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Change Management and Its Facets in Different Application Scenarios: An Empirical Review

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Abstract

The dynamic business environment noted in contemporarily business environment alarms the wider application of organizational changes across the globe. The way in which businesses manage change and their success depend largely on the nature of business, the change and the people involved.Therefore, it is essential to first understand some of the views and methodologies pertaining to change management. This paper reviews the notion of Change Management by referring to models and theories whilst context related matters are discussed. Accordingly, paper reviews the change management referring to public sector organizations, issues of small &medium enterprises, application of mergers& acquisitions and pattering changes in cross cultural perspectives.

Accordingly, the article proposes that high in power distance, masculine, Individualistic and strong in uncertainty avoidance become challenging environments for change management efforts. Additionally, paper revealed that most of the obstacles related to innovation and change in public sector are found as structural and cultural problems whilst lack of proper communication, absence of formal change management process, financial limitations and lack of strategy are highly influential in the success of change management process inside Small Businesses. Moreover, major reasons lead to change during mergers and acquisitions were noted as system dynamics, structure-focused changed and profitability issues. Likewise, this study provides the insights of change management with reference to different application scenarios, and some research propositions have been highlighted as concluding the essence of the content reviewed.

Key Words: Change Management, Culture, Mergers & Acquisitions, Public Sector, Small & Medium Enterprises

Introduction

Against a background of rapid technological development, a growing knowledge workforceand the shifting of accepted work practices, change is becoming an ever-present feature of organizational life (Burnes, 2004). In today's business environment, changes are increasing at a rapid pace taking the form of different types, scales and quantities. According to Burnes (1992), effective change management is a critical process for firms' continued existence. In response to the increasing importance organizational change, there is a growing body of literature looking at the concept andprocesses of change management and factors that contribute to its success. Drawing from a wide range of disciplines and theoretical perspectives this literature has been described as abounding in complexities and containing many contradictory and confusing theories and research findings (Todnem, 2005, Fernandez & Rainey, 2006).

Researchers have attempted to define organizational change from their individual perspectives.
Change management refers to the adoption of an idea, procedure, process or behavior that is new to an organization (Pierce & Delbecq 1977). Berger (1994) defined change management as "the continuous process of aligning an organization with its marketplace and doing it more responsively and effectively than competitors". It a movement of an organization from the existing stage towards a desired future state in order to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness (George & Jones, 2002; Cummings & Worley, 2005). Vakola and Nikolaou (2005) defined organizational change as the challenge to the way things are normally done in an organization, which results in feeling of uncertainty among individuals and stress about the potential failure of meeting the new situation.

Organizational change can be viewed from a variety of different frameworks. Many change theorists viewing changes in systems as taking place in two distinct, evolutionary and revolutionary (March, 1981; Gersick, 1991; Romane Ui & Tushman, 1991; Haveman, 1993; Burke, 2000; Meyerson, 2001). Evolutionary, incremental, or first order changes are small changes that alter certain small aspects, looking for an improvement in the present situation, but keeping the general working framework (Blumenthal and Haspeslagh, 1994; Goodstein and Burke, 1991; Greiner, 1972; Levy, 1986; Mezias and Glynn, 1993; Nadler and Tushman, 1989).
The second type of changes are strategic, transformational, and revolutionary or second order ones. They are radical

transformations, where the organization totally changes its essential framework
(Blumenthal & Haspeslagh, 1994; Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1996; Goodstein and Burke, 1991; Marshak, 1993; Nadler & Tushman, 1989, 1990), looking generally for a new competitive advantage (Hutt, Walker & Frankwic 1995) and affecting the basic capabilities of the organization (Ruiz& Lorenzo, 1999). Transformational change efforts result in a fundamental and radical shift that rejects existing paradigms (Kuhn.1970). It signifies leadership driven modifications of culture, formulation of totally different strategy or demands for conformity due to a merger or acquisition by a dominant company (Derming, 2005).

Theeffectiveness of Change Management in organizations results performances. Organization performance is positively impacted by the presence of change management practices which tend to create a significant contribution on organizational competencies, and becomes a great boost for enhancing innovativeness. According to Horngren (2000) and Anantharaman (2003), organizations link the maximization of performance with change management practices. Organizations can out-perform the competition, adapting to the market and adopting new ways of working faster than others. (Paul Arnold, 2015). Organizations benefit from change that results in new ways of looking at customer needs, new ways of delivering customer service, new ways of strengthening customer interactions and new products that might attract new markets (Richards, 2006).Change is important in organizations to allow employees to learn new skills, explore new opportunities and exercise their creativity in ways that ultimately benefit the organization through new ideas and increased commitment. (Michael & Shandra 2016).

