examples of internal forces that an organisation can implement (Rosenbaum et al. 2018). Bhaduri (2019) identifies external forces as political forces, economic forces and sociocultural forces. The researcher notes that internal force could have been the key driving force at TelOne, Zimbabwe as it could have been driven to change due to organisational needs to survive and remain compatible with the changing environment.

The wavering performance of the economy in the past decade(s) has led to inflation as the value of the Zimbabwean Dollar has been prone to fluctuations since the early 2000s. These fluctuations have reduced the value of money leading to financial losses for organisations and individuals, thus the migration to prepaid billing services might give TelOne leverage to acquire its revenues before the currency loses value. Since organisational change is either driven by internal or external forces which are determined by the nature of the environment influencing the change, this study argues that effective communication determines the nature of the changing environment. However, different types of organisational change may be used as underlying principles for organisational change initiatives or change processes.

2.2.1 Types of organisational change

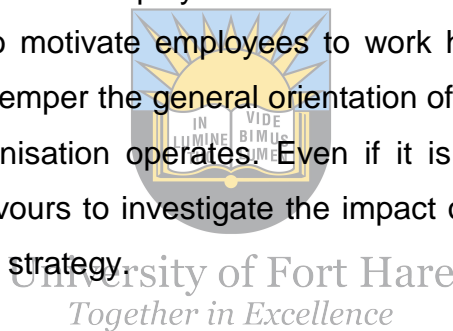
Different types of organisational change in this research are categorised according to characteristics of change:

2.2.1.1 Depth and extent of change

- ***Strategic and non-strategic***

The depth of change is segmented into strategic and non-strategic change. Strategic change entails the modification of a business' mission or vision statement. An organisation may purposively tailor its mission or vision statement to suit the new direction or new philosophy of conducting business (Setzer & Byrnes 2019). This type of change is identified by the above scholars as strategic; its depth is deep, as it changes the orientation of a business. Non-strategic change refers to the alterations that focus on improving organisational performance (Setzer & Byrnes 2019).

Particularly, these are just initiatives that focus on enriching the organisation's enhanced organisational performance. For example, an organisation may implement a clock book system to promote timelines within the organisation, or it may introduce an awards system such as 'Employee of the Month', as a way of instilling performance objectives to motivate employees to work harder. To elaborate, non-strategic changes do not temper the general orientation of a business, they just seek to improve how the organisation operates. Even if it is strategic or non-strategic change, this study endeavours to investigate the impact of effective communication as a change management strategy.



2.2.1.2 Order of change

- ***First order and second order***

Ben-Eli (2018) notes that the order of change is categorised into first-order and second-order change. McDowell et al. (2019) argue that first-order thinking refers to the increased changes which are ongoing. These occur daily in a system and are purposed to enhance its effectiveness and or efficiency. This means that the values of an organisation remain the same, what differs are the methods used to achieve the same planned goals. First-order change zooms against the symptoms and their immediate changes instead of changing the entire system (Ben-Eli 2018). For example, a first-order change may be the upgrade of a slow network in the company during the day. TelOne is a typical case study where first-order change can be implemented; daily the network needs to be upgraded and this change is continuous.

The Second-order change is described by Leong (2020) and Ben-Eli (2018) as radical and multidimensional, characterised by major alterations that transform the entire organisation. This change involves seeing the world differently and operating with totally different values and goals. This also applies in the TelOne scenario where the organisation implemented a radical change from post-paid to prepaid billing. This new way of operating contrasts the old system, thus bringing a drastic shift to the organisation. This study acknowledges the first order and the second-order types of changes; however, the study establishes how organisational change can be managed through effective communication.

2.2.1.3 Need for change

- *Required and elective change*

Chalchissa (2021) and Ibbs et al. (2001) identify two categories in the classification of the need for change; namely the required change and elective change. Required changes occur as necessities and should be implemented to achieve organisational objectives (Leong 2020). Stemming from the above, the migration of TelOne from post-paid to prepaid billing can be understood as a required change that seeks to complement organisational objectives. The change in the billing system complements the organisation's objective of acquiring revenue before it loses value. Elective changes are adjustments that an organisation can employ to improve the effectiveness of a business (Chalchissa 2021; Ibbs et al. 2001). An example of this type of change would be the implementation of cost-effective online marketing in comparison to the more costly traditional forms of marketing.

2.2.2 Origin of change

2.2.2.1 Planned and emergent

Planned changes are predicted, and thus can be analysed easily (Bussetti & Vercchi 2018; Franco-Santos & Otley 2018). In essence, planned changes are a purposively planned course of action that follows certain cognitive reasoning. They ensure that an organisation meets the demands of its internal and external environment (Sa & Serpa 2020). As per the literature discussed above, the researcher is of the view that the migration of TelOne from post-paid to prepaid billing is a required change. TelOne changes also fall within the sphere of planned change as conscious and

deliberate action was required to implement the new system. Emergent changes are unpredictable and unclear (Yang et al. 2021; Franco-Santos & Otley 2018). To elaborate, the emergent changes should be responsive and adaptive to the environment (Boje et al. 2012; Orlikowski 1996; Weick 2000). For example, the outbreak of Covid19 affected many business operations forcing them to close or minimise the number of staff members working at a given time. This kind of external force led organisations to adopt online operations; this change was adopted in response to the demands of the environment. This study notes that to survive in business, organisations had to plan and implement a new way of operating in what was corporately themed as, 'The New Normal'. This reflects the significance of this study to establish an effective organisational communication strategy that is suitable for holistic change management.

2.2.3 Models for organisational change

The table below is a comparison of organisational change models propounded by various scholars.

2.2.3.1 Comparison of three models of emergent change

The table below compares Luecke's, Kanter's and Kottler's models of emergent change. In the table below, Kanter's ten commandments for executing change and Luecke's seven steps both begin by analysing the need for change in an organisation. Having identified the need for change, all three scholars address the issue of creating a vision that directs the course of action. Leadership must be created and thereafter the vision should be communicated to all respective persons. All three models identified the need to institutionalise success through formal policies and structures that support the change.

Kanter <i>et al.</i> 's Ten Commandments for Executing Change (1992)	Kotter's Eight-Stage Process for Successful Organisational Transformation (1996)	Luecke's Seven Steps (2003)
1) Analyse the organisation and its need for change		1) Mobilise energy and commitment through joint identification of business problems and their solutions
2) Create a vision and a common direction	3) Developing a vision and strategy	2) Develop a shared vision of how to organise and manage for competitiveness
3) Separate from the past		
4) Create a sense of urgency	1) Establishing a sense of urgency	
5) Support a strong leader role		3) Identify the leadership
6) Line up political sponsorship	2) Creating a guiding coalition	
7) Craft an implementation plan		
8) Develop enabling structures	5) Empowering broad-based action	
9) Communicate, involve people and be honest	4) Communicating the change vision	
10) Reinforce and institutionalise change	8) Anchoring new approaches in the culture	6) Institutionalise success through formal policies, systems, and structures
	6) Generating short-term wins	
	7) Consolidating gains and producing more change	
		4) Focus on results, not on activities
		5) Start change at the periphery, then let it spread to other units without pushing it from the top
		7) Monitor and adjust strategies in response to problems in the change process

Figure 0.1: Models of organisational change

Source (Todnem 2005)

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Notably, while Kotter and Luecke's models identified seven steps to organisational change, Kanter's model identified 10. In the ten commandments for change, Kanter further discussed the need to develop enabling structures and involve people in the change process, and reinforce and institutionalise the change (By 2005). Thus if compared and contrasted, these models guide a researcher through the change process.

Lewin's three-step model is the basic model for organisational change, it sums up all the steps identified by the above scholars into three steps; the freezing stage, the moving stage, and the unfreezing stage (Burnes 2020). This study posits that although various models may map the way to organisational change, good leadership is paramount in the change process assuming that effective leadership determines the success of an organisation's change process despite the implementation of the best change management model.

2.2.4 Role of effective leadership in organisational change

Louw et al. (2018) argue that most organisations have realised that effective leadership contributes to the overall performance of the organisation. According to Khoiri (2021) competent leadership is the ability to manage knowledge, skills and capabilities. A competent leader can handle change process issues effectively and efficiently. The image below illustrates how a competent leader can utilise skills, knowledge and capabilities to handle organisational change.



Figure 0.2: Leadership Competencies for Effective Change Management

Source: Pagon, Banutai and Bizjak (2008:4)

In the figure above, Pagon et al. (2008) identified three facets of competent leadership. Cognitive competence demands the leader be creative, analytical, future-oriented and self-reliant; functional competence focuses on communication skills, managerial abilities and knowledge abilities; and social competence demands a leader to have stress management skills, interpersonal skills, ethical skills and so on. Pagon et al. (2008) argue that these capabilities produce employee satisfaction, reduce conflict and increase productivity among other benefits. Based on Pagon et

al.'s (2008) study on leadership competencies for effective change management, this study argues the importance of effective leadership in the change management process. Change resistance is inevitable in organisational change processes and is efficiently offset by employing leadership skills (Pagon et al. 2008). Dealing with resistance demands cognitive, functional and social competencies, thus, competent effective leadership cannot be ignored in organisational change management.

2.2.5 Nature of resistance to change

Resistance to change is inevitable in organisations due to workforce diversity, organisational culture, systemic comforts, and diverse temperaments and beliefs. Blom (2018) indicates that resistance to change is construed as an attitude or behaviour of an individual who can make the process of change very difficult to accomplish. Kit et al. (2021) articulate that change is made possible by people with whom the change process applies; if these individuals or this group of people is not eager to adopt change, their resistance makes it difficult for changes to be successfully implemented. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by establishing a model that considers the centrality of effective communication between the organisation and its stakeholders, which in turn strategically manages change resistance.

In addition, Blom (2018) substantiates the above notion by arguing that change initiatives are readily accepted by some organisational members while others who underappreciate its importance may fight its existence. The researcher notes that the causes of resistance to change may vary from organisation to organisation or from one individual to another, however, leaders need to use their competence to offset these challenges. The solution to dealing with organisational resistance begins with understanding the kinds of resistance to change. Pless et al. (2021) argue three kinds of resistance to change; blind resistance, political resistance and ideological resistance.

2.2.5.1 Blind resistance

Yılmaz and Kılıçoğlu (2013), note that some stakeholders may be intolerant to change due to the fear or discomfort of the unknown. Change is often accompanied by multiple questions and uncertainties that cause a lot of discomfort. This study is

also of the view that the migration of TelOne billing services from post-paid to prepaid exposed a lot of customers to doubts and fears of the unknown as some customers were not sure whether the new system will be favourable to them, while employees were probably uncertain whether their skills or competence was suitable to operate the new system. Such feelings usually result in resistance to change as customers and employees are likely to be inclined to systems that they are experienced in. To successfully implement such changes amidst these feelings, Yılmaz and Kılıçoğlu (2013) argue that during the blind resistance stage, it is important to provide reassurance to the people involved in the change process. Reassurance comes with constant communication to instil confidence in the necessity of the new system, and that it will not threaten their jobs, work processes and welfare. Blind resistance is resisting change due to ignorance of the new system and its necessity at that given time. As discussed above, change is made successful by a competent leader, the leader controls the flow of the change process and manages any challenges that come along with it. Thus, this study establishes that organisations that seek to successfully implement change should consider placing a very competent leader (good communicator) who will take care of such resistance as blind resistance.

2.2.5.2 Political resistance

Political resistance occurs when organisational members resist change due to the fear of losing something valuable such as status, power, position, and so on (Ahmadova 2019). Political resistance often occurs among people who are affluent in the organisation, some changes in the organisation may temper someone's position, salary, power and so on (Pless et al. 2021). Thus, when an organisational member has something to lose due to the change process, they are not likely to support the change. Such situations call for competent leadership to apply their good management skills, interpersonal skills and stress management skills amongst others, to convince such members to support change. The importance of competent leadership in change management cannot be ignored. To this, the researcher contends that one way or the other, change can face resistance and, in most cases, such resistance is easily overcome or solved by a leader with analytic skills to comprehend situations and initiate effective communication to relevantly address change resistance issues as they arise.

2.2.5.3 Ideological resistance

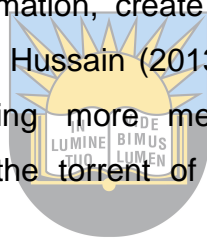
An organisation might have intellectual members who disagree with change because they feel it is ill-timed or that it may cause more harm than expected improvement (Yılmaz & Kılıçoğlu 2013). Such members would genuinely oppose the change because they do not comprehend the positive outcomes of the change process for the organisation. For example, some intellectuals at TelOne may oppose the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing because it may upset customers or become costly for the organisation to train its employees on the new system. Intellectuals may analyse anything that may be affected by the change process and depending on the effects of the change on the organisation, they may either accept or refute the change (Ahmadova 2019). Therefore, this study establishes the extent to which such situations call for competent leadership with vast knowledge of the old and new systems as well interpersonal skills to persuasively communicate and manage people with alternative ideologies. Ideological resistance is bound to happen in any organisation as intellectuals are part of every organisation, especially when they seem to have more knowledge and facts against the new system (Rosenbaum et al. 2018). This gave rise to the part of the study focus that establishes that leaders in a change process need to be well informed and knowledgeable about the change process to handle arguments waged against new systems when they seem to have more knowledge and facts against the new system. The following section reviews the centrality of communication as a tool to minimise resistance and manage organisational change.

2.3 THE ROLE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN CHANGE MANAGEMENT

For effective change management, an organisation can equip its employees with relevant information concerning the changes to occur. This includes workshops based on training its employees in all aspects connected to the changes that will happen. Common prescriptions for effective change management include encouraging participation from as many employees as possible, addressing their concerns in the change program or ensuring that leaders act as role models for the changes (Heracleous 2002). For a better understanding of effective change management, this study evaluates the impact of frequent upward and downward communication between the employees and the management, about the technicalities of the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing. Employees are

central to change management as they interact more with stakeholders. Thus, feedback from employees is a proactive method of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of communications strategies used during the process of migration.

It has been recognised that effective and appropriate communication is a vital ingredient in the success of any change program (Husain 2013). Internal communication represents the interactions between the employees of an organisation. Innovative technologies have made it easier to generate, develop, distribute and accumulate written documents, exchange messages, work together and organize meetings despite space and time proximity. Electronic mails, intranet and video conferences are a few of the communication tools used to inform employees about the news and activities of the organisation. Deetz states that internal communication entails describing and explaining the organisations (Jublin & Putnam 2001). This specifies that communication is the central process through which employees exchange information, create relationships, and build meaning, values and organisational culture. Hussain (2013) argues that the challenge is not only managing media and using more media but reducing the noise in communication and moderating the torrent of information from management to increase individual understanding.



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Understanding employees as targets of change suggests planned change. It does not consider the proactive and driver-like roles that those employees pursue in continuous change efforts. This difference can be explored from a constructivist perspective in terms of how employees make sense of change and construct their new realities. In their study, Witherspoon and Wohlert (1996), found that information is distributed downward and differentially. Information was found to be a commodity to be brokered and a scarce resource to be guarded and the flow of information stopped at the supervisor level. This finding raises questions on how lower-level employees make sense of change without the information provided by supervisors. This study closely examined this aspect through an empirical review of continuous change to gain a deeper understanding of the flow of communication.

2.3.1 The essence of effective communication in change management

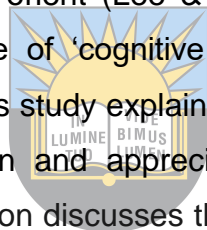
Frahm and Brown (2007) investigated how communication affects the successful implementation process and affirmed that communication is central to predicting outcomes of planned change. They argue that the central communication processes involved in the implementation of planned change have received less attention from communication scholars. However, the communication process involved in the implementation of emergent changes has received less attention. In signalling future research directions, Lewis (2000a, b) argues that more research is needed to detail the specifics of change processes, and address questions of how change is communicated, by whom and with what result (Frahm & Brown 2007). The research directions outlined by Lewis (2000a, b) can be considered typical of instrumental communication research. For that reason, this study bridges the gap by examining change management through effective communication strategies.

Some management studies investigate organisational communication in terms of discourse and dialogue. Butcher and Atkinson (2001) argue that the active management of language in the context of change has received less attention; emphasising that language, norms and taboos can be a key anchor to maintaining the status quo of the organisation. They highlight framing as a potential area to pursue in change management research. This avenue is supported by Graetz's (2000) work on case studies about strategic change leadership. He found that whilst the change agents in Pilkington Australasia were communicating the change, they were not necessarily doing so with the appropriate 'enthusiasm and vigour' and thus apathy became a crucial framing issue in the implementation. This study thus assesses how this aspect was considered by evaluating the communication strategies used in the change from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne.

Communication is noted as a key factor influencing change resistance. When the levels of resistance to change are low within an organisation, the change effort turns out to be more productive (Pascual Gea 2021). Furthermore, Bruskin (2019) and Husain (2013) argue that a change plan is determined by the capability of the organisation to change the individual performances of each employee. Alternatively, it might be difficult to manage the performance objectives of individual employees except through stakeholder segmentation. For instance, the migration of telephone

billing services from post-paid to prepaid billing could have affected each department differently. Thus, this study highlights the need for organisations to implement an effective communication strategy that re-orient departments on their newly assigned duties. Such a strategy is applicable to suitably address different customers. Although segmentation helps organisations to successfully communicate with their stakeholders, addressing them as a whole is still essential.

Stakeholders who are addressed as a whole during change implementation are less likely to resist change because the shared value enhances the spirit of unity and a sense of belonging. About this, Warnaaars (2021) and Barrett (2002) remark that effective communication is more informative and educative to employees at all levels to harness strategy support. The researcher values this because positive attitudes to change are vital in successful change programs, while resistance to change is one of the major obstacles to overcome. Hence, meaningful communication about change would require organisations to re-orient (Lee & Kim 2020). Therefore, meaningful communication requires a degree of 'cognitive organisational reorientation' (Van Vuuren & Elving 2008). Hence, this study explains how a meaningful communication strategy enhances comprehension and appreciation of the proposed change at TelOne. Hence, the following section discusses the centrality of communication as a tool to minimise resistance to organisational change.



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2.4 PLACING COMMUNICATION IN CHANGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Having discussed the various causes of resistance to change and the factors affecting the change process, this section examines how effective communication affects change management as well as the factors that influence effective communication.

2.4.1 Organisational communication and change management

For communication to be effective, every change management team should address those affected by the change, what is the change, why the change, when will change be necessary and implemented and where will the change occur? When the management team is cognizant of all the necessities concerning change, communication will most likely be effective since they will be intent on what, why and

how to communicate the change. However, for communication to be successful as a change management tool, these factors should not be overlooked.

2.4.2 Factors that influence effective communication

2.4.2.1 Company's history of failure

The researcher notes that change, according to Lewin, entails driving forces versus restraining forces. In this study, driving forces are carried by TelOne while restraining forces are carried by its stakeholders due to diverse misunderstandings or ideologies regarding the change process. Several scholars argue that organisational change management is greatly affected by the experience that the stakeholders held concerning the preceding company's change management (Debrovic & Timkova 2017; Nyaguthi 2015; Feizi 2019). This means that stakeholders are most likely to resist change if they no longer trust the organisation because of its negative historical experiences. Inasmuch as communication is considered among strategies that curb change resistance (Feizi 2019), it is important for change initiators (organisations) to address previous issues which could be the restraining forces carried by stakeholders.

The image and reputation that stakeholders have about TelOne, may have affected the extent to which its stakeholders accepted the migration of post-paid to prepaid telephone billing. For instance, TelOne has made controversial changes in the past that may have negatively impacted stakeholders' confidence in TelOne's change management. In 2009 TelOne dollarized its telephone bills and was heavily criticised by its stakeholders. Before 2009, telephone bills were post-paid being charged in Zimbabwean dollars, however, hyperinflation inflated the cost of its services to the extent that subscribers deemed services as free. Subject to this, in 2009 the Reserve bank of Zimbabwe granted the use of United States Dollar (USD) billing. Thus, as a driving force to the company's success, TelOne adopted the USD billing but this might have been a restraining force to its customers who were accustomed to using their services at the cheap hyperinflated price of the Zimbabwean Dollar.

Case Study 2.1: Customer's complaints about dollarisation

“At dollarization in 2009, we didn’t inflate any telephone bills”.

“TelOne has noted sentiments emanating from the market indicating that TelOne inflated Zimbabwe dollar bills and converted the amounts to United States Dollars hence the current outstanding bills that have accrued on the client accounts. TelOne would like to set the record straight and dispel this incorrect view. At dollarization (February 2009) all outstanding bills were converted to the US dollar using an exchange rate prescribed by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. This resulted in all businesses and households starting off with zero balances upon transfer. In addition, TelOne wrote off the entire January 2009 bill following stakeholder representations. Further to this, tariffs were reduced from 7 cents to 5 cents per minute in September 2009 but this reduction was backdated to February 2009 when dollarization commenced. The relevant credits were passed on to each account. It should be noted therefore that the current bills did not accrue from the pre-dollarization era and the conversion to US dollar but due to failure by clients to honour their bills over an extended period of time. TelOne urges all clients to honour their outstanding bills”.

Source: Kabweza (2014)

TelOne customers were not happy about the implementation and the adoption of USD billing as most accused TelOne of converting Zimbabwean dollar bills to USD at an unfair rate. The customers' grievances were exacerbated by the extraordinary bills that they struggled to settle. The researcher contends that TelOne could have used effective communication with its stakeholders to justify the need for billing changes.

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As indicated above, TelOne had misunderstandings with its subscribers concerning the change implemented. Though the change was implemented in 2009, the subscribers continued complaining about the bills years after, refusing to pay because they believed the conversion of billing was incorrectly done. TelOne suspended services to all subscribers who had high bills before sending debt collectors to them. Such conflict signifies the need for effective communication and stakeholder engagement before and during change implementation (Blom 2018; Angtyan 2019).

The migration from post-paid to prepaid billing is more or less like the 2009 dollarization issue. TelOne bills were charged in the Zimbabwean currency and due to hyperinflation in the country, customers could have been enjoying the post-paid service. As a result of the previous experience, customers might doubt any TelOne changes that concern billing. Stemming from the above, this study evaluates the essence of communication in successful change management and assumes that

effective communication must consider the company's history of change management.

2.4.2.2 Content vetting

Another important factor to be considered during change implementation is the nature of change information being disseminated to the stakeholders. Change communication loses effectiveness when the message fails to justify the need to change and its benefit to the organisation and its stakeholders. Nyaguthi (2016) emphasises this saying that the content of the message must be scrutinised to understand its impact on organisational goals, as it informs practitioners on what must be amended.

2.4.2.3 Relative advantage

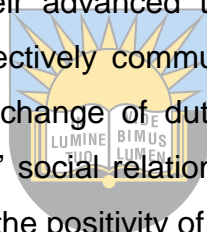
Relative advantage considers the uniqueness of the benefit brought by the change, which involves answering the question: why change? Debrovic and Timkova (2017) articulate that the factors impacted by the organisational change include but are not limited to competitiveness, growth, efficiency, high productivity and survival. They further argue that change should factor in customer satisfaction, good relations, employee involvement, job security and quality service. In addition, the researcher believes that TelOne should have considered that prepaid billing benefits stakeholders as it enhances growth, and improve services and service delivery since it injects disposable capital into TelOne while minimising the effect of hyperinflation. Henceforth, the researcher conjectures that the effectiveness of change communication and management between TelOne and its stakeholders about the migration of telephone services could have been enhanced through persuasive communication that promotes its mutual benefit to both parties.

2.4.2.4 Effect on social relations

Since change may include new duties and new positions, it is likely to affect the existing social relations of the targeted group. However, the change management team must prevent changes from negatively affecting the target groups (Rizescu & Tileaga 2016). The management would have to convince the employees about the need for new positions or changes within departments, aimed at improving efficiency, productivity or competitiveness (Pascul & Gea 2021). The change could

positively influence social relations, that is if management builds team spirits, clarifies the objectives of change, empowers the team to fully participate and encourages feedback concerning change.

When effective communications strategies are well-managed, change may strengthen relations between those involved. Moreover, repeating processes may become monotonous to some employees hence the change of duties may motivate their performance. For instance, a TelOne credit control clerk might develop frustrations over continuous visits to customers' premises for debt collection (including those frustrated customers who believe that dollarization was unfairly implemented) and would probably enjoy the change of duties when shifted to the sales department that deals with new customers and stakeholders. Nonetheless, duties and non-existent post structures may likely be changed. The researcher postulates that the system may be redesigned especially in a telecommunications company like TelOne due to their advanced technology which can be used to strengthen social relations by effectively communicating the relative advantage of change. Contrarily, mismanaged change of duties during change implementation could negatively affect employees' social relations hence making it harder for such employees to be convinced about the positivity of change.



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2.4.2.5 Change divisibility

Fear of the unknown during change implementation is normal. The organisation should consider changes that can be implemented on a limited scale for trial (Rizescu & Tileaga 2016). The stakeholders may also consider the extent to which change can be tried on a sample as it guarantees a company's existence in the event of failed change. When implementing such a strategy, TelOne could migrate a limited number of telephone accounts from post-paid to prepaid billing, for instance, a sample from the rural areas where they rarely use the service. Having such a pilot study can provide information about the potential glitches emanating from the system as well as the perceptions of stakeholders in response to the changes.

2.4.2.6 Change reversibility

Before change is implemented, it is regarded as essential to consider the possibility of the restoration of the status quo in case the change is rejected or failed (Debrovic

& Timkova 2017). In reference to the current study, TelOne employees would probably reject the migration of telephone services if they learn that once the migration is done, it would be irreversible. The fear could be that in case of failure the company would run severe losses, resulting in job retrenchments.

2.4.2.7 Change complexity

The change initiators should be considerate about the nature of the change in terms of its complexity. Stakeholders prefer user-friendly systems to changes that are difficult to use and understand (Nyaguthi 2016). To this, the researcher argues that complicated changes require management to conduct a lot of staff training and to also take considerate time explaining the technical aspects of the change. As a result, some stakeholders would deny change considering it is a risk to the organisation's survival (Lee & Kim 2020).

2.4.2.8 Change compatibility

Change appropriateness and its use is paramount. Change initiators should be considerate of the values and beliefs of the affected group such as psychological or sociological factors, level of education and the history of change in an organisation (Rizescu & Tileag 2016). For instance, a certain segment of TelOne customers (senior citizens) could find it difficult to adapt to prepaid services that require the technicalities of top-ups as compared to the ease of post-paid services. Thus, TelOne must think through the elderly customers and patiently interact with and educate them on how the new system works before implementing it.

2.4.2.9 Change communicability

Kajongwe et al. (2020) articulate the need for management to consider the ease of disseminating change information. This is necessary because communication is regarded as key in all the different phases of change. However, the researcher notes that the communicability of the change information is determined by the extent of knowledge harboured by the change management team.

2.4.2.10 Change Timing

Change cannot be introduced too quickly or too slow. The affected stakeholders require adequate time to learn and adjust to change. Thus, Debrovic and Timkova

(2017) consider the lack of time needed to implement the change as one of the obstacles to successful change management. Consequently, this study gives attention to establishing how the content of the message about change should indicate issues such as the relevance of change, its impact on social relations, the possibility of its implementation in a small area, its ease of implementation and the time needed for changes to be adopted.

2.4.2.11 **Organisational structure/culture**

An organisation is guided by its vision and mission to achieve set objectives. Thus, the intended organisational change plan should be aligned with its vision. However, organisational culture also drives the way its stakeholders react to change. This is indicated by Kajongwe et al. (2020) who conducted a study evaluating the factors affecting change in telecommunications companies in Zimbabwe (Econet, Telecel, and NetOne). The study found that management was the main source of power with a lack of engagement with employees hence hierarchical structures impacted the organisational change process, making competitors highly competitive.

The researcher agrees with Blom's (2018) argument that modernised leadership entails stakeholder empowerment. The command-and-control approach was favoured during the traditional era because the change was usually the resources or capacity (Debrovic & Timkova 2017). Thus, Feizi (2019) also states that obstacles to change involve inappropriate organisational culture, inadequate planning of change, and non-empowerment of affected stakeholders during change. Since change should be aligned to organisational vision, change management failure would translate to company failure as well. Hence the need for organisations to consider accommodating cultures that value stakeholders and interaction when necessary.

Nyaguthi (2016) argues that most organisations still prefer the top-down communication approach, which is the normal method of communication during change management. However, this study disagrees with the notion put forward by Nyaguthi (2016) that the top-down communication approach should be considered the best strategy for change management since it is initiated with direction and control. The scholar justifies his assertion, arguing that the bottom-up approach may lack direction, be difficult to control and fail to link with corporate strategy since it involves all employees in the change process. However, this study argues that the

combined approach of both the bottom-up and the top-down strategy may be the best change communication strategy. This is because the culture of transparency in the organisation enhances mutual trust and participative decision-making even during the trying time of change.

This study endeavours to investigate how effective communication enhances successful change management. Notably, the company history of change, content, and nature of the message may impact effective change communication between the organisation and its stakeholders. Much has been discussed on how organisational culture may impact change, considering that change motives should be aligned to the organisation's vision. Clearer motives of change that support the organisation's existence are communicable and are easily understood by stakeholders.

TelOne's vision is, *"Digitally enabled society by 2023"* while its mission is, *"To provide connectivity and digital solutions."* TelOne's values entail being client-centric, innovative, accountable and excellent. Such a vision, mission and values necessitate a constant change to keep abreast with the competitive environment in the telecommunications industry. TelOne's motives for migrating its telephone billing services, its communicability and how it adds value to the organisation's mission, are discussed in Chapter 5 from the findings. The role of management as the drivers and communicators of change is discussed below.

