

Change Management: A Golf Club's Struggle With Assimilation of Members Who "Don't Conform"

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Abstract

Membership to private social and recreational clubs is taking root in Kenya, especially with the growing consumerism of an emerging middle class. Further, the number of women who are taking up club membership – either for leisure, sports or social interactions – is on the upward trend. Most membership clubs, especially golf clubs, have been primarily male-dominated, private, and with locked-in members. This research seeks to find out the effect of assimilating members who have hitherto not been able to access the services of these closed-in groups. The research employed an ethnographic approach in which the researchers interacted closely with other club members for a one-year period. During this time, the researchers observed the interactions among club members, held interviews with some of them, and examined archival data held at the club. Content analysis was used to analyze the large amount of data. Findings indicate that there are many benefits accruing to the club as a result of admitting new "different" members. These benefits include, but are not limited to, increased funding, more patronage, and expanded quality of league players. However, with the coming of this new category of members, problems arose in areas such as club norms, facilities, social change and the pain of sudden change for the established members. The researchers provide several recommendations that can hasten and ease the assimilation of members with diverse characteristics and preferences.

Keywords: Golf, Kenya, organizational reforms, change management, middle class, gender.

INTRODUCTION

Private social and recreational clubs in Kenya and other parts of the world offer different membership formats and price structures. They are formally constituted and have their own facilities. They are limited to members for compatibility and congeniality (Somers Jr., 1994). People join these clubs for a variety of reasons. Bekkers (2005), for example, opines that people join groups to "find meaning in life, to express their social identity, to contribute to the wellbeing of others, and to improve their chances in the labor market." Some private clubs primarily sports activities. Some benefits of sports club membership include both physical and mental health. Premature death and such lifestyle diseases as colds, heart attack, stroke, cancer, depression, and suicidal tendencies are known to reduce substantially through social interactions that clubs offer (House, Landis & Umberson, 1988).

There are about 40 golf courses in Kenya, many of which started when the country was a British colony (Travel Weekly, 2006). These courses are primarily private country clubs, with locked-in members. The clubs are supported by their members through subscription fees and other spending. The quality of a club, and hence its standing in society, is a factor of the economic status and lifestyles of the club's members. To many members, the club is a "second home" because of the special social interaction involved with the leisure activity of golf and

other activities. This feeling has been built over time as most members join when they are relatively young.

Kenya has a wide range of social and recreation clubs that offer such sports as tennis, swimming, rugby, cricket and golf, as well as other activities. This research paper borrows extensively from various sports with particular interest in golf clubs.

History of Golf in Kenya

Golf is a popular and fast-growing sport in the African continent. Kenya has seen an explosion of the sport's interest (Kenya Golf Marketing Alliance (2015) www.golf-kenya.com) and is now a leading destination for golfers. The country has hosted several national and international competitions bringing with it profound exposure and international interest. The interest shown by sponsors and international organizations is testimony to the popularity and influence the sport has developed over time.

Golf has a long history in Kenya; the country's first golf course –The Nairobi Golf Club, now the Royal Golf Club – was opened in 1906, six years after the arrival of the East African Railway at the present city of Nairobi. At that time, the game of golf was dominated by the early European settlers who introduced a joining fee and a strict vetting procedure for prospective member (http://visitkenya.com/3_0_22_1_Golf-in-Kenya-:-Best-Destination-Travel-Guide-by.html). This essentially locked out most natives. The Meru (now defunct) and Nyeri Golf Clubs were opened in 1910 with Mombasa Golf Club opening shortly after in 1911 (Kenya Golf Marketing Alliance,www.golf-kenya.com). The Kenya Golf Union (KGU) was set up in 1928 to promote the interests of the game in the colony and protectorate of Kenya, and to control the amateur golf championship of Kenya (Kenya Golf Union Constitution n.d). With the entry of ladies in the game in the 1930s, the Kenya Ladies Golf Union (KLGU) was established to take care of their interests.

In the succeeding years, golf has undergone rapid growth. Forty very attractive, challenging and alluring golf courses have been established across the country. Investors have established fully private clubs such as Windsor, The Great Rift Valley, Rea Vipingo, Thika Greens and Migaa. Today, the golf courses and clubs offer thousands of Kenyans leisure and fitness while also providing them an opportunity to socialize. In addition, the clubs offer employment to thousands of people not only in the recreational facilities, but also at the club restaurants and spas. It is the same trend with other countries; in the UK, for example, golf courses and the country clubs market consist of over 11,000 businesses, employing a third of a million individuals and generating \$23 billion in revenue (Willis, 2015).

The sheer size of a golf course (which may run to thousands of hectares) makes it costly to manage. Further, golf equipment is fairly expensive. These two factors, plus annual subscriptions and club membership fees for new entrants, have made golf a relatively expensive sport. Consequently, this has reinforced the perception that golf is an elitist and exclusive sport, a preserve of the "moneyed." This perception has discouraged a fairly large number of individuals from taking up the sport. The above reasons have led to various challenges that are found in many private clubs around the world.

