

**CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE NIGERIAN MEDIA INDUSTRY:
EFFECTIVE USE OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS
AS THE ANTIDOTE FOR RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN E- BUSINESS
ENVIRONMENT.**

By

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Abstract

Management of organizational conflict involves an effective diagnosis of the surrounding variables within and in the immediate environment of such an organization. Such strategic diagnosis must indicate whether there is need for an intervention and the type of intervention, which must be applied as well as what the intervention, seeks to achieve. The objectives of this paper amongst other are to: (i) explore possible areas of conflict in the media industry as well as causes of conflicts in organizations (ii) show-case how the use of Integrated Marketing Communications can help promote long-term Client-customer relationships. The paper adopts a mixture of ex-post facto and survey research Methods with structured questionnaire distributed among three classes of respondents, which are (a) customers, (b) Advertisers (producers of beverage products), (c) Advertising agencies, and media houses. Pearson moment correlation and Kruskal Wallis One way analysis statistical instruments were used to analyze the data obtained from respondents. Findings shows that the use of Integrated Marketing Communication across to target audience will help reduce conflicts, help company manage possible areas of conflicts and promote long lasting client- customer relationship in the media industry.

Keywords: Conflict; Management; Media; Integrated; Marketing; Communication; and Relationship.

Introduction

In the today's world of Marketing, Companies face the common challenge of creating distinctive Capabilities and improving their economic performance in the face of competition. Organizations have also become increasingly concern about stimulating and facilitating communication between the various internal functional areas and the external network of customers and suppliers. This concern is motivated because of the significant impact that these interfaces have on an organization's business strategy. Robbins (2000) sees conflict as a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected or is about to negatively affect something that the first party cares about or desires passionately.

Management of Organizational conflict involves an effective diagnosis of the surrounding variables within and in the immediate environment of such an Organization. Rahim (2002) believes that such diagnosis must be at the interpersonal, intra-group and inter-group levels and the styles (strategies) to be used in handling the conflicts. Such environmental diagnosis must indicate whether there is need for an intervention and the type of intervention, which must be applied. Such intervention might be designed to achieve a number of goals, according to Rahim (2002). These goals amongst others include. (i) To attain and maintain a moderate amount of substantive conflict in non-routine tasks at various levels. (ii) To help reduce conflict at all levels. (iii) To enable the organization members to select and use the appropriate styles in handling conflicts so that various situations can be effectively dealt with and (iv) To proffer an effective and efficient way in avoiding such conflicts in future; and.

Conflict may occur due to a number of factors; such factors according to Rahim (2002) include: (i) When a part is required to engage in an activity that is inconsistent with his goals, needs or interest;(ii) When one party holds behavioral preferences, the satisfaction of which is incompatible with another person's implementation of his or her preferences (Rahim, 2002); (iii) When a party wants some mutually desirable resource that is in short supply. This leads to the non-satisfaction of the needs of the every member of the group; (iv) When a particular party possesses attitudes, value, skills and goals that are salient in directing his or her behavior but are

perceived to be exclusive of the attitudes and values, skills and goals held by other(s), amongst others.

To sum-up the above clarification, conflict occurs when there are incompatible preference(s), goal, objectives, interest, and desires among different parties within a group.

On the problem, which necessitates this paper, it is interesting to note that most literatures suggest that conflict is often said to be functional for organizations. Most recommendations relating to organizational conflict still fall with the spectrum of conflict management and resolution. (Richard and Chadrick, 2004). There has been disturbing lag on how conflicts can be really be eradicated or reduced to a minimal level as far as intra-organizational and inter-organizational conflicts are concerned. This proposed research therefore intends to fill that intellectual gap.

The objectives of this paper amongst others are to: (i) explore possible areas of conflicts in the media industry as well as causes of conflicts in organizations. (ii) Show-case how the use of integrated marketing Communications can help promote long-term client customer relationship. To achieve the above stated objectives, the paper makes this research hypothesis stated in the alternate form, which states thus “the more an organization adopts IMC Principles the more profitable long term client –customer relationship it will build”. Data obtained were analyzed with the use of Correlation Coefficient Matrix and Kruskal-Wallis Test One Way Analysis

Literature Review

Thomas (1989) as cited by Esuh (2004) produces a model for understanding organizational conflict. In the model, Thomas (1989) believes that organizational conflict can be viewed as a process in a complex series of events over time and in turn affect them. Thomas (1989) therefore draws our attention to the following elements. (i) Awareness of conflict: here the parties to a conflict must first recognize that conflict exists. (ii) Experience of emotional reactions: He believes that these emotions and thoughts are crucial to the development of conflict. (iii) Formulation of appropriate strategies and there must be plan to adopt the best strategy.

