



The Journal of **ARSYM**

*A Publication of Students' Research of the
Annual Research Symposium in Management*

Published by
Faculty of Business Studies and Finance
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka

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Volume: 1

Issue: 02

June: 2021

The Journal of ARSYM (JARSYM) is a refereed journal published bi-annually by the Faculty of Business Studies & Finance, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. The aim of the JARSYM is to disseminate high-quality research findings on a variety of timely topics generated by the undergraduate researchers in the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. Furthermore, it opens up avenues for the undergraduates involved in the industry to share their inventions, state-of-the-art discoveries and novel ideas. The main philosophy behind the JARSYM is to enhance the research culture within the faculty, thereby within the Wayamba University. All research articles submitted are double blind reviewed prior to publishing. Views expressed in the research articles are not the views of the Faculty of Business Studies and Finance, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka or the Editorial Board.

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National Library of Sri Lanka- Cataloging in Publication Data

Journal of ARSYM (JARSYM)

ISSN No: 2756-9373

Bar Code: 9 772756 937008

Published by:

Faculty of Business Studies and Finance.

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Kuliyapitiya, Sri Lanka

Tel: +94 37 228 4216

Web: <http://bsf.wyb.ac.lk>

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Printed by

Vidyalankara Press, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Telephone: +94 11 291 1382, +94 71 634 3183



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Aims and Scope

The Journal of ARSYM (JARSYM) is a refereed bi-annual journal committed to publish undergraduate research papers of the Faculty of Business Studies and Finance, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. The JARSYM publishes theoretical and empirical papers spanning all the major research fields in business studies and finance. The aim of the JARSYM is to facilitate and encourage undergraduates by providing a platform to impart and share knowledge in the form of high quality and unique research papers.

Core Principles

- ❑ Publication in the Journal of ARSYM is based upon the editorial criteria cited and the evaluation of the reviewers (each manuscript will be sent two reviewers).
- ❑ Priority is given for novelty, originality, and to the extent of contribution that would make to the particular field.

The journal welcomes and publishes original articles, literature review articles and perspectives and book reviews describing original research in the fields of business studies and finance. The core focus areas of the journal include;

- Accounting
- Banking
- Economics
- Entrepreneurship and Small Business
- Finance
- E-Commerce & Business Communication
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The Contribution of Organizational Factors for Adaptability to Change Management Process; A Study in Apparel Manufacturing Company, Katuanayake Export Processing Zone, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Change has always been a part of life of the organization because the world is constantly changing at a very faster rate. Change usually discomforts individuals in an organization while struggling with sustainable change management. Therefore, no matter the change has an impact on the individuals and the whole organization. With the effect of new ownership, the XYZ organization reforming and transforming old organizational environment to new one that changes have not been an easy task to undertake since it has been faced by various challenges from internal and external environment. Resistance to changes is one of major problem that can influence the success of implementing any organizational change. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of core competencies, organizational structure, leadership, culture on change management. To investigate case study, quantitative research approach and convenience sampling method were applied to collect data by using questionnaires from 278 of sample employees. Data analysis was done through the SPSS 20 while descriptive and inferential statistics were used to describe the data. The results of this study important to organization especially in the field of change management that revealed the change management was positively affected by its organizational factors that found, concluded a unit increase in core competencies, structure, leadership, culture increases the change management. Hence, organization should consider enhancing these factors which ensure the change management directions. The study recommended for XYZ organization to increase the project allocations for training and develop employee's skills to adapt with challenging environment.

Key words: - *Change Management, Core Competencies, organizational Structure, Leadership, Organizational Culture*

