

Revista Publicando, 4 No 12. (1). 2017, 621-636. ISSN 1390-9304

Studying the effect of Organizational Culture on Employee Attitude towards Organizational Change

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ABSTRACT

Organizational culture is one of effective significant factors of accepting organizational change thereby changes are facilitated and organization adopts new orientations. According to the increasing role of hospitals in preserving human life and health promotion, the present research is conducted to study the effect of organizational culture on employee attitude towards organizational change in Zabol Medical Science University. Research statistical population included all employees of Zabol Medical Science University in 2016. 340 of 3200 employees were randomly selected through clustering sampling method as research sample. Research instrumentations comprised Organizational Culture Assessment Questionnaire (OCAQ) by Parsons and Attitude to Organizational Change Questionnaire, the reliability of which obtained 0.88 and 0.91 using Cronbach's alpha. Then, research results were analyzed using t-independent test, ANOVA, and regression. Findings showed that organizational culture and the components may significantly influence employee attitudes towards organizational change in Zabol Medical Science University.

Key words: Parsons organizational culture, attitude towards organizational change, Zabol Medical Science University



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1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the extensive rapid changes of the present age in organizational contexts, inevitably, organizations must consistently adapt to the changes. Today facts compel organizations to continuously improve their performance in order that they are enabled to positively respond to internal and external change forces. Changes occur in five domains of organizational activity: organizational culture, strategy, through main competitive, technological, and social changes in the environment (Beugelsdijk and Slangen, 2001). Organizational change is a set of solutions from multiple groups inside an organization responding to. The need to change increases through some stimuli including market requirements for business, organizational requirements, cultural requirements, workforce nature, technology, economic shocks, competition, social trends, global policies, employees and managers' behavior, as well as leadership and staff mindset (Anderson and Ackerman, 2008). Change refers to the organization transition from existing situation to the desired situation. According to the literature, human factor plays a significant role in organizational change achievements (Widdis, 2003). Some others claim that organizational change revolves around human resources and view other organizational change factors or issues as a function of human resources (Bamberger and Meshoulam, 2002). Other scholars assume that changes occur relying upon structure such that it influences other change factors (Hall, 2001). And, some also regard organizational objectives as the foundation of organizational change (Miles and Snow, 1994). Others assert that change follows technology. And finally, some scholars view culture as the foundation of organizational changes. Although, they presume slow and long-term cultural changes; on the other hand, they consider organization nothing but culture (Afjeh, 2002).

On the other side, nowadays, enjoying a desired organizational culture is considered as power in organizations. In a social context, various organizations have different cultures; and, here, organizational culture is an environmental (context) variable differently influences all organization members. Hence, it is necessarily required to properly perceive the structure for effective management (Seyedameri, 2013).

Considerable amount of disparity is seen among scholars respecting the concept of organizational culture, the characteristics, research design, and measurement, effective



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factors of culture establishment and evolution, as well as outcomes of particular culture governance on organization. However, there is some consensus on the issue that organizational culture management is of management necessity in the present age and of the necessary condition for achievement (Choi et al, 2010).

In other word, one of the basic organizational strategies for higher effectiveness is organizational culture; and to adjust organizational strategies in culture domain and to create a suitable organizational culture may be probably the significant management mission. Significance of organizational culture stems from the fact that managers already feel culture effect on employee attitudes and behavior; in addition, managers have found out the importance of organizational culture recognition to enjoy competitive advantages of other organizations (Mohammadpour zarandi et al, 2014).

The effect of organizational culture on employees is to the extent that staff behavior, emotions, perspectives, and attitudes are obtained; further, employee probable responses to the considered evolutions would be assessed, predicted, and oriented. Changes are easily facilitated and new orientations are created through organizational culture leverage (Rasteh moghadam et al, 2013).

Regarding the significance of organizational culture issue, obviously achievements in implementing innovative strategies and new managerial techniques, as well as realizing organizational goals rely upon coordination of organizational culture as human resource status index with formulated purposes and strategies (Rahimniya and Alizade, 2008).

On other side, employee attitude toward any issue is particularly important in organization. However, the purpose of organizational change is environmental adaptability and improved performance (Pardo del val and Fuentes, 2003), resistance is an inevitable response to any important change. Individuals naturally are aggressive toward change to defend the existing condition; especially, when they feel that their security and or status are at risk (Smith, 2005). Readiness to change concept, which is widely agreed, has been initiated from individuals' change perception (Cunningham and Iles, 2002). Change managers predict change resistance and adopt timely steps to minimize adverse consequences (Hathaway, 2009).