Challenges Faced by Private Sports Clubs

Despite the growth of golf in Kenya, and benefits clubs offer, there have been some challenges. For instance, when there is an economic downturn, leisure activities take a backseat as

people's priorities change. Willis (2015) notes that the changing socio-economic landscape in the UK, and the harsh economic times, have led to club member losses and reduced revenues. Further, although golf is popular and continues to generate significant interest, there has been an oversupply of golf courses without a commensurate growth in the number of golfers, leading to financial distress for some of the golf facilities. Therefore, clubs have resorted to such strategies as reducing their entry charges to attract more members, diversifying to other sports and activities, opening up their restaurants for meetings, wine tasting, and other activities. The new strategies have attracted the ever present and aggressive middle class; and, awakened the challenges of a patriarchal society as discussed in the following sections.

Emergence of a New Middle Class

Kenya's middle class is driving growth in many sectors, including golf. This growing middle class, comprising mainly of Gen-Xers (people in their 40s and 50s) and the millennials (people in their 20s and 30s), is challenging the status quo by their lifestyles and capacity to spend. They have boosted Kenyans' purchasing power, giving rise to a thriving mall culture and booming housing market, and a double-digit boost in domestic tourism (African Development Bank (AfDB), 2015). Some of these self-made entrepreneurs and business people have revolutionized the cultures of the private clubs due to their departure from the "accepted" norms that are the hallmark of the older members. This new trend sometimes leaves the older members feeling disenchanting and alienated.

Middle class is a trend marked by changing lifestyles, greater spending power, more recreational time, the harnessing of technology and a new political assertiveness and cultural self-confidence (Grail Research, 2013). According to AfDB (2011), the African middle class is the fastest-growing segment in the world and is attributed to a reduction in income inequality, a robust and growing private sector, stable and secure employment, quality and accessible tertiary education and a well-developed infrastructure. In Kenya, the middle class – a product of over four decades of relatively decent education and healthcare – stands at 44% with 34% in the lower middle and 4% in the upper middle incomes. This bourgeois is mainly based in urban areas (Gettleman, 2008).

In 2008, according to Githongo, Africa's middle class were disillusioned because despite possessing a world-class education, technical skills and knowledge, most sectors of the economy were performing poorly, while the political class plundered the vast country's resources. Evidence shows that the growth of a middle class can be associated with a country's better governance, economic growth and poverty reduction given that people in this cohort are more likely to use their greater economic clout to demand more accountable governments (AfDB, 2011). This includes pressing for the rule of law, property rights and a higher quantity and quality of public services. The situation is similar in Mexico and Brazil, where Birdsall (2007) noted that an increase in the size and economic command of the middle class markedly improved macro policies, adherence to fiscal policies and reduction in poverty in the preceding decade.

Sexism in Golf

In recent years, women in Kenya have been breaking the "glass ceiling" in many spheres of life. Changing economic, social and cultural demographics among women have helped break the invisible barrier to advancement based on attitudinal and structural bias, which means today, Kenyan women are leaders in many spheres. Coupled with more disposable income, a break in social inhibitions, and the hunger for assimilation, women have found comfort and pride in hitherto male dominated territories such as private member clubs.

Golf started as a gentleman's game. The trend continued in different parts of the world even as the game got introduced in Kenya during the early 1900s. In some clubs, ladies were not allowed to enter the Club House or even work there. Although the structural barriers to women's integration into traditionally male sports are disappearing, profound social and psychological barriers and constraints remain (McGinnis, McQuillan & Chapel, 2005). For instance, similar to many occupations, people often frame golf as masculine, making women golfers feel different or unexpected (Snyder, 1977). Similarly, the disproportionate number of men compared to women on the course exacerbates men's dominance and subtly encourages conscious and non-conscious sexism, social closure, tokenism in golf settings and stereotypes. These factors have some ramifications for women's participation and persistence in golf (McGinnis, McQuillan, & Chapple, 2005).

Sexism in Kenyan golf was hitherto a hushed subject until a major problem arose in Limuru County Club in 2013. The Club had amended the rules to read, "The Golf Committee being a male only affair, only full male members with valid handicaps, and who are fully paid up, will be allowed to participate in the meeting and the lady golfers will attend the meeting as guests." Aggrieved ladies instituted litigation and the judgment was made in their favor. The judge noted, "The amendment to the by-law passed by the Board Resolution of 18th December 2012 was not only discriminatory contrary to Article 27 but is also in violation of the right to freedom of expression protected under Article 33 of the Constitution of Kenya 2010." The judgment was a wake up call to not only Limuru club, but also to other clubs that gender-insensitive rules.

Theoretical Background for Change Management

Jamali et al. (2006) opine that every type of modern organization has little choice but to adapt to the relentless pace of change otherwise it will face the risk of failure. Researchers have advanced different theories and structures for the change effort. These have been reviewed and used variously to advance and guide organizational change. In this section, a review of three change management theories that were deemed more relevant to this research has been made: Lewin's Field Theory and Group Dynamics, Kotter's 8-Step Process in 1996 and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. The first two have been fundamental to planned change and most other recent theories have largely borrowed from them (Burnes, 2004; Schein, 2006; Hayes, 2010). In addition, since this research is about people changing internally, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory that identifies behavior modeling, as a prerequisite for change has been reviewed.

