MAKALE / ARTICLE:

THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine factors that influence organisational change and the nature of relationship that exists between them in order to lead to favourable outcome(s) of change for organisations. This paper adopts a critical approachto identify the relationship between organisation culture, leadership, human resource practices and organisational change management. The extended literature review indicates the need to create and encourage positive relationships between factors that influence organisational change. The conceptual model that emerged from this paper leads to five propositions which emphasised that positive relationships do exist between influencing factors of organisational change management. Creating and maintaining quality and positive relationships between factors that influence organisational changemay not only be daunting to maintain and sustain throughout change process, but challenging to create in specific organisations and countries.

Keywords – Change Management, Organisational culture, HR practices, Leadership, UAE

1. INTRODUCTION

The need for organisational change management in a country such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) cannot be more important given the numerous projects, initiatives, and quest for economic development (Mimouni and Metcalfe, 2011). The transition from a

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mundane or customary society to a more dynamic and emerging economy requires better understanding of how change process as well as an understanding and knowledge of leadership and its direction (Nielson and Pate, 2008). As known and documented in literatures such as Hassan and Mouakket (2016), Martin-Rios (2016), Trondal (2015) change especially organisational change initiatives arise out of problems that an organisation faces. However, change in the context of the UAE aligns with the position taken by Asaad et al. (2015) and Al-Nasser and Behery (2015), that organisations may change based on the impetus of leaders, who are enlightened and who recognises the potentials and possibilities of exploiting circumstances and dormant potentials that may amount to greatness. For change to be possible and attainable especially in a country such as the UAE, Asaad et al (2015) argued that leadership and communication are essential amidst the cultural conditions, as well as continuous process supported by communication. Not to mention that, literature about organizational change in the Arab world is rare (Al-Blori, 2005) and especially so in the UAE, even though significant progress has been made in economic and technological development in recent years (Wagie, 2006; Al-Ameri, 2013). It seems there are very limited attempts to understand change management and its motivations. Renukapp (2014), for example, agrees that there is little information known about how public sector organizations are reacting to change in Abu Dhabi, as it is one of the UAE seven cities.

Organisations across the world regardless of size, mission and location are prone to the influence of several factors that motivates change. Change, while seen by authors such as Metre (2009) and Moon (2009) as essential for growth and innovation, it requires approach that helps to transition people, systems and processes within an organisation in order to generate positive impact (Mento et al. 2002). However, managing change within an organisation of any size can be demanding, frustrating and generate negative outcomes. Change management is an important aspect of any organisation, as such not a new concept. Authors such as Beer and Nohria (2000), Lucey (2008), Kotter and Schlesinger (2008), Carine (2007), to mention a few have all examined factors that motivate change in organisations and the ones responsible for failures and successes of change management process. Although views differ on what should be the focus of change management in organisations, the ever-increasing pace of change is generally acknowledged by all.

Managing change requires systematic approach for dealing with people within the organisation and the organisation itself. This statement portrays change management as a process which involves controlling or coordinating change process, adapting to change and effecting change (Carter, 2008). While the process and approach taken are key to the successful transition and change that the organisation had to undergo, mismanaging change can have consequences that may have severe costs implications or risks to project, people and organisation (Lucey, 2008). As argued by Andrews et al. (2008), change is often redefined by individuals or contextualised by contingencies, conflicting interests and ideologies of groups within an organisation. This notion is further elaborated by Hortho (2008) who explained that "change is presented as an objective fact that happens to the organisation, either as a consequence of external drivers, or as an outcome of management choice" (p.725).

As such, change is channelled towards success when rooted in culture, communication and leadership; factors which all ensure that competitive advantage and adaptation within an organisation is prompt and possible (Metre, 2009). Thus, organisational change is considered an important process that draws from concepts from different disciplines and fields combined to effect the necessary changes in an organisation (Kilpimaa, 2006; Lanning, 2001). Bendor-Samuel (2004) defined organisational change as the process in which an organisation alters its strategies, operational methods and structures in order to effect changes. Regardless, change management have its unfavourable or unsuccessful outcomes in the past. Examples of some unfavourable and negative outcomes are Ernst and Young organisation where Lucey (2008) reported that 75% of all change activities and transitions failed, while 50-70% of the reengineering projects also failed to generate the intended outcomes.