Change is not always experienced as pleasant and it often leads to resistance in organizations. The failure of many change initiativesis due to resistance to change. (Lawrence, 1954; Maurer, 1996; Strebel, 1994; Waddell Sohal, 1998). Resistance to change introduces costs and delays into the change process (Ansoff, 1990) that are difficult to anticipate (Lorenzo, 2000) but must be taken into consideration. Resistance is a phenomenon that affects the change process, delaying or slowing down its beginning, obstructing or hindering its implementation, and increasing its costs (Ansoff, 1990). Resistance has also been considered as a source of information, being useful in learning how to develop a more successful change process (Beer & Eisenstat, 1996; Goldstein, 1988; Lawrence, 1954; Piderit, 2000; Waddell & Sohal, 1998).

Undoubtedly, resistance to change is a key topic in change management and should be seriously considered to help the organization to achieve the advantages of the transformation. Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) proposed a more emergent view to tackling employee resistance, stating that the circumstances of the change and the content of the change itself will vary largely between organizations and that this should determine the appropriate response. (Self & Schraeder2009).Education& Communicationis involved communicating the benefits of change and justifying why the change is required. Moreover, communication between both sides positively influences the employees' contribution for implementing change, and creates a background for mutual understanding and trust (Costello, 1994).Participation & Involvement; make staff involved (stakeholders) in the change process to reduce suspicion; staff may have good ideas which management can use. Additionally, they consider employees' participation and their involvement in the change process to be an effective way of feeling committed to its implementation and success. By facilitating and supporting its employees, management could encourage their participation towards training for obtaining new skills or by listening to their fears and anxiety, and thus minimize their resistance (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). By facilitating and supporting its employees, management could encourage their participation towards training for obtaining new skills or by listening to their fears and anxiety, and thus minimize their resistance (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). Furthermore, in cases where changes will bring about reductions in employees' benefits and vested rights, management could come to an agreement after negotiating with employees, and offer compensation in return; thus, minimizing the possibility for resistance. Another approach is manipulation and co-optation, through which management give desirable roles to key persons during the implementation of change, in order for them to influence their colleagues positively Kotter and Schlesinger (1979).

Theoretical Approach in Change Management

The discussion on models, approaches to change and change management are important in that it sets the scene for change interventions in organizations. Change management models are a way of representing and describing a theoretical understanding of the change process, through a series of stages (Mento, 2002; Rothwell & Sullivan, 2005).

In 1948, Lewin suggested that the change process start with unfreezing the current state of the organization by creating incentives, implementing the desired changes by selecting the right leadership style and ends with refreezing the state when the organizational desired change has been reached. Lewin stressed the need to include dialogue in solving problems, and believed that successful problem solving requires active participation of change agents in understanding the problem, finding a solution and implementing it. (Kotnour2015) Moving or changing refers to cognitive restructuring, where the actors acquire information and evidence showing that change is desirable and possible (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Schreyogg &Noss; 2000). Change may mean anything that alters the existing relationships or activities such as installing new equipment, restructuring the organization, transformation of processes, discussing new behaviors with employees or implementing a new performance appraisal system. The role of managers at this stage is critical topromote employee adjustment and commitment to the whole process. Refreezing involves setting up a process that ensures the new levels of behavior will be relatively secure against reversion to prior modes of operation. Employees' newly learned behaviors are embedded through repeating newly learned skills in a training session and role playing to teach how the new skill can be used in a real-life work situation (Iles &Sutherland, 2001).

John Kotter (2002) introduced eight steps of effective large-scale change effort.According to Burnes (2001) these eight steps were considered to be a process by Kotter and not a checklist.Creating a sense of urgency is essential as to encourage people and to assist with the change. (Kotter, 1996, 1998).Creating urgency involves helping people see and feel first hand why a change needs to occur (Campbell, 2008). By making employees aware of the need and urgency for change, support will be created.To lead change, you need to bring together a coalition or team of including job title, status, expertise and political importance. Once formed, your “change coalition” needs to work as a team, continuing to build urgency and momentum around the need for change.(Kotter, 1996, 1998) andcreating a vision and the strategies for achieving the vision will help expedite the change (Kotter, 1996, 1998).The vision needs to include a collective sense of what a desirable future looks like, in clear and measurable terms that all stakeholders can stand behind (Clark, 2010). The fourth Stage in Kotter’s Process is to communicate the vision for change.This involves communicating the vision in words and actions by leading through example. Members from all groups need to be hearing the same message from everyone in order to gain buy-in and guide them from awareness of the change to a state where they feel empowered to advocate for the change (Campbell, 2008). Before change is accepted at all levels, it is crucial to change or, if necessary, remove obstacles that could undermine the vision. By entering into dialogue with all employees, it will become clear who are resisting the change. This step empowers others to act on the vision by removing barriers to change and encouraging risk taking and creative problem-solving change (Kotter, 1996, 1998).Creating short-term wins can help keep the momentum going. Wins should be celebrated in a highly visible way that is connected to the vision and then that momentum can be used to set new achievable goals (Clark, 2010). Kotter (2011) organizations should not declare victory before the changes and business improvements have sunk deeply into a company’s culture as this may kill ongoing momentum allowing resistors to take over.The last step explains that a change will only become part of the corporate culture when it has become a part of the core of the organization. Change does not come about by itself. Values and standards must agree with the new vision and the employees’ behavior must provide a seamless match. Employees must continue to support the change. Regular evaluation and discussions about progress help consolidate the change. (Kotter, 2011).