Lewin's Field Theory and Group Dynamics which was advanced in 1951 identified three phases that can be used to manage planned change:

First phase is Unfreezing – This is the phase in which a situation is prepared for change and felt needs for change are developed. It involves the deliberate altering of the status quo that supports existing behaviors and attitudes. Readiness for change is distinguished from resistance and is described in terms of the organizational members' beliefs, attitudes, and intentions (Armenakis, et al., 1993). Readiness would require deliberating on the threats that change is likely to bring as well as motivating people to accept that change is inevitable, thus helping attain the natural state of equilibrium (Armstrong, 2009), and minimizing resistance. This phase also involves developing a compelling message on the need for change, while challenging beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors that are most difficult and stressful.

Second phase is Changing – This is the phase in which something new takes place in the system and change is actually implemented. It involves developing responses based on new information gathered to steer the change process (Armstrong, 2009). People move from cynicism and resistance to change to a place they can believe in, and support, the change effort. However change needs to be introduced gradually as some people will be genuinely hurt by it. Other people may resent the change as it disrupts the status quo. This phase requires superior communication, negotiation and persuasive skills to have the desired effect.

Third phase is Refreezing – This is the phase of stabilizing change and creating conditions for its long-term continuity. It involves solidifying the change by introducing new responses to those involved in the change effort. This stage requires organizations to internalize and institutionalize the new direction, while some cultures and Behaviors have to be remodeled to accommodate change. Organizations need to celebrate any major and minor successes that they achieve to help people find closure and to help them understand the benefits accruing from the change effort.

The second theory is the Social Learning Theory was advanced by Bandura in 1977. According to Bandura, people's actions are influenced by their own choices, environmental influences, and the relative importance attached to the choices, abilities and consequences.

This theory brings out three implications for managers. First, there is a link between a particular behavior, outcome expectations, environmental and personal factors. Environmental factors include situational influences and the environment in which behavior is expressed (Bandura, 1986). Second, the more an outcome is deemed desirable the more likely that one's behavior will lead to it. Third, the more a person believes that they have the ability to achieve the desired behavior, the more likely they will try it (Armstrong, 2009). Managers therefore need to create an environment within which a change is expected, communicate the value of the change process, and train and develop people so that they can believe that they are capable of achieving the change.

The third theory, The Transformation Programme, was advanced by Kotter in 1996. This theory specifies an 8-step process that improves the ability to change and could therefore help organizations increase their chances of success while avoiding failure (Armstrong, 2009). The eight steps required to transform an organization are:

1. Establishing a sense of urgency through identifying risk and opportunities.
2. Forming a powerful guiding coalition by identifying change leaders and encouraging teamwork.
3. Creating a vision to guide and direct the change effort.
4. Communicating the vision to guide the establishment and practicing new behaviors.
5. Empowering others to act on the vision through identifying obstacles and encouraging risk-taking.
6. Planning for and creating short-term wins through addressing performance management, improvements and reward systems.
7. Consolidating improvements and producing still more change through increasing surveillance on change activities and systems.
8. Institutionalizing new approaches through aligning new behaviors with the overall business strategy.

Kotter's transformation model emphasizes the need to engage with people emotionally because unless people themselves change, changes made in the organizational environment do not persist.

Criticism of planned change

Burnes (2004) criticizes Lewin's theory of change in four areas: (1) his view of stability and change in organizations was at best no longer applicable and at worst 'wildly in-appropriate' (2) his approach to change is only suitable for isolated and incremental change situations; (3) he ignored power and politics; and (4) he adopted a top-down, management-driven approach to change (p. 996).

Other scholars have supported the Lewin theory. Schein (1996) studied the theory and said that "I have reflected only on some aspects of Lewin's theory, but even those few aspects have deeply enriched our understanding of how change happens and what role change agents can and must play if they are to be successful" (p. 71). In addition, Burnes (2004) opines that the change theory recognizes that: (i) change is not constant and group dynamics is a fact of life; (ii) change is a slow process involving groups with the aim of achieving behavioral and cultural change; (iii) one of the strengths is that "they identify the forces within and between groups and show how individuals behave in response to these" (p. 996); and (iv) the charge that he saw change as being management driven or top-down is difficult to sustain since he sympathized with those that were discriminated against and the disadvantaged to the extent that national and local government, religious and racial groups, and employers and unions sought his consultancy.

Kotter's change management model has also received considerable criticism. For instance, Bucciarelli (2015) noted that the model does not take into enough consideration the need for analysis before the creation of the "urgency" for change. This is an important step as the need for change cannot be easily seen by success or failures without the underlying factors being monitored. In addition, the author noted that the model lays a lot of focus on leadership as the most important aspect of the change process without considering other aspects like economics, sources of finance, political forces, the oppositions and the other restraining factors to change. Other observed flaws are that the model is too linear and prescriptive; the hierarchy of steps means that once started it is difficult to change or go back; it does not encourage participation; and it may lead to conflict and dissatisfaction on the employees.