2.4.3 Managerial communication and change management

The management is the intermediate between the organisation and its stakeholders; thus, they need to be good communicators. Managers must be knowledgeable about the content that needs to be communicated, the context of where and when the change will be implemented as well as information about who will be affected and how. To this end, Beshtawi and Jaaron (2014) remark that the nature of management determines the extent to which change will be adopted in the implementation phase.

When an organisation initiates change, it relies on the management to disseminate information to the relevant stakeholders and to also give feedback on the stakeholders' reactions toward change. Nyaguthi (2016) argues that poor change management in an organisation is due to lack of clear objectives, poor communication, and inadequate planning that top management fails to follow. On the

same note, Feizi (2019) emphasises how feedback and active involvement affect telecommunications' ability to change while Thomas (2014) indicates that competition in the telecommunications industry is tense. Henceforth, managers need to innovatively and strategically improve their products and services to meet new competitors, pressures and demands. Based on the above, this study has significant contribution to the body of knowledge, establishing how effective communication affects change management in a telecommunications organisation and examining diverse factors that influence or hinder effective communication during change. This study also considers the ADKAR Model as a managerial strategy that could enhance effective communication and change management at TelOne.

2.4.4 The ADKAR Model

ADKAR stands for Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. The model is further analysed below.

2.4.4.1 Awareness

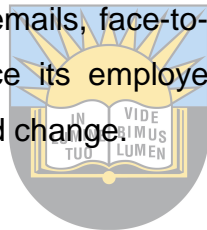
The reasons for change may differ between organisations and may also be similar for instance, something new may be introduced to them all. There is a need to consider the credibility of the management team that disseminates the message concerning change to minimise the probability of circulating misinformation or rumours (Galli 2019). Thus, employees and customers deserve authentic information from a reliable source for them to be fully aware of the need for change and its relevance.

This study examines the effectiveness of the communication strategies used by TelOne before, during and after the implementation of the change from post-paid to prepaid billing services. To this, the awareness phase could have involved the dissemination of relevant information to the affected stakeholders in preparation for the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid services. This could involve TelOne management sharing necessary information with its employees through briefings during board meetings or online forums.

2.4.4.2 **Desire**

When employees are aware of the intended change, management needs to motivate them to feel the need to participate in that change. Elaborating on the factors affecting change, Galli (2019) argues that most business leaders often mistake awareness of the need for change with building a desire to change. However, instilling a desire to change entails motivating, for instance, the employees to an extent that they perceive the organisation and the impact of change positively.

This is possible through the active involvement of employees in the process of change preparation and implementation (Beshtawi & Jaroon 2014). They further argue that employees value recognition and empathy. This study agrees with these scholars, adding that motivated employees are more likely willing to participate in the change hence minimising resistance and preventing refusal. Likewise, effective and efficient communication by TelOne could have been achieved by using communication vehicles such as emails, face-to-face communication, orientation as well as and meetings to convince its employees to accept and understand the relative advantages of the intended change.



2.4.4.3 **Knowledge**

Motivated employees should be knowledgeable about how to make the desired change happen. Kachian et al. (2018) indicate that the management team should provide the availability of resources to access the needed information. For knowledge sharing, TelOne should educate its employees about the prepaid service by giving them modules about change that they may be conscientious about what it entails. Since TelOne is a telecommunications company, practical training on the new system could be conducted. This would help the employees to understand the ease of using the updated system and to assess the probability of its reversibility or divisibility to be tested on a small area. Thus, the researcher is of the view that knowledgeable employees would understand the time needed to implement change as well as its impact on social relations and job security. Mostly, the relative advantage of the prepaid system would be understood hence minimising resistance and enhancing the communicability of the message. Well-convinced employees are likely to disseminate information smoothly to the customers.

2.4.4.4 Ability

Employees must be able to implement change. However, the extent of their capability is sometimes dependent on the management's competencies to effectively communicate the change (Kachian et al. 2018). This study sought to investigate if TelOne employees would have the capacity to rapidly accept and adapt to change if they had the right information and training on the migration from post-paid to prepaid telephone billing. Management should provide a conducive environment for learning the new and also avail resources to support new abilities (Galli 2019). For instance, if the training is online, management ought to provide access to online connectivity and the availability of gadgets such as laptops and cellular phones. Likewise, working offices for employees should be comfortable and favourable for performance enhancement; for instance, working environments with extreme hot or cold temperatures or uncomfortable chairs would most likely distract employees from their duties. By addressing such, employees could have the ability to implement change.

Galli (2019) also argues that during the implementation of change management, organisations must consider employees' physical abilities, disposable time available to develop the needed skills, and implement performance monitoring. Thus, TelOne could monitor and evaluate whether there is sufficient time and human resources to implement the change as well as whether the assigned teams are performing as expected. By so doing, employees can evaluate themselves to assess their capabilities.

2.4.4.5 Reinforcement

Once employees have gained the ability to adopt change, it becomes a necessity to reinforce the behaviour to keep the change in place. The researcher concurs with Beshtawi and Jaaron (2014), that altered change can be sustained through intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. TelOne could cement employees' positive attitudes toward prepaid service by monetary rewards, recognition or appraisals to be leaders of the change teams.

Thus, the management as initiators of change to other stakeholders, should be good communicators because leading entails inspiring or giving stakeholders the zeal to work positively towards achieving organisational goals, which may include

organisational change. Thus, the model helps the stakeholders through the transition process as it helps managers to determine the role of their employees in the change process (Feizi 2019). Galli (2019) argues that the ADKAR model has practical applications and thus can minimise or control resistance.

The ADKAR model, like other models of communication, is not free of critique. This model has been criticised that it may fail due to organisational history, experience or existing beliefs that are not appropriate for change (Kachian et al. 2018). The impact of company history on change management was extensively discussed earlier in this chapter, thus it is conclusive that management teams need to prioritize lessons learnt from previous experiences. This study articulates those negative issues that have previously affected an organisation's stakeholders must be managed through effective communication.

2.4.5 **Employee communication and change management**

Much discussion in the sections above has been on the duties of management as change communicators of the organisation. For effective change management, an organisation must equip its employees with all information concerning the changes to occur (Esenyel & Emeagwali 2019). Employees are the mirror of the organisation to other stakeholders (Blom 2018). For a better understanding of effective change management. Thus, this study is of the view that feedback from employees is a proactive method of monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the communication strategies used in the change process.

It has been recognized that effective and appropriate communication is a vital ingredient in the success of any change program (Khoiri 2020). This means that internal communication represents the communication and interactions between the employees and members of an organisation (Bonyo 2018). Innovative technologies have made it easier to generate, develop, distribute and accumulate written documents, exchange messages, work together and organize meetings despite space and time proximity. Electronic mails, intranet and video conferences are a few of the communication tools used to inform employees about news and activities of the organisation (Kenny & Zysman 2020). This specifies that communication is the central process through which employees exchange information, create relations and build meaning, values and organisational culture.

Understanding employees as 'targets of change' suggests planned change (Rosenbaum et al. 2018). Moreover, Al-Alawi et al. (2019) found that information is distributed downward and differentially. These scholars further argue that information was found to be a commodity to be brokered and a scarce resource to be guarded and that the flow of information stops at the supervisor level. This finding raises questions about how lower-level employees make sense of change without the information provided by supervisors. At TelOne, employees are the first point of contact in the daily interactions between customers and TelOne. Henceforth, employee recognition vitally considers pertinent employee views toward organisational change. Employees, as patriots of the daily activities of the organisation, have developed experiential knowledge about customers' perceptions and preferences, thus enhancing their knowledge and views about change.

Initially, before TelOne rebranded from PTC, it had been operating on a post-paid telephone billing system. Thus, when normal operational routines change in an organisation, high decision-making and effective communication are required amongst the stakeholders involved. This is important, especially to employees who are the primary implementers of organisational changes and who disseminate the change information to and interact with customers throughout the adoption process (Debrovic & Timkova 2017). These scholars argue that employees must be fully motivated to implement change to enhance the organisation's ability to adapt, should be considered for employees to confidently communicate the change to customers. Based on the above, this study is of the view that effective communication is fundamental in successfully implementing organisational change.

Kajongwe et al. (2020) conducted a study evaluating how change management strategies affect the performance of telecommunications organisations in Zimbabwe. The evaluated communication companies include the country's three mobile network providers which are Econet, Telecel and NetOne. The study found that other factors affecting change management were the company's history of failure which elevated stakeholders' affinity to doubt the company's capabilities. Poor service delivery was also found to affect change management, as customers complained that after signing up and paying for services, mobile networks delayed setting up connections. Moreover, the study found that economic factors such as Zimbabwe's hyperinflation negatively affected change management. The study, therefore, seeks to establish

the extent to which effective communication could address issues such as the company's history of failure to replenish stakeholder trust to a position whereby there is ease of access to change. With an emphasis on the essence of communication during change, Jain (2017), as cited in Kajongwe et al. (2020), concurs that strategy will likely be successful if the organisation effectively communicates the need for change to its employees.

The scholarly research was conducted to evaluate the factors affecting change management at the Kenya Trade Network Agency (KENTRADE) and findings revealed that employee training, rewards, employee empowerment and unclear communication of organisational goals, affect the performance of change management (Nyaguthi 2016). Akin to the aforementioned effects of the KENTRADE study, similar effects contributed to this current study, however, this study gives much emphasis to how effective communication affects change. For instance, the KENTRADE study identifies training as an effect of change management while this study further evaluates the effectiveness of communication during those training. Moreover, if employee rewards are considered an impact to change management, this study evaluates whether the management effectively communicated the purpose and nature of the reward system as well as the criteria used to select those to be rewarded.



Feizi (2019) also conducted a study on evaluating change management in the East Azerbaijan telecommunications departments, noting that the driving forces of change were technological advancement, fierce competition and the need to develop new services. The study found that East Azerbaijan telecommunications had some challenges in managing change, mainly due to the lack of employee involvement and insufficient interaction about the change. Feizi (2019) argues that change management was negatively affected by the organisation's one-way communication system whereby the managers were not transparent because they did not consider the interest of employees in the meetings. The employees complained of being informed through email, telephone and meetings from immediate supervisors. Based on the above, this study finds relevance in that, it contributes to the body of knowledge by establishing how effective communication affects change management at TelOne Zimbabwe.

Beshtawi and Jaaron (2014) argue that mismanaged change negatively affects performance to the extent of total closure of business, loss of valued employees and loss of high-value dissatisfied customers to other competitors. Employees value recognition and entrustment, thus they should be empowered to contribute positively toward change management. The researcher is of the view that employees mirror the organisation, thus it is likely that satisfied employees translate to satisfied customers. Hence, there is need for organisations to need to build long-term relationships with their employees through recognition and involvement as custodians of the organisation's brand.

For effective communication, employee engagement could be implemented at the departmental level through the formation of teams aimed at effectively providing feedback on their understanding of change. Thus, Feizi (2019) emphasises that interactive two-way communication such as face-to-face meetings and emails enriches the environment and results in high-quality client service. Therefore, qualitative customer service fosters a participative employee workforce during change implementation and enhances the level of competitiveness of the organisation.

Stemming from the above, the researcher agrees with Feizi's (2019) argument that change communication must be clear, realistic, and linked to the company vision to enable the employee to buy in. Thus, Nyaguthi (2015) states that employees' skills must be leveraged through training. This enlightens our knowledge of the current study; TelOne management determines employees' reaction to change as well as their capabilities to adopt the new changes. Henceforth, effective communication could mean effective change management to help employees minimise loss of productivity as well as to effectively disseminate the message about change to the customers.

2.4.6 Customer communication and change management

Customers are regarded as the central lever of any successful business; hence change should be convincingly introduced to customers, fully addressing the question of 'why the change'. Beshtawi and Jaaron (2014) articulate that customers' perceptions and preferences must be considered and employees must be given proper training whenever necessary to improve the quality of products and services.

To elaborate, the organisation should consider the two-way flow of communication with its stakeholders as it produces a positive customer experience which contributes to customer satisfaction and retention over time.

Employees should be well informed about the changes occurring in the organisation. If they turn out to be against the intended change, the customers are likely to deny it. However, Feizi (2019) notes that change is difficult because it becomes an enemy of the beneficiaries of the old system. This could be the case with TelOne customers, who are likely to oppose prepaid services since they terminate previous personal privileges of paying inflated bills. The study, therefore, establishes the extent to which effective communication could address such restraining forces during change, leading to successful change management.

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is guided by Kurt Lewin's change model and Freeman's Stakeholder management theory. Lewin's change model is used to examine TelOne's change communication strategies during the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing. Since communication is a continuous process that includes stakeholder communications, the stakeholder management theory is employed. The stakeholder management theory is human orientation as it enables the researcher to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication strategies used. These two theories complementarily examine the extent of successful change management as they consider whether the message was sent and delivered to the target audience at each stage of change (Lewin's change model) and whether a mutual consensus was reached between the organisation and its stakeholders concerning the change (stakeholder management theory).

2.5.1 Lewin's Change model

This study utilises Lewin's change model to analyse the change management process employed by TelOne during the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing. As a key change management strategy, Lewin's change model identifies three stages of the change process, its objectives as well as the communication needed at each stage of change management. It is essential to understand that during the change process, it is not the organisation that changes but the people in it. "Change starts from the individual and in any successful execution of change, it is to know

how to facilitate change in an individual” (Blomqvist 2017: 6). In Lewin’s change model, individuals are supposed to change their way of working to a more efficient way which demands the change of old habits to new ones (Rosca 2020). According to preliminary research, change management at TelOne involved creating awareness of and facilitating the adoption of the new billing system by customers and employees.

The stakeholders need to be educated and influenced to adopt new habits that support change initiatives. The underlying principles of Lewin’s change model give a framework of how change initiators can manage change, focusing mainly on how change can be implemented for adoption by individuals. Ferrazzi (2014) argues that a change initiative can be viewed as an addiction treatment program, thus, to manage change, organisations will have to endure particular steps to achieve change akin to patients in an alcoholics’ anonymous 12 step program. Ferrazzi (2014) further argues that the change process cannot begin unless an individual understands why and how to change. Having said that, the researcher adds that Lewin’s change model helps to understand the steps to organisational change akin to Ferrazzi’s 12-step program to alcoholic change.

Organisational change is the movement or the migration of an organisation from a state of being, which is the current reality to the desired state, which is the future reality (Vongvisitsin & Wong 2021). In the absence of effective communication, change may cause stakeholders to become uncertain, confused and resistant to change. Lewin’s change model is a guide to effective organisational change, thus its adoption to investigate the recent change process at TelOne. Lewin’s change model identifies three stages of the change process as well as the objectives and communiques needed for each stage. Deborah (2018) also identifies three stages of Lewin’s change process; *the unfreezing stage*, *the transition stage* and *the freezing stage*. Below is the diagram that shows Lewin’s change model.

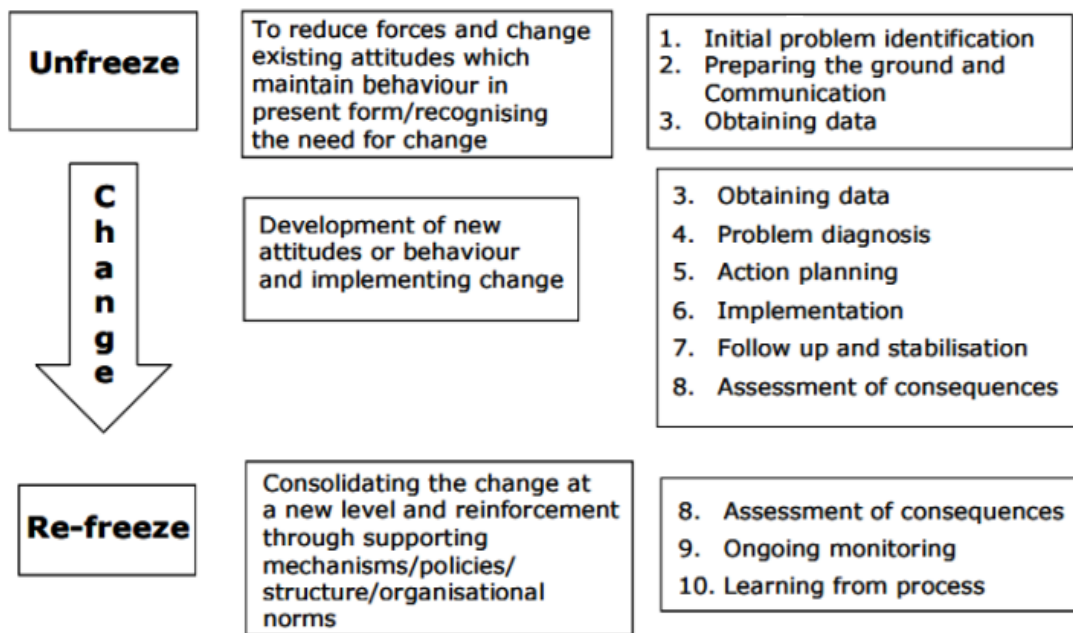


Figure 0.3: Lewin's framework for change

Source: Blomqvist (2017)

In the unfreezing stage (The First stage of Lewin's change model) the organisation recognises the need for change and takes considerable actions to initiate the change. Blomqvist (2017) supports this notion that at the unfreezing stage the organisation breaks down the current state of things and formulates new ways of doing things.

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2.5.1.1 Communicating during the Unfreezing Stage

This is the first of Lewin's change transition stages, where people are taken from a state of being unready to change to be ready and willing to make the first step (Rosenbaum et al 2018). During this stage, the primary communication objective is to prepare employees and the organisation for the change. This step is also identified as "readying" the organisation. Resistance will increase at the same rate with how big the change is and how much it affects the organisation (Raymond 2021). However, it is much easier to overcome this resistance if the communication strategy is designed to account for the initial resistance (Husain et al. 2018). This first stage is about preparing ourselves, or others, before the change (and ideally creating a situation in which we want the change). The more we feel that change is necessary, the more urgent it is and the more motivated we are to make the change.

The first thing that needs to be communicated is the need for change, by pointing out the discrepancy between desired outcomes and actual outcomes. If the change is an organisation-wide change, this first message should come from the top management of the organisation. Although written communication followed by question and answers meetings has been proved to be an effective way of communication, face-to-face communication is important at this stage (Burnes 2020).

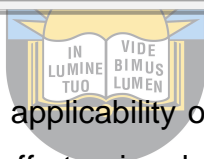
This is the first of Lewin's change transition stages, where people are taken from a state of 'unreadiness for change to a state of readiness and willingness to take the first step toward change (Rosenbaum et al. 2018). The unfreezing stage is a pivotal stage in change strategy because the primary communication objective is to prepare employees, stakeholders and the organisation for the change (Hussain et al. 2018). This step is also identified as readying the organisation (Hussain 2013). The scholar further explains that resistance increases at the rate of how big the change is and the extent to which it affects the organisation (Husain 2013). However, it is much easier to overcome this resistance if the communication strategy is designed to account for the initial resistance (Raymond 2021).

The researcher agrees with the aforesaid that communication is a necessity during this first stage since it is about preparing internal stakeholders before the change (and ideally it enhances creating a situation in which we want the change). The more we feel that change is necessary, the more urgent it is, and the more motivated we are to make the change (Bubb & Jones 2020). A typical case study of Kurt Lewin's model was applied by Aziz et al. (2017) in their research, "implementation of higher-order thinking skills in schools" (HOTS). The application of the first stage of Lewin's model is portrayed in a case study by Aziz et al. (2017: 111-112).

Case Study 2.2: The Application of Kurt Lewin's Model of Change in the implementation of Higher Order Thinking Skills in School

"In the stage of unfreezing, the school head administrator responsible for catalysing the change has to make effort to prepare teachers readiness over the implementation of HOTS as proposed by the MOE. In this situation, the role of the school head administrator is highly crucial in influencing the behaviour and trust of the teachers in executing the shift of HOTS application, especially in the classrooms. Hence, the school head administrator should provide clear and concise information on this program to affected teachers to orient the teachers, making sure they are well-comprehended on the executed changes. The awareness of the benefits of change has to be spread widely to make sure that no school is left behind in the process of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning with the implementation of HOTS amongst students. Nonetheless, it is not a simple request for the current executor agents that are already comfortable with the present status quo in forming the new working culture. Hence, the information on this change has to be conveyed efficiently by the head administrator for the sake of the success of this program (Armenakis, Bernerth, Pitts & Walker, 2007). The school head administrator must be capable of shifting the negative perception of teachers towards the implementation of HOTS from its initial stage to lessen the tribulations during the implementation of this change".

Source: Aziz et al. (2017: 111-112)



The case study above reveals the applicability of Lewin's first step. The unfreezing stage entails behavioural change efforts aimed at preparing people to accept new norms. It reveals how the school headmaster influenced the change of behaviour and attitudes of teachers toward the new implementation (Aziz et al. 2017). This was achieved by clear and concise communication of relevant information to teachers affected by the change. Hence, creating awareness of the change through communication better prepares teachers to accept the new norm.

Akin to the case study, this study posits that TelOne needed to inform all its stakeholders about the change before migrating from post-paid to prepaid billing. More so, stakeholders ought to be informed and persuaded about the important benefits of accepting the new status quo. Stakeholders might be comfortable in their current status, and thus not willing to accept the new change, thus the need for the change initiator to ready the employees, customers and all organisational stakeholders for the change (Burnes 2020). Post-paid billing in the Zimbabwean economy has been beneficial to most clientele about the fluctuating value of the currency. Since post-paid billing gave customers an allowance of 30days to pay their

bills, they delayed payments until it became advantageous to pay bills after the currency had lost value to inflation. This was probably a serious loss to TelOne as they lost value for money due to post-paid billing. With prepaid billing, TelOne benefits from the value of money since the customers pay before accessing telephone services. This, amongst other factors, led TelOne to consider a change of billing from post-paid to prepaid. The post-paid system was favourable to customers and thus, were most likely to be laggards in adopting the billing changes initiated by TelOne.

The unfreezing stage entails persuasive communication aimed at removing any doubts and fears that cause resilience to change. Rizescu, Kavanagh and Tileag (2016) also argue that a lot of organisations struggle to accomplish change initiatives due to their failure to appreciate the influence of change on individuals. Thus, this study sought to establish that, for an organisation to perform well during the unfreezing stage, effective communication of relevant information is necessary to identify, understand and offset various factors that fuel resilience to change. The table below identifies common factors that cause resilience to change in organisations and suggests ways to overcome them.

Table 0:1: Causes of and ways to overcome change resistance

Causes of resistance to change	Overcoming resistance to change
Habit	Participation and involvement
Fear of the unknown	Education and communication
Knowledge and skill obsolescence	Facilitation and support

Source: Yılmaz, Derya & Kılıçoğlu, Gökhan (2013)

As noted by the above scholars, organisational change at TelOne may also experience resilience in the unfreezing stage due to customers' comfortability with the old billing system and thus, fearing the unknown implications of the new system. Employees are likely to have an extent of resistance to adopting change due to their lack of knowledge or skills about data capturing on the new prepaid billing system. Consequently, this study would like to proffer that such inevitable elements of resistance point to the need for effective internal and external organisational communication to achieve effective telephone billing changes to be successfully implemented at TelOne, effective communication is needed. Hence, change initiators

must educate stakeholders about the new development in the organisation. The fear of accepting new developments may be caused by inadequate knowledge of those developments (Warnaars 2021). The unfreezing stage demands change initiators to support employees with skills or resources to efficiently complete tasks in the new system (Hussain 2013). Hussain (2013) argues that initiators of change should proactively ensure stability by supporting and strengthening individuals' efforts to fit into the new system. The researcher agrees with this and posits that employees who feel supported, readily accept change; further arguing that communication is central to the unfreezing stage since organisational stakeholders cannot support change that they do not understand. Conclusively, there is a need for facilitation and workshops to equip employees with the necessary skills and expertise to operate efficiently in the new system (Thomas 2014). Having understood the unfreezing stage, the transition stage is discussed below.

2.5.1.2 Communicating during the Transition Stage

This second stage occurs as necessary changes are being adopted. People are unfrozen and moving towards a new way of being or operating. This stage is often the hardest as people are unsure or even fearful (Hussain et al 2018). Hence, this stage reflects hardships, as people are learning about the changes and, need time to understand and implement them while making effort to be competent in work processes and completing work tasks. When change is being implemented, there is a lot of organisational activity. Since most of the employees are not directly involved in the change process and do not know exactly what is happening, there is a high level of uncertainty that breeds rumour (Bubb and Jones 2020). Thus, objective communication at this stage provides those who are not involved in the change implementation with detailed and accurate information about what is happening and how the change process affects their roles, their new roles and their responsibilities, and to dismiss all the misinformation that is circulating through the organisation (Saphiro 2010). The scholar further posits that the change is beginning to have more tangible outcomes and some organisational impact, the communication should have a more specific character than in the first stage.

This second stage occurs as organisations implement the changes that are needed. People are unfrozen and moving towards a new way of being. This stage is often the

hardest as people are unsure or even fearful (Hussain et al. 2018). In elaboration, this time is not easy as stakeholders are learning about the changes and need time to understand and work with them. When change is being implemented, there is a lot of organisational activity. Since most of the employees are not directly involved in the change process and do not know exactly what is happening, the level of uncertainty rises and rumours appear (Bubb & Jones 2020). Thus, communication in this stage is very important and according to Saphiro (2010) it has the objectives of:

- ***providing those not involved in the change implementation with detailed and accurate information about what is happening***

An organisation cannot successfully achieve the desired change if the forces advocating change are overcome by forces resisting change (Lewin 1944a; Lewin 1946a). For instance in the transition stage, TelOne ought to provide sufficient information to its customers about what is happening during the change process. Uncertain customers who are not happy with the change process will either leave the organisation for another or remain unhappy (Banyo 2018). The transition stage is made successful by the people who are directly affected by its implementation (Kenny & Zysman 2020). The initial post-paid billing system at TelOne was a more favourable experience for customers as they could access TelOne services before making payments, thus enabling them more time to budget for the bills at their own convenient time. However, those in business likely preferred post-paid billing as it allowed them to make profits through telephone services that could be paid later while other businesses preferred prepaid billing to manage the budgets spent on telephone bills.

This study posits that the prepaid billing system eliminates the privileges of post-paid billing that were enjoyed by customers. Hence, the researcher anticipates that for TelOne to fruitfully implement the new system, a strong communication team should be selected to carry out effective communication during the change process. This is because customers need to be influenced to accept the change and they need to be well-detailed with a clear understanding of the change that is happening (Blom 2018). This new system is novel to customers the need for them to be well informed about its operations and functions. This study contributes to the body of knowledge,

establishing how the change initiators at TelOne should constantly communicate the change to educate customers until the change is well received and accepted.

- ***To provide those involved in the process with information about their role in the change process.***

This study identifies TelOne employees as drivers of the change process that occurs in an organisation, they determine the success of the change process. In the second stage of Lewin's change model, any change that needs to take place in an organisation should consider the eligibility of employees who carry out the new system (Risescu and Tileag 2016). The scholars note that the employees who are not eligible for the task, contribute to the failure of the new system. The case study below conducted by Aziz et al. (2017:111-112) entitled, "...the implementation of higher-order thinking skills in schools", illustrates how Lewin's second stage was applied.



Case study 2.3: The Implementation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Malaysia Secondary School: Post PISA 2009

"In guaranteeing the change is successfully implemented, the school has to be provided with appropriate sources and technology. The efforts on boosting the skills and knowledge amongst teachers on the higher-order thinking skills have to be highlighted and highly concerned as this aspect directly affects the process of teaching and learning (Rajendran 2008). The elevation of the higher-order thinking skills of the teachers also indirectly improves their confidence in executing the change. Hence, the appropriate programs are may be conducted by the school such as in-house training or meetings to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the implementation of this change. In the context of teaching, teachers have to shift from conventional teaching methods that provide less opportunity for students to think at a higher level. Contrarily, teachers must motivate active participation amongst students doing the learning session. The implementation of this change requires change managers to face challenges and tribulations in shifting from the static point towards a different situation, purposely on enhancing the quality of education. Stemming from this situation, the school Head Administrator has to educate, support and motivate the adoption of this program to ensure that teachers continuously make efforts to fit in this change".

Source: Aziz et al. (2017:111-112)

As illustrated in the case study above, the second stage of Lewin's model entails collective activities that enhance the skills and knowledge of teachers who carry out the innovation effectively. In like manner, the researcher notes that TelOne probably experienced Lewin's second stage by engaging in a series of collective activities that

sought to empower employees with knowledge and skills to effectively cope with the new system. Employees, staff workshops, meetings, and educative seminars are possible programs that TelOne employed as vehicles of information to ensure its employees were prepared for the new billing services. As the case study shows, this stage also involves providing employees with adequate and appropriate resources for the change, this kind of support motivates employees and make them accept and adapt to the new system. Cross checks of how employees are adapting to the change are also vital (Aziz et al. 2017). This justifies the essence of this study as it seeks to establish the need for employees to provide feedback as to whether the new system needs any alterations.

In the second stage, Lewin's argument is that for any change to be successfully implemented in an organisation, the launch needs to be supported by a series of activities that empower employees (Hussain 2013). Continuous communication in form of in-house training, educative programs, follow-ups and technical support, are all activities that equip employees for change (Stouten et al. 2018). Thus, this study endeavours to investigate whether TelOne proactively supports its employees with the knowledge, skills and resources that are necessary for the implementation of change.

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- ***To dismiss all the misinformation that is circulating through the organisation***

The grapevine can negatively impact the progress of any organisation as rumours can easily destroy the uniformity of purpose and usually, these are caused by uncertainty. Since the change is beginning to have more tangible outcomes and some organisational impact, the communication should have a more specific character than in the first stage (Klein 1996). As employees gather knowledge about the change, they can express it with greater fluency and clarity (Burnes 2020), and, thus increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of change management communication, and thus, increasing the adoption rate of the change.

