Relationship between Customer Motivation, Customer Training, and Emergent Change Preparedness

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Abstract: Many organizations are yet to understand the extent to which emergent change affects them. The immense focus on planned change, while important, means that a focus on emergent change is disregarded. In the same breath, organizations understand the importance of customer motivation and customer training yet a gap still exists in preparing the customers for emergent change. The purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between customer motivation, customer training, and emergent change preparedness. This is a trans-disciplinary approach that merges the concept of customers and organizational development. The study was conducted at the Telecommunication companies in Nakuru Sub County in Kenya. The findings of the study showed that a significant positive relationship exists between customer motivation and customer training (r= 0.764, p= 0.000), between customer motivation and emergent change preparedness (r= 0.342, p= 0.036), and between customer training and emergent change preparedness (r=0.410, p= 0.011).
Keywords: Customer Motivation, Customer Training, Emergent Change Preparedness.

INTRODUCTION
Customer Motivation and Emergent Change Preparedness

Customers have to be motivated so that they can voluntarily contribute to the organization. An exploratory study by [1] showed that organizations segment their markets so that they can get to understand their customers better.

Therefore, segmentation of a market is a knowledge-generation process that helps to understand customer motivations. The organizational environment affects this process. Understanding customer motivation, therefore, help to deal with any emergent change that presents itself.

A survey by Kaufmann, Schulze, & Veit [2] on motivation in crowdsourcing found that voluntary participation is brought about by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. However, intrinsic motivation was more important. In agreement, Meuter, Bitner, Ostrom, and Brown [3] showed that intrinsic motivation was quite important and it had an advantage in emergent change preparedness. The survey also showed that extrinsic motivation such as rewards has a relative advantage in customer participation in an organization. Participation necessitates the customers to contribute their time, effort, and knowledge. An organization has to understand how to segment its market to understand how best to motivate the customers to participate in the organization.

Likewise, Leimeister, Huber, Bretschneider, and Krcmar [4] studied ideas competition in software companies and the importance of user participation. The study showed that active user participation was imperative for successful organizations. Participation can be achieved by motivating the users. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. The motives of customers to participate include direct compensation, learning, self-marketing, and other social motives such as a push from family and peers. Customers can be motivated through incentives. Incentives can be monetary or non-monetary. Non-monetary incentives include access to knowledge, prizes, appreciation, and career options.

Kaufmann *et al.* [5] showed that customers would participate depending on the benefits that they will receive. By involving the customer in service provision, the customer becomes a co-creator. As a co-creator of the organization, the customer becomes more motivated to perform activities in the organization regardless of what the organizational environment may bring about. This kind of motivation goes beyond financial reward, it is an intrinsic motivation. This does not, however, oust other forms of rewards.

Chan *et al.* [6] did a study on customer participation in financial services and found out that customer participation was instrumental in creating economic value especially when the customer is

motivated to participate. Thus, they may want to be compensated. This compensation was financial. A review by Cuiling [7] showed that customers would like to have their experiences taken into account and the organization should be flexible enough to accommodate the customers. This helps to gain customer satisfaction and in the end, customer loyalty. The customer becomes motivated to withstand any changes in the organizational environment.

In a content analysis study, Holjevac, Marković, and Raspor [8] revealed that in the service industry, customers are a vital component and their participation in the provision of feedback serves as a motivating factor. This creates dialogic communications in which the customer can be given information that helps in preparing them for emergent change.

Customer Training and Emergent Change Preparedness

In studying co-creation service recovery, Dong, Evans, and Zou [9], enumerated that organizations need to train their customers so that the organization can develop. Training enhances the ability of the customers in the process of co-creation as they operate in the complex environment. By equipping the customers with knowledge, the organization is ensuring that the customers are empowered to act when there is a change in the organizational environment. Correspondingly, Dong, Sivakumar, Evans, and Zou [10], investigated the boundary conditions in customer participation. The investigation revealed that customer ability is a vital factor for customer participation readiness. An organization has a responsibility in enhancing the participation of customers. The organization can enhance the ability of the customers by ensuring that the customer is trained. Training a customer may ultimately depend on the level of participation of the customer. The results of the investigation showed that increased abilities had an effect on customer participation readiness. The higher the customer participation readiness, the higher the service outcomes. This included the level of customer satisfaction and perceived service quality even in times of unforeseen events.

Organizations need to understand the abilities of their clients in order to provide the customers with training that will assist in participating in the organization. Atwal and Williams [11] considered customers' ability as instrumental in luxury hotel brand marketing as it helps to increase customer participation. Empowerment of the customers raises their self-efficacy as they have the belief that they are able to tackle and solve any problems or changes that may surface. In the same way, Dabholkar [12], developed a framework that examined the impact of customer participation when delivering services. The framework revealed that there is a causal model between the expertise of a customer and their participation. When

the customer has a low level of expertise to deal with any unintended changes in the organization, then, it becomes important for the organization to increase their knowledge and train the customers.

