IMPACT OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT ABIA STATE

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Abstract

This study focused on the impact of crisis management on the performance of ministry of transport Abia State. This study employed a survey design. This study adopted both primary and secondary data. The target population consists of two hundred and forty-one (241) employees of every department in the Ministry of Transport in Abia State. Thus, the sample size of 150 respondents was derived from Taro Yamane formula. A stratified sampling method was adopted and it gave the staff an equal chance of being selected. Regression model was used to test the dependent and independents variable. The study found out that Crisis planning has a significance effect on organizational effectiveness of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria. The study concluded that crisis communication has a significance impact on organizational output of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria. The study recommended that management must not only believe in the value of crisis planning, they need to understand the components of effective crisis planning and implement those components in their organizations.

Keywords: Crisis Management, Crisis Planning, Crisis Communication and Performance.

Background of the Study

Crisis has become a rampant phenomenon in Nigeria organizations. However, business organizations in Nigeria have witnessed persistent and reoccurring crisis situations over the years, these crisis manifest both in the internal and external environment of the organizations. No organization can operate without the occurrence of unexpected or unplanned business disruptions. Thus, an organization's survival depends on how adequately crisis situations are managed. Crisis management involves identifying crisis planning, crisis communication, response, confronting, and resolution. Crisis can strike any organization at any time and it does not discriminate based on a firms size or notoriety and hits when an organization least expects it. Crisis comes in many forms like strikes, layoffs, allegation of misconduct, products recalls, and threats from employees, equipment explosions, and government policies. Some of these crises have the potential to damage the reputation of a firm (Johnson, Schnatterly, & Hill, 2003).

Any organization that can estimate a crisis well through crisis management strategies can sustain any uncertainties with least possible negative outcomes. Therefore, it is essential for the ministries to deal with crisis through effective crisis management process. During a crisis situation, an organization seems to be losing its potential for performing complex situation with regular practices. Crisis management is a process in which continuous steps are taken to overcome any crisis situation through early signals and eliminating the same with no or least damages. Due to heterogeneity of the workforce government parastatals, ministries are more prone to crisis situations due to the various complexities involved during the event of installation (Lehman, & Ramanujam, 2009).

Thus, crisis management is therefore seen as the provision of an organization's pre- planned, rapid response capability supported by a leadership, information management and communications capacity in an integrated fashion to enable fast decision making at a strategic level within a structured environment, and thereby allowing for effective recovery and protecting an organization's survival or reputation (Coombs, 2006). A crisis is thus a critical situation that can have severe negative consequences to the organization. Tackling crisis in an organization goes beyond developing a crisis management strategy plan, it has to do with crafting effective strategy via information, communication, peaceful dialogue and other approach to resolving management crisis in order to enhance organizational performance (Clair, & Waddock, 2013).

However, when managers face crisis in the organization, they should consider it as thus; a threat to the organization, the element of surprise and a short decision time. Crisis management is also the process organizations use to respond to short term and immediate shocks, such as accidents, disasters, catastrophes, and injuries. Its process involves identifying a crisis planning as a response to the crisis, confronting, and resolving the crisis (Hudson, & Okhuysen, 2000). Crisis management is an overt display of dissatisfaction with the rules, ideas, opinions, values, personalities, and resources of an organization. It is an unusual atmosphere which hinders the attainment of certain desirable or achievable goals.

Problem Statement

It is believed that most organizations lack the ability to identify the likely causes of crisis and also they lack strategies to tackle such crisis whenever it occurs in the organization. Firms have also failed to prevent and resolve crisis among employees, labour unions, stakeholders and management staff, also there is a dearth in crisis communication among crisis members in the ministry. Ministries have a low rate of organizational performance as a result of resultant effect of a poor crisis management; this outcome will make an employee feel insecure in the workplace. Employees' inability to understand an organization plan policies and strategies that relates to crisis could lead to industrial actions by labour unions, strikes, suspension, termination of appointment, demotions, non-payment of salaries, lack of incentives and motivation, theft, allegation of misconduct, products recalls, and threats from employees, equipment explosions, and harsh government policies. Most organizations do not have a crisis plan. This failure in crisis plan leads to utilization of sophisticated machineries and equipment's by most employees, unqualified manpower, and naïve of the nature of the environment in which they operate in.