2.5.1.3 Communicating during the Freezing Stage

Freezing is the third stage of Lewin's change theory, whereby people are taken from a state of being in transition and moved to a stable and productive state. Kurt Lewin refers to this stage as freezing although a lot of people refer to it as 'refreezing'

(Husain 2013). As the name suggests, this stage is about establishing stability once the changes have been made. The changes are accepted and become the new norm. People form new relationships and become comfortable with their routines. Yang et al. (2021) argue that without the freezing stage, employees are likely to revert to their old routines. Lewin (1947a; 1947b) substantiates this notion, arguing that individual behaviours are sustained when group norms and routines are transformed.

In today's world of change, the next new change could happen in weeks or less. There is just no time to settle into comfortable routines. This rigidity of freezing does not fit with modern thinking about change being a continuous, sometimes chaotic process in which great flexibility is demanded (Yang et al. 2021). As a result, popular thoughts moved away from the concept of freezing. Instead, we should think about this final stage as being more flexible. This way 'Unfreezing' for the next change might be easier. However, this model is still considered relevant to the particular study as it assists the researcher in fully answer especially the first objective of this study which is, to examine the communications strategy of the selected telecommunication company used to disseminate information about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing with its employees and customers.

Likewise, the migration of TelOne from post-paid to prepaid billing could be cemented or brought to final fruition by the freezing stage. All company systems and routines should be transformed to suit the new system. The old system that accepted post-paid billing should be replaced by a new system that supports the new development. To elaborate, the freezing stage is the integration of new values into the company system. Burnes (2020) further argues that the purpose of refreezing is to stabilize the new equilibrium emanating from the change process by balancing both the driving and restraining forces. Employees, customers and all affected stakeholders need to be encouraged to embrace the change, without which, change is short-lived. Hussain et al. (2018) say reinforcement is necessary for the change process. The researcher wants to add that the refreezing stage ensures that reinforcement is present and this could be possible through effective change communication strategies.

2.5.1.4 Critique of the theory

Lewin's three-step model faced a lot of criticisms that questioned its validity in organisational change. The writings of Dawson (1994), Hatch (1997), Burnes (2020), Pettigrew (1980), Pfeffer (1992) and Wilson (1992) critiqued that the model ignored the role of power, politics and the conflictual nature of organisations. They argue that Lewin's model is simplistic and cannot manage these elements, critiquing that overlooking such elements make the model farfetched and less practical for organisational change. However, Bargal et al. (1992) argue that Lewin has addressed the differences in value systems and power structures of the parties involved, noting that Lewin's (1946) quotation addressed the issues he was critiqued of. Nonetheless, the issues of power and politics in this study have less bearing on the migration of TelOne services from post-paid to prepaid billing. The change is a top-down initiative; hence power and politics cannot threaten organisational change. The conflictual structures at TelOne can be offset by Lewin's three-step model.

These conflictual structures and resistance to change are addressed by Lewin in his unfreezing stage. An analytical study of the "unfreezing stage" indicates how conflicts and differences in value systems can be offset. The essence of it all is in communication, as it is commonly known that communication is the lifeblood of an organisation, in this case, the lifeblood of organisational change. In the unfreezing stage, Lewin talks of melting the existing behaviours of people involved in the change and influencing them to adopt the new system. The principles underlying Lewin's three-step model were criticized for advocating only top-down management-driven approach while ignoring bottom-up situations. Various scholars - Dawson (1994), Raymond (2021) and Wilson (1992) - were sceptical about such an approach. Training, workshops, staff involvement, and continuous communication all help to break conflictual structures in organisations. Thus, Lewin's change model is still applicable in this study.

2.6 STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT THEORY

Stakeholder management theory is more concerned with running the business ethically and responsibly. The stakeholders' concerns are valued as much as the organisation's success. Thus, Freeman (2004:365) claims that "whatever ultimate goals an organisation might have, it must also take into account the interests of

those groups who can affect or be affected by an organisation”. For that reason, there is need for an organisation to fully understand its mission and the way it operates to be more articulate to its stakeholders. Moreover, the stakeholder values should also be well understood for the organisation to create shared value. This justifies the need for effective communication, especially during organisational change.

For instance, if TelOne had implemented an effective change management process, the migration process from post-paid to prepaid billing would have been successful without any customer grievances. Had there been effective communication, customers would have embraced the migration with an understanding that they would obtain convenient service delivery through faster internet speed and clearer voice calls. As customers enjoy the offered service, organisational trust is most likely to be created and sustained. Accordingly, sales volumes and profits can be boosted. Likewise, employees would also enjoy serving satisfied customers and also working using a friendly updated TelOne system.

However, this theory believes that when stakeholders' interests are met, stakeholders will also strive to achieve the goals of the organisation. In support of this, Jensen (2002: 410) argues that “managing stakeholders' relationships makes good business sense because it allows the firm and its management to achieve its objectives”. This signifies the need for managers to successfully manage organisational change as they develop relationships, inspire stakeholders, and create communities where they strive to give the best for the value of the organisation's premises.

The stakeholder management theory entails creating value for all stakeholders in an ethically responsible and sustainable way (Freeman 1984). This is a human-oriented theory that emphasizes understanding the stakeholders' needs, fulfilling them as well as sustaining the gained trust. Particularly, the stakeholder management theory originated when Freeman noted the shortcomings of the shareholder theory which assumes that organisations should prioritise their profits to their shareholders to appreciate the risk they take as investors of the organisation (Narbel & Muff 2017).

Unlike the shareholder theory, this theory is concerned with the mission and purpose of the organisation as a whole (Narbel & Muff 2007). It also sees a business as a

fully human enterprise. Hence, it emphasises that processes of achieving the mission should fully recognise the humanity of each person involved (Phillips et al. 2019). This study posits that sometimes for the enhanced success of the organisational mission, change turns out to be a necessity in business so that it fits in the fluctuating digitalised world. Hence, the researcher is of the view that as drastic changes occur to any organisation, effective communications between the organisation and its stakeholders become a need. Likewise, stakeholder theory shows the need for TelOne to effectively communicate the change to its stakeholders, assessing how it adds value to employees, customers and the organisation. Thus, scholars such as Nam (2012) show that companies that embrace strong stakeholder theory are successful.

TelOne must worry more about the needs of its stakeholders. Consequently, TelOne is a service industry with several competitors in Zimbabwe. Though it is a monopoly in the fixed telephone industry, it faces fierce competition from mobile telecommunications companies. To be competitive, this study elaborates that it should build and maintain strong relations with its stakeholders. This is possible through effective communication. TelOne drastically migrated from post-paid to prepaid billing and most probably it could have been easier for entrusting stakeholders to accept change if they were proactively part of it. This study, thus investigates whether a strong application of stakeholder management principles significantly benefits the organisation, its management, its employees and its customers during the migration of telephone services.

2.6.1.1 Understanding the Stakeholders

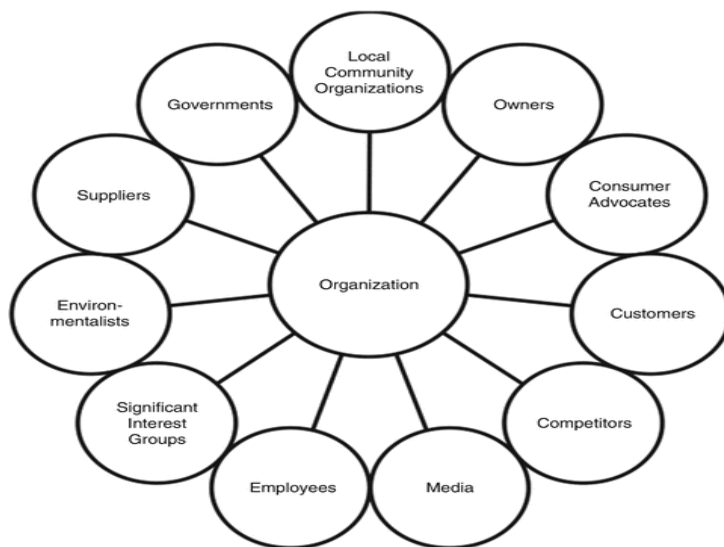


Figure 0.4: Stakeholder map

Source: Freeman (1984: 55) & Friedman and Miles (2006)

As illustrated in Figure 4 above, there are various stakeholders in an organisation. Several scholars (Ozgit & Zhandildina 2021; Mhlanga & Moloi 2020; Heikkinen et al. 2019) cited the work of Freeman (1984), defining the stakeholder as, “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives”. Furthermore, Preston and Sachs (2002:2) defined stakeholders as “...individuals and constituencies that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily to the corporations’ wealth-creating capacity and activities, and who are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers”. This explains that the organisation and its stakeholder’s existence are sustained by their mutual dependence on each other. Hence the need for the organisation to fully understand, segment and value its stakeholders while building and sustaining trust among them all.

With the same view, Nyarko (2021) adopts Friedman’s (2006) description of the organisation a grouping of stakeholders and hence justifies that the main purpose of the organisation should be to manage the necessities and views of those stakeholders. Greenwood and Freeman (2011) cited Freeman’s (2004) definition of stakeholders as “those groups who are vital for the survival and success of the corporation”. Concerning this study, the researcher views TelOne as a ‘grouping of stakeholders’, thus its survival and success solely depend on its stakeholders. Moreover, relevant stakeholders of this study include the primary stakeholders

namely TelOne management, employees and its customers. Without the support of diverse stakeholders, TelOne will likely cease to thrive or exist.

The stakeholders of the organisation have been classified as primary and secondary stakeholder groups. Panda and Sangle (2020) reference Friedman and Miles (2006) who describe a primary stakeholder as one whose continuous organisational support is needed for the continued existence of the organisation. They further note the customers, employees, suppliers and shareholders form part of the primary stakeholders. Yet, the secondary stakeholders consist of (...groups, which can mobilize public opinion in favour of or opposition to the firm" (Friedman & Miles 2006). The contemplated secondary stakeholders include the media, consumer advocacy groups and environmental lobby groups (Mannetti et al. 2019).

As stated earlier, the TelOne management, employees and customers as the relevant stakeholders that should be considered the main pillars of TelOne's existence. Hence, there is a need for effective two-way communication whereby the organisation through the management, communicates (with employees and customers) the intended ways of achieving the mission and objectives of the organisation. Moreover, the management must be willing to communicate and listen to the needs and expectations of the employees and the customers.

Transparency or being aware of each other's expectations in an organisation creates trust and sustainability (Lee & Kim 2020) between TelOne and its stakeholders. The researcher agrees with these scholarly opinions on the need for sustaining stakeholders' trust as it helps remove uncertainty and resistance to change, more specifically in the event of drastic migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne. Considering the organisational trust, the management could confidently convey the message to the employees who would be inclined to understand the message and successfully interact with customers. Therefore, this study relevantly proposes that by establishing that it could be easier for TelOne to convince its entrusting or loyal stakeholders about the initiated change as well as enlightening on the challenges experienced when convincing doubtful stakeholders to accept the change.

Although stakeholders can be grouped under the same group as primary or secondary, the way they are affected or impact the organisation even within the

same group may differ. Thus, Freeman (1984) suggested the following questions as a way of facilitating stakeholder mapping in a phenomenon:

- Who are our current and potential stakeholders?
- What are their interests/rights?
- How does each stakeholder affect us?
- How do we affect each stakeholder?
- What assumption does our current strategy make about each vital stakeholder?
- What are the “environmental variables” that affect us and our stakeholders?
- How do we measure each of these variables and their impact?
- How do we keep score with our stakeholders?

Akin to the study, TelOne could have raised such questions before change implementation. Abundantly, strongly consideration of current and future stakeholders, their environments, and the way they may affect or get affected by the change could have minimised the resistance to change (Blom 2018). Moreover, TelOne telephone service activation also determines the internet connectivity of its subscribers. As a result, failure of prepaid service would most probably result in conflicts and misunderstandings between TelOne and its stakeholders in particular. This study is therefore important as it established the extent to which TelOne communicates change organisation should communicate pro-actively with a sense of urgency or how it mitigates the use of strategies that denies stakeholders' right to sensitive issues like the internet. This study becomes more relevant during this Covid-19 pandemic, a period when the world relies on the internet for daily activities such as academic learning, church services as well as socialising. This explains the need for urgent and effective change communication strategies to enhance successful change management impacting the internet as a major mode of interaction. Below is a further discussion on stakeholder management.

2.6.1.2 Principles of stakeholder management

Principle 1	Managers should acknowledge and actively monitor the concerns of all legitimate stakeholders, and should take their interests appropriately into account in decision making and operations.
Principle 2	Managers should listen to and openly communicate with stakeholders about their respective concerns and contributions, and about the risks that they assume because of their involvement with the corporation.
Principle 3	Managers should adopt processes and modes of behavior that are sensitive to the concerns and capabilities of each stakeholder constituency.
Principle 4	Managers should recognize the interdependence of efforts and rewards among stakeholders, and should attempt to achieve a fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of corporate activity among them, taking into account their respective risks and vulnerabilities.
Principle 5	Managers should work cooperatively with other entities, both public and private, to ensure that risks and harms arising from corporate activities are minimized and, where they cannot be avoided, appropriately compensated.
Principle 6	Managers should avoid altogether activities that might jeopardize inalienable human rights (e.g., the right to life) or give rise to risks that, if clearly understood, would be patently unacceptable to relevant stakeholders.
Principle 7	Managers should acknowledge the potential conflicts between (a) their own role as corporate stakeholders, and (b) their legal and moral responsibilities for the interests of stakeholders, and should address such conflicts through open communication, appropriate reporting, incentive systems and, where necessary, third-party review.

Figure 0.5: Principles of Stakeholder management

Source: Clarkson Center for Business Ethics (1999:4)

The above diagram is the work of the Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics that is meant to summarise the key features of stakeholder management. The researcher's assertion is that the application of the stakeholder management principles at TelOne during the migration of post-paid to prepaid telephone services could have been handy. The Clarkson Centre appreciates the role played by the management as the arbitrators between stakeholders and the organisation (Friedman & Miles 2006).

However, relevant stakeholders to this study are the employees and customers. For that reason, this study sought to highlight the extent to which TelOne management should consider how change could impact its diverse employees from different departments such as technical, credit control and services and so forth. To elaborate, the customers who have signed post-paid service contracts with TelOne should be seriously considered. This implicates considering all TelOne ADSL customers since the services are inseparable. Customers' interests may also differ since others use the services for business, work, and academic needs, while to some the service is a need, whereas others consider it an alternative. Moreover,

TelOne management could have also considered its future customers who could be in favour of the new system.

The notion of the Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics aligns with and the view that after thorough consideration of stakeholders' interests, effective two-way communication becomes a prerequisite. Hence, this study seeks to establish the level of interaction by TelOne management in sharing information about the migration to its employees and customers. The researcher posits that shared information could enlighten how the migration should be implemented, its essence to the company and the stakeholders, and of course as a new initiative there might be anticipated risks. TelOne management should consider an ethical approach and welcome the views of its employees and customers so as to identify, address and learn from their experiences and views on the migration and TelOne as a whole.

Since the management could have gained knowledge about how its employees and customers differ, diverse modes of advertising should be employed to reach the required stakeholders. According to the principle, TelOne management must consider the risks versus benefits of change, acknowledge potential conflicts and eliminate strategies that jeopardise stakeholders' basic rights.

In essence, the researcher posits that stakeholder management principles are part of the stakeholder theory and are relevant to the study as they strongly relate to how effective communication affects relations between stakeholders and the organisation even during change. However, effective communication may stimulate shared value creation and a strong bond between the organisation and its stakeholders.

2.6.1.3 Shared Value Creation (SVC)

The stakeholder theory assumes that business is all about Creating Shared Value among stakeholders (Freeman 1984). Yet, the value varies depending on the nature of the organisation and also as per stakeholder. Notably, Narbel and Muff (2017) explain that values differ based on the definition of the firm as well as on how the responsibilities are articulated towards the stakeholders. SVC entails the exceptionality or worthiness of a service creation that can be beneficial to the organisation and its stakeholders. Hence, some types of value are discussed below.

- ***Types of Value***

Argandoña (2011) argues that, although the value is usually expressed economically, there could be other extrinsic and intrinsic factors determining value creation. He elaborates that extrinsic value should be provided by the company as per the mutual contract with the stakeholder while intrinsic value arises within the stakeholder. To this, the scholar identified the following types of value:

- Economic extrinsic value

All stakeholders desire economic stability. Even job seekers tend to choose the employers depending on the salary bracket they opt to offer. Economic extrinsic value is provided by an organisation (e.g., salary) to its stakeholders, based on the agreed condition of a relationship (Argandoña 2011). The migration from post-paid to prepaid billing might have potentially posed extrinsic economic insecurity to employees. In such a case, the study investigates whether TelOne effectively communicated the change to ensure that all its employees understand that the billing changes are not designed to negatively affect their remuneration. On this note, much attention could have been given to the credit-control employees who might have assumed that prepaid billing would eliminate the debt collection department, thus leading to staff retrenchment. Thus, the migration seemed to be a negative to some employees. Generally, many employees were uncertain whether prepaid services would sustain the company as much as post-paid billing. Thus, this study relevantly highlights the necessity for organisations to interact with their employees and stakeholders about change, ensuring that change creates and sustains economic extrinsic value with its stakeholders.

- Intangible extrinsic value

This is offered by an organisation in the form of recognition and is considered complementary to economic value (Aguado, Frey & Retolaza 2020). To this, the researcher contents that to create intangible extrinsic value during change implementation, TelOne could engage every employee and provide training regarding migration. In addition, customers could also be recognised by being engaged and trained about every necessity concerning prepaid service. By so doing, TelOne could become reputable for its professionalism and hence customers and employees could gain personal status and become proud of being part of TelOne

and its initiative. Though recognition may not supplement remuneration, employees and customers expect to be highly recognised by the organisation (Argandoña 2011). This study also points out that business is part of society hence there is a need to rebuild public loyalty through stakeholder engagement to create value and sustain trust.

- Psychological intrinsic value

This is not offered by an employer; however, it is more psychological since it stimulates the employee (Argandoña 2018). The scholar states that such value may be attained by an employee through contentment with the job done or accomplished outcome. However, the researcher argues that the employer could indirectly affect the creation of intrinsic value. Most likely, the employee would be zealous about positive work outcomes considering being satisfied with the other needs such as tangible and economic values.

- Intrinsic value

The intrinsic value is created when the employee is not only satisfied with thriving in doing the job but would be content with being capable of operational learning in the acquisition of knowledge (Argandoña 2011). The scholar elaborates how this value is created by employees who work as a team. For instance, this may involve TelOne employees engaging and sharing information on the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing. As a result, the researcher posits that teamwork enhances employee performance. Thus, TelOne employees may be thrilled by swiftly operating the new system. The researcher proffers that the thrill of capability is 'intrinsic value' creation and its possibility, increases the significance of this study because teamwork management during change can be enhanced through effective communication strategies.

- Transcendent value

The uniqueness of this value is that it cannot be replaced by any other value (Argandoña 2011). To elaborate, the scholar articulates that its core characteristic involves effective communication between stakeholders and the organisation. Constant relevant engagements are meant to create strong relations between parties involved whilst ensuring that everyone's needs are forever addressed even in the

future (Argandoña 2011). The researcher finds this value to be the heart of the stakeholder theory because it emphasises much on being ethical. About the study, TelOne could effectively engage with its employees and customers to understand and address their needs. This could involve open communication about the prepaid service, and its benefit to the organisation, its employees as well as customers. Transcendent value is deemed relevant to the study because its prominence is to ethically create and sustain value between the company and stakeholders which could also enhance change management.

- Positive and negative externalities

This is the value most felt by others rather than those who created it (Argandoña 2011). For instance, the way the management treats its employees would affect the customers. If TelOne management could not effectively communicate about change with its employees, the customers are more likely to be confused about the system since they rely on employees as their main source of information. On the other hand, well, convinced employees would also manage to articulate the messages properly to the customers. Notable, Nam (2012) posits the externalities in his master's thesis stating that the stakeholder approach is a competitive management strategy that in the long term gives the company better financial returns through sustainable stakeholders' trust.

The various methods of values have been discussed. Some stakeholders could have been privileged to be honoured with all of the above while others might have experienced part of the values. However, what matters is creating shared value. Akin to the study, the prepaid service should be an SVC strategy. That would involve management convincing the employees about the benefit of prepaid services and in turn, the employees doing likewise to the customers. Understanding the new system would mean reduced conflict (Argandoña 2011). This indicates the essence of this study which is set to establish the effectiveness of communication strategies towards enhancing successful change management. When conflicts are reduced, employees would enjoy serving the happy customers while the customers enjoy the competent service. As a result, loyalty between the organisation and its stakeholders would most probably be sustained. This would result in enhanced company profits (Nam

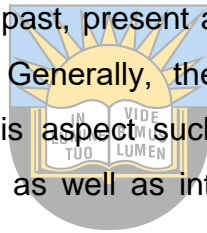
2012). As a result, employees might have higher chances of remuneration rise while the client might also benefit from promotions hosted by the company.

2.6.1.4 Aspects of stakeholder theory

Donaldson and Preston (1995) consider the stakeholder theory as a managerial organisational strategy. To justify this, they came up with the descriptive, instrumental and normative approaches to stakeholder theory.

- ***Descriptive or Empirical approach***

This aspect of the stakeholder theory describes the interaction that takes place between the managers, the organisation, and the stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston 1995). They argue that the state of relations between organisations and stakeholders, whether it's good or bad is also defined. This is meant to understand how managers value and represent stakeholder interests (Phillips et al. 2019). Hence, it reveals and clarifies the past, present and future expectations on how the organisation can be conducted. Generally, the organisation's performance and management are explained in this aspect such as organisational growth, profit, losses, communication strategies, as well as intrinsic values created between the organisation and its stakeholders.



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The researcher considers this aspect as an organisational environmental scanning technique that defines stakeholder management, organisational administration as well as an understanding of the relations between the organisation and its stakeholders. This study establishes the extent to which TelOne could have considered such a technique before the migration of post-paid to prepaid services. For instance, the management could assess its client relations during the post-paid era, and in the process determine the acceptance of change since disloyal customers might be resistant (Blomqvist 2017). Another issue to be considered by TelOne could be the market share growth, profits and losses incurred. Such knowledge could help TelOne to project profit, losses and future customers' market share. Environmental scanning should be a prerequisite especially when an organisation strategizes to introduce change and this requires elite communication skills.

- ***Instrumental approach***

Having understood the outcome from the organisational environmental scanning, it then becomes necessary to find out the causes of revealed consequences. According to Friedman and Miles (2006), an instrumental stakeholder is more of a cause-and-effect relationship whereby empirical data is being scrutinised to find out how stakeholder management impacts organisational performance. To this, Fontaine et al. (2006) conducted a study of organisational consequences by taking into account practices of stakeholder management and its impact on the achievement of various corporate governance goals. The results indicated positive relations between lack of stakeholder management and unsuccessful attainment of corporate goals. Thus, this approach assumes that for an organisation to achieve its goals it must first fulfil its stakeholders' interests. Consequently, this has been justified earlier in this study by Friedman and Miles (2006) who describe the organisation as a grouping of stakeholders whom the organisation needs to manage to achieve its objectives.

The application of the instrumental stakeholder approach could involve TelOne analysing the relationship that it has with its employees and customers whilst being on to be changed post-paid service. This would involve scrutiny of the causes of such a relationship whilst also examining the consequences of the organisational performance versus stakeholder management. This could assist in how best TelOne could introduce the prepaid service and how the service, stakeholder management and company performance would be improved in the future.

- ***Normative approach***

Andrew and Barker (2020) describe the normative stakeholder approach as ethical guidelines considered by an organisation for its functionality. This involves the organisation's consideration of intrinsic and transcendent stakeholder values (Perrault & Shaver 2021). The researcher posits that after describing and evaluating the company's environment, the organisation becomes much more knowledgeable about the consequences of its actions. Thus, for positive stakeholder relations and company administration, organisational management needs to consider and recognise its stakeholders by treating them justly. Modern communication practices have done away with the one-way communication from management to employees and customers. In regards to the ethical considerations of this theory, it promotes the

value of stakeholders (Blom 2018). For instance, TelOne could ethically consider the views of its employees and customers regarding the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing. Engaged customers who feel considered in deciding for or against change, are likely more tolerant and patient when there are glitches in the new system. Hence, it is paramount for organisations to exercise ethics toward their stakeholders who are the primary sustenance of their business. The aspects of the stakeholder theory require effective change communication strategies to ensure ethical considerations to relevant stakeholders, hence justifying the necessity for this study and its contribution to existing knowledge. However, the theory is further critiqued below.

2.6.1.5 Critique of the theory

The stakeholder theory faced a lot of criticisms from scholars regarding its validity in the success of organisational goals. Narbel and Muff (2017) and Harrison et al. (2015) critiqued that since it is derived from the shareholder model, it tends to consider society's needs as something that the firm can address in economic means. Some scholars argue the possibility of balancing the morals of all stakeholders (Narbel & Muff 2017; Harrison et al. 2015; Wood et al. 2021; Morley et al. 2020; Fassin 2008; Sheehy 2005; Jensen 2001). They also contend that although stakeholders may be segmented, their interests may differ. For instance, employees are from different departments and/or ranks; moreover, an employee may have multiple ranks in different departments while at the same time being shareholders.

The criticism of this theory notwithstanding, it can still be employed at TelOne and be helpful towards successful change implementation. Due to its ethical nature, it addresses the critiques indicated above. The value of this theory is not only economically or monetary but it values the humanity of all stakeholders (Nam 2012; Heikkinen et al 2019). Effective communication through management-stakeholder engagements addresses the issue of different interests (Argandoña 2011). The stakeholder management concept and intangible values of this theory have been discussed earlier. Even Friedman and Miles (2006) argue that it is effective because it harnesses efforts of the stakeholders towards the fulfilment of the organisation's objectives. This emphasises how stakeholders' value is being recognised.

Moreover, the core characteristic of this theory is Shared Value Creation (SVC). This technique addresses even the need of heterogeneous stakeholders. This justifies the necessity for TelOne to employ this strategy during its migration. For instance, different customers of TelOne all need effective and efficient service from TelOne. Hence through stakeholder management briefings, TelOne should ensure its customers that migration to prepaid guarantees upgraded service. Likewise, the employees need assurance of an upgraded best service which benefits them through sustaining the company. Hence, the stakeholder approach helps companies to create and maintain trust which becomes the organisation's competitive advantage resulting in improved financial returns in long term (Argandoña 2011). Using this technique is further justified since Nam (2012) elaborates that the stakeholder approach is more important and effective in the service industry than in the manufacturing industry because the nature of the service industry requires frequent involvement of stakeholders.

2.7 SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed the different types of change and discussed the factors influencing change management. More so, the diverse causes of change were carefully examined to fully understand the nature and setting of organisational change at TelOne. Furthermore, this section extensively articulated the centrality of effective communication in organisational communication strategies aimed at change management. Moreover, it discussed empirical evidence and relevant theories on change communication and their critiques. As stated in the chapter, Lewin's change model reveals the communication strategies used to communicate the migration of post-paid to prepaid telephone service at TelOne. This helps the researcher to answer the first objective of the study as it states:

- ***To examine the communications strategy of the selected telecommunication company used to disseminate information about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing with its employees and customers.***

However, communication is a never-ending process and is not all about communicating with the stakeholders. Hence, the stakeholder management theory as discussed above is human-oriented. With the application of the discussed values

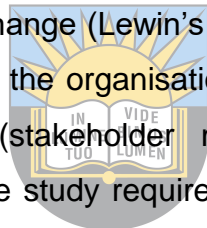
and stakeholder management principles, the researcher would be enabled to respond to the second objective of the study as it says:

- ***To evaluate the effectiveness of the information disseminated to facilitate the migration from the post-paid to the prepaid billing system.***

However, the instrumental and normative stakeholder approach as discussed earlier would assist the researcher to justify the reason behind challenges faced during the implementation of prepaid. This response to the third objective:

- ***To know the challenges faced by employees and customers about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing at a selected telecommunications company.***

Thus, these theories complement each other towards answering the main objective of this study which seeks to evaluate how effective communication affects organisational change. They consider whether the message was sent to the rightful individuals during each stage of change (Lewin's change model), while if it was sent was a mutual consensus between the organisation and its stakeholders concerning the change of billing system (stakeholder management theory). However, responding to the objectives of the study required the researcher to have collected data from relevant stakeholders. Hence, methods of data collection and analysis are discussed in the following chapter.



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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodologies are the methods and techniques used in implementing research design including the principles and assumptions motivating why they were used (Sovacool 2018). The methodology allows the researcher to formulate a systematic approach to collect data that will be used to understand the study.

3.2 CONSTRUCTIVIST PARADIGM

The researcher's understanding of reality is guided by the constructivist worldview. According to Raul (2021), constructivists construct personal understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflection of experiences. Constructivism is a qualitative research approach whereby humans construct the meaning of reality as they engage with the world that is being interpreted; making sense of the world based on their historical and social background (Kerrigan 2018). In addition, this worldview is neither narrow nor objective, it is complex and subjective. The experiences, teachings and beliefs of respondents influence what they perceive to be a reality, thus, qualitative research methods were suitable to understand respondents' beliefs and teachings. Phenomena in this study were best understood through deductive reasoning, thus the researcher employed the qualitative research design which allowed a clear understanding and interpretation of the communication strategies used by TelOne staff to communicate to customers about the change of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.

3.3 THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted the qualitative research design whose methods involve disciplined, explicit, and systematic ways of examining things. It differs from other methodologies as it studies the behaviour of phenomena in their natural settings using people's experiences as data, whereas quantitative research objectively understands reality by discovering general laws (Hancock et al. 2021). Moreover, they argue that qualitative research seeks to understand what determines people's behaviour, their opinions and attitudes, and how they are affected by events that go on around them (Hancock et al. 2021).