Change at organizational level may not be complemented without individuals; and individuals may never change unless they are ready. Change begins with individuals as



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resistance or support, ultimately, are individuals' decisions and behaviors (Afjeh and Rezaei abyane, 2013).

As a result, individuals' attitude recognition significantly contributes in organizational change literature for effectively and successfully changes (Weber and Weber, 2001). In addition, culture of any organization also plays a critical role in employees change acceptance and change readiness. In general, organizational culture influences all organizational dimensions, management obligations, and employee orientation. Scholars believe that general changes may never take place unless the culture has already changed (Martins and Terblanche, 2003). In organizational perspective, culture is interpreted as a robust chain leading to organizational sustainment (Korte and Chermack, 2007).

Moreover, it is worth to notify that the necessity of change and innovation is recognized in the present organizations and no manager may ignore change and innovation for longterm periods. Further, organizational development based on employee attitude toward changes is now an essential element and effective factor of employee attitude toward organizational change of organizational culture. Therefore, it is expected that Zabol Medical Science University, which is an educational, health, medical, and rehabilitation servicing centers, provides better performance through exploring the organizational culture and offering proper feedbacks. Furthermore, the information may also be applied to help employees and managers prepared for change opportunities in the present dynamic environment. Like any other similar organizations, Zabol Medical Science University also resists against change. Studying the effect of organizational culture components on employee attitude towards change in Zabol Medical Science University, it is anticipated that effective factors are identified and required measures are adopted to decrease change resistance. Thus, the present research tries to find the answer to the question that how organizational culture influences Zabol Medical Science University employees' attitude toward organizational change?

2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE

Organizational culture

Organizational culture is an inter-organizational phenomenon and all staff consensually agrees that a hidden hand directs individuals toward a typical invisible behavior.

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Individuals' behavior is justified through organizational culture recognition and

perception (Zarei matin, 2005).

Organizational culture refers to a dominant behavioral pattern among organization staff

formed based on individuals' values, beliefs, and habits, and supported by the majority;

furthermore, it is under the influence of factors such as governance, control,

communication, participation, conflict, cooperation, observing social values, and the like

(Ostad hassanlou, 2011).

The core of organizational culture consists of common individual values shaping inter-

organizational behaviors. Culture is a set of key values widely accepted by staff.

According to Morris, organizational culture is a unique model of assumptions, values,

and common norms of social activities forming organization language, symbols, and

operations (Rezaeiyan, 2007; p 154).

The present research used Parsons AGIL-based organizational culture model to study

organizational culture. Adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latent pattern

maintenance are the four necessary Parsons social system functions with four main

hypotheses as follows:

Adaptation: as the first function, includes compatibility with natural and external

environment where scarce material resources are obtained. Simply, the first function is

economic function.

Goal attainment: the second function means political utilization of the resources to attain

particular goals. Any system may require some instrumentation for resource mobilization

so that objectives and satisfaction are achieved.

Integration: the third function refers to the realization of legal and legitimate norms,

rules and regulations to supervise and control the entire system, which can be reflected in

the law. Any system must maintain internal component coordination, and prevent any

deviations; in other word, it should keep it coherent.

Latent pattern maintenance: it means altering personal values turning them into

individual values to become an element of common and constant value models of a given

system. Any system is supposed to keep the balance as much as possible (Craib, 2013;

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The theory, in general, intends to provide a detailed comprehensive description of

challenges actors encounter within a social whether micro or macro system. Parsons not

only talks of state-nations social system, but also discusses organizational social systems

that are at micro levels, as well as macro system known as global community. He

supposed that the theory has the ability to respond to external world conditions (Stones,

2009).

Each function relates to a social system. Adaptation to the material world is a function of

economic system; goal attainment in social system is the function of political system;

integration and discipline are associated to the legal system; and latent pattern

maintenance is the duty of cultural system (Smith, 2004; 57).

In the model, all systems lack equal power. Despite the fact that each system is individual

and independent, cultural system is of more significance than other systems. According

to Parsons, cultural system embraces three main domains as follows:

1. Domain of cognitive institutions; associated to the beliefs and ideas of external

world.

2. Expressive institutions; such as art and music, which are applied in emotional

communication.

Moral norms and criteria; associated to the right and wrong of human actions 3.

(Smith, 2004; 53).