Change Management: An Overview of Different Organizational Contexts

Change Management in Cross Cultural Organizations

Various theorists (Kotter, 1996; Carter & Alfred, 1999; Kanter, 2000; Fullan, 2001; Drapeau, 2002; Eddy, 2002; Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Bridges, 2003) discussed the centrality of grounding any new change into the culture of the organization. It is argued that many change management interventions are culturally-bound and not appropriate across cultures. Such an ascertain challenges some of the basic values of the behavioral change management movement, calling into question the desirability of the questions such as power sharing, collaboration, team work and autonomy. (Barry,Olin &Winter 2007).A Number of authors highlighted the necessity of take culture into consideration when deciding on the appropriate management practices. Few have explored the need in assessing the potential effectiveness of a change management intervention (Wellman 2007).

The role of organizational culture during the change process is the most important as it confirms or denies the legitimacy of the new arrangements (Bluedorn & Lundgren, 1993). In most cases, changes are unavoidable but may often lead to conflict between the old and the new circumstances

Therefore,the connection between structure and culture has to be mutually supportive, so that organizations can operate efficiently and effectively in order to achieve the desired goals it is better to manage changes around the culture, rather than trying to change the culture which is an extremely difficult and lengthy process (Smollan &Sayers, 2009).

Hofsted (1983) classified cultures based on four dimensions; power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/ femininity and Individualist/collectivist. Each element in the model has a significant impact on the success of change management effort. (Barry,Olin &Gregory Winter 2007).Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance are fearful of change and uncertainty and attempt to avoid it through rules and regulations. The entire basis of organizational development movement would may be viewed with suspect in cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance, while resistance to change found in all organizations. Countries with high power distance do not allow for much power sharing in the organization. In high distance power cultures, both those with powerand those without power generally accept the view that superiors make decisions without input from lower level organizational members. Many behavioral interventions which involve power sharing, may be viewed with suspicion by existing managers in these cultures. High individualistic societies focus performance on each person, and generally have more difficulty with team work and sometimes trust issues arise (Costigan 2007). Efforts aimed at individualistic change would be hard to introduce to an organization.Masculine cultures are materialistic, aggressive, and competitive and achievement oriented, accumulation wealth and material possessions, therefore it is considered that change management efforts would not receive a warm welcome.(Barry,Olin & Winter 2007).In line with the said power sharing, collaboration, team work and autonomy are factors to be considered in change management process of cross cultural organizations. Further, author denotes to consider the cultural behavior inside an organization before implementing any change process.

The Management of Change in Public Sector Organizations

Public organizations often need to implement changes in the governance, design and delivery of public services (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Fernandez & Rainey, 2006). The implementation of such organizational changes is a considerable challenge for public sector organizations (Kelman, 2005; Isett, Glied, Sparer & Brown, 2012; Piening, 2013; Karp & Helgø, 2008; McNulty & Ferlie, 2004). The introduction of change to the public sector goes hand to hand with a lot of managerial implications. Change needs new skills, office equipment; new professions, new offices, procedures, new legislations laws, and structures. Therefore, managers would need money to provide these requirements and many others. Apart from that managers have to be responsible for the outcome of change they have introduced. Sometimes change bring negative results not as expected. (Sharma, 2007).

There are major obstacles to innovation and change in the public service, and they are deeply ingrained in the structure and practices of public sector organizations (Hornstein 2010). Perhaps it is cliché, but it has been said that these impediments are 98 percent management and two percent technology. Meanwhile, the critical importance of innovations and service delivery in public sector institutes has been highlighted in the recently held studies (Dissanayake &Hamid 2017; Dissanayake, Wasantha, & Jinadasa, 2017). Those studies mainly argued the importance of structural changes and organizational climate as the driving forces to change the service delivery systems in organizations including local public authorities towards innovations and change. Thus, it provides a notion to investigate how service innovation is holistically is assisted by the contents of change management. The public sector institutes need effective service delivery systems to innovate its effectiveness via technical and people related changes (Dissanayake, et.al.2017). Therefore, an argument is made to consider change management-related aspects as the driving forces for strategic change and reforms in public sector institutions adding commercial value to sustain. This implies that technological and process improvements are effective enablers of change only if government bureaucracy, particularly its managerial hierarchy, is ready and willing to adapt to change. Although there are many managers who are committed to creating an innovative government, they are in a weak position to instigate change because they are hindered by the bureaucracy's rigidity(Hornstein 2010). Alongside the discussed, author reveals that most of the obstacles to innovation and change in public sector are structural and cultural problems.