The objectives of qualitative designs are to explore areas where limited or no prior information exists or to describe behaviours, themes, trends, attitudes, needs, or relations that apply to the units analysed (Du Plooy 2009). Welman et al. (2005) say that qualitative data is based on meanings expressed through words and symbols or metaphors. The best methodology for examining the change process at TelOne was through a qualitative approach to probe the knowledge and experiences of employees and customers during the migration process from post paid to prepaid billing. Blythe (2009) also explains that qualitative research is not usually numeric but is usually verbal as it results in the expression of ideas and opinions. This justifies the use of qualitative research in this study so as to allow the respondents to freely express how they view communication strategy used as a change management technique.

Other scholars define qualitative design, as “...research that analyses respondents’ responses according to meaning, experience, perceptions and produces descriptive data in the respondents’ own written or spoken words” (Fortune & Reid 1999: 94). Qualitative research methods are embedded in the interpretive paradigm where reality is subjective to the individual experiences of the respondents. In view of this, the qualitative approach allowed the researcher to use open-ended questions during interviews to obtain detailed information about the communication strategies used during the migration from post-paid to prepaid telephone services at TelOne.

Akin to Blythe (2009) who says qualitative research provides respondents with an opportunity for detailed expression, the qualitative component of this study design allowed respondents to freely respond to the researchers’ questions. In this regard, Fortune and Reid (1999: 94) state that, “qualitative research elicits data from the respondents according to their experiences and perceptions, and then produces descriptive data from the respondents’ responses”.

On the other hand, Schutte (2019) states that “A quantitative design is suitable when we want to measure variables and to predict, describe and explain quantities, degrees, and relationships also to generalize from a sample to the population by collecting numerical data”. Abhari and Salehi (2021) acknowledged the work of Aliaga and Gunderson (2002) who view quantitative research as the examination of phenomena by gathering numerical data and analysing it statistically. This method is

highly objective and has no room for respondents' subjective views as it overlooks the reasons behind social phenomena. With the principles underlying qualitative and quantitative research methodology, the researcher saw it appropriate to employ the qualitative approach because quantitative approaches limit the ability for respondents to express themselves. Unlike quantitative research, a quantitative approach limits respondents' expression of their knowledge, experiences and opinions about the effectiveness of internal and external communication strategies used by TelOne to communicate the change of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION

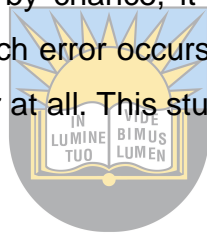
Arhin (2019:37) defines a population as, "...an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications". This informed the targeted study population comprising TelOne management, employees, and customers whose telephone accounts have been migrated from post-paid to prepaid billing. The population was chosen as the best informants in scrutinising the effectiveness of internal and external communication strategies used by TelOne to communicate the change of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.

3.5 SAMPLING

Although the population constitutes TelOne management, employees, and customers, not all participated in the study. Measuring the whole population is tedious and bears inaccuracy challenges as larger populations tend to increase the probability of error. Thus, to reduce tedious data collection and the margin of error, a representative sample was chosen from the population. Sampling is the selection of part of a population to represent that particular population (Pandey & Pandey 2021). Kumar (2005) defines it as "...the process of selecting a few from a bigger group, to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group". Measuring the whole population poses difficulties in accessing the respondents. Akin to Du Plooy's (2001:100) arguments, studying the whole population was constrained by limited finances, time and the widely dispersed population from which the sample is drawn. To obtain reliable data, the researcher chose a sample that is representative of the study population.

3.5.1 Sampling error

A sample ought to represent the entire population from which it is drawn, hence the researcher must guard against sampling errors. Various authors such as Mount et al. (2005), Fink (2003) and Wai et al. (2019) refer to sampling error as “...the deviation of the selected sample from the true characteristics, traits, behaviours, qualities or figures of the entire population”. Sampling error can simply be defined as the difference between the sample and the total population as a result of bias or chance. Sampling bias occurs when the researcher favours respondents with particular characteristics in such a manner that they are not fully representative of the entire population, instead they represent a segment of people bearing the traits chosen by the researcher. A wise sampling procedure can successfully reduce bias thus the researcher avoided this type of error by adhering to the procedure of selecting respondents. The sampling error was also reduced by increasing the sample size. About sampling error that occurs by chance, it cannot be avoided no matter how careful the researcher may be. Such error occurs when respondents do not respond to questions either appropriately or at all. This study minimised this error by selecting a sufficient sample size.



3.5.2 Purposive Sampling

Through purposive sampling also known as judgmental sampling, the researcher used sound judgment to choose a sample of respondents with enough experience and knowledge to enrich the objectives of the study. Baxter and Babbie (2004:135) define purposive sampling as “...the judgment of the researcher which is based on the known information about the population and the objectives of the study”. The researcher decides what needs to be known and samples respondents who possess the information needed. Mweshi and Sakyi (2020) also define purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling technique in which the units to be observed are selected based on the researchers’ judgment about the most useful representative ones. The researcher selected a representative sample of respondents with experiential knowledge of the communication strategies used to communicate the change of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing to customers.

3.5.2.1 Expert Sampling

Etikan et al. (2016) note that expert sampling as denoted by its name, identifies respondents who are experts in their field of study. This technique appropriately assisted the researcher to select respondents from TelOne management who directed the communication strategies used to communicate the change of telephone services, employees who implemented it as well as the customers who experienced the extent of its effectiveness. Purposive sampling which was further categorised as expert sampling was deemed suitable for this study since it enabled the researcher to collect relevant information concerning communication strategies during change management. This study required data reflecting the communication strategies used to communicate TelOne billing changes to its customers as well as knowledge of the effectiveness of the communication strategies used. Data were purposively collected from relevant TelOne managers, employees and customers in Bulawayo, with pertinent information relating to the study. The chosen purposive sampling technique that was used is the expert sampling technique.

3.5.3 Sample size

A total of 100 respondents were chosen for this study. The sample drawn consisted of five managers from various departments including one from marketing and public relations department. They were interrogated using face-to-face semi-structured interviews and were chosen based on the assumption that their pivotal internal and external communications roles at TelOne provided them meaningful experience and knowledge of the corporate-client communication strategies used to communicate the transition from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne. The researcher views managers as overseers of the daily running of the company hence had to probe pertinent information from their directive roles in implementing the communication strategies that were used in the process of telephone migration.

In addition, the sample also included 16 employees who were interviewed using the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. This employee sample consisted of the customer relations clerks as well as Revenue and Credit control clerks. These had direct contact with customers, thus their interactions are believed to have increased their understanding of how customers were affected by the communication strategies used in the process of transition from post-paid billing to prepaid billing. They were

the best to answer questions on the impact of the change on the employees and its effect on the customers. The technicians also formed part of the employees' sample due to their face-to-face dealings with customers daily as their duties involve visiting customers' premises to fix or install telecommunications services.

Clients who were liable to participate in the study, whom I had also intended to collect data from through questionnaires; failed due to the pandemic whose precautions warned that papers transmit the virus. Thus, only 79 customers were part of the sample and were interviewed on telephone so as to understand their perceptions, experiences, and overall evaluation of the communication strategies used by TelOne to communicate billing changes to them. To collect pertinent data, the study consisted of only TelOne stakeholders with rich information on the communication strategies used to communicate the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

The process of data collection is very critical to the authenticity of research results. Once inappropriate tools for collecting data are used, the validity of the data is questionable. Various methods can be used in the collection of data, however, in this study, the researcher used document analysis, observation, telephonic and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. As mentioned above, the researcher endeavoured to explore the phenomena through the constructivist paradigm which encourages respondents to subjectively express their thoughts and understanding of the phenomena. The constructivist paradigm can be fully realised through the use of the aforementioned data collection tools. These data collection tools allowed respondents to fully articulate their feelings, perceptions, experiences, and understanding of the phenomena under study. Alluding to this, Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:9) argue that "qualitative research involves small samples of people studied using in-depth methods". In this study, data was collected through observation, telephonic and one-on-one semi-structured interviews. A research study that uses qualitative research methodology calls for explorative and descriptive data collection tools that explore the phenomena under study. Hence, the use of the aforementioned data collection tools.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Face to face semi-structured interviews were employed to interview the five management and 16 employees. Before the interviews, the researcher outlined the main points to be covered throughout the interview sessions while leaving room to rephrase the questions in the interview schedule so as to probe specific emerging issues in the interview. This is supported by Baxter and Babbie (2004: 329) who assert that “semi-structured interviews consist of a number of questions that serve as a guideline to the interview whilst the interviewer has the freedom to probe the informant for more responses”. Similarly, in this study the researcher prepared questions that guided the interview meeting. Having an interview schedule helps interviewers to follow a guided set of questions, mainly open ended. Since the study employed semi-structured interviews, the interviewer probed specific issues mentioned by respondents wherever she saw that such data could be helpful to the study.

Further, 79 were interviewed through telephonic semi-structured interviews. Initially, the researcher had distributed qualitative questionnaires to 79 customers who were given a grace period of one week to answer and return. Regrettably, none of them responded because soon after the distribution of questionnaires there were national imposed Covid 19 lockdowns. Hence, the researcher opted to forego physical questionnaires and use telephone interviews with those 79 customers. The respondents' telephone numbers were retrieved from the TelOne's clientele database of migrated telephone numbers. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions that Blythe (2009) emphasised as enablers of flexibility and freedom of expression by respondents in response to questions posed to them.

Gulbrium and Sankar (1994:23) say that “...in-depth interviews aim to elicit relevant, valuable and analytically rich data”. Therefore, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions enabled the researcher to collect detailed relevant information concerning the study. Considering safety precautions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, the researcher avoided face-to-face interviews with the customers as respondents with huge numbers and thus employed telephone interviews as a route to data collection. Telephonic interviews were not as different from face-to-face interviews as they enabled verbal responses just like face-to-face interviews. The

researcher notes that verbal responses are ideal as they enable respondents to articulate themselves in full expression as compared to written responses.

3.6.2 Participant observation

The researcher was a participant-observer throughout the study. Observational methods of data collection call for the researcher to activate all her senses to analyse phenomena as it they play out in their natural setting as well as the social context of phenomena and how people relate to them. Welman et al. (2005:9) attest to this as they define observations as, “great techniques that provide rich data since they occur in the natural context being observed”. Being employed at TelOne enabled participant observation to be applicable for this study as the researcher experienced the strategies used to communicate the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing.

Participant observation occurs when the observer is a member or is involved in the setting that is being investigated and in which they are collecting data. Bryant (2018:5) clearly defines participant observation as “...a process of data collection within which the researcher observes a specific research field by becoming a member of the setting in which they are collecting data”. The pros of this method are that it increases the understanding of phenomena as it captures the context of interactions, first-hand experience enables open-mindedness to discover as it promotes inductive reasoning as opposed to assumptions, and most importantly, it exposes the researcher to the uncomfortable things that most respondents are not free to expose in interviews.

Having analysed, through participant observation, the effectiveness of communication strategies used for the migration process, the researcher interpreted the collected data under various themes aligned to the research objectives or questions to recommend solutions to the identified problem. This type of data collection is regarded by scholars as systematic in that the researcher needs to know what she is observing and focus on that. Not everything that occurred in the social setup was relevant to the study, thus, the researcher had to be extremely systematic in her observational data collection, dwelling on the information that responds specifically to the effectiveness of the strategies used to communicate the change of TelOne services from post-paid to prepaid billing. Research questions guided the

observation as they became an inclusion and exclusion criteria for the data relevant to the study.

In line with the constructivist and interpretive paradigm, the participant observation component of this study was used to understand complex human phenomena as to how employees interpreted, understood, and implemented the strategies used to communicate the billing migration process at TelOne and to understand how customers interpreted, understood and responded to the same. The researcher realised that during data collection, she was bound to adopt a subjective approach to interpreting truth as the researcher and respondents had a relationship both being employees at TelOne. Thus, subjectivity was central to the study according to their knowledge and experiences during the process of telephone service migration at TelOne. Moreover, as a participant-observer using the constructivist paradigm, the researcher adopted the ideology that truth is a co-constructed conclusion as the researcher considers the perceptions and experiences of research respondents while considering her knowledge and experiences obtained as a participant-observer.

As a TelOne employee located in Bulawayo, the researcher had access to direct observation of TelOne client queries or complaints and had access to opportunities for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the communication strategies used in the migration process. This interpreted data more reliable as phenomena were clearly understood as they occurred; moreover, she was able to evaluate the impact of the TelOne service migration from post-paid to prepaid services. Communication strategies used to communicate change between TelOne and its employees were non-participatory and observed to collect primary data used as background information to probe the respondents for rich data.

3.6.3 Document analysis

Document analysis has widely been used by contemporary scholars as a strategy for qualitative data analysis. As argued by many proponents of qualitative research, "Documents contain essential information for qualitative researchers" (Azungah 2018). Andrade et al. (2016) argue that "Documentary review in a qualitative study generates knowledge and manifests new ways of summarising information". A major benefit of this method of analysis is that it provides valuable data sources that enable

researchers to “investigate specific events in-depth by examining written material” (Andrade et al. 2017). Thus, this study employed document analysis to examine the corporate-client communication strategies used by TelOne to implement telephone service migration from post-paid to prepaid billing. Andrade et al. (2017) further note that “normally document analysis consists of notes, case reports, policies, action plans, and drafts”. Other forms of documented data in digital and audiovisual forms have proved to be reliable sources of relevant and rich data for researchers. A wide range of data was sourced from organisational documents, online forums, and emails that conveyed communiqué, directives, social media posts, promotions as well as corporate-client conversations that occurred on social media platforms specifically Facebook and Twitter. With such information, the researcher was able to get guiding information on the planned strategies, whether they were effective and how TelOne clientele reacted to them.

3.6.3.1 **Organisational documents**

Various documented sources of data were analysed to examine the effectiveness of strategies used by TelOne to communicate the change of telephone billing from post-paid to prepaid billing. To obtain relevant documents, the researcher used her role or position as an employee who is participating in the process of communicating change and interacting with customers who are recipients of the change. Using her employee advantage, the researcher was able to access the TelOne communication plan, strategic plan for the service migration process, progress reports, and policies were accessed and reviewed to extract information specific to the implementation of communication strategies during the billing migration process at TelOne.

3.6.3.2 **Emails**

Emails that were sent during the migration process were analysed to examine the strategies used, their effectiveness, and how customers responded or reacted to them. Internal emails between staff and management, as well as emails from customers to TelOne, were sources of rich data about the research questions. In emails, the researcher classified the communication system as internal communiqué and external communiqué. In analysing internal communications, the researcher analysed directives that were sent from management to staff as well as emails between staff concerning the service migration process. These emails included the

effectiveness of the internal communication system and the internal communication challenges experienced by technicians and other staff during the process.

Part of the emails that were analysed included external communiqués between TelOne and its clientele. As many outbound emails were collected for analysis, those were sent to customers concerning the migration process. Analysis was based on their structure, clarity, and content to examine whether they successfully communicated the migration process for customers to understand their role in the process and how the migration would change the way they receive their TelOne services. Further analysis was made of incoming emails from customers including concerns, complaints, updates, inquiries, appraisals, or any other communiqué concerning the migration process.

3.6.3.3 Advertisements and Promotions

During the migration process, the TelOne marketing and advertising team used various channels to communicate the change in telephone services to their customers. The researcher examined the various channels of communication used and the clarity of messages used in various advertisements on social media, websites, radio stations, and television stations. Analysing such adverts provides the researcher with a basis for evaluating whether the medium used by TelOne was suitable for customers to understand and act. After seeing or hearing the adverts, the researcher analysed whether there were clear guidelines on what the customers were supposed to do to embrace the billing changes most efficiently. Some promotions were made to enhance the reception or acceptance of the billing changes, thus the researcher analysed how these promotions prompted customers to understand and adopt the changes that TelOne was implementing.

3.6.3.4 Social media commentaries

Social media has impacted the way business is conducted over the decade. Unlike the traditional one-way communication practice from the organisation to customers who merely received information and nothing more, the advent of social media has empowered customers with a voice in the digital space for commentary on the organisation's products, services and operations. Social media facilitates efficient corporate-client communications. Moreover, the user-friendly nature of social media enables customers to freely express their views without fear. This allows

organisations to learn their customers' perceptions and in turn model innovations to maintain or enhance client satisfaction.

The researcher analysed the social media commentaries passed by customers on Facebook, more specifically on the TelOne and TechZim Facebook page. The researcher zoomed into the outgoing posts made by TelOne concerning the change of telephone billing services from post-paid to prepaid billing, she analysed the comments posted on those posts to examine the effectiveness of the communication strategies, how satisfied customers were, whether they understood the process, the challenges or complaints posted as well as the successes that they confirmed on those comments. These commentaries informed the researcher of the general challenges faced by customers regarding the change of telephone billing services from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Flick (2015: 5) argues that, "Data analysis refers to the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data..." by searching "...for patterns and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there in the first place" (Bernard and Ryan 2010:215) in an effort, "...to obtain usable and useful information from the data collected" (Lacey & Luff 2009:20). Taylor (2014) acknowledges the work of Boeije (2010:76) who defined data analysis as the, "...process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that you accumulate to increase your understanding of them and enable to present what you have discovered to others". In light of the qualitative component of this study, Patton (2002:432) says that, "Qualitative analysis transforms data into findings", further arguing that "...no formula exists for that transformation". Furthermore, he says "...qualitative data analysts seek to describe their textual data in ways that capture the setting or people who produced this text on their terms rather than in terms of predefined measures and hypotheses". Qualitative analysis is an inductive process whereby the analyst identifies pertinent categories, patterns, and relationships in the data and interprets them according to themes in a process of discovery. The researcher employed thematic analysis to interpret the collected data.

3.7.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was used to interpret collected data. These themes convey respondents' perceptions and experiences of the effectiveness of TelOne communication strategies during its telephone service migration. Thematic analysis entails qualitatively analysing, coding, and examining patterns or themes within data (Creswell 2014). About the coding aspect, Baxter and Babbie (2004:366) explain coding as "...a process of categorising, compiling and sorting data" while Babbie (2010:400) later fortified the relevance of coding when he says that "coding is relevant because it discovers patterns among data which could point to the theoretical understanding of social life". Specific to this study, Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017:2) define thematic analysis as "...a method for identifying, analysing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set". Data collected through document analysis, face-to-face and telephonic semi-structured interviews as well as observations were grouped and separated according to their similarities. Collected data were analysed and explained under certain themes to examine how effective organisational communication influences stakeholders' behaviours towards organisational change.

Consequently, an exploratory data analysis was implemented to investigate the nature of TelOne organisational communication practices during events of change and how they correlate with existing organisational communication change theories. Babbie (2007:88) argues that "exploratory studies are essential since their use helps the researcher to clear off the curiosity, gain new insights and better understanding concerning the study". More to the analysis, the coded themes describe and explain how organisational communication strategies affect the way stakeholders understand and accept organisational change. This approach is explained by Du Plooy (2006:50) when he states that explanatory data analysis is seen as "the direction of a cause-and-effect relationship" between two independent variables.

3.8 RESEARCH QUESTIONS LINKED TO RESEARCH METHODS

Table 0:1: Research questions linked to research methods

RQs	DATA SOURCES	METHODS	JUSTIFICATION
RQ1: What strategies did the selected telecommunication company use to disseminate information about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing to managers, employees and customers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with TelOne management and employees. -Telephonic semi-structured interviews with customers - Document analysis -Participant observation 	Thematic analysis	-Face-to-face and telephonic semi-structured interviews, document analysis and participant observation revealed internal and external communication strategies used for change management while thematic analysis helped to identify ideal themes in the data.
RQ2: How effective was the information disseminated to facilitate the change of migration from post-paid to a prepaid billing system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with TelOne management and employees. -Telephonic semi-structured interviews with customers. - Document analysis -Participant observation 	Thematic analysis	-Responses from face-to-face and telephonic semi-structured interviews, document analysis and participant observation highlighted how communication strategies were viewed and thematic analysis helped to bring out relevant themes.
RQ3: What challenges were faced by employees and customers related to the change of migration from post-paid to prepaid billing at a selected communication company?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with TelOne management and employees -Telephonic semi-structured interviews with customers - Document analysis -Participant observation 	Thematic analysis	-All face-to-face and telephonic semi-structured interviews, document analysis and participant observation of this study indicated any challenges faced and how communication strategies during change could be improved while thematic analysis assisted with applicable themes.

3.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several telecommunication companies in Zimbabwe have implemented service migrations or organisational changes that necessitated communication strategies, however, due to various limitations, this study focused on TelOne Zimbabwe, more specifically, Bulawayo. The other several TelOne branches though experiencing the same phenomena were not included in the study due to financial constraints which

limited the ability to travel for data collection, as well as time constraints as the researcher is a full-time employee.

3.10 ETHICAL ISSUES

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005:54) define ethics as "...a set of moral principles which are suggested by an individual or group and are subsequently widely accepted and offer rules and behavioural expectation about the most acceptable conduct towards respondents, employees, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students". Considering the above, the researcher applied for an ethical clearance certificate from the University Research Ethics Committee for approval to conduct the research and further considered the following ethics during the data collection phase. The ethical clearance was granted with the reference number OSU021SDUB01.

3.10.1 Informed consent

The researcher observed various ethics when conducting the research. Most importantly informed consent was considered whereby respondents were informed about the study and what it means for them to participate in the study. Mukungu (2017) cited that Informed consent is outlined by Wiles (2013:26) as "...ensuring that respondents will always be fully informed about what participating in research will involve". The objectives of the study were clearly defined and explained to the respondents to ensure that they have informed consent to participate in the study. Informed consent was a major ethic considered in this research as all respondents were issued informed consent forms which clearly stated that participation in the research was not by compulsion, moreover the form had a clear outline of the study's background and purpose.

3.10.2 Protection from harm

The treatment of research respondents is an important ethical issue. It encompasses the need for these respondents to be protected from any form of physical or psychological harm. This study does not pose any physical or psychological harm to its respondents. The method of data collection ensured that it would be impossible to trace responses back to respondents.

None of the respondents was named in the research. During the interviews, the researcher made sure to alert the respondents that naming and shaming would not be tolerated because this study is aimed at solely analysing phenomena through academic means. Considering the potential controversies related to this issue, this study exercised anonymity to protect respondents from being persecuted for their responses. Through confidentiality, anonymity is achieved and respondents are protected from harm. Shaffer and Kipp (2013: 35) say that “protection from harm is the right of research respondents to be protected from physical or psychological harm”. All the responses given during the data collection phase were not linked to the personal identification of respondents, thus they received much need protection from follow-up persecutions based on their input. Most importantly considering the current ravaging pandemic, to ensure the safety of respondents and the researcher, the use of masks and sanitisers was a major regulation considered by the researcher during data collection . Covid-19 safety regulations influenced the researcher to conduct telephonic interviews with customers as opposed to traditional face-to-face interviews.



3.10.3 Confidentiality

CIOMS (1991) defines confidentiality as an agreement between the participant and the investigator about how the participant's data will be handled and to whom it will be disclosed. Moreover, the informed consent form should specify “the level of confidentiality to be provided, the names of people or organisations that may review or have access to the research records, such as sponsors or regulatory agencies, the conditions of confidentiality and how long the records will be kept after the study ends”. Respondents' data was not linked to respondents' names, making it impossible to trace responses to the responder. Only the researcher accessed data collected through, telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews, or document analysis. The researcher did not expose confidential information about respondents.

3.10.4 Risk/Benefit ratio

The researcher found it important to evaluate the risks of the study as compared to its benefit to study respondents, TelOne, and its overall clientele. It was important to thoroughly analyse and determine whether there were any risks associated with

carrying out the study while specifying who would be at risk as well as who would benefit from the study. Researchers must prevent respondents' and organisations' exposure to risks that are greater than the expected benefits or permitting known risks to occur even though they could have been prevented (CIOMS: 1991). No extreme risks were posed to TelOne or respondents, in-fact the benefits of this study have far greater leverage as compared to any potential risks since it is aimed at developing communication strategies related to the current migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing.

The study has mutual benefits for the researcher, the organisation, and the respondents in that, this study developed recommendations that will improve the way TelOne renders its services to its clientele. Respondents were informed that they were not going to have any material benefit from this research, however, the knowledge and recommendations from the results of the research will benefit organisations including TelOne's communication strategy, TelOne employees' knowledge of the phenomena and how to manage its effects as well as increase the effectiveness of TelOne communication strategy which in-turn increases the satisfaction of TelOne customers about TelOne services. In general, TelOne employees and management will have a better understanding of how effective communication strategies can be a tool for successful organisational change.

3.11 SUMMARY

This chapter identified, explained and justified the research methodology used for data collection. It included details of the population selected for the study, its purposive sampling procedure, and the data collection methods which included participant observation, telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis. After conducting the research according to its planned design, all respondents sought managed to participate in the study. The obtained results were analysed and interpreted using thematic analysis under themes to answer research questions as typified in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses the data collected from TelOne management, employees and the clientele. TelOne drastically changed its telecommunication services from post-paid to prepaid billing. Initially, the change instigated havoc and misunderstandings between the affected stakeholders and the company. This motivated the investigation into the effectiveness of the company's communications strategy used to implement the change and also the challenges faced before, during and after the change implementation. Hence, the study used telephonic and face-to-face semi-structured interviews, document analysis as well as participant observation as data collection methods so as to respond to the research questions restated below:

- What communication strategies were used by TelOne to disseminate information about the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing to its management, employees and customers?
- How effective was the information disseminated by TelOne to facilitate the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing?
- What challenges were experienced by TelOne employees and customers during the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing?

4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

This study employed qualitative design method hence data analysis analysed data collected from five TelOne managers who were interviewed through face-to face semi-structured interviews, 16 TelOne employees also interviewed via face-to-face semi-structured interviews as well as 79 customers who were interviewed through telephonic semi-structured interviews. Further, data collected by participant observation and documents analysis is analysed in this chapter. Thus, thematic analysis was used to analyse the collected data by categorising and explaining it under the various relevant themes.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TELONE MANAGERS.

This section discusses the findings from the interviews with TelOne managers. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted with five managers from different

departments who seemed relevant to the study such as the client services, credit control and technical departments. In this study these participants would be addressed as *TelOne Manager1*, *TelOne Manager2*, *TelOne Manager3*, *TelOne Manager4* and *TelOne Manager5*. The data was analysed in relation to the research objectives as follows:

4.3.1 TelOne managers' opinions on strategies used to communicate the telephone service migration

In response to RQ1, TelOne managers were questioned about the communication strategies used by TelOne for during the migration of telecommunication services from post-paid to prepaid billing. Below are some of the responses:

TelOne used meetings to communicate with us and the email was mostly used to advise the internal staff however with customers we advised them through advertisements on national radio stations, ZBC TV, national newspapers and we also sent some of them messages to their mobile phones (TelOne Manager3).

When the prepaid was implemented TelOne employed Brand ambassadors and one of their main duties was to phone and inform customers about prepaid services. They also visited some customers on a door-to-door exercise advising and demonstrating how pre-paid works. Customers were as well awarded various gifts for using prepaid services. Office promotions were conducted hence customers were advised about prepaid as they visited our offices and were also offered different prices as a strategy to encourage the use of prepaid services. As for staff, meetings and emails were used (TelOne Manager5)

The indoor meetings and conferences were used to communicate with us about change. TelOne used emails to inform the staff and we also advised them through indoor meetings and briefings. With customers, we tried to reach them via various media platforms like newspapers, radio, TV and social media (TelOne Manager1)

Internal email was used to communicate with employees, sometimes meetings and our customers were phoned and were also advised as they came in to pay. Brand ambassadors were sent to customers' premises to educate them about the prepaid and we also sent a note along with the monthly telephone bills. Initially when it was a post-paid service, TelOne would send telephone bills to its customers monthly, hence the note was

as well sent along with the telephone bill to notify the client about the change (TelOne Manager2)

Basically, most of the respondents who were TelOne managers highlighted that TelOne used various media platforms to communicate the initiative with the clientele. Most customers were contacted via telephone while emails were mostly used to communicate with internal staff and meetings used to inform managers.

4.3.2 TelOne managers' views on the effectiveness of TelOne's change communication strategies

The study further analysed the interviews with TelOne managers to determine the effectiveness of communication strategy used by the organisation as a change management technique.

4.3.2.1 Organisational and stakeholder know-how

The respondents that were interviewed who were TelOne management staff gave various views on the organisational and stakeholder know-how in relation to how they influenced the effectiveness of communication strategies used to communicate the change. One of the TelOne managers' indicated his knowledge of the vision of the company stating that:

...TelOne vision is to be the digitally enabled society by 2023. (TelOne Manager3)

The other respondents also stated that,

The mission of TelOne is to connect everyone with internet and voice by 2023. (TelOne Manager5)

TelOne is a client centric organisation that values excellence thus we also value to be committed to our work, be innovative and accountable (TelOne Manager2)

Furthermore, the respondents (TelOne managers) were positive about working towards the mission of providing connectivity and digitalised solutions to its stakeholders. They believed that migration would enhance the achievement of the TelOne's vision as some of them said:

We got a directive from the company informing us about the prepaid and personally I felt it was good for achieving the company mission. (TelOne Manager4)

We were advised about the company strategy through in-house meeting and Email and I think it is a positive move because migration helps the company to be a digitalised telecommunications company. (TelOne Manager1)

One of TelOne's core values is innovation thus I believe prepaid is an innovative strategy for the success of the company (TelOne Manager3)

Managers were asked whether TelOne used a two-way flow of communication to interact with them and the stakeholders about the change. Most of the respondents (TelOne Managers) highlighted that although the communication vehicles enabled feedback, they were not included in the decision-making processes on whether or not to implement to change. Instead, the managers were informed to facilitate the implementation. More so, one of the respondents said:

"It was a company strategy; the decision about the migration was already concluded and our duty was to inform the employees about the good innovation and make sure that it is implemented as per the company's directive". (TelOne Manager4)

Thus, the key finding is that even though the migration was a directive the management understood the communiqué because they felt it was meant for the betterment of achieving the organisation's vision and mission.