This paper focuses on factors that influence change management and the relationship between the factors during organisational change management process. In the next section, the relevant literature on organizational change management is reviewed and propositions are set forth. Thereafter, the section 3 presents a framework that presents determinants of organizational change management in the context of the UAE. Furthermore, the section 4 discusses about academic and managerial implications of this study which is followed by conclusion and limitations of the study in the section 5.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Influencing Factors of Organisational Change Management

From a global context, reform initiatives have influenced the public sector to the extent that organisations now seek means of enhancing efficiency, profit maximisation and or operational capacity (Hallgrímsson, 2008). In this sense, external factors such as the environment determine change and how such change is being managed (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005). However, the review of change models indicate that change is influenced by certain factors that are internally generated, especially actions and inactions embedded within the change steps, phases and process. As explained by Kilpimaa (2006), change of organisational culture is considered as one of the factors that affect change within an organisation, thereby suggesting that organisational change is an internal alteration of an existing status quo for a better norm.

Thus, from the theoretical background it can be inferred that organisational change is a process that can either be continuous or one that is a set of actions taken at a distinct period of time (Paton and McCalman, 2000). In addition, organizational change can be traced to Kurt Lewin, who in 1951 examined the relationship between group decision-making, implementation, and social change. Change was explained by him with a three-phase model to illustrate the change management process (Burnes, 2004). This model focuses on psychological aspects of behavior modification and presents a systematic approach to change management by using a sequence of well-defined and interrelated processes such as unfreezing, movement, and refreezing (D'Ortenzio, 2012).

Therefore, organisation change involves a process of reconfiguring components and alterations in structure, people or technology within an organisation in order to increase efficiency and effectiveness (Bendor-Samuel, 2004). While this is true, Beardsell (2009) argued that level of analysing organizational change is more significant because it helps to determine the change that occurs at individual, group and structure levels. Based on all these factors, organisation change infer that for change to occur, alterations, action plans and motivation are based on planned change (top down) or/and emergent change (bottom up) (Shipton et al. 2005). But Lanning (2001) argued that change is better motivated and sustained in an organisation through education and communication, two main factors that influence participation and involvement. This argument places strong

emphasis on the role of organisational culture in influencing internal change or as an important change factor (Hofstede, 2001). However, the literature indicates that the drivers of managing organization change across the globe are organizational culture (Beardsell, 2009), leadership (Cameron, Quinn, DeGraff, and Thakor, 2006), organization structure (James and James, 2008), organisation strategy (Tan and Nasurdin, 2011), HR practices (Shipton, et al, 2005), and the like. However, the majority of research literature depicts the role of organisation culture (Hartnell, Yi Ou, and Kinichi, 2011), leadership (Hamstra, Yperen, Wisse, and Sassenberg, 2011), and HR practices (Tan and Nasurdin, 2010) on change management in the organisations. This paper is an attempt to understand and explain the relationship among them.

2.1.1. Leadership and Organisational Change Management

Leaders and leadership have been identified as important and capable of ensuring that quality exists at all levels of production and service processes (Birasnav, 2014). According to Jabeen et al. (2015) leadership, transactional leadership has the potential to mediate the relational psychology and organisational commitments of employees that enable them to successful outcomes for an organisation. However, leaders who are transformational help to establish supportive culture that helps to facilitate process for successful implementation of service and employee to understand the impact of organisational change on improving operational performance (Birasnav, 2014).

Jaskyte (2004) emphasised that leaders play a strategic role in managing the resistance to change by using applicable elements of organisation culture to motivate employee participation in change process. For instance, the clan organisation culture uses thrust that is based on collaboration, uses the cohesive, participative and empowerment means to ensure that employees' morale are sufficient to ensure their commitment to organisational values (Hartnell et al. 2011). However, hierarchy adopts control, using process control, measurement, consistency and capable processes as means of engagement (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). The expected outcome aimed for are efficiency, timeliness, smooth functioning. The difference between clan and hierarchy organisation culture is evident in the outcomes of the two. While clan focuses on boosting the morale, development and commitment of the people, hierarchy end goal are efficiency, smooth functioning and timeliness (Hartnell et al. 2011). The different

outcomes of these two organisation cultures provide insights into the fundamental roles of leadership approach in the two organisations.