On causes of Organizational conflict, it is pertinent to note that numerous causes are identified according to Salleh, Mohamad Johdi and Adulpakdee (2012), “the factors of organizational conflict in school can be classified into two main categories: structural factors, which relate to

the nature of the organization and the way in which work is organized; and personal factors, which relate to differences between organizational members. .

It needs be noted that a number of scholars believe that conflicts have both negative and positive consequences. The negative consequences of conflict include strong negative emotions, disorder in the organization, mistrust, diversion of attention and energies from major tasks and interference with organization effectiveness (Esuh 2004). The storm of conflict can also produce some positive effects some of which include: It can make parties to conflict to sit-up and diligently pursue organizational objectives and goals attainment; It opens up the once ignored problems; New idea opens up; It makes both parties to properly and carefully monitor one another's performance; It can contribute to organization effectiveness. Some conflicts have the potential of yielding both benefits as well as pitfalls; Organizations must abreast their policies and strategies to the process of managing its occurrence. The goal is not to eliminate conflict but rather, adopting procedures for maximizing its potential benefits and minimizing its potential costs.

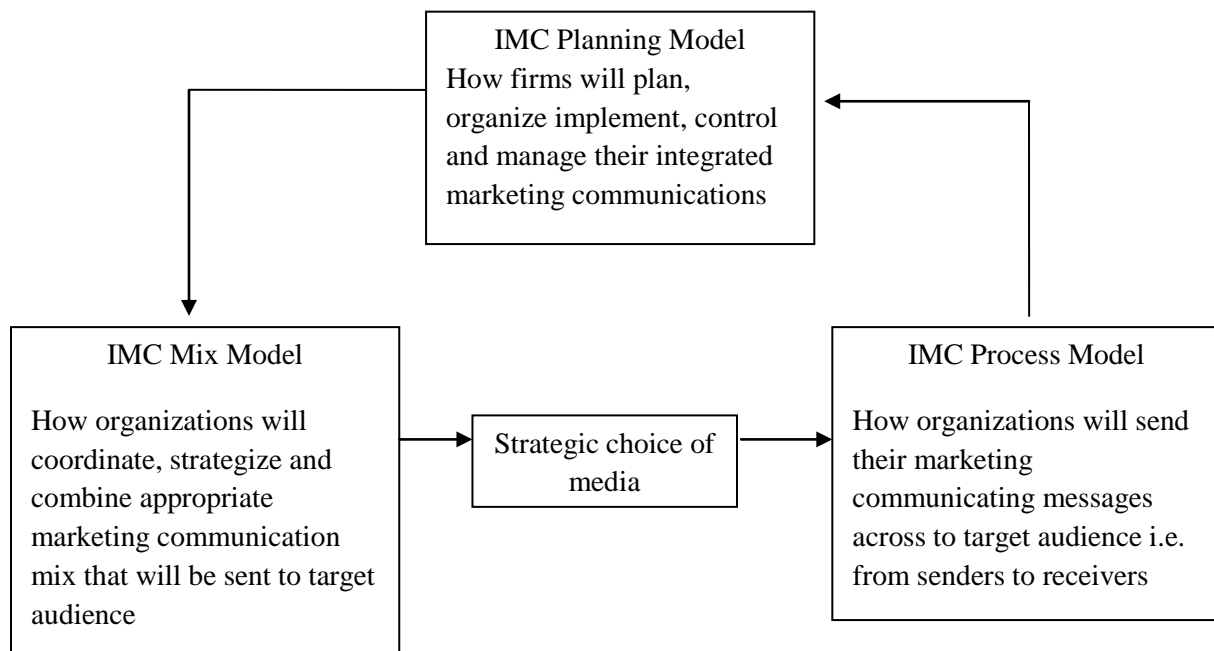
Literature on the concept Integrated Marketing Communications is seen by Duncan and Kaywood (1996) as “the strategic Coordination of all messages and media used by an organization in order to collectively influence its perceived brand value. The American Association of Advertising Agencies (4AS) defined the concept thus “A concept of Marketing Communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines-general Advertising, Direct response, Sales Promotion and Public Relations, personal Selling- and Combine these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and Maximum Communication Impact”