From the interviews conducted the respondents were asked if the employees and customers were informed about the change prior to implementation. This further gave various views on how being knowledgeable about the clientele influenced the effectiveness of the channels used to convey the migration message with them. Most of the respondents emphasised that initially it was difficult to communicate with customers because TelOne had an incomplete clientele database meaning personal information of some customers was missing such as their mobile number, email address, date of birth and physical or postal addresses. Thus, to enhance effective communication about the migration the respondents further noted that a KYC (know your customers) exercise was conducted so as to capture all relevant customers' information to the database. To this, some of the respondents said:

Use of emails with the customers was a challenge because not everyone was reached since the organisation did not have their email addresses

and some of the available emails were also not correct. (TelOne Manager2)

Not all the employees and customers were advised about the migration before it was implemented because at first, we had a challenge to reach most of our customers since we had an incompletely client's database. But with time communication improved due to introduction of KYC exercise... (TelOne Manager5)

Communication was a challenge, we tried to use SMS and social media but most of the clientele were not reached because the organisation did not have their numbers while some available mobile numbers were incorrect (TelOne Manager4)

TelOne is a very big organisation thus it was difficult to reach and timely advise everyone about the migration especially since we had an incomplete customers' data base. But still we had some customers who were reached for instance via email, SMS or social media and they acknowledged the communiqué as they had the privilege to seek clarification as needed. (TelOneManager1)

Additionally, one of the respondents also indicated that sending brand ambassadors to the clientele residences was an effective way of interacting thus said that:

Use of ambassadors as change communicators allowed two-way communication with the clientele but it was not possible to reach most of the clientele because TelOne did not have the addresses for all the customers (TelOneManager1)

In addition, most of the respondents who were TelOne managers highlighted that although they communicated the change via the newspapers, radio and the television, it was uncertain to reach the clientele because majority of the clientele view DSTV channels than the local ZBC TV. Thus, one of the respondents argued:

Well, advertisements about the prepaid were also communicated via newspapers, radio and ZBC. But I guess few were reached since we all know how many people buy the newspapers nowadays and worse how many people watch the ZBC?

Consequently, the findings of this study distinctively add value to the field of communication and change because they highlight how the knowledge that the management has about the organisation and its clientele impacts the effectiveness of organisational communications change strategies.

4.3.2.2 Understanding the essence of change

TelOne Managers commented on the effect of understanding the essence of change. They indicated that the extent to which change would benefit stakeholders also influences their understanding or resistance to change. Some of the respondents noted that:

I would support any company directive about the prepaid because business is not owned through debt, revenue must be collected. (TelOne Manager5)

I understand the need for the migration hence can also advise the employees the need for change, the prepaid service improved the debt management which as a result reduced the cost of debt collection and this will improve the company's revenue. TelOne Manager2)

"Prepaid is the way to go, customers also got control of what they use which means no more debt ". (TelOne Manager3)

Furthermore, most TelOne management highlighted that prepaid billing was accompanied by the digitalisation of the TelOne system, which in turn improved telecommunication services. Interviews with the managers indicated that being aware of the benefits of prepaid billing would limit resistance to change as stakeholders could easily understand the change messages communicated via different media.

Accordingly, the researcher agrees with the notion of the stakeholder theory that the management should understand the vision of the organisation and also the need of its stakeholders to maintain mutual relations and continuous success for both (Phillips et al 2019). While Rizescu and Tileag (2016) also argue that the relative advantage of change determines the success of change management. However, the distinct finding of this study is that the aforementioned factors do not generally affect change but affect the effectiveness of the communication strategies used before, during and after the change implementation.

4.3.3 TelOne managers' opinions on the challenges faced during TelOne telephone services migration

Blom (2018) asserts that change initiatives are readily accepted by some organisational members while others who underappreciate its importance may fight its existence. This assertion is proved in this study as shown below.

4.3.3.1 Management's views on Employee and client resistance to change

When asked about the challenges faced during the implementation of the migration, the respondents revealed that:

As management we faced challenges during change implementation because at first some of the employees were reluctant to change due to the fear of the unknown (TelOne Manager4).

Most of credit-control employees were against the migration because they thought the migration would also mean loss of jobs to them (TelOne Manager1).

"Change resistance was a challenge because when prepaid was introduced some employees assumed that once customers clear off their outstanding bills there will be no more credit control department and there will be downsizing or it will be hard for them to get chances for promotions (TelOne Manager3).

...some employees were at the start resistant to change because they thought they will face difficulties in case they will be required to change departments (TelOne Manager2).

In the beginning we had challenges with employees resisting change due to fear and that feeling of being insecure but the once resistant employees adapted to change with time after understanding the need for change and its benefits (TelOne Manager5).

To this, Rizescu and Tileag (2016) also proffer that impact on social relations and on benefits of intrinsic as well as extrinsic value may influence change acceptance.

Furthermore, the TelOne management added that they had challenges with some of the customers who were also resistant to change. They said:

Some of our customers did not easily accept the prepaid billing due to the benefits ceased by the change (TelOne Manager5).

Our clientele preferred post-paid because with this Zimbabwean hyperinflation, post-paid service meant TelOne would have been indirectly sponsoring its clientele with free service” (TelOne Manager2).

Of course, some customers were against the migration, imagine how they benefitted, a \$1 today is not the same next week due to inflation. (TelOne Manager1)

Most of these respondents indicated that by the time the customers cleared off their bills, the value of money would have been affected by inflation in favour of the client but disadvantageous to the company. To this, Feizi (2019) notes that change is difficult because it creates enmity with the beneficiaries of the old system.

The respondents also indicated that before the migration process, not all customers received communiques about the change; hence opposed the idea of migration. Below are some of their views:

Not all customers were informed about the change hence we faced challenges whereby the uninformed clientele complained that they have signed a post-paid contract with TelOne and were furious how the contract could be just stopped. (TelOne Manager2)

Our customers were not happy because by introducing prepaid they felt deprived of their right to the service they had legal contracted. (TelOne Manager5)

Most queries and complaints of the prepaid service from the customers intensified during the period when telephone services stopped working without the client’s knowledge of the change. (TelOne Manager1)

The researcher subscribes Lewin’s change model that the first stage of change is for readying the environment; thus called the unfreezing stage (Hussain et al. 2018). The scholars argue that the initial stage of change should engage effective communication strategies between the change initiator and the affected stakeholders to overcome resistance to change. Likewise, having noticed the disaster emanating from poor communication, some TelOne managers indicated that they communicated with their customers on the benefits of prepaid services thus said that:

We managed to clear off misunderstanding with some customers by apologising and advising them of the benefits of the prepaid such as having control over their subscriptions without being in debt and

eliminating telephone abusers such as those who use the landline without the owner's approval (TelOne Manager4)

With the use of KYC, we managed to reach many customers and we explained to them the advantages of the prepaid service and apologies were sent to those who were negatively affected by the prepaid (TelOne Manager2).

Therefore, the findings add value to the existing change management model since this study is establishing that lack of communication about the change elicited resistance to the to change while effective communication about the change, acknowledging and rectifying misunderstandings, led to change adaptability.

4.3.3.2 Change compatibility with stakeholders

When questioned about the challenges encountered during the change implementation, most respondents said that as management they had challenges managing the initiative because initially, it was not compatible with some of the affected stakeholders at the initial stage. On this, Rizescu and Tileag (2016) argue that change initiators should be thoughtful of the values and beliefs of the affected stakeholders such as psychological or sociological factors, level of education and history of change in an organisation.

Thus, another participant said:  *Together in Excellence*

Another challenge was some senior citizens who were not happy because the old guys failed to adjust to the new technicalities of using the pre-paid service (TelOne Manager3).

Most of the respondents emphasised how senior citizens preferred the post-paid service since it never required the complicated way of topping it up. The respondents revealed that most of those senior citizens were loyal customers who have been using the service since long back when the company was called PTC. To elaborate another participant stated:

Regardless of the introduction of mobile cellular phones, some senior citizens still opted to use their landlines. Hence, they were not pleased when they were advised that the landlines are now prepaid just like mobile network" (TelOne Manager 4).

One of the respondents stated that:

Apart from the senior citizens, initially topping up was a stressful experience even for any other stakeholder (TelOne Manager3).

More so, the other respondent said:

Since the telephone numbers changed, our customers faced challenges because most of the numbers were not getting through. (TelOne Manager1)

Most of the managers experienced challenges with their clientele due to poor service delivery caused by a technical fault. Customers were not informed about their new numbers. Therefore, the respondents who were the TelOne management staff pointed out that faulty services during change resulted in a tense environment between TelOne and its stakeholders who felt denied of the service. Most of the respondents further explained that although the conflict intensified, TelOne gradually rectified the tensions. Thus, one of the respondents said:

To manage conflicts with our customers we continued to communicate via several vehicles to inform the stakeholders of the new numbers and how the new system operates (TelOne Manager3).

The other participant states that:

As for the senior citizens who could not manage to adapt, their accounts were reverted to the post-paid service (TelOne Manager2).

Furthermore, TelOne management highlighted that the migration was initiated in phases hence the most affected group were those who migrated first. Scholars such as Debrovic and Timkova (2017) also argue that the extent of the change's divisibility and reversibility impact its acceptance and management. Thus, the issue of compatibility was dealt with gradually because, after the initial incident, communication strategies improved. As data stated, different vehicles of communication were used to advise the clientele about the initiative.

While acknowledging that compatibility of the initiative affects the change management or acceptance, this study rather uniquely established that lack of pro-active communication about the change resulted in heightened effects of the change incompatibility. Yet, when the effects of incompatibility hit the stakeholders, it turns to hinder the communication conveyed to them because they would already have concluded that the change is not necessary or good for them. The respondents

further revealed it is also through effective communication strategy and the sensitivity of the change communicator to rectify the conflicts which could have emanated during the initial phase of change due to ineffective communication. The company lacked proactive communication and rather implemented the re-active communication strategy to rectify the disaster.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TELONE EMPLOYEES

This section analyses interviews with 16 TelOne employees from different departments. These employees were from the credit control, revenue department and the client services since their daily work involves engaging with customers. The technicians were also part of the sample since main duties of the TelOne technicians involve face-to-face dealings with customers daily as their work requires visiting customers' premises to fix or install telecommunications services. One-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted. The respondents will be named as *TelOne Employee1* up to *TelOne Employee16*.

4.4.1 TelOne employees' opinions on strategies used to communicate the telephone service migration

TelOne employees were asked about the communication strategies that TelOne used as a change management technique during the migration of telecommunication services from post-paid to pre-paid billing and some of their responses are as follows:

We were told through email, sometimes meetings and the customers were advised via radio advertisements and ZBC TV. (TelOne Employee6)

There is an internal email called (all@telone), that is the email that the company uses to communicate with all TelOne employees whenever there is anything urgent just like this prepaid. (TelOne Employee10)

TelOne always uses email to communicate with us hence we got to know about the prepaid via email and customers were informed using newspapers, SMS and social media. (TelOne Employee4)

I got to know about the prepaid service when most of the telephone lines stopped working and that is when I got an email about the migration. Our supervisor then instructed us to immediately start phoning those customers whose numbers was getting through so as to inform them about the prepaid. (TelOne Employee2)

As for internal staff we were told via email and I believe customers were sent notes along with their monthly telephone bills, also advised through newspapers, radio, TV and some customers we were informing them gradually as they came in our offices for payments or inquiries (TelOne Employee15)

Employees were mostly informed via emails, sometimes through meetings and the customers were sent sms, emails, adverts on TV and radio, indoor promotions and there were also brand ambassadors who were visiting the customers' premises informing them about prepaid service (TelOne Employee8).

The company used emails to communicate with us and we phoned the customers to inform them about the migration. (TelOne Employee13)

"I remember the first time I heard about prepaid was when a client asked me about it and to be frank by then I was totally clueless that telephone lines were changing". (TelOne Employee1)

Thus, the respondents highlighted various communication vehicles employed by TelOne to communicate with employees and customers. However, how the respondents (Employees) viewed the communication strategy employed by the company during the migration of telecommunication services and the challenges faced during that period are discussed below:

4.4.2 TelOne employees' views on the effectiveness of TelOne's change communication strategies

Below is data analysed from the responses given by employees on their perceptions and experiences with TelOne communication strategies during the migration process.

4.4.2.1 The impact of stakeholder recognition

Interview transcripts show that stakeholder recognition has a huge impact on the effectiveness of communication strategies used by an organisation during change management. Most of the respondents revealed that TelOne employees especially

those who work for the small branches are multi-tasked and hence suffer from work overload. Below are some of their views:

It was hard to communicate well with customers about the change because in our case one employee would work as a revenue clerk doing the teller duties whilst at the same time that individual would have to do the client relations duties attending to clienteles' inquiries and queries (TelOne Employee6).

I never attended the morning briefings about change as I was always left by the counter attend to the customers. (TelOne participant10)

I wonder how they expected us to get the information about the change since they used to prioritise meetings with other employees who are not even in front office" (TelOne Employee4)

I got to understand the prepaid better after attending to the morning briefings that we had during the sales blitz. (TelOne Employee15)

Most TelOne employees responded that some employees benefitted from the in-house meetings and briefings because they got enriched with information that could help them to understand the initiative better. However, they further explained that most employees especially those who work at the front offices could rarely attend the meetings due to the work overload. While other employees were attending morning briefings or meeting the frontline employees would be required to be attending to the clientele. This hindered the communication effectiveness because the same employees who were expected to enrich the clientele about the pre-paid service were themselves not being enriched or knowledgeable enough.

Further, some respondents were of the view that sending change communiqué via emails was an effective form of informing those who could access them on time. Thus, they said:

Although I had access to the emails, it was usually difficult for me to open the emails on time due to work pressure. (TelOne Employee12)

Sometimes due to pressure, you can't even check your mail and sometimes there would have been urgent information that could have been a requirement to attend to clientele queries. (TelOne Employee5)

In our department we got access to email so I can say communicating with an email was an easy way of informing us about the prepaid and its promotions. (TelOne Employee1)

TelOne Employees 3, 11, 7, and 15 said that TelOne conveyed most of its messages via email and mostly the company would be telling its stakeholders what to do without willing to hear out their feedback. They also noted that apart from the usage of email as a one-way form of communication, the technicians regarded it as an inefficient way of communicating with them as they said:

TelOne mostly communicates with employees via sending emails to all@telone but as a Technician I rarely have access to the email due to the requirements of my job. (TelOne Employee8)

It was really difficult to access the messages about the promotions and anything about change sent via email because we always on field. (TelOne Employee11)

Our daily job requires us to be visiting customers' premises, installing and attending to the faults during the whole day of our working hours so we can't access emails (TelOne Employee3).

TelOne employees experienced work load thus the limited ability to access emails. This hindered effective communication during their daily interactions with clientele.

Respondents said that it was a challenge to notify the walk-in clientele about the initiative initially because they also lacked the knowledge about the initiative. Nevertheless, one of the respondents said:

It was not easy to effectively communicate with the walk-in customers due to work overload, at least use of brand ambassadors made it better because they were specifically assigned to be informing customers about the prepaid service (TelOne Employee10)

Additionally, the other respondents also stated:

The use of brand ambassadors was an effective strategy since they would visit clientele premises educating them about the pre-paid services. (TelOne Employee3)

Although not every client was reached by the ambassadors at least those who were interacted with had the privilege of two-way communication with the assigned TelOne change communicators (TelOne Employee14)

When the respondents were asked about how they viewed change communication strategies at TelOne they said:

Conducted In-house promotions to promote the pre-paid service were a good strategy because those who topped up their accounts were given various gifts (TelOne Employee4).

(In-house promotions were a good strategy but it was a challenge for front office employees to balance their duties since they were also tasked to hand over the gift to the client and also take a picture of the benefitting client". (TelOne Employee10)

The TelOne employees agreed that the in-house promotions were a good promotional strategy as it encouraged the clientele to adapt to the migration although it was a challenge with frontline employees considering their work overload. They claimed it was difficult to interact with the customers about pre-paid while handing over the gift to every clientele who would have qualified to benefit. As stated,

I would be looking forward to clearing the queue of the customers who will be sometimes complaining of the long queue, the system would be sometimes very slow thus sometimes we ended up not giving some customers their gifts or just handing the gift to some without educating them about the migration". TelOne Employee11)

Prepaid promotions just meant more work to us, being overworked and with a salary that never matches the hard work (TelOne Employee2).

More so, most respondents said that the promotion somehow became a kind of exploitation to them as it added more pressure to them whilst at the same time the management would be demanding to see the promotional pictures taken per day. As a result, the use of promotions was not effective as it would have been if the issue of client recognition was not overlooked.

The employees added that using telephone bills /statements was a great strategy because all those who would have received their bills could have probably received the note about the migration. However, some employees argued that:

Some customers did not even open their bills though received. (TelOne Employee7)

Not everyone received the bills because some addresses in the system were incorrect. (TelOne Employee3)

Some note about change could have not been received because some casuals who were employed to deliver the telephone bill would sometimes

throw them away when they were tired of delivering door to door, just to meet their daily targets. (TelOne Employee 14)

However, TelOne Employees 4, 9, 12 and 1 also indicated that sending of telephone bills was ceased for every account which was migrated. Accordingly, using telephone bills was just a short-term strategy considering that most of the communication was re-actively done after the initial crisis which resulted from the migration.

Therefore, the researcher agrees with the scholarly views of Aguado and Retolaza, (2020) that organisations should offer value to their employees in the form of recognition. This is also the concept of the stakeholder theory as it argues that for an organisation to be successful it has to understand its stakeholders' needs, fulfil them and sustain the gained trust. Likewise, this study complements the existing scholarly work by revealing that those employees who felt unrecognised were also frustrated to work hard willingly towards achieving the organisational initiative. Consequently, this study establishes that overlooking some factors which make the stakeholders feel unrecognised can hinder the effectiveness of communication strategy especial when there is an initiative that requires attentiveness.

4.4.2.2 Lack of empowerment

When the respondents (TelOne employees) were asked about how they viewed the communication strategies used by TelOne to communicate change, they revealed that it was seriously affected by the lack of employee empowerment. They further argued that lack of empowerment resulted in employees usually having conflicts with the clientele even concerning matters they could have easily resolved thus they said:

Prepaid was just troublesome being insulted by customers daily. Initial when the migration took place some of the clientele had credit balances in their telephone accounts meaning they have paid in advance for the month though it was post-paid, but only HQ offices were centralised to transfer their balances to prepaid. (TelOne Employee8)

Being migrated to prepaid meant their post-paid accounts were frozen but instead of the company to simply transfer the money to the prepaid account the clientele had to struggle and follow so many complicated hierarchal approvals for the transfer (TelOne Employee2).

Harare guys are letting us down; just imagine some customers do online transaction when buying prepaid top-ups and the client will be waiting for days for our HQ to process the transaction. All the customers' complaints are being felt by us on ground. (TelOne Employee9)

We lost some customers due to this centralisation issue; some customers could not take it anymore because we were also losing business because of TelOne failures to provide service as promised. (TelOne Employee16)

Interview transcripts also revealed that since the prepaid system was new, some clientele mistakenly juiced their post-paid accounts without the knowledge that the accounts have been separated. Further, the respondents participant also observed that transferring their balances again was a hassle because approval of such was supposed to go via a lot of protocols at TelOne's headquarters (HQ) in Harare. This red tape, instead of improving the communication strategies for the success of change, further weakened the mutual relations between the organisation and its customers.

The researcher noticed that the centralisation of communication and most of the decisions being made by the TelOne HQ had led TelOne Bulawayo to be portrayed as the worst service provider by its clientele. The lack of empowerment resulted in the employees' failure to even treat urgent clientele matters accordingly. As a result, the participant stated that some of the clientele left TelOne during the initiation of the migration of post-paid to pre-paid services since they were not attended to their matters urgently whilst they also instantly needed the service. Scholars such as Phillips et al (2019) and Feizi (2019) emphasise how company transparency and stakeholder involvement affect change management. One striking finding of this study is that the lack of employee empowerment at TelOne negatively affects the interaction between employees and customers.

4.4.2.3 Two-way communication

The respondents were asked if they were informed about the change before its implementation and if there was a two-way flow of communication about the migration. The respondents said that the communication strategy did not allow them to express their views as the initiative emerged as a directive from the management and the communication was never proactive.

The respondents' words:

“TelOne communicated much about its promotional strategies which were meant to promote change success with the client service department and us the technicians were failing to assist the customers who would have been questioning the prepaid promotions as we visited their premises”. (TelOne Employee9)

Sometimes we could hear some information from the customers who would have been in Harare without us employees in Bulawayo being informed by the organisation (TelOne Employee14).

TelOne is never proactive, for instance it's like someone who tells you that right now we are going to Bulawayo pack your bags and let's go. So, we were just being told that tell customers as much as you can that they have been migrated to prepaid. (TelOne Employee3)

Consequently, the respondents' views about communication and change management at TelOne highlighted that if only the organisation was transparent enough with its stakeholders, then the factors hindering successful change management through impacting effective communication strategies would have been addressed and dealt with accordingly.



The respondents further argued:

If only we have been given the platform to say our views concerning the prepaid service, we would have debated the issue of removing the rental fee because it becomes costly to be attending the faults for free. (TelOne Employee13)

TelOne is unlike other service providers, we drive daily we need fuel to attend to faults and other resources to fix faults, why remove rental fee? (TelOne Employee9)

As discussed above, if only the employees were knowledgeable enough about the change, they would have conferred relevant information to customers. In elaboration as the participant observer, The implementation of pre-paid service was initiated in the year 2007 but up to now, some customers are unaware of the initiative. Due to lack of knowledge about the prepaid service, the respondents stated the technicians had to attend a lot of false faults. In situations where the clientele thought their

telephone service was faulty only to discover that sometimes they could have exhausted their bundles hence they just needed to top-up or they have been migrated to prepaid without being notified. Thus, two-way communication with all employees would have at least enriched the organisation of the challenges faced by the clientele through the employees even as employees would also be enriched with relevant information that could have helped the clientele whenever needed.

To this, Argandoña (2011) argues that an organisation should take note of positive and negative opinions from external stakeholders because value is most felt by others rather than those who created it. Thus, this study contributes to the existing literature by noting that the lack of two-way communication about change between the organisation and its employees does not only affect the communication process with its internal stakeholders. It also shapes the entire communication strategy with all the relevant stakeholders and mostly the change management as a whole.

4.4.3 **Employees' opinions on the challenges faced during TelOne telephone services migration**

The respondents who were TelOne Employees had diverse opinions on the challenges faced in their different departments during the migration process.

4.4.3.1 **Training and Timing**

When asked about the challenges faced during the migration of telephone services from post-paid to pre-paid, one of the respondents revealed that:

We had challenges with prepaid because we were never trained and we were told about the change when it was already in process. (TelOne Employee7)

Most of the respondents revealed that an insignificant number of employees were advised about the pre-paid service before its implementation. Hence, they indicated that they could easily follow what was needed to be done even during the disruptions which emanated from the initiative. However, the findings highlight that most of the employees were not trained about the initiative hence some respondents said:

We faced difficulties with how the pre-paid system works due to lack of training. (TelOne Employee13)

We were confused about how to create new accounts for the new clientele, how to top up the existing accounts and also the confusion about the new changed number. (TelOne Employee6)

Initially new installations of prepaid service were not easy because we were not trained (TelOne Employee10)

The transcripts revealed that during the initial migration, most of the clientele' accounts stopped working without being notified. This is because the employees were not aware of what could have gone wrong and what should they promise the disgruntled clientele. Therefore, lack of employee training made it difficult for the employees to handle the initial pressure as they could have shared and advised the clientele about the pre-paid service on time. The study adds value to the existing scholarly views of the ADKAR model in that for a successful change management, the clientele should be trained and be adequately educated so that they become knowledgeable of what is changing as well as how they will make the desired change possible (Kachian et al. 2018).

The participant observer also learnt that most of the TelOne employees became aware of the migration encounter to the havoc which happened during the initial implementation. To cover up the crisis, the researcher noted that was the period when the management intensified awareness of the initiative among its employees. Some employees also indicated that it was difficult for them to learn about the migration while concurrently advising the clientele about it and at the same time also supposed to rectify the informalities or technical challenges that emanated the crisis. This indicates the impact of directive communication from the management to its employees. Had all the TelOne employees been fully involved, the organisation might have realised the need for timely adequate training.

To this, Debrovic and Timkova (2017) consider the lack of time needed to implement the change as one of the obstacles to successful change management. Galli (2019) also argues that during the implementation of change management, organisations must consider their employee's training needs, and disposable time available to develop the needed skills and implement performance monitoring. While acknowledging that, this study reveals that lack of training and time to implement change does not basically affect the successful change management but it rather

affects the communication strategies used to enrich the accomplishment of effective change management.

4.4.3.2 Departmental conflicts and employee–cliente conflicts

Teamwork is one of TelOne’s core values as the transcripts show and its essence is encapsulated in a respondent’s statement as follows:

To complement each other’s effort in delivering superior client service. (TelOne Employee5)

This also complements the notion of the stakeholder theory that assumes that business is all about “...Shared Value Creation” among stakeholders (Freeman: 2004). This indicates the essence of recognition of all stakeholders by the organisation because being recognised would motivate them to work together as a team towards achieving organisational goals even when any relevant initiatives are introduced.

The researcher also noted that the ineffectiveness of the communication strategies used during the migration of telecommunication services from post-paid to prepaid at TelOne led to departmental conflicts. The initiative came as a directive from the organisation to its stakeholders. It was not introduced on time and lacked proactive communication and training. Thus, conflict emanated amongst departments due to a lack of knowledge about the migration and fear of being blamed for errors. Supervisors and management had feared to take urgent action regarding the initiative. More so, as the economic crisis caused hyperinflation, fears and uncertainties spread across TelOne employees and top management. The supervisors and employees in Bulawayo feared making job-threatening decisions without consultation or approval from TelOne headquarters in Harare. Moreover, due to the economic crisis, there was a high unemployment rate and employees indicated fears of losing their jobs amidst such a crisis. This affected change management as employees, mostly in Bulawayo, feared making urgent decisions about the initiative.

The respondents revealed that after the implementation of the migration, there were several instances whereby some customers applied for pre-paid service received

their accounts billing as post-paid service, in contrast to TelOne's instruction. One of the respondents said:

When applying for the prepaid service a client would have been informed that No monthly rentals and one will be required to top up the account and then use the service but due to technical fault some new accounts still came processed as post-paid. (TelOne Employee9)

Unlike the pre-paid service, the post-paid service would allow customers to use the service as much as they wanted and then pay later including the monthly rental fee. Conflicts emanated when for instance, a customer topped up \$5 into her account after the installation with the assumption that she would use it until it was finished. Unknowingly that the account was post-paid, the client kept on using the service thinking that he was still using that \$5. Unfortunately, the children would as well use the service in the absence of the account owner. Meanwhile, the owner had not put any restrictions since she thought that the service would stop working once the \$5 was depleted. Surprisingly, a few weeks after the service installation the client got a call from the credit-control department that she was in debt of \$150. She did not understand it because she was told that she was prepaid. She refused to clear off the outstanding and also abandoned the service. The conflict is said to have not been only between the employee and the clientele but also amongst departments as they blamed each other that the problem was due to a technical fault while others blame the billing department whereas some blame the client service department that they might have selected the wrong option when creating the account.

Similarly, the participant observer note that the old accounts were not fully migrated and the clientele continued to use the service since they would have been advised that they have been migrated to pre-paid. Due to a lack of effective organisational change communication, some clientele paid up the post-paid accounts and since they have already been migrated to pre-paid, there was a need for transfer of the balance to the pre-paid account. Since the process was not as easy or fast as expected, the departments also ended up having conflicts and putting the blame on each other while the clientele also conflicted with the employees.

In addition, one of the respondents said:

“The customers were advised that pre-paid meant no more rental fees but initial were not fully advised that those who were in debt would continue being charged the interest fee hence, the customers expected that there will be no more additional fees to their outstanding and the affected customers had an intense argument with the employees after noticing that their outstanding kept on increasing. (TelOne Employee6)

To this, the researcher noticed that the affected clientele developed negative insights about the pre-paid service and also lost trust and loyalty to the organisation.

Respondents indicated that fear of change as well as uncertainty, created misunderstandings between different departments at TelOne because the assumption was that the migration process would benefit to some departments more than others. As said by one of the respondents:

Most the credit-control department employees initially thought that they will be jobless once all outstanding telephone bills were cleared thus, they became enemies to other departments who supported the need for the pre-paid service and to those who were willing to partake in making the change a success” (TelOne Employee12).

Furthermore, the researcher also observed that the chaos occurred when the first batch of telephone services was migrated from the post-paid to pre-paid service. This was due to ineffective communication about change from the organisation to its stakeholders as stated by interview respondents. On the other hand, the researcher also observed that the havoc that emanated during the initial phase of the migration also instilled fear in some employees as they became scared to be held responsible for the system failure. Hence it as well heightened departmental misunderstandings as they fought on proving themselves right whenever errors or complaints occurred.

Consequently, the Lewin change model has also added value to this discussion in emphasising the essence of communication before, during and after the change implementation (Hussain et al 2018). The findings of this study complement Warnaaars’ (2021) argument that the fear to accept new developments may be caused by inadequate knowledge of new developments. More so, the stakeholder theory also emphasises the essence of SVC which is being established in this study by emphasising the essence of effective communication as a strategy to enhance togetherness in achieving successful change management. Hence, meaningful

communication about change would require organisations to re-orient (Lee & Kim 2020).