Salminen (2000) and Sarros et al. (2005) further explained that leadership, organisation culture and HR practices are moderators in change management and resistance. This is because they are important in encouraging participation and involvement, in negotiating and forming agreement as well as manipulating and co-opting or coercing people to adhere to change (Schein, 2004; Salminen, 2000; Sarros et al. 2005). Thus, organisation change can occur using different change strategies such as power, manipulation, persuasion, consultation and participation (Hartnell et al. 2011). The change strategies may have implications for leadership, organisational culture and Human Resource (HR) practices as moderator of change if planned change is not well implemented (Wilderom et al. 2000). Therefore, the proposition is:

Proposition I: *Positive relationship exists between leadership and change management*

2.1.2. Organisational Culture and Change Management

Culture according to Zhu (2000) have a life of its own which changes due to interactions, and at difference paces, to a varied extent. Certain investigation in this area have indicated that culture within an organisation is at its highest level when it influences its most strategic unit (Elbanna, 2010). But Al-Yahya (2009) emphasised that power-influence in decision making makes the most significant impact in an organisation and their ability to implement their goals. However, it is argued that, organisational culture have strong influence of employees and performance (Carlström and Ekman, 2012). In their research, it was discovered that culture of flexibility trust and cohesion negatively covariate with the overall need for a stable and well-defined framework.

Masi and Cooke (2000) argued that leadership produce cultural innovation and maintenance by reinforcing established sets of shared values. This however infers that norms and established sets of values must have been existing in order for leadership to stir innovation and be able to maintain them. Thus, indicating that culture provides conducive grounds for leadership to thrive, thereby significant for organisational change (Al-Yahya, 2009), since management and staff could collaborate to solve problems (Burke and Black, 1996). This argument is further reinforced by Carlström and Ekman

(2012) stating that managers or change agents could use the understanding of organisational culture to investigate and plan change processes.

According to Lucas and Kline (2008), initiating change efforts needs to be well assessed, so that knowledge of culture can be better understood and utilised as facilitators of the change process. It was further emphasised that organisational learning can help to identify group and cultural phenomena that may have significant influence on the nature of response to organisational change and their capacity to implement change (Lucas and Kline, 2008). But a significant argument is cultural approach and understanding of cultural sensitivity by managers involved in organisational change are important to successful implementation of change (Potter, 2006). Above all, organisational culture and culture models have been examined and identified to have patterns that can provide insights for managers in organisational change (Yahyagil, 2015). Thus, the proposition is,

Proposition II: Positive relationship exists between organisational culture and change management.

2.1.3. Role of Organisational Culture and Leadership on Change Management: The Mediating Role of HR Practices

The existence of shared values that employees can relate to and that can form basis for interactions within an organisation may facilitate or hinder change process (Masi and Cooke, 2000). While leaders and leadership play a major role in the learning process (Birasnav, 2014), and organisational learning influences and modifies service of organisational performance (Lundberg and Brownell, 2006), HR practices are equally important in facilitating a positive change (Wilderom et al. 2000). HR practices in this sense does not operate in vacuum without the coordination of a leader (change agent) and the employees that ensures that the goal of change is achieved (Addae et al. 2006).

Given this premise, it can be said that both leadership and organisation culture are very important in change process (Al-Yahya, 2009). But more significant is the role of HR practices and management which Reutzel et al. (2016) argued as influences leadership in decision making, employee interaction and recruitment in order to achieve top-end outcome in an organisation. For instance, in the clan culture, HR practices mediate in

change process by ensuring that appropriate recruitment are carried out and training programs organised. According to Luu and Rowley (2016), this process does not only ensure that the organisational culture is understood, maintained and sustained, it facilitates the change process and commitment to the process.

Whether for organisational development, change and/or employee and leadership commitment, it is the role of HR to ensure that performance and outcomes reflect organisational objectives and intended outcomes (Addae et al. 2006). For instance, Aladwan et al. (2015) argued that training and development practices implemented by HR have a positive influence on organisational culture. Thus, in its mediating role, HR practices motivate employees and focus their commitment on organisational culture by conducting activities that leads to organisational change and goal of change (Mavondo et al. 2005). Ensures that abilities and skills that brings change in the organisation are prioritised (Nazim et al. 2014). Therefore, the proposition is.

Proposition III: *HR practices mediate the relationship between organisational culture and change managment.*

This proposition and earlier discussion in this paper further indicate that relationship exists between leadership and managing organisational change through HR practices. Thus, organisation culture, leadership and HR practices are all factors that influence organisation change. It also infers that all these factors intervene in processes that lead to organisation change and change management (Aladwan et al. 2015). For instance, it is part of HR practices to recruit appropriate staffs including the leadership for an organisation based on organisation culture and values. In this sense, HR practices and management mediate the communication process and activities that may make change process complex and may hinder change management if otherwise (Paauwe and Boselie, 2005).