A study by Eisingerich and Bell [13], sought to understand the importance of customer education and participation by collecting data from 1268 clients from a global financial services firm. The study discovered that customer education was important for effective customer participation. Customer education also brought about loyalty. This has the ability to ensure that the customers remain in the organization even when turbulent times face the organization. These turbulent times bring about changes that are unplanned in the organization.

In a cross-sectional survey to explore customer readiness, Meuter, Bitner, Ostrom, and Brown [14], performed three studies in self-service technologies firms. The study showed that the predictors of customer ability were affected by the education that the customers had received. For customer readiness, it was important for an organization to educate their customers so that they can have the efficacy to deal with emerging issues on their own. The same sentiments are discovered by a study by Blazevic and Lievens [15]. The exploratory study discovered that with the right training and education, customers are able to identify problem areas and provide suggestions and ideas that are concrete. An organization can educate the customers with seminars and even through online platforms such as websites and social networking platforms.

In their study on retaining college students, Torkzadeh *et al*. [16] found that in order to enhance customer participation in a turbulent environment, it is important to clearly define the customer's role and ability as a way of motivating them. Constant changes in customer demands have inclined changes in institutions and there has to be customer participation if the changes are to be dealt with effectively. There are those customers that participate so that they can learn more about the organization. As presented by Leclercq-Vandelanoitte & Plé [17], this serves as a motivating factor. The customer is given the autonomy to be capable to deal with emerging changes as they have been given the right information, knowledge, and skills.

In a case study on the adoption of mobile money banking in Kenya, Ngugi, Pelowski, and Ogembo [18] showed that mobile phone users need to be educated on new technologies. This provides a sense of autonomy for the users. Users are able to appreciate more self-service technologies when they are equipped to handle various aspects of the technologies. They become participants in service delivery, there is a sense of freedom in dictating the service that they want to receive, and there is no need for often contact with the

organization as the customer has the autonomy to the kind of service they receive.

Research Questions
- What is the relationship between customer motivation and emergent change preparedness among firms in Telecommunication industry in Nakuru Sub County, Kenya?
- What is the relationship between customer training and emergent change preparedness among firms in Telecommunication industry in Nakuru Sub County, Kenya?

METHODOLOGY

This study used a correlational research design to assess the relationship that exists between customer motivation, customer training, and emergent change preparedness. The study was conducted in the telecommunications industry in Nakuru Sub County in Kenya. The major players in the telecommunications industry in Nakuru Sub County are Safaricom, Telkom, and Airtel Kenya. A census survey was conducted and thirty-eight managers serving at different capacities were used in the study. The research instrument that was used in the study was a questionnaire, which was subjected to a validity and reliability test. Kothari [19] indicates that validity is used to check whether the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Content validity was used to ensure that there were no influences that got in the way of the respondents' objectivity. To ensure internal consistency of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted at the telecommunication companies in Kericho County in

Kenya. The questionnaires were then subjected to a Cronbach Alpha reliability test, which resulted in a reliability value of 0.7 deeming the questionnaire reliable for the study. Ethical considerations were considered to ensure that the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents were upheld.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Customer Motivation

The researcher sought to understand how the telecommunications industry motivates their customers. Thus, it was important to understand the level of the managers, their preferred communication method to the customer, frequency of customer access to the organization's products, the frequency of buying products and services, and the rewards the organization offers.

Level of Management

The researcher sought to understand the level of management of the respondents. 20 (53%) of the respondents were on the middle level of management. 14 (37%) of the respondents were in the lower level of management and 4 (10%) of the respondents were in the top management as shown in figure 1 below. This shows consistency with the study's population, as there are fewer top-level managers as compared to the middle and lower managers. This study posits that this is a good indication as the study involves understanding the customers, it is the middle, and lower levels of management that most deal with the customers and are able to best identify the customer participation strategies in use.
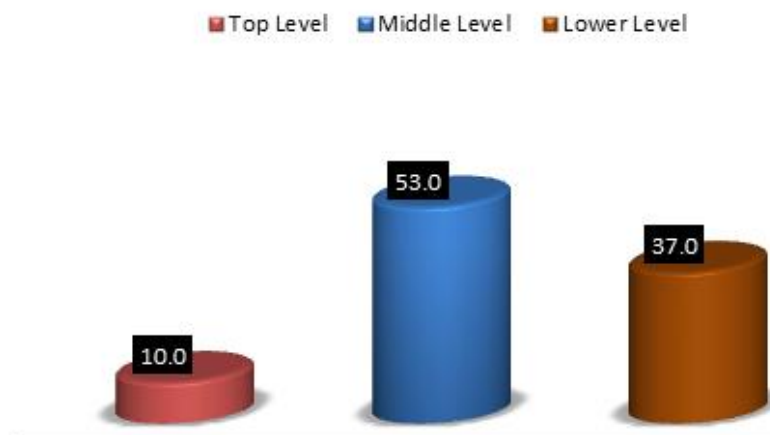