Crisis in ministries in Abia State have spring from major equipment malfunction, misuse of government equipment's, fund mismanagement, unaccomplished task, unfavorable government policies, misinformation, licensing, disputes with local officials, extortion, threats, business protests and labor problems. If crisis is managed poorly by managers in the ministries, it will explode as a result of frustration, disillusionment, poor welfare, and conditions of service which manifests in the form of outbreak of violence, rioting, unrest, strikes, and other disciplinary measures. Firms consider the funds they spend towards adopting strategies to managed crisis as a waste, however, when this crisis explodes and properties and life are damaged, they will spend that money on renovations and replacements of damaged properties and equipments, which on the long run will dents the corporate image the an organization. When crisis reoccur in companies, the competencies of the organizations are questioned and this can lead to the damage of the companies' reputations which invariably result to low patronages. Other consequences of crisis include employees' absenteeism and loss of qualified manpower. This study tends to examine the impact of crisis management on the performance of ministry of transport Abia State.

Research Hypotheses

H_{o1}: Crisis planning has no significance effect on organizational effectiveness of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

H_{o2}: Crisis communication has no significance impact on organizational output of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature
Conceptual Framework
Crisis Management

The term crisis management has also been defined and conceptualized by different scholars and authorities in the field of management. Petriglieri (2015) defined crisis as an inherently abnormal, unstable and complex situation that represents a threat to the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organization. Crisis as an abnormal situation, or even perception, which is beyond the scope of everyday business and which threatens the operation, safety, and reputation of an organization. Crisis is also conceptualize as an unstable time or state of affairs in which a decisive change is impending (Johansen, Aggerholm, and Frandsen, 200). Crisis is also defined as a specific, unexpected, and non-routine event or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threaten or are perceived to threaten an organization's high priority goals. Howell, J. M., and Shamir (2005), Crisis is also conceptualized as a serious threat to the basic structures or the fundamental values and norms of a system, which under time pressure and highly uncertain circumstances necessitates making vital decisions. A change, which may be sudden or which may take some time to evolve, that results in an urgent problem that must be addressed immediately. An event that threatens the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organization (Pearson and Sommer, 2011) Crises is events or trends that threaten the viability of the organizations within which they occur. Crisis is seen as the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organization's performance and generate negative outcomes.

Crisis Management is a term often used to describe the way in which an organization handles a crisis. A paucity of definitions exists within dictionaries, policy documents, and crisis literature. Crises are large-scale, unexpected, serious, negative developments. They are likely to create instant chaos, regardless of how well your company is managed under normal business conditions. A crisis is an event which has the potential to fundamentally change an organization. It is a concrete threat to the well-being, credibility, reputation, and possibly even the existence, of a business. Crisis management, then, is the task of minimizing the deleterious effects of a serious crisis event using limited resources under extreme time constraints. While damage control is the most obvious aspect of crisis management, its true essence goes far beyond "putting out fires." The essence of crisis management is cultivating the potential successes lurking among the pitfalls through careful planning, decisive execution, and good luck. Crisis management are actions taken by organization to protect it when unexpected events or situations occur that could threaten its success or continued operation. Crisis management can be defined as an approach to minimize the negative impacts on business and stakeholders. These include the various actions taken by company and strategies implemented (Pillai, and Meindl, 2011). Crisis management can be as routine as the internal financial controls that prevent embezzlement. Crisis management requires an analytical approach to define a tradeoff between cost of avoiding the risk and the cost risk would inflict. In crisis management, contingency plans are normally prepared not to avoid crisis but to ensure normal working conditions as quick as possible. The concept of crisis management is thus to identify, act on and recover from a crisis. Crisis management differs to risk management in that sense, risk management focus on calculated and estimated risks related to certain events before they happen (Lee, Peterson, and Tiedens, 2004).

Crisis management on the other hand considers not only the risk or probability of an event but also incorporates the actions necessary during and after such an event occurs. According to Pearson and Clair (1998) the success of managing a crisis is based on the assumption that the organization should survive the crisis with minimal financial constraints. Other researchers, though, emphasize other factors such as social value and reputational assets that the crisis responses provide and protect. The functionality of an organizational member is dependent on its ability to manage crisis. The strength of an organizational management is determinant by its ability to manage employees' crisis effectively. Crisis management and conflict resolution is a major tool that clearly measures the extent an individual has grown in experience, knowledge and understanding. The resultant effect of ill-managed crisis can be very disastrous as it directly affects human emotions. Mismanagement of crisis always cause calamity, as it is often said that when crisis is mismanaged, calamity sets in (Ahmadjian, and Robinson, 2001).

Crisis management comprises various phases: preparedness before crisis, response to limit damages during the crisis and feedback after the crisis.