1. Introduction

Today, business organizations are undergoing drastic changes since rapid environmental changes continuously creating opportunities and threats. Without adapting to these changes, the survival, growth and the competitive position cannot be assured. Mullins (2010) proved that the organizational ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions mounts the confidence of employees and assure the long-term survival. Seventy percent of the change initiatives fail due to employee related factors and the factors related to change management process. The Changes are easy to introduce but it is very hard to adapt people's behavior, attitudes towards change and resistance to change is likely to arise from among the employees. However, it is obvious that the ability for adapting to changes will make introducing the changes easy for top managers. Therefore, understanding the complex relationships among organizational factors and ability of employees for adapting to changes are very important and still remaining unresolved. An understanding of the factors that contribute for adapting to changes might help organizational leaders to implement successful change efforts. This study focuses on identifying the organizational factors that are likely to influence on adaptability to change and to investigate the magnitude of effect of the factors. Hitt et al. (2005) stated that the effective structures provide stability the firm needs to successfully oversee change process. Wang (2005), explored that the strong leadership helps drive the change process by encouraging employees to enhance their skills, knowledge and motivation to easily adapt to changes. Also, the strong and supportive organizational culture directly influences the success of an organization change management process. Bandura (1986) also argued that when an organization is being with change, it is time for management to practice leadership and they should become the role models for the rest of the staff to exhibit positive behaviors that demonstrate what is expected from employees in relation to the change. According to Sugarman (2010), the availability of core competencies usually leads organizations to face strategic change management implementations.

By exploring the available body of knowledge on the factors affecting to adapting to changes, this study aims to test a model including core competencies, structure, leadership and culture as independent variables and their effect on adapting to changes. The context selected to test the model is the Sri Lankan apparel industry due to many technologically innovative changes are introduced frequently. On the other hand, this industry is very important to the country due to higher contribution to the economic growth. However, the study was designed as a case study on an apparel manufacturing company in Katunayake Free Trade Zone of Sri Lanka since the particular company has frequently been introducing changes. To assure the special request of the company, the anonymity will be maintained by denoting the company as XYZ Company.

2. Research Problem

The Sri Lankan government has missioned to become the top ten high quality garment manufacture in the year of 2020 which expect to contribute \$150 billion from GDP by keeping less than 3% rate of unemployment (Budget Proposals, 2015).

However, according to Dheerasinghe, (2009), normally Sri Lankan garment industry faces challenges of over dependence on single product, heavy dependence on quota system and restrictions, inflexible labor markets and competition, labor wage differentiation and lack of skilled labor. The study also asserts that the better working conditions, on the job training and better strategic management practices may lead to these challenges to cope with industry issues and uncertainties.

According to Welmilla (2020), Sri Lankan garment industry faces human resource challenges of highly dependence on labor involvement than automated machinery and therefore, the industry has high demand for labor. Based on this study, Sri Lanka apparel enterprises had not seen any substantial technological development and demand is still for manually operated sewing machineries. Therefore, the innovation is an essential strategy to overcome challenges in competitive

environment, but the employees are less responsive and even resistance to the innovative changes of Apparel Companies. Therefore, leaders were hard to adapt employees to new systems and technology-based innovative implementations. As Agbor, (2008), in other countries, the apparel companies face challenges due to rapid changes in technology. Furthermore, employees haven't positively responded to the innovations because they haven't much knowledge or prior experience about the importance of organizational changes on innovation.

To cope with these challenges, it is inevitable to prepare the employees mind set for accepting the changes with a minimal resistance. For that purpose, understanding the complex relationships and their effect among the possible factors and adaptability of employees to welcome new changes. The research studies to identify empirical evidences that reveal the impact of organizational factors on change management is a timely need.

Most researchers are investigating change management focuses on industry, but this study shifts the strategic change management importance for the organizational aspect which is explained the impacts of organizational factors on change management. Thus, it conducts on quantitative research approach to examine case study in an apparel manufacturing company in Katunayake Zone of Sri Lanka since it has been frequently introducing changes.

3. Literature Review

Today the organizations are moving towards the tremendous organizational changes with the purpose of achieving the competitive advantages to grow up and survive their industries. According to Mullins (2010), there is a relationship between organizational ability to adapt changing environment and confidence for its employees and the survival. According to Carnall (2003), strategic change management framework surrounds new standards and behaviors, roles, and positions among the employees in an organization to reduce resistance to change and to strengthen the competitive position with a common vision.

However, as per the findings of Higgs & Rowlands, 2005; Oreg, 2006, 70% of the change initiatives fail due to different reasons of employee related and change process related factors and it is vulnerable to the organization. According to the Hurvey (2010), the changes are easy to establish but it is hard to change people behaviors and attitudes and resistance to change. This situation is likely to be a practical threat to a successfully managing the change.