Fig-1: Level of Management
Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Preferred Method of Communicating to Customers

This study sought to understand the preferred communication method to customers. Table 1 shows that 30 (79%) of the respondents preferred a face-to-

face communication, 7 (18%) of the respondents preferred to communicate via a telephone call, and only 1 (3%) preferred to use the internet. A face-to-face communication is preferred as a dyadic communication,

which helps to bring about a two-way communication that enables real communication to take place.

Table-1: Method of communication to customers

Method of Communication	Frequency	Percent (%)
Face to face	30	79
Telephone call	7	18
Internet	1	3
Total	38	100

Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Customers' Access to Organization's Products and Services

The researcher also wanted to find out the frequency the customers accessed the organization's products. Table 2 below shows that there was a 33 (87%) frequency of daily access to the organization's products by the customers, and a 5 (13%) access of products when it is necessary. A daily access frequency shows that there is a high degree of access to the mobile communication products and services in Nakuru Sub County.

Table-2: Customers' Access to Organization's Products and Services

Customer Access to organization's products	Frequency	Percent (%)
Daily	33	87
When necessary	5	13
Total	38	100

Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Frequency Customers Buy Products from the Organization

The researcher was interested in finding out how often the customers buy the organization's products. Table 3 shows that 16 (42%) of the respondents cited that customers buy products thrice a week, 12 (31%) cited that customers buy products monthly, 9 (24%) cited that customers buy products once a week, and 1 (3%) cited that customer buy products twice a week. This is an indication of high degree usage of the mobile communication products and services in Nakuru Sub County.

Table-3: Frequency Customers Buy Products

Access time	Frequency	Percent (%)
Once a week	9	24
Twice a week	1	3
Thrice a week	16	42
Monthly	12	31
Total	38	100

Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Rewards Provided to Customers

There was an interest to understand whether the customers received any rewards. As indicated in figure 2, 37 (97%) of the respondents acknowledged that the customers receive rewards. These rewards were in form of loyalty points, promotional giveaway products such as hats, t-shirts, bags, umbrellas, and cars. 1 (3%) of the respondents said that the customers do not receive any rewards. Kaufmann *et al.* [20], posits that rewards are a vital component in the motivation of customers. When customers are appropriately rewarded, they are able to participate in the organization more and in a voluntary manner, which provides the organization with insights into the customer's needs, wants, and ideas.

Do Customers Receive Rewards?

■ Yes ■ No

3%

97%

Fig-2: Rewards Provided to Customers
Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Customer Training

The study also wanted to determine whether the telecommunications companies in Nakuru Sub County involve their customers in training.

Importance of Customer Training

First, the researcher wanted to establish whether the respondents thought that customer training was important. Figure 3 shows that 37 (97%) of the respondents stated that customer training was important, while 1 (3%) thought that customers training is not important.
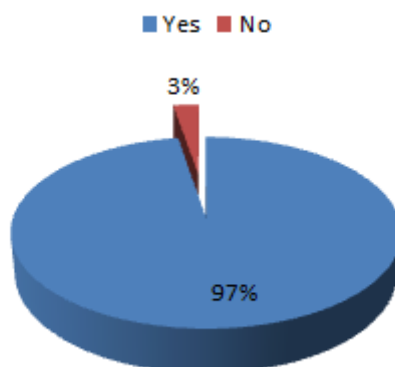
■ Yes ■ No

3%

97%

Fig-3: Customer Training Importance
Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

This finding is in line with the study by Atwal and Williams [21] that found out that customer training is quite vital in increasing customer participation in an organization. This is because customer training provides an avenue in which the customer can understand the organization better and gain abilities that help the customer participate in a meaningful way in the organization.