This research paper is about change in the social economic facets of Kenya. It opines that societal conflicts usually arise from resistance to change, brought about by the view that change destabilizes the status quo. Burnes (2004, p. 979) observes that, "For most of his life, Lewin's main preoccupation was the resolution of social conflict and, in particular, the problems of minority or disadvantaged groups." This paper aligns with this position as the Lewin's theory has strong facets that can guide a change process successfully: the creation of strong vision and mission statements for change management, clear leadership, motivation for all those involved, focusing on the people and their behavior, creation of a working environment, having a clear reward system and institutionalizing change. In addition, as Bandura opines, behavior modeling is a necessary activity that assists the change effort. On the other hand this research also borrows from Kotter's eight step of change management.

The following variables were therefore found to be sufficient for data collection analysis and interpretation: establishing relationships, resistance to change, communicating change, behavior modeling, change implementation, solidifying change and, risk management. These

aspects have been used to discuss and advance recommendations for the change effort at the institution under study.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

It is often said that the only constant in life is change. Even though most things have changed so much over the years – fashion, technology, preferences, among others – the golf has remained the trusty constant; a place where “things have always been done this way.” At the same time, golf clubs have been experiencing financial distress as a result of low demand for new members and non-payment of subscriptions by existing members. To remain viable ventures, how then can golf clubs attract the well-heeled Gen-Xers and the millennials without alienating the still hugely influential older members?

This research was triggered by a series of events starting with the researchers joining a golf club during a membership recruitment drive. The researchers' experiences upon joining the club provided an opportunity to document the events taking place and then subjecting them to rigorous scientific tests to make interpretations based on the emerging cultural anthropology. In addition, the research bug set in when the hiatus of research on private member clubs, in particular golf clubs became evident. For instance, this research has relied heavily on websites and pamphlets for literature review due to the lack of scientific evidence on the subject under study, more so scientific literature on the Kenyan context.

Justification For the Research

Organizations all over the world face myriad and potential challenges and implications arising from emerging technology, globalization, changing social and political climates, competition, shifting economic conditions, swings in consumer preferences and demand for better performance and standards (Hughes, Ginnet & Curphy 2012). Change can also be brought about by internal factors that arise when change in one part of the system creates the need for change in another part of the system. Equally, change can be brought by the need for an organization to respond to one or more external forces. Furthermore, Joshi, Denker, Franz, and Martocchio (2010) state that to manage change successfully, organizational leaders would need to proactively minimize any resistive aspects of inter-generational interactions—mostly through incentivizing appropriate collaborative efforts between generations.

This research paper examines a rapid organizational change and people's response to it. In particular, the paper focuses on the existing norms and standards in private member clubs. Findings of this research will be useful to membership organizations that are going through or intend to change. Management of membership clubs will find this research useful as they continuously deal with new and existing members. Prospective investors in the business of golf and other sports will benefit from the findings and recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

This paper employed qualitative methods with an ethnographic approach. Hallet and Barber (2014) view ethnographers as mainly being concerned with how individuals and groups live out life in social spaces, and they challenge ethnographers to go further and consider how digital spaces inform the study of physical communities and social interactions. On his part, Falzon (2012) explains that ethnography is a multifaceted methodological choice that allows the researcher to achieve an engaged, contextually rich and nuanced type of qualitative social research where fine grained daily interactions, socialization, observation and interviews constitute an essential part of data.

The researchers joined the Club under study during a recruitment drive in June 2014. The aim of the drive was to incorporate new members as the Club was undergoing transition from a 9-hole course to an 18-hole one and therefore required additional funding. The researchers interacted with the members, the board of directors, visitors as well as the workers to gain a better understanding of the club's day-to-day processes.

The choice for the research method was informed by the fact that it allowed the researchers to collect data in a realistic setting in which people behaved naturally and felt less intruded. The fact that Club members knew the researchers made data collection easy and adventurous since the research could be carried out in any area of the club such as in the golf course, at the bar counter, in the dining room, changing rooms, and even in the gymnasium. However, where possible the researchers made use of a notepad and/or audio recorders to preserve the conversations.

This research employed three main methods of data collection. First was observation. Behaviors, interactions, and non-verbal cues were noted and recorded. In ethnography, observation is important because ethnographers observe and participate in the lives of those under study to elucidate predictable patterns and discern activities and interrelationships in the population (Angrosino, 2007). Secondly, formal and informal interviews were conducted; the researchers interacted with different members of the club through directed conversations and discussions to gather intended data. Thirdly, archival records such as minutes of meetings, records of different activities and the Club website were analyzed for information gathering.

Snagasubana (2009) notes that ethnography research usually involves "a full immersion of the researcher in the day-to-day lives or culture of those under study." He adds that collection of data is best done over an extended length of time through multiple ways for triangulation, resulting in a process that was inductive, holistic and involving. Conclusions and interpretations that are formed can be probed and feedback from those who are under study, making the research extremely rich and discourse very engaging. This research was personalized since the researchers were both observers and participants in the lives of those under study.

In analysing ethnographic data, it is sometimes difficult to make a clear delineation between data gathering and analysis because some preliminary analysis and interpretation occurs during data gathering (for example, making sense of and recording observations), and sometimes analysis reveals the need to double-check and seek more data. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2010) observe that in qualitative research "Data collection and analysis are often conducted together in an interactive way where collected data are analyzed, initiating new questions, and initiating further data collection." In this research, it was observed that the feedback received during the interviews determined the categorization of data, which formed part of the analysis.