Barasa & Ombui (2014), the successful implementation is complex for many organizations in which inherent resistance of employees occurs. Consequently, many change initiatives need re-engineering the culture, core competencies, organizational structure, and leadership amidst the employee resistance to changes. So, there is an essential requirement for the strategic change management to implement effective change strategy. Findings based on Martin (2005), change management refers to the structured strategy and process for managing change within an organization which more specially related to managing reactions of employees.

The theoretical framework established based on the Lewin's change management model (1951) that facilitates easier to understand and structure the change process. It has three stages of unfreeze, change, and refreeze. These three stage change management process explains how employees should adapt to changes by reducing their resistance to the change process. In the second stage of changing status quo will not be the end of a successful change management process. In refreezing, the support of employees is essential for stabilizing the change by training, leading, and expecting mistakes as part of the process. According to Burke et al. (2009), the re-freezing emphasizes the establishment of stability once the changes have been implemented. Pulakos et al. (2000) states that the positive and supportive force of employees within the organization is an essential aspect in this stage and it would be a highly important resource to any organization.

According to Hitt et al (2005), effective structures provide stability the firm needs to successfully oversee the change process and gain the sustainable competitive advantage through new changes. When a firm's ability to control the resource include all assets that enable a firm to catch and implement strategies to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Wang (2005) explored and stated that the dynamic leadership who has the responsibility to encourage employees to enhance their skills, knowledge and motivation to adapt to changes is a key factor to drive the change process.

Potosky and Ramakrishna (2001) argue that the culture of the organizations shows direct influences on the success of an organization change management process. Organizations often create positive organizational culture through communication, values, norms policies and rules, programs, and leadership. However, effect of the organizational culture on change management has not been explored in the context of Sri Lankan apparel industry.

Bandura (1986) stated that it is essential for management to practice a leadership style that the leaders become the role models for the rest of the staff and exhibit behaviors that demonstrate what is expected from employees in introducing an innovative change. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), studied the application of the commitment model including affective, continuance, and normative commitment to organizational change management process. By studying a sample of 224 university students, they identified employability, trust in management, communication of the change and decision-making process of an organization as main factors that affect organizational change management process. In addition, it was found that there is a moderate effect of leadership on change management.

Week (2005); Herold and Fedor, (2008), argues that the organizational effectiveness and employee well-being would be decreased if organizational leadership fails to manage the change effectively and put the managers' career at a risk. Gregory (1983) and Meyer (1982); Senior & Swailes (2010); Krug and

Hegarty (1997), suggested that strongly homogeneous and unsupportive organizational culture may face difficulties in introducing strategic change management to the organization.

Resistance to the changes in organizational structure can deliver results such as job dissatisfaction, failure of organizational change, increased stress, turnover and decreased organizational commitment (Tavakoli, 2010). According to the Burke et al. (2009); Sugarman, (2010), inefficient allocation of resources and lack of core competencies usually lead management to face obstacles during strategic change management process. According to the Burns, (1996); De Wit and Meyer (2010), there are issues in implementation of strategic change management process in an organization where there is a weaker organizational leadership or managerial style to overcome the employee resistance.

The available empirical evidences indicate that the majority of results are mixed with strong, moderate, negative effects of the organizational factors on change management making it obvious that the relationships and effects are not yet well established. Accordingly, understanding of the factors that contribute to resistance to change the status quo might help organizational leaders to facilitate successful change efforts (Atkinson, 2005; Furst and Cable, 2008). As the literature review reveals, studying the effect of organizational level predictors such as organizational core competencies, structure, leadership, culture on change management will be helpful for making accurate decisions of apparel industry in Sri Lankan context.

4. Research Questions

Based on a comprehensive literature review on change management and its predictive factors, the few empirical research gaps were derived in Sri Lankan context and following research questions and research objectives were formulated.

To what extent the organizational factors such as Organizational Core Competencies, Organizational Structure, Organizational Leadership, Organizational Culture affect change management in XYZ Company?

5. Research Objectives

For answering the above research questions, following research objectives were established.