Before a crisis, preparedness consists in developing knowledge and capacities in order to effectively anticipate, respond and recover from a crisis:

- Risk assessment constitutes the fundamental first step in preparedness: preparing for crisis requires identifying and analyzing major threats, hazards and related vulnerabilities.
- Early warning systems based on the detection of these threats serve to activate pre-defined emergency or contingency plans.
- Stockpiling, maintaining equipment and supplies, training and exercising emergency response forces and related co-ordination mechanisms through regular drills all contribute toward preparedness.
- Appropriate institutional structures, clear mandates supported by comprehensive policies and legislation and the allocation of resources for all these capacities through regular budgets are also instrumental for thorough preparedness to crisis (Coombs, 2007).

Crisis Planning

As a necessity, businesses are viewing crisis planning with increased interest. But understanding the importance of crisis planning is different from developing effective plans, particularly when management may have to sell the need for crisis planning to organizational cultures that previously looked upon the effort as a waste of time and money. Attempting to plan for all the potential crises that could conceivably strike a business can be time-consuming, tiresome, and difficult. As such, even organizations that choose to plan for crises may find their plans shallow, overly-simplistic, or ineffective when crises occur and plans are put to the test. To effectively tackle adversity then, management must not only believe in the value of crisis planning, they need to understand the components of effective crisis planning and implement those components in their organizations. Discussed here is a five-step process that management can follow to create sufficiently detailed, comprehensive crisis plans. By following the process of forming a team, analyzing vulnerabilities, creating strategies, working the plans, and assessing performance, managers can decrease their discomfort regarding crisis planning and increase the probability that their organizations will survive, or perhaps even benefit from, times of crisis.

Management of Crisis Planning

No corporation looks forward to facing a situation that causes significant description to their business, especially one that stimulates extensive media coverage. Public scrutiny can result in a negative financial, political, legal and government impact. Crisis management planning deals with providing the best response to a crisis (Coombs, 2007).

Contingency Planning

Preparing contingency plans in advance, as part of a crisis management plan, is the first step to ensuring an organization is appropriately prepared for a crisis. Crisis management teams rehearse a crisis plan by developing a simulated scenario to use as a drill. The plan should clearly stipulate that the only people to speak publicly about the crisis are the designated persons, such as the company's spokesperson or crisis team members. The first hours after a crisis breaks are the most crucial, so working with speed and efficiency is important, and the plan should indicate how quickly each function should be performed. When preparing to offer a statement externally as well as internally, information should be accurate. Providing incorrect or manipulated information has a tendency to backfire and will greatly exacerbate the situation. The contingency plan should contain information and guidance that will help decision makers to consider not only the short-term consequences, but the long-term effects of every decision (Coombs, 2007).

Business Continuity Planning

When a crisis will undoubtedly cause a significant disruption to an organization, a business continuity plan can help minimize the disruption. First, one must identify the critical functions and processes that are necessary to keep the organization running. Then each critical function and/or process must have its own contingency plan in the event that one of the functional processes ceases or fails. Testing these contingency plans by rehearsing the required actions in a simulation will allow for all involved to become more sensitive and aware of the possibility of a crisis. As a result, in the event of an actual crisis, the team members will act more quickly and effectively (Adut and Coombs, 2007).

Organizational Performance

The concept of organizational performance emanates from the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness. A business organization must produce the right products and services and it must produce them using the fewest possible inputs if it is to have a strong organizational performance. Organizational performance can be measured by analyzing a company's performance as compared to its corporate goals and objectives based on three primary outcomes - financial performance, market performance and shareholder value performance. Businesses simply endeavor to perform well in a number of areas of organization. Most importantly, they strive to do well financially in terms of achieving superior profitability and realizing good returns on investment.

In order to acquire as much market share as possible, it is imperative that companies produce a product that is in demand and offer it at a price that allows them to compete in the market. Finally, they need to perform well in terms of creating value for their shareholders by ensuring a sustainable level of growth and shareholder return (Brown, 2014). However, organizational performance should include multiple performance measures. Such measures could be traditional accounting measures such as sales growth, market share, and profitability. In addition, factors such as customer satisfaction and non-financial goals of the owners are also very important in evaluating performance, especially among privately held firms. This approach is consistent with the Balanced Score Card that the performance of a firm should be measured in four perspectives – financial, customer, learning and growth and internal business processes. The balanced score card directs that managers should use both financial and non-financial measures to evaluate the organization of the firm. In the context of this study, organizational performance will be measured by four components – profitability, sales growth; market share and customer satisfaction (Kaplan and Norton, 1996). Organizational performance as the results of activities of an organization or investment over a given period. However, it is essential to recognize the multidimensional nature of the performance construct. Thus, research that only considers a single dimension or a narrow range of the performance construct (for example, multiple indicators of profitability) may result in misleading descriptive and normative theory building. Research should include multiple performance measures. Such measures could include traditional accounting measures such as sales growth, market share, and profitability. In addition, factors such as overall satisfaction and non-financial goals of the owners are also very important in evaluating performance, especially among privately held firms (Lumpkin and Dess, 2006).