The use of Integrated Marketing Communications emphasizes the need for a synergistic marketing communications plan, which uses multiple tools of marketing Communications apart from the traditional Advertising and capitalizes on the strengths of each, with the goal of achieving maximum communication impact. It believes that marketing communications elements such as Advertising; Sales Promotion, Personal Selling, Public Relations, Direct and Interactive marketing must be strategically Coordinated and that the firm must also do a strategic evaluation on its choice of media taking the strengths & weaknesses of each of the media into consideration, as well as the objectives of the marketing communication message, target audience under focus,

amongst others. A firm's understanding of integrated marketing communications structure must first start with an abreast knowledge of the issues involved in IMC planning model. The firm needs to understand the issues involved on how it has to plan, organize, implement, control and manage the entire marketing communication program. The model below explains this clearly. Thereafter, the organization makes a strategic choice of marketing communication mix elements. All the marketing communication mix elements are put on the table and the choice of combination depends on a number of factors such as:

- Marketing objective of the organization, & Nature of target audience under focus
- State of the product in its product life cycle
- Resource availability to the organization, & Cost of media choices
- Cost effectiveness of each of the marketing promotional tools
- Type of tool being used by your competitors
- Competitors' reaction pattern to the organization's marketing communication drive

Figure 1 Planning of IMC program



Source: Kehinde, O.J. [2009] *Integrated Marketing Communications and Customers Patronage of Nigerian Beverage Products*. Published doctoral dissertation, Covenant University, Nigeria.p40

According to the above model, the organization will thereafter make strategic choice of media after considering the factors listed above. The next step is IMC process model. Fundamental to the understanding of marketing communications is an understanding of the marketing communication process, (i.e. how marketing communications work from sender to the receiver (Picton and Broderick, 2005). .

The Nigerian Media Industry

The Nigerian Media Industry represents one of the most vibrant business concerns in the field of marketing Communications. Marketing Communication has been defined according to Belch and Belch (2004) as the coordination of all seller initiated efforts to set-up channels of information and persuasion in order to sell goods and services or promote an idea. Fill (2005) opines that marketing communication is a management process through which an organization engages with its various audiences. By understanding an audience's communication environment, an organization seeks to develop and present messages for its identified stakeholder groups before evaluating and acting upon the response. By conveying messages that are of significant value, audiences are encouraged to offer attitudinal and behavioural responses. Players in the Nigerian media industry include: Advertising Agencies, Advertisers, public relations Practitioners, Media houses such as Radio, television houses, etc

Advertisers are actually on the increase in Nigeria today. Odunsi (1998) as cited by Esuh (2004) identified three categories of Nigerian Advertisers: The multinationals companies which are part of foreign based companies, the strong locals and the emergent of small & medium scale entrepreneurs. A major player that is not included in the above classification is government and its agencies. Government and its agencies represent a key player among Nigerian Advertisers. In other words, government and its agencies place adverts that run into multiple millions in the Nigerian various media.

Areas of Conflict in the Nigerian Media Industry:

We can examine organizational conflict from two prospective. Theses two areas are identified by Fey and Beamish (2000) as intra-organizational conflict and inter-organizational conflict in which Selleh et al (2013) tagged it a structural factors and personal factors respectively. Intra-organizational conflict according to Esuh (2004) arises from opposition and clashes that are

based primarily on the way jobs are designed, Organizational structure and allocation of authority.

Esuh (2004) identified four main areas of intra organizational conflict. These are:(i) Vertical conflict: This arises between levels in an organization especially when superior officers try to control the subordinate rigidly and the subordinates try to resist; (ii) Horizontal conflict: this is a conflict that arises at the same hierarchical level in an organization i.e. between two heads of departments;(iii) Line/staff conflict: This is when line Managers feel that staff managers are stepping on their areas of legitimate authority; (iv) Role conflict: This is when a focal person perceives incompatible messages and pressures from the role senders.