To examine the effects of Organizational Core Competencies, Organizational Structure, Organizational Leadership and Organizational Culture on change management in XYZ Company.

6. Methodology

6.1 Research Design

The explanatory, cross sectional study design and quantitative research approach have been used in this study. According to the company current information, it has 1000 employees who are working at deferent employee levels of managers, executives, supervisors, and other operational employees. Hence, sample size of 278 respondents is taken into the study based on the population as per the Morgan (1970) and it represents the population of this organization. Due to the problems of limited budget, time consuming, and country health condition this study was undertaken with non-probability sampling technique of convenience sampling to collect data using questionnaires via Online Google Docs form. Therefore, the overall response rate was 100% with no unanswered because online form was prepared with the condition of required option which eliminates nonresponses.

6.2 Research Model

Based on the research gaps revealed by the review of the literature, research model including four independent variables which has possible effects on change management was developed.

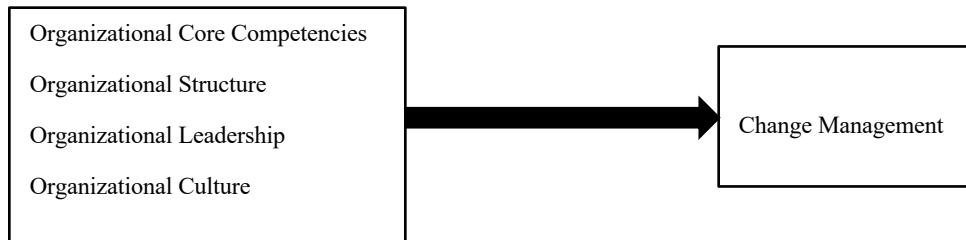


Figure: 1 Conceptual Model

6.4 Hypotheses

Depending on the direct paths of the research model, following hypotheses were formulated to test the model in Sri Lankan apparel industry.

- 1 **H1:** There is a significant impact of core competencies on change management in XYZ Company.
- 2 **H2:** There is a significant impact of organizational structure on change management in XYZ Company.
- 3 **H3:** There is a significant impact of leadership on change management in XYZ Company.
- 4 **H4:** There is a significant impact of organizational culture on change management in XYZ Company.

6.5 Data Analysis

The analysis of data was done at three levels, the univariate analysis by descriptive statistics, bivariate analysis using Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate analysis by multiple regression analysis.

7. Results

7.1 Descriptive analysis

According to the descriptive analysis of demographic variables gender shows 61.5% of male and 38.5% of female employees. Age distribution shows, 81.7% of employees are between 18 and 30 years, 31 and 40 years presented 12.2% and above 41 years represented 6.1%. Marital status represents, 78.1% of employees were married and of 21.9% were single. Education status shows, Ordinary level of 44.6%, Advance level of 27.7%, Graduate with 18.7% and other specify of 9.0%.

Majority of 65.1% respondents are operational employees, 15.5% were executives, 14.7% were supervisors, and 4.7% were managers. Working experience indicates, 48.9% respondents have worked between 2-5 years and 29.1% of below 1 year and 11.9% of above 11 years and least 10.1% respondents have worked among 6-10 years.

Table: 1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Change Management	3.40	.609	278
Core Competencies	3.50	.707	278
Structure	3.88	.776	278
Leadership	4.17	.665	278
Culture	3.80	.615	278

Source: Survey Data 2020

Descriptive statistics revealed the results mean value of change management is 3.4 and core competencies, structure, leadership, culture mean values are respectively 3.5, 3.88, 4.17, and 3.8. Change management is moderately accepted by employees and other are accepted at higher level. Standard deviation for all variables is lower than 1 which indicates all are not highly disperse from its mean values.

7.2 Correlation Analysis

The p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.01, ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, there is a positive significant relationship between core competencies and change management. Based on the result, the Pearson Correlation (r) is 0.782, 78.2%, this indicates that value of this correlation coefficient 0.782 is fall under coefficient range from + 0.70 to + 0.89. Therefore, the relationship between core competencies and change management is very strong relationship.

The p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.01, ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, there is a positive significant relationship between organizational structure and change management. Based on the result, the Pearson Correlation (r) is 0.596, 59.6%, this indicates that value of this correlation coefficient 0.596 is fall under coefficient range from + 0.50 to + 0.69. Therefore, the relationship between structure and change management is substantial to very strong relationship.