Ethnographic research is best analyzed through content analysis as the data is fragmented and diverse. To deal with this massive amount of data, content analysis was applied to seek structures and consistencies in the data collected (Myers, 2009). Roper and Shapira (2000) suggest the following strategies for ethnographic analysis: First, coding for descriptive labels – this involves identifying codes and meaningful categories, placing the data into the correct codes, and then organizing to compare, contrast and identify patterns. This reduces and manages the massive data collected during ethnography. Second, sorting for patterns – in this

step, the researcher develops themes from the codes and makes sense of possible connections between the information. Third, identifying outliers – this stage identifies data that may not be useful to the research and provides the basis for the decision on whether they can be kept, or reorganized to make sense. Fourth, generalizing constructs and theories – here data collected is collated with theories and existing frameworks to make sense of the collected data. Fifth, memoing with reflective remarks – memos are written and insights or ideas that one has about information, and which may require further clarification or testing, are collected.

This research collected a large amount of data that described the way people reacted, behaved and also the conversations that were held with the participants. A total of 198 members were approached to take part in the research. Out of these, 22 members did not want to take part while 18 did not complete the interview process. Through both formal and informal interviews, data was collected from 158 respondents and their contribution used to make conclusions for this research. In addition, the Club Manager, Club Chairman and three members of the golf administration took part. Below is a table showing the respondents demography.

Table 1: Respondents

Gender	Age (years)				Total
	25-35	36-45	46-55	Over 55	
Male	9	38	34	28	109
Female	4	16	18	11	49
Total	13	54	52	39	158

The numbers in the table above is a reflection of the demography of the club, where men are the majority and the younger people are fewer than the older ones Interviews conducted from the 158 members, the observations made and perusal of archival records produced a large amount of data. Johnston (2010) observes that triangulation of data generates large amounts of data from several sources, making analysis and organization of the data critical. The large amounts of data collected posed a great challenge in its analysis and interpretation, a fact that was also observed by (Roper & Shapira, 2000). It was therefore necessary to reduce and edit the data through coding so as to make it more manageable and meaningful. Codes function as a shorthand strategy to distinguish, label, compile and consolidate data to make it easy to manage information for the purpose of interpretation. In this study, the variables identified through literature review were used as codes to analyze the large amount of data collected. These were: establishing relationships, resistance to change, behavior modeling, change implementation, communicating the change, solidifying change, and risk management.

FINDINGS

This study was done as the researchers interacted with veteran or newly recruited golf club members. The club in question has been in existence since 1923. The Clubhouse is a hallmark of British architecture, design and commonality. As it is with most golf courses in Kenya, the Club was founded as a recreation facility for workers at the institution where it is located. It started off as a 9-hole course, but five years ago it was elevated to an 18-hole course. Currently, the Club is registered as a society with diverse membership that includes people from all professions including politicians, government officials, and business. Findings for this research were derived from extensive interviews mostly conducted among members and the Club administrators in informal settings. In addition, the researchers perused documents held by

the Club and also observed the general settings, interactions and the behavior of the Club community, which included members, workers and visitors.

According to one director, the recruitment drive was occasioned by challenges that the Club was facing which included cash flow, a situation arising from poor patronage and the ageing membership. This position was exacerbated by an addition of 9 golf holes, meaning more funds were needed for water and maintain the new 18-hole course. The cost of utilities were rising and the membership, as constituted then, could not sustain this, hence the need to generate additional revenue. Indeed one member commented that the senior corner could not sustain the Club because the members “only take one glass of wine or a cup of tea and a bun.”

Secondly, to grow the Club, there would be need to develop infrastructure and diversified sports activities. The recruitment drive would hence offer much needed cash injection and opportunities for increased sponsorship of events.

Thirdly, the dilapidated Clubhouse, constructed during the colonial era and with very little renovations over the preceding years, required a facelift.

Fourthly, ageing membership – prior to the recruitment drive, the median age was about 54 years. This in itself brought issues of patronage, succession planning and golf competitions. According to one senior member, golf clubs have been associated with the elite and most members tried to guard that position jealously. Thus, joining a club depended more on parentage and social status than on other considerations. In addition, most clubs had “cartels” of old, wealthy members who had gone to school together and lived in the leafy suburbs. Their children went to the same elite schools. This situation acted as a disincentive to prospective members who wanted to join the Club. Another problem was that the members’ children, having been educated abroad, preferred new savvy entertainment (not golf) clubs for their leisure. Furthermore, the older members demanded to get “life membership” meaning that they would be exempt from paying annual subscriptions.

Fifthly, gender imbalance: for a long time golf clubs were exclusively “men only.” During the colonial times, there would be a sign at the entrance stating, “women, children and dogs, not allowed.” Although this is no longer the practice, the number of women patrons is still low. Indeed, most of the lady members and golfers only have supplementary membership through their spouses. It was, therefore prudent to reduce the entry fees for ladies in order to close the yawning gender gap.

Sixth, paucity of ideas – a club whose composition of members does not change soon becomes dormant and may not be able to have any meaningful change. Prior to the recruitment drive, the board of directors had observed that during annual general meetings, there were hardly any new ideas suggested. Further, new opinions would be vehemently opposed, necessitating the need for a different calibre of members with a different paradigm.