Organization Provision of Customer Training

The researcher sought to understand whether the customers were trained in the organization's products and services. As indicated in Figure 4, 29 (76%) of the respondents indicated that their organization did provide customer training while 9 (24%) were of a contrary viewpoint. This signifies that the telecommunication companies not only understand the importance of customer training, they also implement the customer training to the customers. The respondents also pointed out that training has to be provided because the telecommunication industry is quite vibrant and there are emergent issues that come up every day due to situations such as changes in technology. By itself, the training that is provided mainly focuses on the products that are offered by the organization such as access to the internet and voice bundles as well as usage of money transfer platforms.
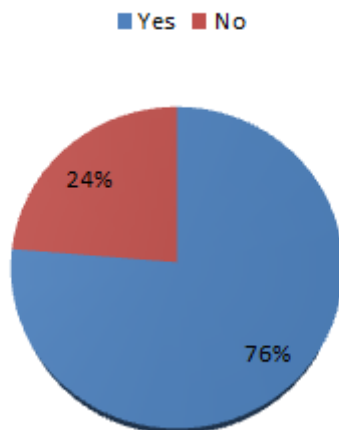
Fig-4: Organization Provides Customer Training
Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Frequency of Providing Training

The researcher sought to understand how often training programs are provided in the organizations. The data collected was analyzed and presented in Table 4 below. 29 (76.3%) of the respondents that had indicated that their organizations conduct customer training, 11 (28.9%) indicated that the training was conducted monthly, 1 (2.6%) indicated that the training is conducted half-yearly, 1 (2.6%) of the respondents indicated that training was conducted annually, and 16 (42.1%) indicated that training was done in other times when necessary.

Table-4: Frequency Training is conducted

	Training times	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Monthly	11	28.9	37.9	37.9
	Half yearly	1	2.6	3.4	41.4
	Annually	1	2.6	3.4	44.8
	Others	16	42.1	55.2	100.0
	Total	29	76.3	100.0	
Missing	System	9	23.7		
Total		38	100.0		

Source: (Survey Data, 2018)

Informing Customers

This study was interested in understanding if the organizations kept the customers informed on new service features. This is an important aspect as the provision of information is a way of increasing the abilities of the customers. In line with organizational development, this can be seen as participation by information giving in which information is passed to the customers. All the respondents indicated that the customers were informed of the new service features that are introduced by the organization. The medium used for communication include Short Message Services (SMS) and media. The media used was mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, and social media. These tools are used because of their simplicity in sending information to the customers and the customers are able to easily access the information.

The relationship between Customer motivation, customer training, and emergent change preparedness

This study took on a trans-disciplinary approach, which makes it important to understand the relationship between customer participation strategies and emergent change preparedness. Correlation analysis was used to establish the relationship between the study variables. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship and the findings presented in Table 5 below.

Table-5: Pearson Correlation Coefficient

		Customer Motivation	Customer Training	Emergent Change Preparedness
Customer Motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	.764[**]	.342[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.036
	N	38	38	38
Customer Training	Pearson Correlation	.764[**]	1	.410[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.011
	N	38	38	38
Emergent Change Preparedness	Pearson Correlation	.342[*]	.410[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.011	
	N	38	38	38
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Table 5 shows that a significant positive relationship exists between customer motivation and customer training (r= 0.764, p= 0.000), between customer motivation and emergent change preparedness (r= 0.342, p= 0.036), and between customer training and emergent change preparedness (r=0.410, p= 0.011). These findings indicated a positive correlation strength that ranges between moderate and strong relationships.

Arkkelin [22] deems a correlation value of about 0.10-0.29 as low correlation, 0.30-0.49 as moderate correlation, and 0.50-1.0 as high correlation. It can, therefore, be deduced that a very strong positive relationship exists between customer training and customer motivation (r=0.764, p=0.000).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study sought to establish the relationship between customer motivation and emergent change preparedness. A positive moderate relationship exists between customer motivation and emergent change preparedness. The study concludes that there are many strategies capable of bringing about preparedness for emergent changes such as offering rewards to the customers. Interaction with service providers also helps the customers to be innovative especially in times of abrupt changes. Face to face is a more preferred method of communication between the customers and the mobile telecommunication company representatives. When the customers are motivated, they are able to provide ideas voluntarily to the organization. The ideas can be used to deal with issues that are present during abrupt changes in the organization.

The study also sought to assess the relationship between customer training and emergent change preparedness. The study concludes that training is a vital component in aiding the customers to be prepared for emergent changes that may occur; since a moderate positive relationship exists between customer training and emergent change preparedness. The study concludes that the mobile telecommunications companies provide training to their customers. Training helps the customers to be able to use services on their own and be confident in their ability to participate in the organization when an abrupt change occurs. It is conducted when it is necessary to do so; such as when new products and services are introduced. The study also deduces that as a way of training their customers, there is a need to keep the customers informed at all times with media. Media use comprises of mass media, which includes the use of television, radio, and newspapers; as well as the use of social media sites. This study recommends that a similar study can be replicated to understand customer participation strategies and emergent change preparedness focusing on the views of the customers.

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