Therefore, performance should be measured both financial and non-financial measures should be used to assess organizational performance (Zahra, 2009). There are four main approaches to measure the performance of organizations. These are the goal approach, system resource approach, stakeholder approach and competitive value approach. The goal approach measures the extent an organization attains its goals while the system resource approach assesses the ability of an organization obtaining its resources. For the stakeholder approach and the competitive value approach, these evaluate performance of an organization based on its ability to meet the needs and expectations of the external stakeholders including the customers, suppliers, competitors. Among these, goal approach is most commonly used method due to its simplicity, understandability and internally focused. Information is easily accessible by the owner's managers for the evaluation process. Thus, the goal approach directs the owners-managers to focus their attentions on the financial (objective) and non-financial measures (subjective). Financial measures include profits, revenues, returns on investment (ROI), returns on sales and returns on equity, sales growth, and profitability growth. Non-financial measures include overall performance of the firm relative to competitors, employment of additional employees, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, customer loyalty, brand awareness and owner's satisfaction with way the business is progressing.

Theoretical Framework

Stakeholder theory by Edward Freeman and Reed (1983)

A stakeholder is a person or a group that has, or claim, ownership, rights, or interest in an organization and its activities. Hence a stakeholder is, for example, employees, customers, suppliers and stockholders. Freeman and Reed (1983) describes that stakeholder theory is that any action taken by management must be made in consideration of the organization's stakeholders. Furthermore Freeman and Reed (1983) propose two definitions of stakeholder: 'The wide sense of stakeholder' and 'the narrow sense of stakeholder'. The Narrow sense of stakeholder is: 'Any identifiable group or individual on which the organization is dependent for its continued survival' (Freeman and Reed, 1983). This type of stakeholder group can also be called a primary stakeholder. This group of stakeholders is typically comprised of employees, shareholders, suppliers and customers. The wide sense of stakeholder is: 'Any identifiable group or individual who can affect the achievement of an organizations' objectives or who is affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives' (Freeman and Reed, 1983).

Another definition of these stakeholders is secondary stakeholders. Media and a wide range of special interest groups are considered as secondary stakeholders. Stakeholder theory is essential to consider in a crisis situation, since it is an event that can harm such stakeholders. Furthermore, a crisis often raise question about the organizations responsibility towards its stakeholder (Alpaslan, Green and Mitroff, 2009).

Alpaslan (2009) suggest that a greater emphasis on stakeholders may help organizations to recover from crises more successfully. This is dependent on the organizations assumption and knowledge about their stakeholders. Moreover, organizations must also be aware of the fact that in a crisis situation the 'wide sense stakeholders', as Freeman and Reed (1983) defines them, are of importance. Alpaslan (2009), however, call these stakeholders "discretionary stakeholders". These stakeholders necessarily do not play a vital role in the organizations daily business but become dependent for the organizations, since they can cause significant damage to an organization. This implies that organizations must consider their secondary stakeholders in planning for and during a crisis situation. The issue here is that secondary stakeholders can range from terrorists to the inhabitants in a crisis area. Therefore, it is hard to determine this group beforehand, since different crises affect different primary and secondary stakeholders.

Empirical Review

Amesi and Amaewhule (2015) carried out a study crisis management and conflict resolution strategies in business organizations in Rivers State. Two research questions were posed to guide the study and one hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The entire population of 7,610 was not studied by the researchers and so sample/sampling techniques were considered necessary. Data for this study were collected by means of questionnaire developed by the researchers and titled "Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution Strategy in Business Organizations in Rivers State (CMACRSBORS)". Sample for the study was 50 percent of the total population, given a total of 3,805 as sample size. A total of 3,200 academic and non-academic staff who returned their instrument amounting to 84 percent returns rate were studied. The questionnaire adopted a modified four point Likert scale of strongly agreed to strongly disagree. Validity was done by 25 academic and non-academic staff, other than those used for the study and reliability co-efficient of 0.78 was obtained. Mean rating and standard deviation was used to analyses the research questions while Z-test was used to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that crisis and conflict affects business organizations in Rivers State as compromise, dominance and suppression, mobilization of members, restructuring the organization and so on are solutions to crisis management and conflict resolution strategies in business organizations. Recommendations made amongst others were that managers and administrators should try as not to be autocratic but should be neutral in handling crisis or conflict issues in business organizations and university administrators should be able to handle issues that arise in business organizations constructively and objectively as the consequences of crisis or conflict in business organizations may be very severe.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a survey design. It has its own advantages of identifying attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals, the economy of the design and the rapid approach in data collection.