Inter-Organizational Conflict refer to misunderstanding and clashes between two or more organizations:

Possible areas of conflicts in the Nigerian Media Industry include

- Client (Advertiser) - Agency Conflict
- Agency to Agency conflict
- Agency - Media Conflict
- Conflict within media such as conflict between print Media and Broadcast Media
- Proprietors / Manager V Employees Conflict

Conflict could also arise between Regulatory bodies such as:

- ADVAN – Advertisers of Association of Nigeria
- AAAN - Association of Advertising Agencies of Nigeria
- BON – Broadcasting Organization of Nigeria
- MIPAN – Media Independent Practitioners Association of Nigeria
- NPAN – Newspapers Proprietorship Association of Nigeria
- DAAN – Outdoor Advertising Agencies of Nigeria

The above regulatory Associations are under the umbrella of advertising practitioners’ council of Nigeria (APCON). APCON, the umbrella controlling body has as its vision to promote responsible and ethical advertising practice, acting as the conscience of society, and watching for the consumers whilst managing the needs and interest of the stakeholders in the Nigeria

Advertising industry. It needs be re-emphasize here that the contention of this paper is how conflicts can be managed not mere resolution. According to Robbins (2000) conflict resolution implies reduction, elimination or termination of conflict. In the light of the above, many studies on negotiation, bargaining, mediation and arbitration, fall into the conflict resolution category. On the literature on conflict and its management, wall and Callister (1995) as cited by Rahim (2002) made the following assertion:

*“We raised three of the most important questions in this article:
Is moderate conflict desirable? Is too little conflict dysfunctional?
As too much? And should leaders at times, promote conflict to attain
organizational goals? Our tentative answers to these questions
are no, no and no” (p 545)*

The paper uses a combination of ex-post facto and survey research methods with a hypothesis and structured questionnaires distributed among sample respondents that include those from marketing communication agencies, Advertisers or producers of beverages products and consumers of beverage products in the Lagos, Ogun State, and Osun State of Nigeria. The population of this study includes (i) consumers of beverage products in south western part of Nigeria, (ii) Producers or manufacturers of beverages in south-western part of Nigeria, and (iii) Marketing Communication Organizations such as Advertising Agencies, Media Independent organizations public Relations forms etc. Using stratified sampling methods, 50% of a total of 84 registered Advertising agencies were sampled and fourteen beverage-producing companies were sampled comprising of seven multinational companies and seven indigenous firms. As regards sampled consumers, the research adopted a multi-stage sampling approach after three states of Lagos, Ogun and Osun had been earlier randomly sampled using judgmental sampling method.

In analyzing the data, Pearson moment correlation coefficients were calculated among the continuous variables. Also Kruskal Wallis one-way analysis was also uwzzased. Kruskal Wallis one way analysis was used because of the nature of the hypotheses as we are comparing the mean (\bar{x}_s) of three variables which are those of consumers; staff of beverage producing firms (Advertisers) and staff of marketing communication organizations (Advertising Agencies).

Hypotheses Testing

Research Hypothesis: The more an organisation adopts IMC principles in its e-business operations the more profitable longterm client-customer relationship it will build.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficient Matrix of Adoption of Integrated Marketing Communication and client-customer relationship

Variations	CPAIME	MPIME	SBOCPIME	CPCCR	MCR	SBOCPCCR
CPAIME	1	0.57*	0.82*	-0.58*	-0.67*	-0.64*
MPIME		1	0.72*	-0.74*	-0.51*	-0.53*
SBOCPIME			1	-0.88*	-0.59*	-0.66*
CPCCR				1	-0.72*	-0.60*
MPCCR					1	-0.77*
SBOCPCCR						1
Mean	16	18	16	8	12	10
Standard Deviation	0.46	0.44	0.42	0.40	0.32	0.24

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Key:

CPAIME-Consumers' Perceived Adoption of Integrated Marketing Communication

MPIME-Marketers' Perceived Adoption of Integrated Marketing Communication

SBOCPIME-Staff of Beverage Producing Company Perceived Adoption of Integrated Marketing Communication

CPCCR-Consumers' Perceived client-customer relationship

MPCCR-Marketers' Perceived client-customer relationship

SBOCPCCR-Staff of Beverage Producing Company Perceived client-customer relationship

Table 2: Summary of Kruskal-Wallis Test One Way Analysis

Test Statistic	57.415
Corrected for ties	56.246
Degree of Freedom	2

Significance Level	0.012
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Source: Field Survey, 2015

Nonparametric, Kruskal-Wallis Test. A asymptotic significance level at $p < 0.05$

@ - Rating means (scale range 1 to 5) and $n =$ sample size=1090

Kruskal- Wallis test is a nonparametric (distribution free) test, which is used to compare three or more groups of sample data. Kruskal- Wallis test is used when assumptions of ANOVA are not met. ANOVA is a statistical data analysis technique that is used when the independent variable groups are more than two. In ANOVA, we assume that distribution of each group should be normally distributed. In Kruskal- Wallis test, we do not assume any assumption about the distribution. So Kruskal- Wallis test is a distribution free test.. Kruskal - Wallis test is also an improvement over the Sign test and Wilxoson’s sign rank test, which ignores the actual magnitude of the paired magnitude.