Therefore, the mediating role of HR practices influence leadership directly in this sense, the decisions of leader (as change agents) also influence subsequent HR practices such as training needs and development programmes for staffs and leader to develop required skills for organisation change (Tan and Nasurdin, 2010). Explanations like this indicate that leader (as change agent) is unable to perform his or her duties effectively without efficient HR practices (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005), thereby preventing successful outcome for organisational change. Furthermore, the mediating role of HR

makes action and change process more smooth, especially when resources are timely and well organised, and distributed for organisation change (Paton and McCalman, 2000), a process in which leadership plays a positive role in ensuring its success.

In this context, leader (as change agent) mentors and facilitate the development of employees and ensures that HR practices focuses hiring and training appropriate people that can facilitate change. Similar process applies to other organisation culture in that HR practices will be influenced by the projected end result or outcome for undergoing organisation change (Mavondo et al. 2005). Luu and Rowley (2016) argued that the top-down intervention, purpose and direction provided by leaders and HR does not only motivate employees to be committed to the organisational culture, but trust and degree of upward influence from individual employee to their employer. The strength and quality of this relationship is reflective to the extent that it further enhances organisational capability to attract and retain valued contributors (Luu and Rowley, 2016). Therefore, it can be proposed that;

Proposition IV: *HR practices will mediate the relationship between leadership and change management positively.*

2.1.4. Organisational Culture and Leadership

Culture is broad to the extent that it covers all aspects of internal and external relationships, deep to the level that it guides actions of individuals without people awareness of its influence on them (Martin and Siehl, 1983). This is because culture have been identified by Schein (2004) as a complex issue that entails intricate link between shared values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, assumptions and artefacts. Organisational culture is also explained as set of values, assumptions, beliefs and behaviour and the extent to which sets of values influence other aspects of the organisation (Jabeen et al. 2015). Thus, this infer that, the stronger an organisational culture is, the greater its impact on attitude and behaviours exhibited by employees and leaders in the organisation (Ostroff et al. 2003). Reinforcing Jaskyte (2004) argument that the stronger the organisation culture, the more difficult it is to change.

Accordingly, the role of organisation culture cannot be overlooked, however it is noteworthy that organisations change is mostly influenced or determined by a fusion of different factors (Child, 2005). Factors that are facilitated and managed by leaders or

change agents, who also endeavour to preserve organisational culture and facilitate change process (Nazim et al. 2014). Thus, Brandt et al. (2016) explained that the role of leadership in success or failure of an organisation is undeniable. This is evident in being able to retain the organisational culture and coordinate the change process and outcomes (Birasnav, 2014). However, leadership performance to generate the appropriate change outcomes is based on the organisational culture, values, mission and attitudes that influences employees and the leader (Masi and Cooke, 2000). The proposition derived is that:

Proposition V: *There is positive relationship between organisational culture and leadership*

3. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK ON ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The propositions made in this paper are that positive relationships exists between factors that influence organisational change management process. Factors such as leadership, organisational culture and HR practices. As explained in previous sections, positive relationship exists between leadership and ability to manage organisational change. While Masi and Cooke (2000) argued that leadership play a major strategic role in ensuring that organisational change results in favourable outcomes, Nazim et al. (2014) also explained that organisational culture provides the enabling environment for leadership to function optimally in the interest of the initiated and planned change. Organisational change and its management as argued in this paper may seem rather simple, but Aladwan et al. (2015) explained the mediating role HR practices play in ensuring that organisational culture align change management. The mediating role of HR practices does not undermine the significant of both organisational culture and leadership, but emphasise the need and importance of aligning all factors and enabling positive relationships between them in view of the planned change, its process and successful outcome. Figure-1 illustrates the relationships and interactions of all factors in view of managing organisational change.

As shown in the conceptual model, organisational culture and leadership have direct relationship that enable the mediating role of HR practices (Aladwan et al. 2015; Reutzel et al. 2012). It also infer that both organisational culture and leadership require positive relationships and the mediating role of HR to ensure organisational change are successfully implemented. While the change management process within organisation is