Data collected for this study is from the Club recruitment drive held in May 2014 where the fees for joining were reduced by almost fifty percent. The target members were categorised according to their ages and gender. The younger members paid less and women were admitted at a discounted fee, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Fees for joining the Club in May 2014

Gender	Age			
	25-35	36-45	46-60	Over 60
Male	150	200	250	300
Female	100	130	150	200

As can be observed, if an applicant was young, say, between ages 25 to 35 and a woman, then they paid the lowest amount, while older applicants were made to pay more.

The recruitment drive resulted in an additional 153 members of diverse ages and gender. Below are two tables showing the composition of club members before and after the recruitment drive.

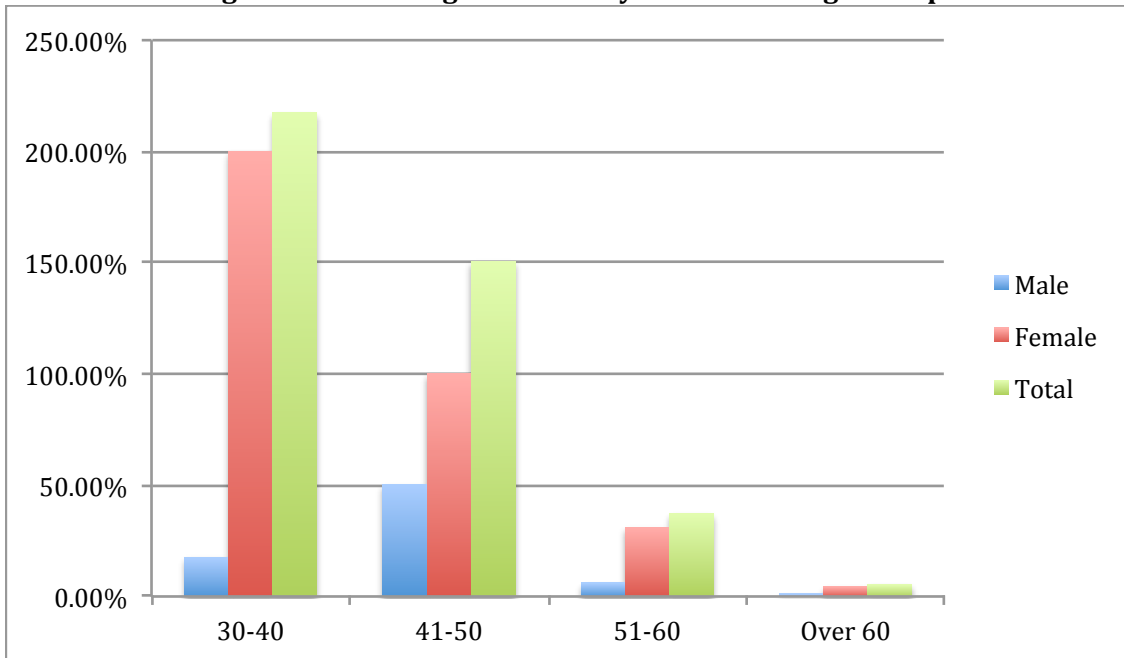
Table 3: Composition of Members Before the Recruitment Drive

Gender	Age (years)				Total
	30-40	41-50	51-60	Over 60	
Male	63	105	210	219	597
Female	6	41	58	47	152
Total	69	146	268	266	749

Table 4: Composition of Members After Recruitment Drive

Gender	Age				Total
	25-35	36-45	46-60	Over 60	
Male	74	158	223	221	676
Female	18	83	76	49	226
Total	92	239	299	270	902

Figure 1: Percentage Increase by Gender and Age Group



As can be observed from Tables 3-5 and Figure 1, the recruitment drive achieved the duo purposes of raising the number of lady members and also attracting younger members. The median age shifted from about 54 years to around 49 years. The ratio of female to male

members also changed from 1:4 to 1:3. Of the ladies who joined, 17.2% were in the ages between 30-40 years while 50.5% were in the ages 41-50 years.

The increase in different cohorts presents interesting data. The overall increase in membership was 20.4%. New male members increased by 13.2% while new female members increased by 48.7%, pushing the male to female ratio from 1:4 to 1:3. Out of the 153 new members, the largest growth was in the 41-45 year bracket where male membership grew by 50.5% and female members more than doubled with a growth of 102.4%. In the 30-40 year bracket however, female membership grew by a significant 200%.

The cohort with the highest increase in membership was ages 41-50 (63.7%) while the cohort with the lowest increase was that of over 60 years, increasing by only 1.5%. There was a substantial increase in the 31-40 years cohort (33.3%). A possible explanation for this phenomenon is that those in the 41-50 age bracket are at a more stable stage in their lives and can therefore afford to pursue this hobby that “should be followed with a single mind” (Robinson, 1897). Those younger than 35 years are still going through career turbulence and may not perceive club membership as a priority. Those between 46-60 years and have an interest in joining clubs have already done so, unless they want to join a second or a third club. This is corroborated by an AfDB (2011) report that notes that Africa’s middle class, aged between 35-50 years, is characterized by stable and secure employment, among other attributes.