The p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.01, ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, there is a positive significant relationship between Leadership and change management. Based on the result, the Pearson Correlation (r) is 0.600, 60%, this indicates that value of this correlation coefficient 0.600 is fall under coefficient range from + 0.50 to + 0.69. Therefore, the relationship between leadership and change management is substantial to very strong relationship.

The p-value is 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.01, ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, there is a positive significant relationship between Organizational Culture and change management. Based on the result, the Pearson Correlation (r) is 0.545, 54.5%, this indicates that value of this correlation coefficient 0.545 is fall under coefficient range from + 0.50 to + 0.69. Therefore, the relationship between culture and change management is substantial to very strong relationship.

According to the Model Summery the correlation (R) for this research 0.822 whereas the coefficient of determination (R²) is 0.676. Accordingly, independent variables explain 67.60% of total variance in adopting to change.

7.3 Multiple Regression analysis

Table: 2 Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		t	Sig
	B	Std Error		
(Constant)	.298	.151	1.972	.050
Core Competencies	.505	.040	12.78	.000
Structure	.102	.038	2.676	.008
Leadership	.089	.043	2.043	.042
Culture	.151	.047	3.214	.001

Source: Survey Data 2020

Dependent Variable: Change Management

$$Y \text{ (change management)} = 0.298 + 0.505 \text{ (core competencies)} + 0.102 \text{ (structure)} + 0.089 \text{ (leadership)} + 0.151 \text{ (culture)}$$

Based on the 4.3 coefficient table, core competencies, structure, leadership, culture have the significant positive influence towards change management. That means for everyone unit increase in independent variables, change management will increase by respectively $b_1, b_2, b_3, b_4 = 0.505, 0.102, 0.089, 0.151$ units. Core competencies have the strongest influence on change management. Core competencies plays the most important predictor compared to culture, structure, and leadership.

8. Testing Hypotheses

According to the results of data analysis, core competencies are statistically significant because its significance value $0.000 < 0.05$. It is concluded that there is a significant impact of core competencies on change management of this XYZ Company. Therefore, H1 will be accepted at 95% significance level.

Organization structure is statistically significant because its significance value $0.008 < 0.05$. It is concluded that there is a significant impact of structure on change management of this XYZ Company. Therefore, H2 will be accepted at 95% significance level.

Leadership is statistically significant because its significance value $0.042 < 0.05$. It is concluded that there is a significant impact of leadership on change management of this XYZ Company. Therefore, H3 will be accepted at 95% significance level.

Organization culture is statistically significant because its significance value $0.001 < 0.05$. It is concluded that there is a significant positive impact of organizational culture on change management of this XYZ Company. Therefore, H4 will be accepted at 95% significance level.

9. Discussion and Conclusion

According to the results, core competency's structure, leadership, and culture are statistically significant $p < 0.05$ it concludes that there is a significant positive impact of all variables on adapting to change in this Company. Therefore, all the four hypotheses were accepted at 95% significance level. Core competencies have the strongest influence on change management. Core competencies play the most important predictor compare to culture, structure, and leadership. Kotter (1998), stated that the effective and successful change management process engage with proper planning. This requires high skilled managers and leaders who are capable to foresee future benefits and take necessary actions to achieve the set goals and objectives using the existing resources. According to Senge et al (1999), well financed organizations lead to achieve established change goals more effectively and efficiently than financially instability organizations. Hitt et al (2005), an organization with best and updated technology system usually has an efficient over technologically obsolete organizations not only in competition but also in the whole process of management of change. With good technology an organization is able to easily implement, monitor and evaluate a change process it has

undertaken. Therefore, managers can adjust their organizational factors in order to implement change management strategies. The results imply to the management of the Company that they should increase the allocation of adequate resources to each project and stay aware about government policies when implementing new strategies to change management. The organization should organize training programs to develop employee's competencies and develop clear organizational structure that can be understood by every employee. Finally, the organizations should sponsor its employees to promote for higher levels. Further researchers can aware about employee adaptation to the change management.

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