4.4.3.3 Company's negative historical practises

The respondents highlighted that the clientele's history of negative experiences with the company could badly impact the effectiveness of communication strategies towards enhancing successful change management. They argued that TelOne is well known by its customers as a poor service provider thus stated:

The customers did not trust the migration as they complained that the company's network is said to be always slow (TelOne Employee4)

The customers always complain to us whenever we visit their premises that the system is always faulty both the telephone and the ADSL. (TelOne Employee8)

As a result, they complain about paying for services that they do not enjoy using especially the ADSL as it expires after 30 days of topping up. Hence, most of the respondents highlighted that the clientele doubted that the company was fit enough to manage the prepaid service while failing to maintain the current service provided.

Furthermore, as indicated by the respondents earlier in this chapter the researcher noted that the company system was always down hence there were always long queues outside the TelOne offices. The respondents also indicated that:

What was more frustrating is that the customers could have tried to get the service online and failed, and then expected to get the better services from the TelOne Offices but also suffer from being kept for hours (TelOne Employee4)

Our network is always slow, installations also usually delayed and we suffer for that as technicians because customers would vent out their anger whenever they met up with us making it even more difficult to fruitfully discuss the migration matters (TelOne Employee2)

The respondents argued that even though the clientele reported faulty services, they were rarely attended to on time. This was caused by the shortage of company resources such as cables, poles and fuel. These shortages also slowed down the installation of new telephone lines and the ADSL. To this, the clientele developed bad relations with the employees especially the technicians as they believed it was

them who delayed attending to their faults or to do the new installations. As a result, the employees had difficulties convincing the clientele about the prepaid service.

The researcher noted that company also introduced a sales blitz as a way of promoting the initiative. As a result, this was not regarded as a good strategy considering the shortage of resources. Instead, it worsened the bad relations that the company had with its clientele due to the failure to deliver. It even became worse when the prepaid was initially installed when most lines stopped working. This means the internet service also became faulty because TelOne ADSL only functions when the telephone service is also active. Hence, while some customers were complaining that their lines and ADSL had stopped working some prospective customers were also complaining that they have been encouraged to apply for service which is taking ages to be installed. Technicians faced challenges to engage with the clientele because the clientele believed that the technicians were the ones who were failing to deliver, thus could hardly believe what they were promised about the essence of pre-paid.

Further, another employee said:



Some customers were hard to be convinced about the prepaid because they had the impressions that just like the 2009 dollarization issue; TelOne will dollarize and inflate their bills. (TelOne Employee14)

The respondents said that some employees especially, the technicians, were not very much knowledgeable about the 2009 issue because TelOne is said to be reluctant to advise the technicians about the sensitive issues that concern the clientele although they engage with them on daily basis. As a result, the technicians were not in a position to respond to the accusation and referred the complaining customers to the offices. Therefore, the study revealed that whatever the organisation could have done that affects its image also turns out to affect the current communication strategy that the organisation applies as a way to manage change. Several scholars argue that organisational change management is greatly affected by the experience that the stakeholders held concerning the preceding company's change management (Debrovic & Timkova 2017, Nyaguthi 2015 & Feizi 2019).

4.4.3.4 Change Restriction forces

The respondents highlighted that the pre-paid service gave the stakeholders some challenges because it deprived them of benefits they used to get when it was a post-paid service. Thus said:

Unlike the post-paid service, the pre-paid did not provide a toll-free facility, as technicians we used the toll-free facility to be communicating with other teammates in the office while at the clientele premises. (TelOne Employee8)

The unavailability of toll-free became a restraining factor in achieving the organisational goals which included the initiative because installation or fixing of TelOne faults requires the technician who will be out to the customers' premises to be working together communicating with other teammates in the office. (TelOne Employee5)

Some of our customers were resistant to prepaid because they complained that it deprived them the right to free calls between 10pm to 6am that they used to benefit from when it was post-paid service. (TelOne Employee2)

The finding here reiterates that communication about the change from the organisation to its stakeholders was not impressively effective. Thus, the stakeholders faced challenges on how to implement or use the prepaid service. To this, some employees noted:

... most customers had challenges with how to top up the prepaid vouchers. (TelOne Employee13)

Despite the challenges faced because of lack of knowledge about the change, many difficulties in how to use the new system emanated due to the company's technical faults during the migration (TelOne Employee11)

Sometimes even we the employees we also failed to assist the customers to top-up because the 216-top-up platform was often faulty (TelOne Employee16)

One of the respondents highlighted that in some cases the client would try to top up the ADSL voucher but due to the faulty system, the voucher would go to the voice balance as said:

For instance, a client would have intended to put \$5 towards voice airtime and \$15 towards the ADSL bundles. But due to the technical fault, the \$20 would be all credited to the voice balance. Then it would happen that the client would use the voice airtime of \$6 since it was even difficult to monitor the usage of the airtime. However, the client would seek help from the TelOne employees after noticing that the ADSL would not be working. Unfortunately, the client would be advised that she has to add another \$1 voice airtime to make it \$15 and thus make it possible to convert the balance into ADSL bundles (TelOne Employee7)

The respondents revealed that this caused a lot of confusion and misunderstanding between customers and employees as customers were failing to understand how it was possible that they had already consumed part of their ADSL bundles as voice airtime. Due to the desperation and need for internet services, the client would add \$1 airtime and be expected to wait for the TelOne hierarchical formalities to approve the transfer of that \$15 balance from voice bundles to ADSL bundles. Consequently, this worsened the relations between employees and the customers while enhancing pessimistic opinions about prepaid services. This finding reveals the significance of this study as it adds value to Lewin's change model on the premise that it is difficult for an organisation to productively attain its desired change if the forces advocating for change are overcome by forces resisting change (Husain et al 2018).

4.5 ANALYSIS OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH TELONE CUSTOMERS

A total of 79 TelOne customers were interviewed via telephonic semi-structured. In this study these respondents are tagged from *Customer 1* up to participant *Customer 79*.

4.5.1 TelOne customers' opinions on strategies used to communicate the telephone service migration

Customers were asked about the communication strategies that TelOne used as a change management technique during the migration of telecommunication services from post-paid to pre-paid billing. Below are some of their responses:

TelOne used radio to communicate about the migration and they also phoned because I remember that I once got a call from TelOne informing me that my number was on prepaid and has changed. (Participant 6)

"I think they used the TV because my grandfather likes watching news on ZBC and he was the first one in my family to know that landlines were on prepaid". (participant34)

"I got a note which was sent with the telephone bill stating that our numbers have change and our landline is now supposed to be topped up for us to be able to phone out. (participant61)

... they advertised on newspapers". (Participant 23)

TelOne used Emails and I also received SMS about the migration (Participant9)

Nowadays even if you are not being advised, social media does. (Participant45)

TelOne employees visited our area on a door-to-door exercise telling us that we have been migrated (Participant18)

I was one of the lucky customers because one day as I walked into TelOne shop to report a fault I was advised that my phone was on prepaid, I was encouraged to top-up my account and I got a prize for that (Participant59)



Most of the respondents highlighted that TelOne phoned to inform them about the migration while some indicated that they learnt about the prepaid when they visited the office to report their faulty lines, which were temporarily not working during the implementation phase of the initiative. The respondents' perspectives of TelOne's communication strategy on the migration is analysed as follows:

4.5.2 Customers' views on the effectiveness of TelOne's change communication strategies

This section discusses TelOne customers' opinions about the communication strategies used by the company to inform them about the change during the migration process.

Respondents were asked if they were aware of the migration and some said:

Yes, I know about the prepaid and my first time to hear about the pre-paid service was on Tv and the radio. (Participant 50)

I heard about the migration when I visited TelOne to report a faulty line but I don't know much about it because I have never topped up my landline. Why did they just change our lines without telling us? (Participant 76)

I am aware and I was very surprised when I saw it on Tv that our telephone numbers have been changed and that we were then supposed to top up the landline for us to dial out. For real, I tried to use my landline it was no longer working. Participant33)

I came to know about it after I have been struggling to use my landline when I tried to dial out it was telling me that I had no balance. Then later on I just heard on the radio that landlines have been migrated to prepaid. (Participant 1)

The clientele felt that the information sent via the radio and the television was inadequate as it did not give satisfactory details on how to use the new system. Instead, they were simply advised that they have been migrated. Thus, they considered the telecommunication strategy used as inhuman since the strategy used was inconsiderate of them as the customers. In another respondent's words:

... It is the same like we were never being told, TelOne advertisements on Tv and the radio never stated clearly how to top-up and where to buy the top-up vouchers. (participant22)

Some respondents who got to know about the prepaid through the notes sent with the telephone bills argued that:

I received the note but it was not so helpful because I did not manage to understand what it said about how the new service works. (participant17)

I heard from my neighbour that TelOne sent letters that they are now like the cellular phones; we have to juice the airtime first. I had received that note too but by then I was not aware because I no longer wanted to hear anything about TelOne. They converted the Zimbabwean Dollar (ZWD) accounts to USD accounts without using the proper cross rate according to market value, and up to now I am still failing to clear off the outstanding. (Participant 19)

I know longer trust TelOne, the way it just changed our telephones I won't be surprised if they also send us huge bills we don't know. (Participant25)

Some respondents highlighted that they heard about the initiative before its implementation through the brand ambassadors, also through employees as

they walked into the TelOne offices and via the conducted promotions. One of the respondents stated:

I got to know about the prepaid before the numbers changed because TelOne staff visited my home and advised me that landlines will start to be juiced like cellular phone (Participant27)

The researcher noted that proactive communication about the migration process was acknowledged by customers, even though they were not considered in the decision making on whether they support the decision to migrate. Therefore, being advised was appreciated as an element of humanity. Consequently, those who were advised in advance were tolerant of the chaos that occurred at the initial phase of implementation, thus were more understanding and reasoned with the imperfect process. More so, the participant stated:

I was already informed that the telephone lines will migrate and I was not surprised when initially our telephone lines stopped working during implementation because I believe change is not always a smooth process. (Participant 42)

Respondents revealed that they were informed about the migration process way after the implementation had started, thus, had conflicts with the organisation. They considered the organisation untrustworthy for abridging the post-paid contract which they had signed for. They felt unrecognised that their concerns were not being considered hence viewed the organisational culture as very directive with minimal pro-active or two-ways communication concerning urgent matters impacting the organisation as well as themselves the stakeholders. To this, the findings strongly revealed the TelOne communication strategy about the change and the organisation as a whole as unethical and inconsiderate.

The following excerpts are proof of unethical communication according to the customers:

TelOne made us sign for a post-paid service and when the company feels like changing, we are no longer engaged and they call themselves a telecommunications company. (Participant 8)

As their customers, TelOne should have at least advised us on time about the migration rather than to surprise us with faulty lines and ADSL then only to be told numbers have changed. (Participant 23)

The change was not only imposed to us, but also no training on how to top-up the prepaid service and worse the later given top-up platform was always not working. (Participant 70)

... communication about the migration was extremely poor. I struggled the whole day trying to phone out assuming maybe it was the network issue, only to find out that besides migration the numbers have also changed. Imagine I had also initially struggled to top-up the prepaid voucher. (Participant 58)

During the migration process, TelOne ambassadors encouraged me to apply for the service and I was also given a free cordless handset but my joy never lasted because it took more than a year for the service to be installed. I was even tired of making follow ups being given unjustifiable excuses. (Participant 77)

The researcher as a participant observer, also established that TelOne strives to be a client-centric organisation hence it gives much emphasis on the clientele being treated like kings. However, the mission became not so possible because to satisfy the customers, it is also paramount to fully recognise the employees. TelOne overemphasised its notion of the Customer is King' to an extent that some clientele would mistreat and insult the employees while deceptively holding on to this cliché and the other one The Customer is Always Right'. This impacted the effectiveness of the communications strategies used during the payment migration.

This deception elicited behaviour differential, negatively to TelOne but positively to other organisations, with proof to show. A TelOne client once complained that he had stayed too long on the queue. He insulted the employee who was serving him and even threatened the same employee with dismissal through a petition to the managing director. Surprisingly, the same customer was later seen standing at the back of a long queue. He did not exhibit frustration or disappointment because the bank behaved responsibly by profusely apologising to all customers earlier over a system glitch. Therefore, the overemphasis on the 'Client is King' approach has somehow impacted TelOne's communications about the change negatively because it created tensions between the employees and the clientele. It could be beneficiary if TelOne continued striving for being a client-centric organisation whilst at the same time acknowledging the essence of its employees, making it known that they should be trusted that they give the best service and must also be respected. Even the

stakeholder theory emphasises much on being ethical whereby the organisation fully recognises all its stakeholders (Phillips et al 2019).

4.5.3 TelOne Customers' opinions on the challenges faced during TelOne's telephone service migration

The analysis below reveals customers' perceptions of challenges faced during telephone service migration at TelOne.

4.5.3.1 Service quality

Most of the respondents faced some challenges during the implementation of the prepaid service, including poor service quality. However, the researcher acknowledged that facing and addressing the challenges could have been better done if the communication strategy about change had been proactive and effective.

Some of the respondents said:

I had challenges with the adaptation of the pre-paid service because I did not have an idea how it should work. (Participant 33)

I had to suffer after buying the prepaid voucher as it was failing to top up (Participant5)

I had confusion because initially I was advised that I had two different telephone numbers whereby when topping up the voice airtime I was supposed to prefix the old number with (0292) whilst when topping up the ADSL I was supposed to prefix the number with (09). However, later on, the ADSL stopped working when I tried topping it up with prefix (9). When I queried the TelOne officials informed me about the subsequent changes and were supposed to also prefix the number with (0292) even when doing ADSL top-up (Participant 37)

... even though it was TelOne's fault not to advise me of prompt prefix changes, transferring the data to the correct account would as well take ages. (Participant66).

Hence, the researcher asserts that ineffective communication about change strongly affected service quality management at TelOne. Further, some respondents said that the system was always slow or down, leading to the following statements:

We were informed that change was for upgrading the system but TelOne downgraded the system. Post-paid was far much better than this pre-paid.
(Participant25)

I missed so many presentations because after prepaid implementation my ADSL was always down. I ended up failing my other module at school because I missed the due date of the submission of my assignments”.
(Participant18)

... initially with the prepaid service, I could hardly attend an online church service (Participant 10)

Thus, most respondents indicated that they were no longer topping up the voice and were only using the TelOne service for the internet. Even the ADSL subscribers complained that their ADSL bundles usually expired before they could exhaust them because the system was always faulty. One argued that:

...the only reason I'm using TelOne is that it is cheaper compared to other service providers and if it wasn't for our economic crisis, I would have abandoned this TelOne (Participant13)

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This client was frustrated about poor communication and poor service quality.

The respondents claimed that poor service had been TelOne's culture even before the initiative but it worsened during the change implementation. The study further acknowledged that if only the company could motivate a culture that recognises its stakeholders, then it would be easier to understand how the stakeholders view the services provided by the company, leading to service improvement.

This finding corroborates the theories used in this study. Lewin's change model also requires the organisation to effectively communicate about the change with its stakeholders before, during and after change implementation while the stakeholder theory emphasises stakeholder recognition, valuing them and hearing them out in every organisational matter that also affects them. Despite poor services from

TelOne, some respondents indicated that with time they have understood how the pre-paid service operates, thus they said:

“I appreciate the removal of the rental fee which makes the service more affordable and also the elimination of the possibility of outstanding bills by paying in advance” (Participant20)

“Besides the slow network, I prefer the prepaid because there are no more rentals and I will no longer owe TelOne anymore”. (Participant58)

Most of the respondents also acknowledged the promotional offer since the commencement of the pre-paid service, whereby one could buy a voucher for ZWL261Bonds (i.e., valued at less than \$1USD) and then enjoy the service of unlimited calls from TelOne landline to any TelOne number anywhere within Zimbabwe for a month. Thus, one of the respondents said:

“With prepaid I can phone all my relatives and friends who also have got landlines within the country absolutely for free”. (Participant 11)

Consequently, several respondents viewed the company and its communications strategy for the migration as unethical. This is because the initiative was a directive from the management, neither pro-actively communicated nor using a two-way flow. Further, the customers felt neglected since they were not trained about the migration, and also experiencing terrible slow network and confusion on new numbers and the new topping up system. However, this study is important as it revealed that communication helped the clientele to understand the essence of change and as a result became tolerant of inaccuracies that would have occurred during the change implementation process.

4.6 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Data relevant to the study was sourced from TelOne’s documents, emails, social media commentary, as well as advertisements and promotions. Document analysis and findings are presented below:

4.6.1 Timing and complexity of the change

Macheke	0379	065	2080	(065) 2080xxx (Existing Number)
Marondera	0279		23	(065) 23xxxx (Existing Number)
Wedza	0222		208	(065) 208xxx (Existing Number)
Murewa	0278		21	(065) 21xxxx (Existing Number)
Mutoko	0272		213	(065) 213xxx (Existing Number)
Masvingo	039	039	2	(039) 2xxxxx (Existing Number)
Jerera	034		234	(039) 234xxx (Existing Number)
Nyaningwe	0337		2380	(039) 2380xxx (Existing Number)
Mataga	0517		2366	(039) 2366xxx (Existing Number)
Mberengwa	0518		2360	(039) 2360xxx (Existing Number)
Gutu	030		230	(039) 230xxx (Existing Number)
Mashava	035		245	(039) 245xxx (Existing Number)
Nyika	0338		2323	(039) 2323xxx (Existing Number)
Zvishavane	051		235	(039) 235xxx (Existing Number)
Chatsworth	0308		2308	(039) 2308xxx (Existing Number)
Chiredzi	031	031	-	(031) 231xxx (Existing Number)
Triangle	033		233	(031) 233xxx (Existing Number)
Rutenga	014		2337	(031) 2337xxx (Existing Number)
Ngundu	036		2370	(031) 2370xxx (Existing Number)
Bulawayo	09	029	2	(029) 2xxxxx (Existing Number)
Tsholotsho	0287		2861	(029) 2861xxx (Existing Number)
Nyamandlovu	0387		2821	(029) 2821xxx (Existing Number)
Turkmine	0285		2803	(029) 2803xxx (Existing Number)
Shangani	050		2802	(029) 2802xxx (Existing Number)
Esigodini	0288		2800	(029) 2800xxx (Existing Number)
Figtree	0283		2804	(089) 2804xxx (Existing Number)
Kezi	0282		2807	(089) 2807xxx (Existing Number)
Matopos	0383		2809	(089) 2809xxx (Existing Number)
Baobab	0281	081	28	(081) 28xxxxx (Existing Number)
Binga	015		2847	(081) 2847xxx (Existing Number)
Dete	018		2835	(081) 2835xxx (Existing Number)
Hwange	0281		28	(081) 28xxxxx (Existing Number)
Jotsholo	0289		2875	(081) 2875xxx (Existing Number)
Lupane	0398		2856	(081) 2856xxx (Existing Number)
Victoria Falls	013	083	28	(083) 28xxxxx (Existing Number)
BeitBridge	0286	085	23	(085) 23xxxxx (Existing Number)
Plumtree	0219	089	280	(089) 280xxx (Existing Number)
Filabusi	017	084	2801	(084) 2801xxx (Existing Number)
Collen Bawn	-		2835	(084) 2835xxx (Existing Number)
Gwanda	0284		28	(084) 28xxxxx (Existing Number)
West Nicholson	016		2808	(084) 2808xxx (Existing Number)
Gweru	054	054	2	(054) 2xxxxx (Existing Number)
Shurugwi	052		252	(054) 252xxx (Existing Number)
Mvuma	032		2532	(054) 2532xxx (Existing Number)
Lalapanzi	05483		2548	(054) 2548xxx (Existing Number)
Chivhu	056	055	212	(054) 212xxx (Existing Number)
Kwekwe	055		25	(055) 25xxxxx (Existing Number)
Redcliff	055		25	(055) 25xxxxx (Existing Number)
Battle Fields	055		25	(055) 25xxxxx (Existing Number)
Gokwe	059		259	(055) 259xxx (Existing Number)
Nkayi	0558		2558	(055) 2558xxx (Existing Number)
Munyati	0557		2557	(055) 2557xxx (Existing Number)

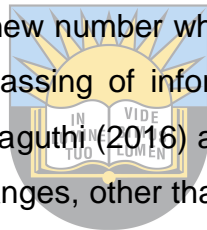
Figure 0.1: TelOne New Area Codes

Source: (TelOne internal email 2019)

The above document indicating the new area codes was retrieved from the TelOne internal email which was sent by the organisation to all employees of TelOne. This was also posted on the clientele notice boards in TelOne offices. This communique

was sent to the employees after the change implementation, thus justifying the previous discussion of the findings in this study from the interviews, on how employees had suffered concerning understanding the sequence of the new telephone numbers and the difficulties they experienced on conveying the appropriate message with clientele. To elaborate, Debrovic and Timkova (2017) say that an initiative must be appropriately and timely communicated to the relevant stakeholders to enhance the success of change management.

Customers had challenges understanding the complex changes in telephone numbers. In addition, the study argues that the customers were not only required to know their personal new area codes but also those of others in case they needed to make outgoing calls. For the differing prefix number according to different areas, made it harder for customers to comprehend. Considering the complexity of the new TelOne telephone numbers, the researcher noticed that even the employees would have to first check and verify the new number when assisting customers. Therefore, change complexity affected the passing of information about the initiative and its management as a whole. Even Nyaguthi (2016) acknowledged that the stakeholders prefer user-friendly systems to changes, other than those that are difficult to use and understand.



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In addition to the complexity of the new TelOne telephone area codes, the researcher noted that the document about the new numbers lacked clarity. Concerning the change in numbers for Bulawayo, for instance, it stated that the area code was prefixed with (2) as well as the existing number. For instance, the old area code was (09) and the new one changed to (029) while if the number was (216878) it then changed to (2216878). However, there are other Bulawayo telephone numbers with 5 digits and, the researcher learnt that the new numbers for these were prefixed with (22). For example, if the old number was (65025), the new area code would be (029) while the new number would be (2265025). On the other hand, the above communiqué only highlighted the prefixes for telephone numbers with six digits meaning the clientele with 5 digits telephone numbers still failed to enjoy the service even after receiving the communiqué. The preliminary research of this study also revealed that initially most of the migrated telephone numbers were no longer working. Hence among other reasons, ineffective communication could have been

the cause since clientele with 5digits numbers could have been prefixing the new numbers incorrectly due to the incomplete provided communiqué.

4.6.2 Need for clientele training and reinforcement



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Your best call to win a cordless handset

Over 2 000 cordless handsets to be won!

GIVE YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS WIRELESS ADVANTAGE!

Prepay your landline and stand a chance to win one of these cordless handsets every month. Simply recharge your landline with \$20 every month from 23 July to 24 September 2018 to stand a chance to win.

Why wait? Pre-pay now to win!

• New sign ups during the promotion also stand a chance to qualify and enter the promotion.
• Promotion runs from 23 July 2018 - 24 September 2018.
• TelOne recharge vouchers are available from TelOne Client Service Centres, TM/PA/AN/RY, OK/Bon Marche, Spar, Choppies, online including TelPay (www.telpay.co.zw), www.teloneselfservice.co.zw, PayNow Too Us, Getcash and Nkomo's.

Voice | Broadband | Satellite
Runhare House, 107 Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
Harare: (024) 783 565/6, Bulawayo: (029) 717 760 or 886 688
Gweru: (054) 221 794 or 230 617, Mutare: (020) 63395 or 67666
Masvingo: (099) 263 284 or 263 384
Call Centre: (024) 700 950

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Figure 0.2: Prepay and win Promotion (Ad1)

Source: (TelOne internal email 2018)

The above document was extracted from an email sent by the organisation to its employees as a directive on how to conduct the promotion. The promotion was meant to educate the clientele about the new system and to also reinforce acceptance of the service by giving away prizes to those who used the service more often.

Prepay & Win Promotion 2018

Great News!

TelOne is launching a new and exciting voice promotion where TelOne is giving away cordless handsets to 2 000 lucky winners.

The Prepay and Win Promotion aims to reward customers for consistent and high usage of the prepaid voice service.

How do clients qualify?

Clients simply need to recharge their prepaid landline with \$20 and above within one calendar month to stand a chance to win a prize. The more the client tops the more they stand a chance to win a prize

Where can clients access TelOne prepaid voice recharge vouchers?

Prepaid voice recharge vouchers are available in TelOne Client Service Centres, nationwide, online including TelPay (www.telpay.co.zw), TelOne Self Service Portal, Ndasenda, GetCash and PayNow Top Up as well as Retail Outlets TM/PickNpay, OK/Bon Marche, Spar and Choppies.

New sign ups during the promotion will also qualify to enter the promotion. For every \$20 paid towards new installation, the new client stands more chances to qualify for promotion.

PROMOTION MECHANICS

The promotion mechanics will be as follows:

- Clients will be required to buy a recharge card from \$20 denominations upwards. The more they buy the more they stand a chance to win a prize.
- A random draw to select the winners for each Region will be held every month end.
- The Prepay and Win Promotion is for residential clients and SMEs only.
- An SMS will be sent to all winners to collect their prize (cordless handset) at their respective client service centres with a copy of their ID.
- TelOne staff are not eligible to enter the competition

Who are we targeting?

The promotion is targeting residential clients that have been moved to prepaid voice as follows:

- Existing TelOne Subscriber
- Potential clients
- Subscribers on competitor networks

Monthly Draws

A total of 2 000 cordless handsets will be given away monthly.

Promotion Dates

Monday 23 July 2018—24 September 2018



Figure 0.3: Prepay and win Promotion (Ad2)

(Source: TelOne internal email 2018)

The findings from the analysis of the interviews with the employees revealed that front-line employees were the main communicators about the promotion although they faced predicaments to run it smoothly due to work overload. However, considering the content of this flyer, the employees indeed required appropriate time to explain to the clientele how do they qualify to be part of the promotion, where else could they buy the prepaid vouchers and to also explain how would the draw be conducted while also advising the draw date.

Furthermore, the above message indicated that it was also meant for persuading prospective customers to join the company and be part of the promotion. As the Figure 4.3 states:

“Who are we targeting?”

“The promotion is targeting residential customers that have been moved to prepaid

Voice:

- *existing customers*
- *Potential customers*
- *Subscribers on competitor networks”*

On the other hand, the findings from the interviews with employees revealed that the company lacked the resources required to provide the service such as cables, poles and fuel. Thus, this document supports the findings from the interviews that advertisement to prospective customers as indicated above were done regardless of lack of resources and this enhanced the lack of trust and acceptance of the initiative due to the failure of delivering the promised prepaid service. However, the researcher as the participant observer also acknowledged that those who benefited from the promotion accepted the initiative better than those who never got what they have been promised. Hence, this study uniquely revealed that the way promotions are run affects the communication process about the change either positively or negatively. To this, Beshtawi and Jaaron (2014) argue the importance of reinforcing the behaviour of early adopters of change through extrinsic and intrinsic values.

4.6.1 Lack of knowledge, poor services and clientele frustrations

This section discusses the views of customers on TelOne services as posted on TelOne Facebook page and the TechZim platform. TechZim is a blog that reviews and gives news about the services or products provided by the information technology companies in Zimbabwe as well as in Africa as a whole.



Figure 0.4: *216# mobile top-up platform

Source: (m.facebook.com/TelOneZW)

The above communiqué was posted by TelOne on its Facebook page on the 29th of May 2018. It stated various denominations of TelOne voice recharge cards which gave the clientele an option of spending according to their affordability and willingness. However, the findings from the interviews with employees and customers also revealed that it was at all times a challenge to use this platform as it was always faulty. Besides being faulty, the researcher noticed that this post could have not been clearly understood by some clientele. This is because it just stated that an individual should dial 216 and follow the instructions. Thus, the communiqué did not indicate that one would have to dial using a TelOne landline. Some could have thought that you should dial the 216 with a mobile network since the introduction of pre-paid services resulted in some clientele likening it to the mobile network services. Moreover, the communiqué did not clarify where exactly the stakeholders were supposed to get those voice recharge cards. Unlike the post-paid service which allowed clientele to use the service first and then pay later, TelOne should have provided convenient platforms where one could have purchased the recharge cards besides going to queue at TelOne offices.

The documents used by TelOne to communicate issues about migration lacked sufficient knowledge about the change, leaving customers confused about the process. This also resulted in disastrous change management as revealed by the previously discussed findings from the interviews with managers, employees and the customers.

4.6.1.1 Customers' social media commentary on TelOne services

This section of the document analysis discusses some commentaries that were posted by the clientele on the social media commenting on TelOne services. The commentary below was posted on the TelOne Facebook page during the year 2019. This was two years after the initial implementation of the prepaid service.

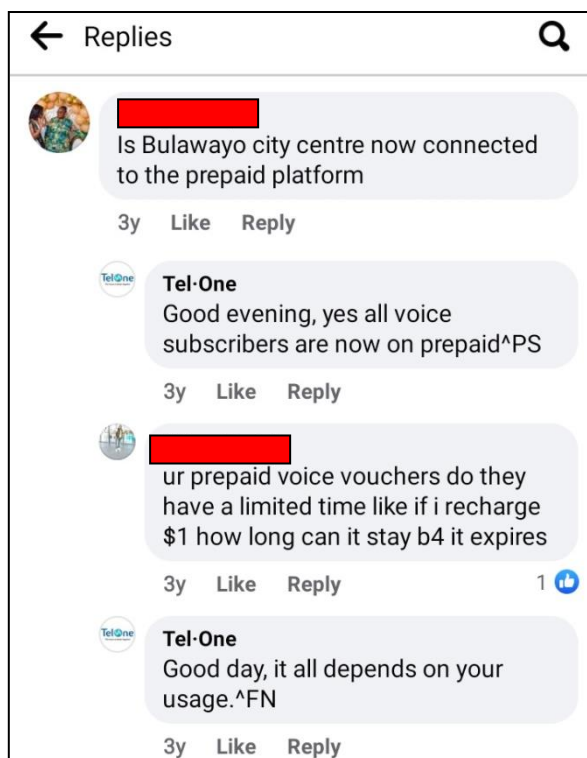


Figure 0.5: Customers' social media commentary on TelOne services 1

Source: (m.facebook.com/TelOneZW 2019)

However, the customer seemed to be aware of the pre-paid billing yet did not know that it was also applicable in Bulawayo as she asked:

"Is Bulawayo city centre now connected to the prepaid platform?"