The profiles of the new members effectively changed the Club’s demographics. Most of the new members included the emerging middle class – a young dynamic population – and a significant number of women. As one older member quipped, “the ladies in this club are no longer our laid back wives but a new crop of independent and moneyed lot that wants their special space.” This group of new members brought with them new behaviors and ways of thinking, requiring a paradigm shift in the way the Club conducted its business.

INTERPRETATION

The effects of the recruitment drive are clearly discernible from the transformation of Club composition, patronage, and improved facilities. In addition, collected data from members’ responses was interpreted using the variables identified through empirical and theoretical literature review. These areas are: establishing relationships, resistance to change, behavior modeling, change implementation, communicating the change, solidifying change and, risk management

Building Relationships

Interviews with the members revealed that the Club experienced new vibrancy and patronage has continued to be on the rise. Unlike other golf clubs in Kenya, it is possible to find over 100 members at the Club long after 10 p.m. During sponsored events, the Club engages a disc jockey. This has become a significant highlight for the members who often dance till the wee hours.

Building relationships between the newly recruited members and the older members was however not as smooth as it was envisaged to be. Some older members felt invaded by the “loud, testosterone-laden and poorly dressed” newly recruited members. Newly recruited members indicated that they too felt that the older members were not ready for the transformation that was taking place.

Resistance to change

The older members expressed displeasure at "being pushed to the periphery." They felt that their needs were not being met as had always been the case and further that the level of service had gone down. Most of these people are retired and had established the Club as a second home. Furthermore, the Clubhouse became too small for the bigger number of members, giving rise to the need for new and more apt space.

Management of change should take into account factors that lead to resistance of change. Such issues include poor communication, lack of support, implicit or explicit fear, threat to economic or social security, uncertainty, self-interest, low tolerance to change, lack of clarity, and the perception of losing out. Torrington, Hall, and Taylor (2005) noted that veterans are bound to be loyal to their peers and the establishment while the Gen-Xers strongly resist any tight control systems and set procedures. Change needs to be introduced gradually as some people will be genuinely hurt by it while others will be disrupted. This phase requires superior communication, negotiation and persuasive skills to have the desired effect (Lewin, 1951).

Behavior modeling

This involves showing people how to do something and guiding them through the process of imitating the modeled behavior (Bandura, 1967). Interviews from members of the Club brought out to fore how some members blatantly ignore norms, to the chagrin of the other members. Increased numbers have also had an impact on the members of staff because too many members seek individualized attention and when it does not come fast enough, they become aggressive and rude.

Older members felt that new members should be thoroughly inducted to the Club rules and etiquette in order to preserve the dignity associated with such an establishment. Although some new members were not too enthusiastic about adapting to a new set of behavior, most were however happy to habituate to the new environment. Thus it was suggested that specific and functional New Member Orientation Programme be introduced so that incoming members get to understand their expectations and responsibilities. Further, vetting of new members need to be guided by specific criteria that takes into account wider considerations than just the motivation to generate more revenues.

Some respondents were of the opinion that the Club rules and code of conduct should always be enforced to ensure comfort of members and their guests. While this is practiced to some extent, consistency is however needed. In addition, training, development and coaching is necessary to align the new members with new knowledge and skills (Nadler, 1998).

Change implementation

In this stage, all the planned activities were put in practice to effect the necessary change. This resulted in a number of positive outcomes; First is the stabilisation of cash flow, as evidenced by the club accounts. The new, mostly younger members, cough up more on food and drinks and they invite their friends thus spending more time patronising the club. However, a department like the cash bar did not post any profits despite a significant increase in sales. Second, recruitment of members injected fresh capital that was used to renovate the Clubhouse, expand the changing rooms, build a sauna, and equip a gym. Today the Clubhouse is one of the most beautiful in the country. Third is that golf, special and annual general meetings have become more interesting and resourceful with big attendance. Fourth, with the increase in new, younger and diverse members, the Club has been able to recruit more competitive league players. This has greatly improved the quality of competitive play as evidenced by the

results of various tournaments. Fifth, the Club has achieved diversity in membership, with the younger members transforming it to a more lively and interesting place.

To achieve desired change, strong, sustainable and transformational leadership is required to guide the change process. Transformational leaders motivate followers to go beyond normal expectations by pushing people out of their comfort zone (Raineri, 2011). They achieve this by modeling the way, challenging established processes, enabling and empowering others, inspiring a shared vision and encouraging their followers. This involves recruiting or developing people to champion the change process, and constructing an acceptable reward system for those who succeed. Notwithstanding, the choice for change champions must take into account their temperaments, traits and emotional stability.

Communicating change

Some respondents, especially non-golfers, expressed disappointment with the channels and level of communicating such major change. According to the respondents, most announcements about change were made during golf tournaments prize giving, by when most of the older members would have left. Furthermore, non-golfers would not be at the prize giving anyway. In addition, some respondents indicated that they were yet to embrace technology, hence they did not check their emails regularly. On probing the disenfranchisement of older and non-golfing members, the club administrators confirmed that most communication is done through emails, text messages and posts on the Club's Facebook page.