Sources of Data

This study adopted both primary and secondary data. The primary data was gotten from observation and questionnaire that was administered to the respondents at Ministry of Transport in Abia State. Secondary data made use of journals, magazines, textbooks, newspapers and seminar papers.

Population of the Study

The target population consists of two hundred and forty one (241) employees of every department in the Ministry of Transport in Abia State.

Sample Size Determination

To get the sample size, a formula propounded by Taro Yamane (1964) was used.

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

Where:

N	=	population of the study (241)
$(e)^2$	=	margin of error i.e 5% (0.05)
n	=	sample size
I	=	Constant

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

$$n = \frac{241}{1 + 241(0.0025)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{241}{1 + 0.6025}$$

$$n = \frac{241}{1.6025}$$

$$n = 150.4$$

n= 150

Thus, the sample size of the study was 150 respondents

Sampling Technique

A stratified sampling method was adopted and it gave the staff an equal chance of being selected.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Validity is based on the view that a particular instrument measures what it is meant or purposes to measure (Robson, 2003). The content validity of the instruments was established by first submitting the prepared questionnaire on separate sheets to the experts in the field. Those items that proved ambiguous and did not address the issue being investigated were discarded. In scientific research, measurement of accuracy is of great importance. Reliability suggests trust worthiness, based consistency and precision of the measurement process. However, Test– retest approach was adopted to ensure the reliability of the instrument and the Cronbach Alpha for reliability of the co-efficient result was computed through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 2.0. The decision rule was based on the coefficient correlation that is up to 0.5 and above.

Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive analysis in form of percentages and frequencies. The Social Package for Statistical science (SPSS) software aided in data analysis. Regression model was used to test the dependent and independents variable.

Data Presentation/Hypotheses

H_{o1}: Crisis planning has no significance effect on organizational effectiveness of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

Regression between Crisis planning and organizational effectiveness

Variable	Parameters	Coefficient	Std error	t – value
Constant	β_0	0.019	0.002	9.50***
Crisis planning (X_1)	β_1	0.661	0.288	2.295**
R-Square		0.569		
Adjusted R – Square		0.524		
F – statistics		6.502***		

Source: Field Data, 2021

The table showed the effect of Crisis planning and organizational effectiveness. The result of coefficient of multiple determination (R^2) was 0.569 which implies that 56.9% of the variations in dependents were explained by changes in the independent variables while 43.1% were unexplained by the stochastic variable indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 1% probability level.

The coefficient of crisis planning was statistically significant and positively related to organizational effectiveness at 5 percent level (2.295**). This implies that a unit increase in crisis planning leads to a corresponding increase on organizational effectiveness. This implies that Crisis planning has a significance effect on organizational effectiveness of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

H_{o2}: Crisis communication has no significance impact on organizational output of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

Regression on Crisis communication on organizational output

Variable	Parameters	Coefficient	Std error	t – value
Constant	β_0	0.221	0.051	4.250***
Crisis communication (X_1)	β_1	0.254	0.082	3.097***
R-Square		0.500		
Adjusted R – Square		0.465		
F – statistics		7.721***		

Source: Field Data, 2021

The table showed the effect of Crisis communication on organizational output. The result of coefficient of multiple determination (R^2) was 0.50 which implies that 50.0% of the variations in dependents were explained by changes in the independent variables while 50% were unexplained by the stochastic variable indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 1% probability level.

The coefficient of Crisis communication was statistically significant and positively related to organizational output at 5 percent level (3.097***). This implies that a unit increase in Crisis communication leads to a corresponding increase on organizational output. This implies that Crisis communication has a significance impact on organizational output of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

Summary of Findings

i. Crisis planning has a significance effect on organizational effectiveness of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.
ii. Crisis communication has a significance impact on organizational output of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study examined the impact of crisis management on the performance of ministry of transport Abia State. The study found out that crisis communication has significance impact on organizational output of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria. The organization and communication involved in responding to a crisis in a timely fashion makes for a challenge in businesses. There must be open and consistent communication throughout the hierarchy to contribute to a successful crisis communication process. The study concluded that crisis planning has significance effect on organizational effectiveness of Ministry of Transport Abia State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

i. Management must not only believe in the value of crisis planning, they need to understand the components of effective crisis planning and implement those components in their organizations.
ii. Management should make sure that the plan should outline and explain how organization should communicate about the crisis and handle the crisis towards enhancing organizational performance.

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