dependent on the nature of HR practices and management strategy in place, which may vary (Jabeen et al. 2015; Birasnav, 2014), the argument, propositions and discussion in previous section imply that positive relationships between these constructs may still lead to successful organisational change.
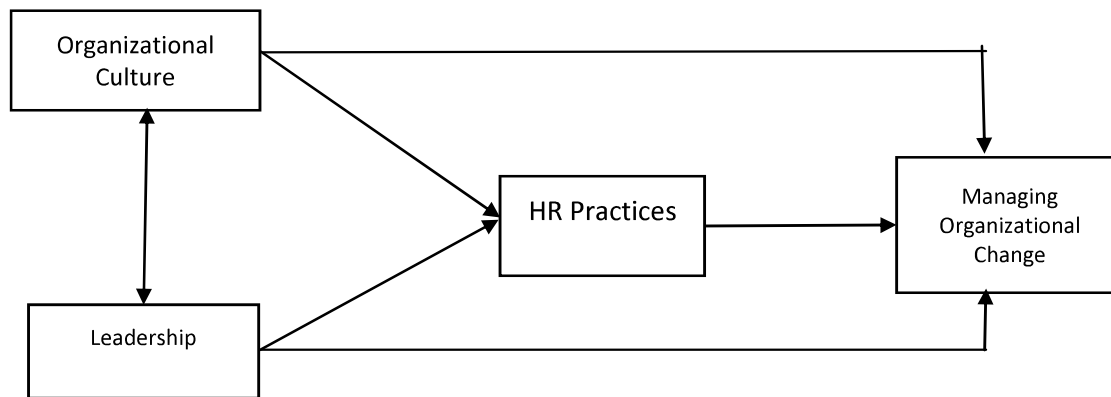
Figure 1: Proposed framework on managing organisational change

Furthermore, Reutzel et al. (2012) argued that leadership and change management may witness challenges that may hinder the successful outcome of change process without the mediating role of HR practices that ensures that appropriate people are strategically placed in leadership roles and as employees that are committed to organisational change. HR practices in this sense ought to ensure that training programs, recruitment and other HR activities both motivate all stakeholders to commit to change and build trust (Luu and Rowley, 2016), while still retaining their commitment to organisational culture (Addae et al. 2006).

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Each factor identified and examined in this paper is not sufficient as an individual component to ensure successful change management process. The inherent nature of organisational change is interwoven in strategic choices made by change agents as a process for effective changes (Senior and Swailes, 2010). Thus, in view of managerial implications of the conceptual model, the role and importance of leadership, communication and ability of change agent to ensure that organisation and its employees understand the benefit, compatibility, complexity and tri-ability of change process (Rees and Hall, 2013). This emphasises the importance of communication in alleviating problems that may be associated with change resistance (Fernandez and

Rainey, 2006) that may prevent positive relationships from being formed between the factors examined in this paper.

In the academic context, this model like any other academic theoretical model that relates to practice field, may demonstrate gap between theoretical interpretations and what exists in reality. Even though change is generally identified, recognised and implemented as a constant and continuing phenomena within an organisation (Osborne and Brown, 2005), it is nonetheless a challenging process that may challenge HR practices and ability of organisational culture, leaders and employees to commit to change process (Jabeen et al. 2015). Thus it is essential to subject this proposition on role of HR practices to further academic inquiry in order to identify further alternatives to mediating organisational change.

5. LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This paper places emphasis on the influencing factors of organisational change management such as organisational culture, leadership and HR practices. In order to increase efficiency and effectiveness on the implementation of change management. However, the speed of change will vary from organisation to organisation, thus restricting this model as a generic 'one approach fit all' process for organisational change. It can then be further inferred that identifying and demonstrating all relationships in the positive sense as indicated in this paper may be challenging for some organisations, but this limitation is not to discourage its application in organisational change management process. While attempting to create positive environment that favour change may be daunting, it is crucial to strategically attempt to simulate characteristics of positive relationship that may contribute to successful organisational change management process.

It is common knowledge that no scientific enquiry is limitation free, and this paper is no exception. However, a more empirical limitation is that it is likely to be more challenging to find a willing government enterprise and to create positive and conducive relationship that facilitates change process. Thus making it difficult to generalise the context of this paper and draw a conclusive and affirmative premise. This study selected organizational level variables (that is, leadership, organizational culture, HR practices and change management) only, without focusing it is implication on employee's level.

The factors that influence organisational change management process have been examined and explained in this paper. The relationship that exists between these factors have also indicated that organisational change require more than a singular factor to ensure successful process. The conceptual model could inform empirical and applied research in organisational change, however limitations exist that indicate that the model may not be effective in all organisations except specific factors and their corresponding relationships as examined in this paper are replicated. Yet, the awareness of change management challenges suggests a need for better understanding of the specific roles and nature of relationships that exist between factors that influence change management in order for the process to be more successful.

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