The involvement and participation of everyone in an organization is necessary. People are more likely to support, commit to, and own something they have helped create. Thus management must do all it can to explain why change is essential and how it will affect everyone. Further, an environment that allows for self-expression would help the change to thrive.

In a world of global competition, technological innovation, turbulence, discontinuity, change is inevitable (Quinn, 1980). Employees are ultimately responsible for executing change initiatives. Change, therefore, succeeds or fails depending on employee behavior (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999). Hence, leading employees to support the change process is essential for the success of the change initiative. Effective communication of hard evidence and data to support the need for change is therefore critically important and will most likely lead to successful change.

Risk management

A number of respondents felt that the Clubhouse had become too loud in the evenings, unsettling some members who join with the hope of enjoying some peace and quiet. Furthermore, discos and other forms of entertainment, introduced by the new and younger members, only added to the woes of the older members. Some new members face a different kind of challenge: difficulties in integrating and not finding camaraderie among existing cliques.

Another challenge is that of security. With the surge in numbers, the reception staff could no longer distinguish between the new members and non-members. Visitors and non-members would therefore gain entry to the club without the requisite permission.

Change must take into account existing cultures and organizational structures that can either derail the change process or allow it to grow. People who have shown leadership potential will most certainly welcome the challenges and opportunities that change provides. Failure is part of the change process and should be embraced and seen as a learning experience. In addition as Kotter (1996) suggested, change should be seen as a continuous process and organizations must plan for that change.

Solidifying change

The Club in this study, cognizant of the needs brought about by a diverse group of new members identified specific areas that needed improvement. One, it was necessary to build a sports bar to accommodate members whose interest lies in television sports, thus freeing the main Club bar to members who find television intrusive. Two, most new members have young families. The Club therefore plans to build a swimming pool and develop a children's playground. Three, the Club has started organizing golf induction lessons on every Club Night to sensitize new members with golf etiquette and rules. Fourth, junior golf was introduced and the Club has since signed in one of the most promising young players in Kenya.

Performance-based rewards recognize employees for accomplishing specific tasks, for exceeding annual performance, or other indicators of organizational performance (McShane, Olekalns and Travaglione, 2010). An appraisal system that gauges performance on the Club's transformative programme would encourage and motivate employees, especially in light of the monumental changes accruing from increased membership. Leaders ought to ensure that rewards are linked to work performance, and further that rewards are aligned to performance within the employee's control (McShane, Olekalns and Travaglione, 2010).

It is important to celebrate milestones that may be achieved, to serve as motivation and synergistic impetus for success (Armstrong, 2009). The Club, with its 18-hole manicured lawns and impeccable greens, should carry out more aggressive campaigns to encourage golf tourism. In addition to added revenue, golf tourism would enhance sponsorship deals. A club with a good reputation can attract and host national and international tournaments, elevating its standing amongst peers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research paper has adopted an ethnographic approach. The writers experienced, first-hand, a phenomena that unfolded over a period of one year when a golf club was undergoing transformation. The following recommendations are therefore a collection of the Club members' opinions and the writers' views in light of compelling research findings. In addition, the recommendations are guided by theoretical frameworks on change management as reviewed earlier in this paper. Raineri, (2011) observes that change management strategies include diverse organizational interventions that must correlate with internal and external events. The recommendations are therefore based factors both within and without the organization, but which influence the change process.

Effective change processes, structure and systems ease people's change in behavior, attitudes and corporate culture. Structured change yields better results than if the change was ad hoc and un-anticipated. It is recommended that the Club management consciously plans and applies strategic actions to achieve desired objectives and move the Club towards a clearly defined direction (Tiffany, 1994).

The club under study has significant untapped potential in the form of encyclopedic data lying within the senior members. A new programme, for example a Reminiscence Day, would offer a platform for the sharing of ideas.

Every effort should be made to protect the interests of those affected by change. For instance, to address the concerns of senior members, there is need to engage them and find out what their specific interests are. Would they, for example, be interested in games such as bowling and chess?

The club membership comprises some of the most successful people in such areas as business, academia, and public service. This pool of resources should be utilized for community partnerships. Like most golf clubs in Kenya, the Club neighbors a slum. This is where most caddies live. The Club could start an initiative to uplift the living standards of the less endowed members of the surrounding communities.

Kotter (1996) emphasizes how vital it is for organizations to embed the change process into the organization's strategic objectives and to make continuous efforts to ensure that the change is maintained. In addition, Raineri (2011) observed that failure in the first stages of the change process (i.e. developing a new vision) is likely to derail later stages i.e. communication of change plan, implementing the plan and evaluation of the process). Implementing change is a demanding task and managers should spend a great deal of time planning so that they can be fully in charge, oversee the change process better, and be able to control outcomes more effectively (DiBella, 1992).

Limitations of the research

Bryman (2012) describes delimitations as the restrictions or bounds that researchers impose, prior to the inception of a study, to narrow its scope. This research is limited to members of only one golf club in Kenya. Although literature suggests that other clubs have similar issues, generalization should be done with care. Further, despite the recommendations sufficing to other sports, this research is restricted to the game of golf. Other researchers could, therefore carry out more comprehensive research on other sports and a larger population of study.

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