The researcher is of the view that since the study revealed centralisation as one of the core challenges towards successful change, the customers assumed that the service was not yet implemented in Bulawayo because of being used to the TelOne culture of centralising most of its new services and products in Harare (HQ).

Over two years later, the customers' comments show that she lacked knowledge about the pre-paid services and was willing to be advised more. Hence, evidence of ineffective organisational communication during the change process

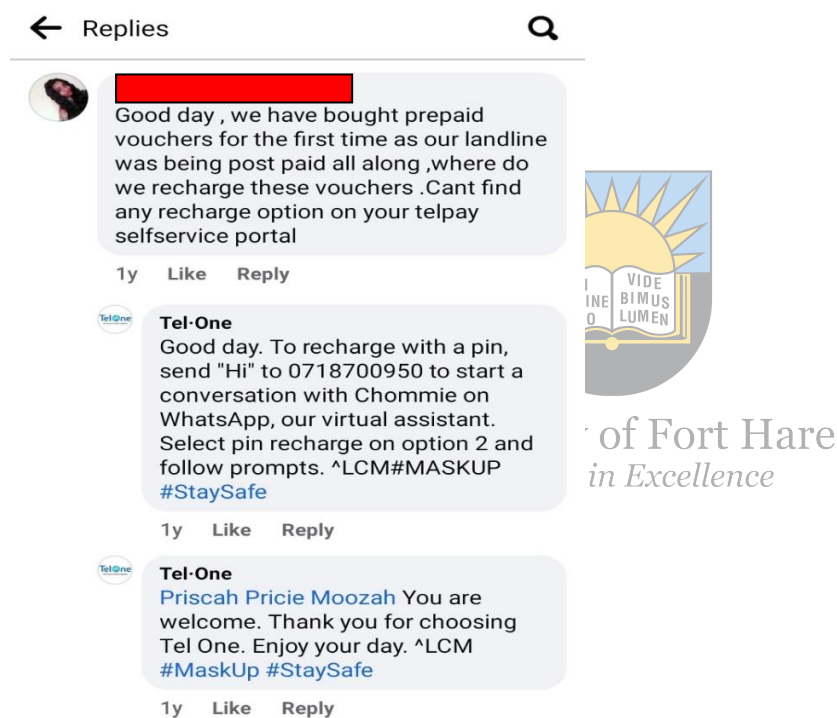


Figure 0.6: Customers' social media commentary on TelOne services 2

Source: (m.facebook.com/TelOneZW)

Furthermore, in 2021 some customers still had challenges with how to effectively use the prepaid service. This is substantiated by Figure 4.6 above commentary on Facebook as she questioned:

...we have bought prepaid vouchers for the first time as our landline was being on post-paid all along, where do we recharge these vouchers? Can't find any recharge option on your TelPay self-service portal.

This also indicate ineffective communication towards successful change management, considering that it was four years later after the initial implementation. On a good note, TelOne advised the client on how to top up and mostly appreciated the client for being part of TelOne. Consequently, this study acknowledges the notion of Lewin's change model that posits the significance of effectively communicating about the change before and throughout the implementation process to equip the affected stakeholders to become fully knowledgeable about the initiative which enhances the change's success (Raymond 2021).

Earlier in this chapter, the findings revealed that poor services provided by TelOne led to clientele frustrations and lack of trust thus mostly limited their acceptance of the company's initiative. Customers' commentaries below corroborate the intensity of the service failure and their frustration.

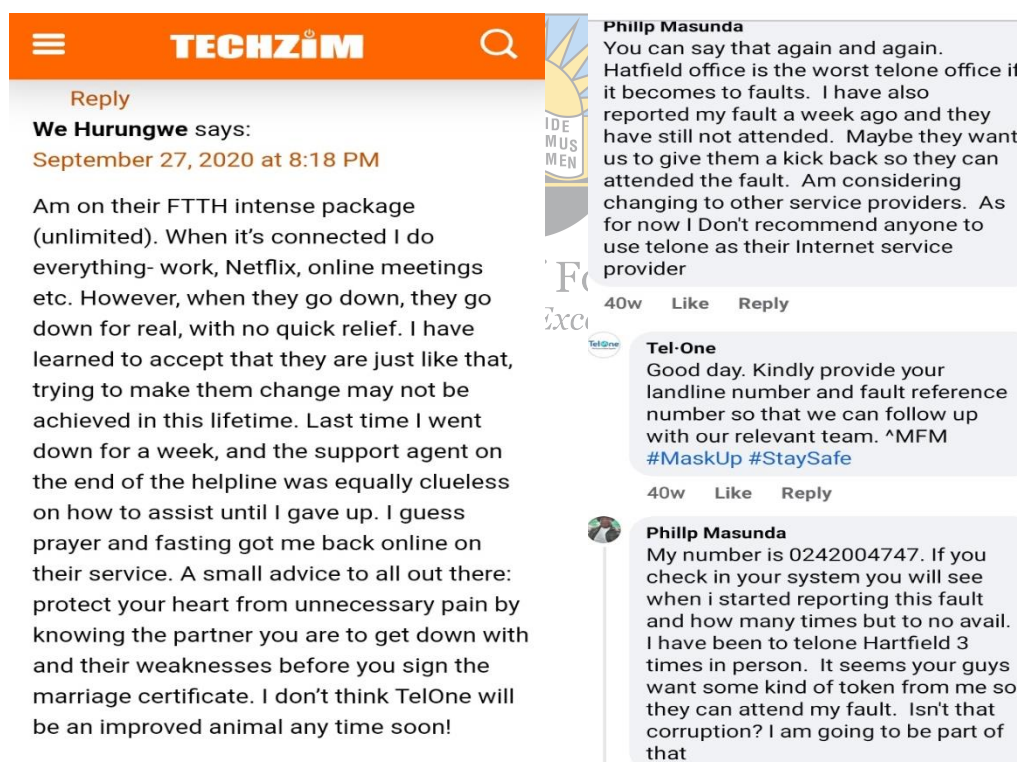


Figure 0.7: Customers' social media commentary on TelOne services 3

Source: Techzim.co.zw; m.facebook.com/TelOneZW

The foregoing commentaries on social media about the quality of TelOne services, show the company usually delays attending to the faults reported by the clientele. As

a result, the customers have lost trust and interest in the organisation to an extent that one of them commented that he is even thinking of changing the service provider and adding that he would not even advise anyone to consider TelOne as their service provider. The intensity of the lack of trust was also indicated when the client said he assumed maybe TelOne employees wanted an illegal token from him for them to attend to his fault. Another disgruntled client also revealed that she was using an unlimited fibre TelOne internet service but due to the poor connectivity she ended up substituting again with another service provider since they urgently needed the service for online lessons. She considered such an experience unacceptable and worse off after paying for an unlimited bundle.

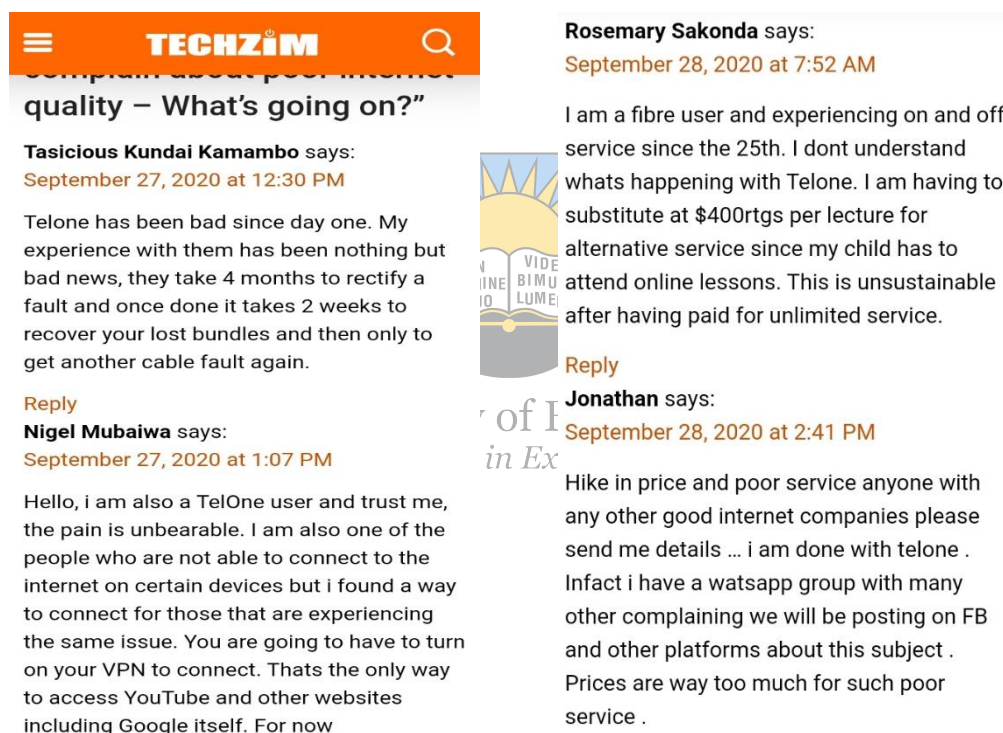


Figure 0.8: Customers' social media commentary on TelOne services 4

Source: (Techzim.co.zw; Techzim.co.zw)

As shown in Figure 4.8, another client complained about frequent price hikes and poor services, while requesting referrals to better service providers. He also threatened that he and other disgruntled customers would publicise the matter on social media. In addition, another client revealed that he has learnt that poor services

are part of TelOne culture and has lost the hope for any improvement. He warned other prospective clientele about how bad TelOne is:

“... protect your heart from unnecessary pain by knowing the partner you are to get down with and their weaknesses before you sign the marriage certificate”.

One of the customers commented that he has never enjoyed the service ever since it was installed and TelOne always took long to reimburse lost bundles which would have expired during unattended faults. This justifies the importance of the revealed findings from the interviews with employees and customers that communication about the initiative with the clientele was distracted due to the poor service experience they had with TelOne. Debrovic and Timkova (2017) also signify that successful change management also relies on factors such as customer satisfaction and good organisation–stakeholder relations.

4.7 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data analysed from the TelOne managers, employees and customers revealed the various communication vehicles that the organisation used as a strategy to convey the message about the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing. According to the respondents, meetings served the organisation to communicate the migration with the managers; email messages to employees and telephone calls to customers. However, Burnes (2020) argues that although written communication has been proved to be effective during organisational change, face-to face communication is crucial during the initial phase of the change. Thus, the respondents differed on the way they viewed the effectiveness of the communication change strategy employed by TelOne although they mentioned use of similar communication vehicles.

Most respondents across the three categories indicated that the communication about the migration was a directive from the company and mostly it was neither proactive nor interactive irrespective of the use of communiqué such as meetings or emails that could allow two-way flow of communication. Even though the change was a directive, the findings revealed that the managers could not resist the initiative as they understood its essence towards achieving organisational goals. This supports the notion of Feizi (2019) that understanding the organisation and its

stakeholders impact change management. The managers' understanding of the directive notwithstanding, this study has established that the employees and the customers needed not only to be informed but to be much more knowledgeable about the initiative since the employees were part of the implementers of the migration while the customers were the most affected by the change. The Lewin's change model also emphasises the need for effective communication strategy throughout the change process (Hussain et al 2018). Consequently, this study found that those who were actively involved or directly affected by the change implementation really needed to be fully involved and be effectively communicated with so as to enhance their understanding and active participation.

Further, the findings, according to the managers, indicated that the communication effectiveness of the strategy used to convey the initiative was influenced by the general understanding that the management had about the organisation and its stakeholders as well as understanding of the essence of change. Rizescu and Tileaga (2016) also noted that understanding the need for change in line with organisational goals could impact change management. However, the employees acknowledged the above factors but emphasised that the communication effectiveness during change was strongly influenced by the intrinsic and extrinsic values offered by the organisation to its stakeholders. Hence, the study established that the employees viewed the effectiveness of change communication as being strongly influenced by the level of stakeholder recognition in an organisation, stakeholder involvement and empowerment as well as the two-way flow of communication about the change. The findings revealed that most customers considered the communication strategy used as ineffective since they viewed it as unethical. The finding supports the scholarly notion of the stakeholder theory that the organisation must create value to its stakeholders in an ethical way so as to create trust to all stakeholders as well as sustain a convenient context even in condition of change (Phillips et al. 2019).

The study also found that the managers faced challenges during the migration because the change was not compatible with all the stakeholders and also due to some employees' resistance to change emanating from the fear of the unknown. This has also been argued by other preceding scholarship like Raymond (2021) and

Rizescu and Tileaga (2016). However, in this study the employees also acknowledged the aforementioned factors but indicated that the major challenges that influenced the effectiveness of communication and success of change were the company negative history of change as well as lack of training and inappropriate timing of change, which led to departmental and employee-clientele conflicts due to lack of knowledge about the initiative. In addition, the customers also revealed that lack of training and provisions of poor service were the major challenges encountered during the migration at TelOne. Consequently, the findings revealed that communication is a never-ending process thus it is necessary for organisation to effectively communicate with its stakeholders before, during implementation and after the change. This enables the continuous understanding of factors that may hinder the effectiveness of organisational communication change strategy henceforth address them accordingly.

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter examined the communications strategy used by TelOne to communicate about the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing. The strategy included the use of various communications vehicles comprising of the radio, telephone bills, emails, meetings, brand ambassadors and etcetera. These were used by the company to give a directive about the initiative to its management, employees and clientele. Hence, the researcher established that the communications strategy was neither satisfactory pro-active nor interactive. The study further established that the communications strategy hence got affected by amongst others, stakeholder empowerment, stakeholder recognition, change timing, training, understanding of the essence of change and the company's negative historical practices. As a result, the researcher established that ineffective communication led to challenges such as stakeholder resistance to change, departmental conflicts, failure to understand the change and poor services. Given that, the findings established that communication effectiveness affects the success of change management hence factors affecting the effectiveness of communications about change should be dealt with accordingly especially through the involvement of all relevant stakeholders through-out the change implementation process.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the study were to find out the communication strategies used by TelOne to communicate change from post-paid to prepaid billing, the effectiveness of these strategies as well as the challenges faced by TelOne and its stakeholders during the migration. This chapter summarises the entire research project by presenting the main findings and recommendations on how communication strategies can be used to enhance effective organisational change. The thesis explored various factors that impact the effectiveness of the communication that was seemingly overlooked by TelOne during their initiation of telephone billing changes. Most relevantly, the aforesaid factors could be considered by organisations that seek to implement change.

5.2 PROBLEM RE-STATED

TelOne is the sole operator which provides a fixed telephone facility in Zimbabwe and is a key player in the information communication technology (ICT) industry. The company's network has the widest coverage in the country with a massive commercial and individual customer base. The company initiated migration of its telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing in 2017. In the telecommunications industry, post-paid billing is when customers have free access to making telephone calls at a fixed charge with a bill that accumulates according to the calls that are made. This bill is due for payment at the end of every month. Alternatively, prepaid billing is when the client cannot make a call until they buy airtime, upon which deductions occur with every call that is made.

The migration process also came with changes in area codes and telephone numbers countrywide. Seemingly, customers were not informed about the intention to change telephone billing services. However, when TelOne initially implemented the prepaid service, most of its telephone lines temporarily stopped working. Customers did not understand their role in the change process hence the numerous inquiries and complaints during the process. However, havoc occurred because employees did not receive enough information regarding the initiative and hence were also marred with a lot of uncertainty. This motivated the study to investigate

where exactly the communication glitch occurred. Although it has been established that several scholarships have researched on communication and change management, no studies in or about Zimbabwe have adequately established factors determining communication effectiveness during change as well as its impact on the success of change management. Further, this is the first study to explore how TelOne Zimbabwe communicated with its employees and customers concerning their telephone services migration.

Basically, this thesis endeavours to analyse the effectiveness of the communication strategy used to implement the migration of telephone services from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne Zimbabwe. The thesis also goes further to analyse the challenges faced by TelOne and its stakeholders during the migration particularly the employees and customers. Indeed, the study has been able to answer the research questions in the context of the theories that gave direction of the thesis. This study was underpinned by the Freeman's stakeholder theory as it gives emphasis on stakeholder value and how organisations should ethically run their businesses even during change. The Lewin's change model also gave guidance to this study as it emphasises the need for organisations to communicate before, during and after the change implementation as a way to make the initiative to be easily understood by the stakeholders.



To effectively answer the research questions of the study, a qualitative approach was utilised and the key research methods used included document analysis, participant observation, face-to-face and telephonic semi-structured interviews which were conducted with purposively selected respondents such as TelOne managers, employees and the customers. The documents and respondents were purposively sampled based on the researcher's knowledge of their relevance in the study. The findings revealed several factors that mired effective change communication strategies such as the one discussed in the following section 5.3. To curb these communication challenges the study proposes an organisational communication change model that directs the organisations to communicate the initiative to its relevant internal and external stakeholders considering their views and addressing factors that might hinder effective communication as a strategy to enhance successful change management.

5.3 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This section summarises the study's key findings in cognisance of the research objectives, existing literature and the theoretical framework.

5.3.1 **Impact of understanding the organisation and the essence of change on communication and change management**

This thesis has concluded that understanding the organisation mission and the essence of change has positively influenced the TelOne managers to accept the migration. Findings revealed that an awareness of the benefits that prepaid billing would bring, the management resistance to change was limited as they could easily understand the change messages communicated via different media. Accordingly, the researcher agrees with the notion of the stakeholder theory that the management should understand the vision of the organisation and also the need of its stakeholders to maintain mutual relations and continuous success for both (Phillips et al 2019). While Rizescu and Tileag (2016) also argue that the relative advantage of change determines the success of change management. However, the distinct finding of this study is that the aforementioned factors were also acknowledged by the employees and customers but what rather determined their understanding about the initiative was more of intrinsic and extrinsic values offered by the organisation before, during and after the change implementation.

5.3.2 **Impact of service quality on effective communication and change management**

The study has established that the image and reputation of an organisation affect the communications strategies meant for change management. This finding emerged from the perceptions of TelOne clientele and employees. When TelOne experienced a phase of crisis during migration, TelOne customers likened the scenario to prior incidents and blamed TelOne for recurrent poor services. Employees acknowledged tendencies of poor services such as delayed response to faults and installations. The employees had claimed these delays were caused by fuel shortage. Amongst others, challenges included long queues in banking halls due to slow faulty systems and failure to provide connectivity to new prepaid customers due to unavailability of poles and cables.

Despite the justifications and owing to previous incompetence, clientele identified the crisis that occurred during the migration process as a well-known TelOne culture. Bond-Barnard et al. (2018) posit that the company's history of failure is a major factor that impacts the success of organisational change implementation. Significant to existing literature and theory, this study found that a company with a culture of poor service delivery loses trust as customers are likely to doubt the organisational changes that are introduced by that company. Due to TelOne's reputation for poor service, customers do not trust changes introduced by the organisation.

While acknowledging the other preceding scholarships notions on service quality and change management, this study distinctively established that company history of poor services does not only affect change implementation, it predominantly affects change management communication strategies, which is the key process to successful change management. The findings indicated that the employees had difficulties conveying the message about change to customers because customers doubted the capabilities of the organisation due to its recurrent bad reputation. Instead of a desire to learn about the change, customers spent much time questioning the company's failures. Alternatively, those who portrayed TelOne positively were willing to gain knowledge and cooperate in the migration process. Thus, this study acknowledges that effective change management communication does not only involve using vehicles that merely deliver the message to the receiver, it must also consider the externalities affecting the receiver decoding the message.

The theories used in the study complement the finding that a company's reputation affects its change communication strategies. The unfreezing stage of Lewin's change model is considered the 'readying stage of the stakeholders and the organisation to the change' (Errida & Lotfi 2021). This stage is designed for communications about change before its implementation. This is a critical stage whereby change communicators must alleviate all factors that hinder the effectiveness of organisational communication strategies. Owing to the findings, this study posits that managing all negative factors before change implementation enhances the willingness of stakeholders to better understand new changes. This is akin to the stakeholder theory that entails creating value for all stakeholders in an

ethically responsible and sustainable way, understanding and fulfilling their needs, as well as sustaining corporate-client trust (Brin and Nehme 2019).

5.3.3 **Impact of stakeholder recognition on effective communication and change management**

Another interesting discovery from this study is the revelation that, the extent to which the employees and customers felt recognised by the company strongly affects the effectiveness of communication strategies used for change management. The findings highlighted that TelOne employed various communication vehicles to communicate with its employees and the clientele about change. The management believed that the more the message reaches the affected stakeholders the more they will accept the initiative. However, this study uniquely revealed that amongst others work overload and nature of some employees work duties resulted to them to be not being able to access information about the initiative hence failure to even advise the customers about the migration.

Further, the study established that the employees and the customers felt unrecognised by TelOne because the initiative was a directive with inadequate training and timing. Several preceding scholarships have argued about how training and timing of change affects change management (Feizi 2019; Lange & Bundy 2018). However, this study distinctively found that inadequate training and timing of change led to disastrous departmental and employee-customer conflicts. As a result, this exacerbated employee and clientele resistance to change, thereby making it difficult for some of them to be convinced about the migration regardless of any communication strategy used. The study established that some employees who felt recognised had no difficulties in understanding the change and communicating it to customers, whereas, those who felt that the organisation was unethical, had difficulties understanding the essence of change hence failing to communicate effectively. However, those who felt that the organisation valued them had ease of change-communication with customers because they understood the essence of change for themselves and others.

5.3.4 Impact of centralisation and empowerment on effective communication and change management

Scholars such as Lee and Kim (2020) posit that empowerment determines the level of change management success. This study appreciates the aforesaid and it will add currency to the existing literature and also closes the gap of knowledge in this study that has instigated this research as highlighted in chapter1. This study revealed that TelOne Headquarters in Harare centralised the communication strategies used to communicate the change process. Challenging the aforementioned, employees argued that Bulawayo customers likely differ from those in Harare thus a need for flexible communication strategies across cities. As a result, the centralisation of communication created a lack of empowerment that led to a failure of TelOne management and employees in Bulawayo in making some necessary change-process decisions without approval from the headquarters.

Consequently, the study revealed that due to lack of empowerment, the Bulawayo TelOne employees and management have severely suffered from fear to make decisions. The most fearful were the long-serving employees. This was also observed by the researcher during the data collection process Employees were scared to provide information about the company even though they were advised that the responses from the interviews would be treated with confidentiality and only for academic use. Being fearful to make decision has endangered the organisation's success, especially during change.

The disastrous approach to change management at TelOne during the initial implementation of prepaid billing required urgent attention. studies have also established that the majority of long serving employees resisted change because they felt secure with traditional operating systems and likely preferred that system until retirement (Chavunduka, et al 2015). However, this study has added a peculiar dimension by establishing that lack of stakeholder empowerment enhanced instilled fear especially on long serving employees to freely communicate or make decision about the organisational initiatives. Nonetheless, centralisation of change communication strategies, lack of empowerment and delayed response to

complaints made ineffective communication strategy, leading to the failure of change management at TelOne.

5.3.5 Impact of focusing on successful change (result) over effective change communication (process)

The questioning of the effectiveness of the channels used to communicate change resulted in another key finding. The majority of the employees who engaged with highlighted that ineffective communication strategies were used because TelOne was more concerned about successful migration, with little or no emphasis on effective change communication. In other words, the company prioritised the technical side of change to successfully switch from post-paid to prepaid telephone services. Findings indicate that pro-active communication about the migration was mostly to the management and those who were directly involved in the practical migration process. Since the initiative was a directive, the assumption was that customers would automatically adapt the new billing services after the switchover implementation. As a result, most employees were aware but not fully knowledgeable about the prepaid service or the technicalities of the migration process. Thus, employees who were involved in daily engagements with customers did not have the technical knowledge to educate the customers about the migration process. To this, Warnaars (2021) indicates that individuals should be educated about the change because not only does the organisation or its system change, but affected stakeholders also need to change. The findings of the study acknowledge that focusing more on the change than the people involved, negatively affects change implementation and management.

The study discovered exclusively that prioritising the implementation of change more than the communication of the change initiative to stakeholders negatively impacts change communication strategies. The findings showed a crisis at TelOne during the implementation of prepaid services because most telephone lines became faulty while some stopped working. Unfortunately, the front-line workers at TelOne were uninformed and lacked knowledge about change since they were not directly involved in the practical and technical migration of the billing services. Thus, they did not fully know how to deal with the crisis and how to communicate with the clientele about the migration. Customers were unwilling to learn about the migration process and the prevailing crisis during its implementation as they complained that they were

not consulted before the migration process affirming that they signed post-paid service contracts with TelOne. The insignificant number of customers who were aware of the migration process, was considered after the crisis. Significantly, the study found that prioritising the change more than the stakeholders, made stakeholders feel unappreciated, and thus led them to resist the change which further hindered the effectiveness of the change communication strategies. Thus, this study considers effective communication strategy as a vehicle for successful change.

Akin to the theories employed in this study, the stakeholder theory indicates that stakeholders like the idea being valued (Phillips et al. 2019). In this study, customers felt that the organisation was unethical as it ceased the post-paid service contracts without mutual agreement. In addition, Lewin's model also emphasises the need for communication with all the affected stakeholders before the change, during its implementation and after the change (Errida & Lotfi 2021). This study also posits the essence of business ethics and the relevance of proactive communication. TelOne unethically denied some of its stakeholders the opportunity for informed consent. Stakeholders were not provided proactive communication because TelOne prioritised the change result over the process. The change process enhances successful change management which is the change communication strategy.

5.3.6 Re-active communication and change management

The findings of the study revealed that positive re-active communication enhanced the success of the TelOne change implementation and management. After experiencing the disastrous incident during its initial phase of migration, TelOne initiated the "Know Your Customers (KYC)" exercise as a reactive strategy to curb hindrances to successful change management. The management revealed that efforts were made to advise customers before change implementation, but some were out of reach because the company did not have a complete and updated database of their contact details. Hence the KYC exercise entailed updating the client's physical and postal addresses, mobile cellular phone numbers, identity numbers and email addresses. In case of faulty landlines, customers were contacted on their mobile phones, emailed or visited in their premises. Thus, the KYC helped to improve the effectiveness of change communication by enhancing the ability of the organisation to contact its stakeholders.

Nonetheless, the migration from post-paid to prepaid services was a directive from TelOne to its stakeholders. Consequently, the study established that KYC helped the change initiators to inform and educate customers about the prepaid service. As a result, most customers gradually became aware of the prepaid billing service though most were not knowledgeable. The findings revealed that the migration was done in phases and is still in process. Accordingly, the KYC helped the other phases of migration that came after the crisis occurred because most customers were contacted and informed about the migration. However, some customers were not aware of the migration even though they were already on prepaid billing for the past 4 years. This indicates the essence of informing and engaging stakeholders to participate in the change.

Another key finding that TelOne took as a corrective measure was to consider its niche market. The KYC exercise revealed the compatibility of the new system with some customers who were not willing to adopt the initiative. These included the senior citizens who found it difficult to adopt the new system; well-paying businesses and government enterprises who preferred post-paid billing. Since the migration was implemented in phases, TelOne considered exceptional customers by discontinuing the migration of their accounts while reversing the system of the accounts that were already migrated. Existing literature acknowledges that the compatibility, divisibility and reversibility of the change process determine the success of organisational change management (Malambe 2018). This study has established that the compatibility, reversibility and divisibility of the change process enhance the effectiveness of communication strategies and augment the success of organisational change management.

5.4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

This study has added value to existing knowledge of organisational communication and change management by examining how communication strategies employed by TelOne, affected its change management. The study analysed Lewin's change model and the stakeholder theory to establish their applicability to organisational communication and change management. The conclusion drawn from this study is that TelOne's change communication strategies resembled those described in Lewin's theory and the stakeholder theory to implement change as well as to

strategically communicate the change to its stakeholders. This study raises concerns about the factors that affect the effectiveness of communication strategies before, during and after change implementation.

5.4.1 Introducing the Thrive Organisational Communications Change (TOCC) model

The findings of the study highlighted several shortcomings of the communication strategies used by a telecommunications company in Zimbabwe as a way of managing operational and organisational change. This study is introducing the Thrive Organisational Communications Change (TOCC) model as a holistic strategy to address the factors hindering effective communication before, during and after the change implementation process. Successful change management is dependent on the full involvement of the organisation and its affected stakeholders (Stouten et al. 2018). Hence the TOCC model can be used as a guide to enhance the effectiveness of change communications to thrive in organisational change management. The model is presented in Figure 5.1 below.