Kruskal- Wallis test statistics is approximately a chi-square distribution, with $k-1$ degree of freedom where n_i should be greater than 5. If the calculated value of Kruskal- Wallis test is less than the chi-square table value, then the null hypothesis will be accepted. If the calculated value of Kruskal- Wallis test H is greater than the chi-square table value, then we will reject the null hypothesis and say that the sample comes from a different population.

In this study, it is tested whether the more an organization adopts IMC principles in its e-business operations, the more profitable long term client=customer relationship it will build. Perception of beverage producing companies, (Advertisers), customers and marketing organization (Advert Agencies) on the adoption of IMC principles in relation to building long-term client-customer relationship was recorded on an ordinal scale from 1 to 5. Since the null-hypothesis is rejected and the above research hypothesis is upheld at ($H=57.415, df=2,$ and $P=0.012$), the conclusion is that the more an organization adopts IMC principles, the more profitable long term client customer relationship it will build. Results indicate that the use of Integrated Marketing Communication. Organizations can help reduce conflicts among the various participants, as clear consistent credible and competitive messages will be sent across to both consumers and other stakeholder in the industry. Moreover, it will help to promote long-

term customer relationships. Better relationship will be enhanced between the different segments such as:

- Better Advertiser (client) & Advertising Agency relationship
- Reduction in Ad. Agency to Ad. Agency conflicts
- Minimization of Ad. Agency Vs media conflict
- Better interdepartmental / intradepartmental relationships
- Better employees, management/and proprietors relationships
- Reduction of conflicts among regulatory bodies within the industry such as AAAN, ADVAN, BON, AAAN, MIPAN and NPAN among others.

Conclusion: It needs be emphasized here that what we desire for contemporary organizations is conflict management and not merely conflict resolution. Conflict management does not necessarily mean avoidance, reduction or termination of conflict. However it involves a strategic design of effective macro level strategies to minimize the dysfunctions of conflicts and put measures in place to enhancing constructive function that will enhance learning and effectiveness in an organization.

Policy Recommendations:

- Organizational members while interacting with one another must find ways of dealing constructively with their disagreements.
- There must be deliberate and conscious efforts on reduction of certain aspects of conflicts that may have negative effects on individuals and group performance.
- Conflict management strategies must be properly designed in such a way, which can satisfy the needs and expectations of the various strategic stakeholders of an organization.
- Conflict management strategies must also be designed in such a way that can enhance organizational learning. Organizations should ensure that conflict management strategies are designed in a way that will enhance and promote critical and innovative thinking in the organization so as to learn the process of effectively diagnosing the right problems and proffering delightful solutions.
- Leaders must behave ethically. This calls for leaders to be open to information. To manage conflicts ethically, organizations should institutionalize the positions of

employees advocate, customer and supplier advocate, as well as environmental and stockholder advocacy. Rahim, Garrett and Buntzman (1992) asserted that only if these advocates are heard by decision – makers in organizations, then such organization will have an improved record of ethically managed organizational conflict. Another point properly monitored complaints and suggestion boxes must be installed in strategic locations and must be read by chief Executive Officer of the organization or his designation representative such as Human resource manager or Corporate Affairs Manager etc.

- Organizations must select and use appropriate conflict management strategies. This requires training, retraining and on- the –job experience to select and use the styles of handling interpersonal conflict so that various conflict situations can be appropriately dealt with.

Agencies must exhibit maturity during crisis situations. Companies must also exhibit openness, accessibility, truth, honesty and discretion in their organization. These are vital qualities that can make them survive and excel in the ever-competitive world of marketing. Media Practitioners must cultivate better approach in handling crisis. Favourable public opinion can be better achieved through good performance, steady and regular advertising as well as friendly media.

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