Management of Change during Mergers & Acquisitions

Merger and acquisition is the process of integrating two or more companies with different values, cultures and forces into one cohesive unit.It has been found that most mergers and acquisition fail because of poor handling of change management.Every organization which is merging has a culture with itself and when they are merging is bound to affect each other.(Kansal&Chandani, 2014).

Therefore, there are numerous factors that can disturb the equilibrium of the organizations during Mergers &Acquisitions. System Dynamicssuch as internal politics, technology, legal system, IT system and accounting system oftenaffect the alignment and relationships thereby demanding change in related business units and employeesof that unit.Changes like downsizing and decentralizing are bound to happen to reduce costs and increase the productivity and efficiency. Profitability issues such as loss of revenue, market share, low productivity, engagement with processes of restructuring and reengineering lead to major changes in the organizational setup(Kansal& Chandani, 2014). As par with the discussion, authorpostulates that major reasons lead to change during mergers and acquisitionsare:system dynamics, structure-focused changed and profitability issues.

Change Management in Small Businesses

Change management is not just an exercise for big companies. Small businesses also need to help guide their employees through change. (Robert Half 2016). However, the effects of change on small businesses are different from the effects of change on large companies, due to limited resources such as capital, time, energy, and a different set of challenges. Developing change management strategies for leaders of small businesses is crucial for long-term sustainability. (Lora 2016).

According to Clark (2008), leaders need to address communication factors successfully. Bad communication is a reason why employees resist change. Employees need to understand the change process, why it is needed, and how success will be measured (Adenle, 2011). Lack of proper communication created a challenge while trying to manage change. Young small businesses are dynamic; the innovation of products and processes appears to create tremendous economic benefit (Haltiwanger, 2010). However, most of the small business leaders do not have formal change management processes result in failing to manage change initiatives. (Lora 2016). Economic conditions affect organizational operations and outcomes (Ramirez & Mallette, 2007). During the periods of economic downturn, small business companies were threatened by changes that needed to be implemented. Developing a strategy for accomplishing a vision is necessary (Kotter, 2008).A visionary leader moves individuals toward a vision and is effective when a new direction is needed. Most of small business leaders do not have a strategy while initiating change in small businesses. Staples, the office supply company, did a survey of small business owners and found that 40% of all business owners desired more business management skills but went into business for themselves without it due to confidence.(Higdon2016)

Conclusion

Conclusively this paper presents thedefinitions, theories, views and specific scenarios referring to notion of Change Management. Supportively, the article proposes that high in power distance, masculine, Individualistic and strong in uncertainty avoidance become challenging environments for change management efforts. (Barry, Olin& Winter 2007).Those involved in organizational change efforts are encourage to study cross -cultural models in greater detail to successful implementation of change initiatives. Further, the paper revealed that most of the obstacles to innovation and change in public sector are structural and cultural problems (Hornstein 2010) whilst lack of proper communication, absence of formal change management process, financial limitations and lack of strategy are highly influential in the success of change management process inside Small Businesses.(Higdon,2016) and major reasons lead to change during mergers and acquisitions are: system dynamics, structure-focused changed and profitability issues (Kansal, &Chandani, 2014).

Suggestions for further researches

Change is important in organizations to allow employees to learn new skills, explore new opportunities and exercise their creativity in ways that ultimately benefit the organization through new ideas and increased commitment. (Michael & Shandra 2016).Accordingly, author suggests research propositions how change management could influence on productivity, Innovativeness, organizational competencies and corporate sustainability in the context of Public Sector Organizations, Small & Medium Enterprises, Mergers & Acquisitions and Cross Cultural organizations.

Post-acquisition integration is the gradual process of strategic and administrative combination of acquiring and target firms (Shanley & Correa, 1992), in which individuals from the two organizations learn to work together. (Haspeslagh & Jemison, 1991).The post integration process changes organizational structures, systems, cultures and functional activity arrangements (Pablo, 1994), not only at the point of the focal acquisition, but also throughout the corporation. It involves the post- acquisition reconfiguration (Karim 2000), redeployment (Capron et al., 1998), and disposal (Capron et al., 2001) of tangible (physical assets) and intangible (routines) resources of the acquiring and target firms. In line with the foresaid brief author encourages further researches to examine the role of change management in the process of post-acquisition integration.

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