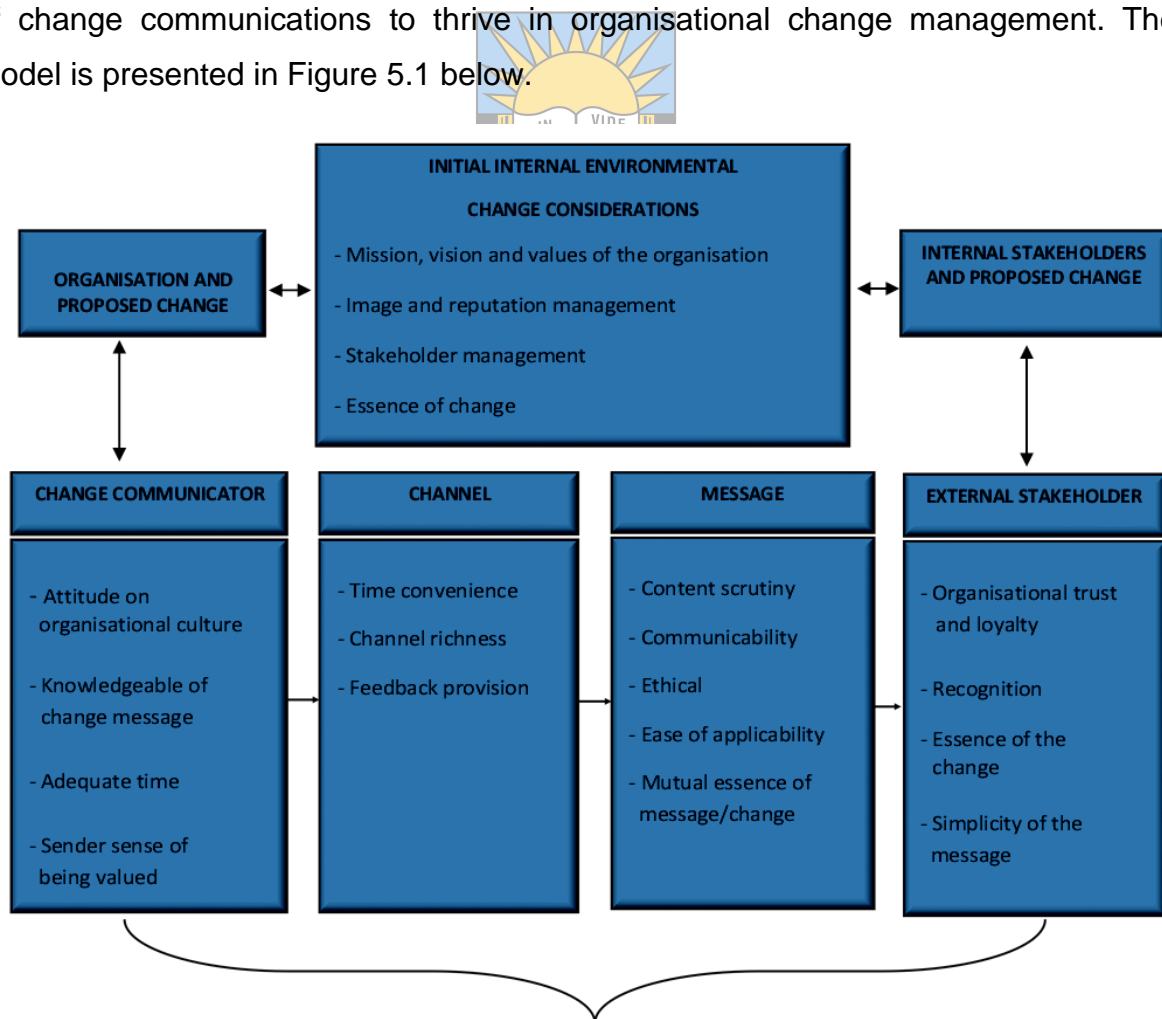


Figure 0.1: Thrive Organisational Communications Change model – TOCC Model

Source: Authors own creation (2023)

- **Proposed organisational change and internal environment**

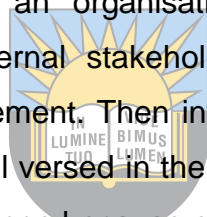
This study's position is that whenever an organisation initiates change it must first communicate with its internal stakeholders especially the most affected ones and those who will be responsible to communicate with external stakeholders. Thus before the change initiation, thorough environmental scanning should be considered in line with the proposed change. The model requires the management and the employees to interactively communicate and fully understand the mission, vision as well as values of the organisation. This helps management and employees to understand organisational culture, its past and how it intends to run the business. Thus, this model recommends that the employees will effectively communicate the change to the external stakeholders if they trust that the initiative positively contributes toward the success of organisational goals since the organisation and its stakeholder's survival are interdependent (Phillips et al. 2019).

Besides being knowledgeable about the mission, vision and values of the organisation, the model further proposes that affected stakeholders should be considered before the change. This will involve communication between the management and the employees on how they feel about the change, its positivity and its drawbacks. Scholars (Lee & Kim 2020) argue that some of the causes of change management failure involve the lack of employee recognition such as lack of change transparency, motivation and training. The findings of the study also established that various intrinsic and extrinsic values affected the way stakeholders accepted change at TelOne. This model recommends the need for organisations to fully involve their employees when preparing for change so that any challenges faced can be addressed in time before they can hinder communications strategies of the entire change management.

Furthermore, the TOCC model ensures that organisations address image and reputation management before change initiation. To justify Feizi's (2019) argument that a company's history of failure affects the success of change management, this study found that the extent of stakeholder trust determines stakeholders' ability to accept and trust the initiative. Therefore, TOCC entails the management solving its past and present misunderstandings with its internal stakeholders as well as

controlling potential conflicts through continuous two-way communication. This approach involves management and employees scrutinising the organisational image and how the created image affects how external stakeholders would accept change. The model recommends that creating and maintaining a positive organisational image enhances effective communication strategies since stakeholders who trust the organisation will in turn believe in the organisation's innovations and thus, be willing to interact and partake in the change.

In addition, the management and the employees need to consider the essence of change to the organisation and its various stakeholders. Similarly, the stakeholder theory argues that organisations need to be ethical by considering their stakeholders in all their initiatives and this is made possible through the application of shared value creation. The model thus recommends SVC's to ensure that organisations accommodate customers in organisational change processes. Consequently, the TOCC model recommends that an organisation should first scan its internal environment, fully involve its internal stakeholders and thoroughly address the potential threat to change management. Then involvement of external stakeholders will follow once employees are well versed in the intended change. This will improve effective communication about change because employees are the ones who usually engage with the clientele.



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- **Communicating organisational change to clientele**

As indicated above, the study recommends that the initial phase of change must consider transparency between the organisation and its internal stakeholders as they mutually think through the factors that may impact the initiative. The next section of the TOCC model proposes the considerations of the communication process that can be employed before, during and after change implementation. The process will be between the change communicator and the affected external stakeholders. Planner et al. (2021) describe a sender as an individual or group to communicate with someone else to influence his or her attitudes and understandings. Thus, this study argues the effectiveness of communiques to customers by considering factors such as being knowledgeable of the change, attitudes toward organisational culture, sense of value and inclusiveness in the change process. The sender/change communicator will be a member of the organisation and its internal stakeholders

hence these factors have been discussed earlier. The provision of adequate time is a necessity for the sender to ensure precise messages that can be easily comprehended by the receiver.

In this model, the sender must be very considerate of the channel to be used to convey the change message to the receiver. There are various formal and informal channels of communication that can be used depending on their richness, such as face-face meetings, mass media, social media, electronic mail and many more (Baharzader & Farhadpoor 2018). However, what determines the applicability of the channel is its richness or its capability to transmit information contextually. according to the context.

The model suggests that communication channels must deliver messages in a convenient time to the receiver, using vehicles that enable two way communication and instant feedback. The channel to be used must be reliable in reaching out to the receiver. For instance, the change communicator may use electronic mail as a channel to convey a change message whilst not every receiver has access to the e-mail or internet. This incongruity causes communication glitches leading to unsuccessful organisational change management. To minimise communication hiccups, the TOCC model recommends that the channel used to communicate change must have the provision of feedback. The two-way communication channel will help the sender to ensure whether the message was received in time and must also enhance the chances of reaching a mutual consensus.

Furthermore, the model recommends message content scrutiny. The message will be the initiative that the change communicator intends to interact with the affected stakeholders. Hence, the message needs to be easily applicable and communicable to enable the sender to efficiently and effectively reach the intended customers. Moreover, the message about the change must be realistic and the organisation should fulfil whatever promises it made. This study established that change communication messages can be negatively interpreted if the message is not clear. For instance, when the change initiator fails to deliver what could have been promised about the change, as advertised during its promotional period. In addition, the model recommends that the message must be ethical. This will enhance effective mutual consensus between the change communicator and the affected

stakeholder because an ethical message represents the mutual relative advantages of the change (Rizescu & Tileag 2016). As a result, a feeling of being valued or stakeholder recognition will enhance active two-way communication about the change, leading to successful change management.

The study additionally suggests that customers as the receivers of the change, need to feel recognised and must trust the organisation to understand the initiative. As discussed earlier, the organisation and its internal stakeholders need to be considerate of the external stakeholders before introducing change. Customers differ as well as their interests, hence the model recommends the need for them to understand the essence of change through shared value creation. Moreover, the message must be clear and understandable to garner acceptance (Rizescu & Tileag 2016).

Unlike Lewin's linear model, TOCC model is non-linear thus, has a more flexible communication structure that allows internal and external stakeholders to communicate with each other at various levels. The TOCC model is applicable before, during and after the change implementation. It is a process and the receiver can send feedback to the sender and continue interacting time and again. However, the receiver can also interact directly with any employee and this study recommends that as discussed earlier if all employees are knowledgeable, they will be handy too. Also, the change communicator can get feedback from the sender and discuss it again with the change initiator or management who may also engage the internal stakeholders as well. In a nutshell, this model regards change communication strategy as a never-ending process that may keep on going and going whenever needs emanate.

5.5 CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

The researcher explored the effectiveness of the communication strategies used by TelOne to implement its initiative to change telecommunication services from post-paid to prepaid services. The study established the effectiveness of communication impacts organisational change management. What makes a distinction of this thesis apart from other scholarly approaches to communication and change management is the way it distinctively and extensively addressed several factors that impacted the effectiveness of organisational communication strategies. Among others, change

communication effectiveness has been affected by company reputation, stakeholder recognition, communication centralisation and empowerment. Thus, the findings revealed that although communication can be done, for it to be effective other factors impacting it should be considered.

The study employed the qualitative research approach which enabled the researcher to acquire in-depth data from the TelOne management, employees and customers concerning the effectiveness of communication strategies used during the telephone billing migration process. Scholars argue how “qualitative research seeks to understand why people behave the way they do, how opinions and attitudes are formed, how people are affected by events that go on around them and how cultures and practices have developed in the way they do” (Hancock et al. 2009: 7). Therefore, qualitative system best suited this study for relevant data collection and analysis.

The findings align to theoretical frameworks used in the study. Lewin’s change model guided the study to assess the effectiveness of organisational change at TelOne as it identified the strategies, objectives and communication needed before, during and after change implementation (Raymond 2021). The stakeholder theory added value to the study, arguing that ethical and human-oriented organisations can effectively communicate and manage successful change management. Freudenreich et al. (2020) also argue that stakeholder recognition harnesses the drive of stakeholders towards the accomplishment of the organisation’s objectives. To this, this study has attested the value and currency of the stakeholder theory and Lewin’s change model.

This study revealed how effective communication strategies result in successful organisational change. TelOne identified itself as a client-centric organisation, however, it overlooked some factors that might affect the achievement of its goals. This study did establish several factors affecting the effectiveness of communication strategies especially when organisational change is enforced. It has been revealed that the ethical stakeholder approach helps companies to create and maintain trust which becomes the organisation’s competitive advantage including the result of improved acknowledgement of organisational initiatives.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following are recommendations regarding the effectiveness of communication strategies and management of operational and organisational changes. They are upshots of the study's findings.

- **Addressing past and current organisational image**

The researcher recommends that organisations should address their past negative reputation before introducing their intended change and also embrace a positive image during and after the change implementation. Several scholarships also argue that organisational change management can be significantly affected by the experience that the stakeholders held considering the prior company's doings (Jan & Veronika 2017; Bond-Barnard 2018; Feizi 2019). Unlike other scholarships, this study extensively examined what determines company image and did not only generally argue about how image affects change management but critically examined how image affected communication effectiveness. Effective organisational communication strategy has been established as the key to change management. Hence to effectively communicate, an organisation should ascertain a positive image and maintain it by being ethical and considerate of its stakeholders.

- **Embrace a culture of stakeholder involvement**

Another recommendation is that organisations should fully embrace the culture of stakeholder involvement when introducing their initiatives. The preceding literature also argues that stakeholder involvement positively affects organisational change management (Feizi 2019). However, the study critically argued that the level of stakeholder involvement before, during and after change implementation tends to affect communication strategy, which in turn affects change management. Considered stakeholders would easily understand the need for change hence the ease of communication with them and their ease of interacting with others due to their feelings of value and recognition which drive them to participate in the change.

- **Communication decentralisation**

In addition, the researcher further recommends that for a successful organisational change, organisations should not centralise their communication when implementing

change, they should rather target all stakeholders, each with specific messages. Kajongwe et al. (2020) also argue that centralisation affected the change management of telecommunications organisations in Zimbabwe. However, the study distinctively established that the use of a 'one size fits all' approach when communicating change to stakeholders, creates communication challenges since stakeholders differ, thus, channels of communication must be diverse to meet the different demographics of customers.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study discussed how communication strategies affect organisational change management. It further argued the factors affecting effective communication which in turn affect the success of change management. However, since we are now living in a digital world with drastic changes and innovative technology, future studies may analyse how digitalisation affects communication strategies and change management.

5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study experienced several limitations. Having been conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic era, there were several restrictions and lockdowns imposed across the country to curb the pandemic. Hence, the researcher had difficulties in data collection due to Covid restrictions imposed on accessing the organisation. When the restrictions were lifted, employees worked in shifts hence making it harder for them to be available for interviews. Customers who were liable to participate in the study, whom I had also intended to collect data from through questionnaires; failed due to the pandemic whose precautions warned that papers transmit the virus. Hence, the researcher resorted to telephone interviews with the customers as it was more affordable for the respondents compared to online data collection methods. In addition, the researcher has been a patient due to the pandemic and has also been acting as a nurse taking care of several relatives and family members. Thus, this dragged the success and progress of the study.

Questioning TelOne colleagues challenged the researcher as colleagues tended to personalise interviews and respond based on the researchers' experiences as an employee. To rectify this limitation and to professionally avoid bias, the researcher engaged a research assistant who conducted interviews on her behalf though the

researcher was present during all interview sessions. Financial limitations constrained the researcher in financing registration levies and travel costs to South Africa. Expensive mobile data bundles limited the ease of research, and though TelOne offers affordable data bundles, their system was often faulty or with a slow network.

5.9 SUMMARY

Consequently, this chapter concludes the study by summarising the findings, outlining recommendation and proposing suggestion for future research. The findings revealed various communication strategies employed by TelOne to communicate change with its employees and its clientele. Although some of the communication vehicles used could have allowed the two-way flow of communication or interaction between the organisation and its stakeholders, TelOne used the channels just to inform its stakeholders about the initiated directive. This minimised pro-active communication and interaction between the organisation and the affected stakeholders concerning the change, thus hindering effective and efficient change management. Still, TelOne strives to be a client-centric organisation as it emphasises much on its motto “client is King”. The employees are then expected to diligently serve customers informing them of the organisation’s directives. However, the study indicated several factors that mired effective change communication strategies such as company image, stakeholder recognition and communication centralisation. To curb these communication challenges the study proposes an organisational communication change model that fore mostly communicates the initiative to its internal stakeholders such as its employees, considering their views and addressing factors that might hinder effective communication to its external stakeholders. When internal stakeholders are knowledgeable about the change, affected external stakeholders will be engaged, along with other potential effects on effective change communication.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



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ETHICS CLEARANCE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Project Number:	OSU021SDUB01
Project title:	Communication strategy, organisational change and billing system: A study of Telone's migration from post-paid to pre-paid billing in Zimbabwe.
Qualification:	PhD in Communications
Principal Researcher:	Sizalobuhle Dube
Supervisor:	Prof O.O. Osunkunle
Co-supervisor:	N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby grant ethics approval for OSU021SDUB01. This approval is valid for 12 months from the date of approval. Renewal of approval must be applied for BEFORE termination of this approval period. Renewal is subject to receipt of a satisfactory progress report. The approval covers the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). The research may commence as from the 13/11/19, using the reference number indicated above.

Note that should any other instruments be required or amendments become necessary, these require separate authorisation.
Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research.

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this approval if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected;
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented;
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require;
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to.
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.

Your compliance with DoH 2015 guidelines and other regulatory instruments and with UREC ethics requirements as contained in the UREC terms of reference and standard operating procedures, is implied.

The UREC wishes you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Renuka Vithal
UREC-Chairperson
 13 November 2019

APPENDIX 2: TELONE NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT



CONFIDENTIALITY

AND

NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

SIZALOBUHLE NCUBE

AND

TEL-ONE (PVT) LTD

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CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

1 PARTIES

The parties to this agreement are:

Sizalobuhle Ncube, a PHD student at the University of Fort Hare and Tel-One (Private) Limited.

2. PREAMBLE

WHEREAS

- 2.1.1 Sizalobuhle Ncube would like to carry out a research for her dissertation focusing on **"Communication strategy, organizational change and billing system: A study of TelOne's migration from post-paid to pre-paid billing in Zimbabwe"**.
- 2.1.2 This will involve TelOne sharing information around their strategy and service delivery;
- 2.1.3 Sizalobuhle Ncube as part of the research will use academic theories and frameworks to analyse the TelOne Organisational Performance;
- 2.1.4 The information gathered will be for the purpose of broadening academic knowledge in the areas of leadership strategies and organizational performance which in turn can be useful to TelOne to sharpen their strategies;
- 2.1.5 The parties wish to record the terms and conditions upon which they are willing and prepared to enter this agreement.

3. INTERPRETATION

- 3.1 In this agreement, unless inconsistent with or otherwise indicated by the context:
 - 3.1.1 "the/this agreement" means the agreement as set out herein;
 - 3.1.2 "Commencement date" means the latest date of signature to this agreement not taking into consideration the dates applicable to amendments, annexures or appendices.
 - 3.1.3 "confidential information" means without limiting the generality of the term, any:
 - 3.1.3.1 technical, scientific, commercial, business, financial or market information, or trade industry secrets;
 - 3.1.3.2 data concerning business relationships, samples, devices, demonstrations,

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processes or machinery;

3.1.3.3 designs, data models, software code, proposals, literature, brochures, drawings and technical specifications,

3.1.3.4 any document with a footer marked "Private and Confidential" and all other information in whatever form, whether or not subject to or protected by common law or statutory laws relating to copyright, patent, trade marks, registered or unregistered, or otherwise, disclosed or communicated to the receiving party or acquired by the receiving party from the divulging party pursuant to this agreement;

3.1.3.5 Provide on paper, on electronic media or any other media capable of storing or transmitting information

3.1.4 "the divulging party" means the party disclosing any form of confidential information;

3.1.5 "the parties" means the parties to this agreement;

3.1.6 "the receiving party" means the party receiving any form of confidential information.

4. COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION

This agreement shall commence on the date of signature by the Party signing last if not signed at the same time and if not terminated earlier in terms of clause 10 below, shall terminate one (1) week after the parties' business and commercial working relationship has ended which termination shall be notified in writing by Sizalobuhle Ncube.

5. RESTRICTIONS ON DISCLOSURE AND USE OF THE INFORMATION

5.1 The receiving party may disclose confidential information only to its officers and employees and then only to such officers and employees to whom such access is deemed reasonably necessary, provided that such officers and employees agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of this agreement.

5.2 The receiving party agrees:

5.2.1 not to disclose the confidential information to any third party for any reason or purpose whatsoever without the prior written consent of the divulging party, save in accordance with the provisions of this agreement;

5.2.2 not to utilise, employ, exploit or in any other manner whatsoever use the confidential information for any purpose whatsoever, other than for purposes of this agreement, without the prior written consent of the divulging party;

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5.2.3 that the unauthorised disclosure of the confidential information to a third party may cause irreparable loss, harm and damage to the divulging party. Accordingly, the receiving party indemnifies and holds the divulging party harmless against any loss, action, expense, claim, harm or damage, or whatever nature, suffered or sustained by the divulging party pursuant to a breach by the receiving party of the provisions of this agreement.

5.3 Unless the parties otherwise agree in writing, any documentation or records relating to the divulging party's confidential information which comes into the possession of the receiving party during the existence of this agreement or at any time thereafter:

5.3.1 shall be deemed to form part of the confidential information of the divulging party;

5.3.2 shall be deemed to be the property of the divulging party;

5.3.3 shall not be copied, duplicated, reproduced, published, electronically distributed or circulated by the receiving party;

5.3.4 shall be surrendered to the divulging party on request and in any event on the termination of this agreement, the receiving party shall not retain any extracts or copies thereof.

6. TITLE

6.1 All confidential information disclosed by the divulging party to the receiving party:

6.1.1 shall remain the property of the divulging party; and

6.1.2 shall not confer any rights of whatever nature in such confidential information to the receiving party.

7 STANDARD OF CARE

The receiving party agrees to protect the confidential information of the divulging party, using the same standard of care used to safeguard its own information or, where such standard of care is lacking regarding its own information, the standard of care that should reasonably have been applied to safeguard such confidential information would apply so that the confidential information shall be stored and handled in such a way as to prevent any unauthorised disclosure thereof.

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8. RETURN OF INFORMATION

- 8.1 The divulging party may, at any time, request the receiving party to return any material containing, pertaining to or relating to confidential information and may in addition, request the receiving party to furnish a written statement upon return, to the effect that the receiving party has not retained any such material in its possession or under its control, either directly or indirectly, any such material.
- 8.2 As an alternative to the return of the material contemplated in 8.1 above, the receiving party shall, at the instance of the divulging party, destroy such material and furnish the divulging party with a written statement to the effect that such material has been destroyed.
- 8.3 The receiving party shall comply within 7 (seven) days of a request in terms of clause 8 and acknowledge in writing the fulfillment thereof during the same period.

9. EXCLUDED INFORMATION

- 9.1 The obligations of the receiving party pursuant to the provisions of this agreement shall not apply to any information that:
- 9.1.1 is known to or in possession of the receiving party prior to disclosure thereof by the divulging party;
- 9.1.2 is known or becomes publicly known, otherwise than pursuant to a breach of this agreement by the receiving party;
- 9.1.3 is acquired independently of the divulging party by the receiving party in circumstances that do not amount to a breach of the provisions of this agreement;
- 9.1.4 is disclosed by the receiving party to satisfy the order of a court of competent jurisdiction or to comply with the provisions of any law or regulations in force from time to time;
- provided that in these circumstances, the receiving party shall advise the divulging party in writing prior to such disclosure to enable the divulging party to take whatever steps it deems necessary to protect its interest in this regard; provided further that the receiving party will disclose only that portion of the information which it is legally required to disclose and the receiving party will

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use its reasonable endeavours to protect the confidentiality of such information to the widest extent possible in the circumstances;

- 9.1.5 is disclosed to a third party pursuant to the prior written authorisation from the divulging party;
- 9.1.6 is received by a party in good faith from a third party in circumstances that do not amount to a breach of the provisions of this agreement or to a breach by the third party of any undertaking it may have made to a party to this agreement in relation to such confidential information.

10 TERMINATION

10.1 This Agreement shall terminate upon the occurrence of:

- 10.1.1 The breach by Sizalobuhle Ncube of any of the material terms of the agreement regarding the provision, and use of information about TelOne; or
- 10.1.2 By written notice from Sizalobuhle Ncube signifying completion of her research.

11 GOVERNING LAW

This agreement shall be governed by and construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Zimbabwe. The parties hereby consent and submit to the jurisdiction of a relevant magistrate's court, notwithstanding that the amount claimed or the value of the matter in dispute exceeds such jurisdiction without prejudice to the rights of either party to initiate action elsewhere or in a court of superior jurisdiction.

11. NOTICES AND DOMICILIA

- 11.1 The parties choose as their domicilia citandi et executandi their respective physical addresses set out in this clause for all purposes arising out of or in connection with this agreement at which addresses all processes and notices arising out of or in connection with this agreement, its breach or termination may validly be served upon or delivered to the parties.

11.2 For purposes of this agreement the parties' respective physical and postal addresses and facsimile numbers shall be -

11.2.1 as regards Sizalobuhle Ncube:

Number 31373 Entumbane, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
Phone: 0735 337 630

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11.2.2 as regards TelOne at:

Runhare House, 107 Kwame Nkrumah Avenue
P.O. Box CY331, Causeway
Harare, Zimbabwe
Phone + 263 4 788 111

or at such other address, not being a post office box or poste restante, of which the party concerned by notify the other/s in writing.

11.3 Any notice given in terms of this agreement shall be in writing and shall -

11.3.1 if delivered by hand be deemed to have been duly received by the addressee on the date of delivery;

11.3.2 if posted by prepaid registered post be deemed to have been received by the addressee on the 8th (eighth) day following the date of such posting;

11.3.3 if transmitted by facsimile be deemed to have been received by the addressee 1 (one) day after dispatch.

11.4 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this agreement, a written notice or communication actually received by one of the parties from another including by way of telex or facsimile transmission shall be adequate written notice or communication to such party.

12. WHOLE AGREEMENT

This agreement constitutes the whole agreement between the parties as to the subject-matter hereof and no agreements, representations or warranties between the parties other than those set out herein are binding on the parties.

14. VARIATION

No additional to or variation, consensual cancellation or notation of this agreement and no waiver of any right arising from this agreement or its breach or termination shall be of any force of effect unless reduced to writing and signed by both/either the parties or their duly authorised representatives.

15. RELAXATION

No latitude, extension of time or other indulgence which may be given or allowed by any/either party to any other party in respect of the performance of any obligation hereunder or the enforcement of any right arising from this agreement and no single or partial exercise of an right by any party shall under

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any circumstances be construed to be and implied consent by such party or operate as a waiver or a novation of, or otherwise affect any of that party's rights in terms of or arising from this agreement or estop such party from enforcing, at any time and without notice, strict and punctual compliance with each and every provision or term hereof.

16. BINDING ON SUCCESSORS AND RELATED PARTIES

This agreement shall be binding upon the heirs, assigns, executors or sequestrates successors-in-title and parent, subsidiaries and affiliates of the parties hereto.

Signed at Harare, on this 06 day of March 2019

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF TELONE

NAME: HOPEWELL ZINYAU

DESIGNATION: CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTOR

SIGNATURE: [Signature]



AS WITNESSES

1. [Signature] 2. [Signature]

Signed at Harare, on this 06 day of March 2019

BY:

NAME: SIZALOBUHLE NCUBE

SIGNATURE: [Signature]

AS WITNESSES

1. [Signature] 2. [Signature]

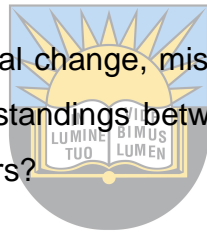
APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview Guide for TelOne Management

1. What is your company's vision, mission and values?
2. How important is the migration to achieving the mission and vision of TelOne?
3. What are the major communication channels that TelOne use to communicate migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
- 3b. With certain instances, can you explain how proactive your communication is about the migration to prepaid?
4. Were the employees and customers informed of the intended change before it was implemented? Explain
5. What communication measures were taken during and after the implementation of the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
6. How often do you use two-way communication to interact with employees and customers about the relevant change?
7. In the event of organisational change, misunderstandings may arise. How do you maintain mutual understandings between the organisation, employees and its customers?
8. According to your view, how do you perceive the communication strategies that you used as TelOne to inform your employees and the customers about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
9. What challenges were faced by employees and customers about the change of migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
10. Kindly explain how efficient and effective is the migration of post-post to prepaid towards achieving the organisational goals and objectives?

Interview guide for Employees

1. What are the major communication channels that TelOne use to communicate migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
2. How important is migration to achieving the goals and objectives of your department as well as the mission and vision of TelOne as a whole?
3. Were you as employees and customers informed of the intended change before it was implemented? Explain
4. What communication measures were taken during and after the implementation of the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
5. How often is two-way communication used to interact with employees and customers about the relevant change?
6. In the event of organisational change, misunderstandings may arise. How do you maintain mutual understandings between yourself and the organisation, as well as with the customers?
7. How do you feel about the culture in your organisation relating to change?
8. According to your view, how do you perceive the communication strategies used by TelOne to inform you and the customers about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
9. What challenges were faced by you as employees as well as customers about the change of migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
10. What do you think could be critical in maintaining a successful organisational change?
11. Kindly explain how efficient and effective is the migration of post-post to prepaid towards achieving the organisational goals and objectives.



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Interview guide for Customers

1. Are you aware of the change of migration from post-paid to prepaid billing at TelOne?
2. What are the major communication channels that TelOne use to communicate migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
3. Were you as customers informed of the intended change before it was implemented? Explain
4. What communication measures were taken during and after the implementation of the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
5. How often is two-way communication used to interact with customers about the relevant change?
6. How do you feel about the TelOne culture about change?
7. According to your view, how do you perceive the communication strategies used by TelOne to inform you about the migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
8. What challenges were faced by you as customers concerning the change of migration from post-paid to prepaid billing?
9. As the client how best could TelOne do to maintain mutual understandings with you about maintaining a successful organisational change program?



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APPENDIX 4: TURN IT IN REPORT/PLAGIARISM CHECK

Thesis

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APPENDIX 5: EDITING CERTIFICATE



Communication strategy, organisational change and billing system: A study of TelOne's migration from post-paid to pre-paid billing in Zimbabwe.



SIZALOBUHLE DUBE
CLIENT

30— 03— 2022
ISSUE DATE

This document certifies that the above manuscript was proofread and edited for proper English language | Grammar | Punctuation | Spelling and Style by one of our highly qualified Professional Academic Editors, most of whom are Members of Professional Editors Guilds. The editor endeavoured to ensure that the author's intended meaning was not altered during the review. All amendments were tracked with the Microsoft Word "Track changes" feature. Therefore, the authors had the option to reject or accept each change individually.


Dr Nomzamo Dube
DIRECTOR


Noel Neville Nyathi (MA)
MANAGING DIRECTOR

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