Parsons considers cultural system as individuals' integration and socialization in the

society. Individuals' social action contains choices determined by values and norms

within a cultural system; meaning that individuals socially act relying upon internalized

cultural values (Belington et al, 2001; 35).

Organizational change

Organizational change is a planned effort throughout the organization run by top

management and enhances organizational health and effectiveness through planned

change projects in organizational process using behavioral sciences. Organizational

evolution objectives are:

1. Increased compatibility among structure, processes, strategy, individuals, and

organizational culture;

2. Creating and developing new innovative solutions in organization;

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3. Developing organization renovation potential (Afjeh and Rezaei abyane, 2013).

In the present fast and competitive world, the need for rapid organizational changes and its management are regarded as basic requirement of organizational achievement. How employee and management view organizational changes, and how the attitudes influence organizational change decisions depend on multiple factors, where three emotional, cognitive, and behavioral attitudes are investigated in the present study.

According to the research subject matter and regarding literature findings of organizational culture and employee attitude toward changes, research conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1. It is a researcher-made model examined in Zabol Medical Science University.

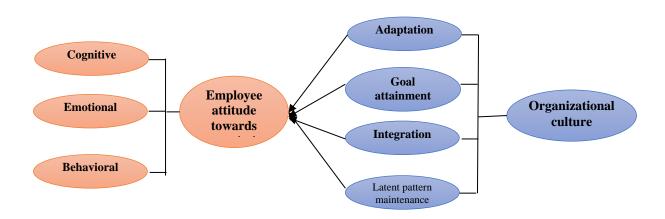


Figure 1: Research conceptual model

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is an applied study in term of purpose and a descriptive survey in term of methodology. Data were collected through field-library method. In the process, organizational culture and organizational change theoretical basics, as well as the components were initially identified and formulated through library study method. Research hypotheses were examined using field study through questionnaires. Research instrumentations included Organizational Culture Assessment Questionnaire (OCAQ) by Parsons relying on Parsons four necessary social system functions model (AGIL). It

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consists of 28 items assessing 4 components of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latent pattern maintenance. Each component consists of 7 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale. The Attitude to Organizational Change Questionnaire (Denham et al, 1989) comprising of 18 items evaluates three components of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral change. It is worth to notify that questionnaires face-content validity was verified by experts; further, the reliability was measured 0.88 and 0.91 through using Cronbach's alpha. Since research statistical population included all employees of Zabol Medical Science University; hence, 340 of 3000 individuals were randomly selected through random clustering sampling method. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation test, and linear and multiple regression through SPSS21.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

Research hypothesis: Organizational culture significantly influences employee attitude towards organizational change in Zabol Medical Science University.

Research main hypothesis is examined by multiple regression analysis. With dependent variables y and p-1, and independent variable of xp-1....x2.x1, it is defined as follows:

$$Yi = \beta 0 + \beta 1x1 + \beta 2x2 + + \beta p-1xp-1+\epsilon i$$
 $i=1, 2, 3..., n (1)$

Therefore, regression model is represented in the following table along with regression coefficients and significance of coefficients:

Table 1: Fitted regression model significance

Model	R	\mathbb{R}^2	Adjusted R	Standard
				deviation
1	0.748 ^a	0.560	0.555	7.795

Table 2: F-statistic and signifiacnce level

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean squared	F	Significance
	Regression	25901.499	4	6475.375		
1	Remainder	20352.674	335	60.754	106.583	0.000^{a}
	Total	46254.174	339			

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Independent variable (adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and pattern maintenance)

Dependent variable (attitude toward organizational change)

According to the two above tables, R^2 in multiple regression model is 0.560 explaining adjustments in attitude towards organizational change as dependent variable by four components of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and pattern maintenance. In addition, the regression model fitted by the variables is significant (p-value <0.05). Regression coefficients and significance levels are shown in the following table.

Table 3: Regression coefficients of attitude towards organizational change and significance levels

	Non-standard coefficients		Standard	Т	Significance
Model			coefficients		
Wiouci	В	Standard	Beta		Significance
	_	deviation			
Independent	59.729	4.23		14.12	0.000
Adaptation	0.666	0.107	0.300	6.194	0.000
Goal attainment	0.442	0.123	0.195	3.593	0.000
Integration	0.48	0.141	0.178	3.412	0.001
Pattern maintenance	-	0.096	- 0.263	- (115	0.000
	0.589			6.115	
Dependent variable (attitude towards organizational change)					

Considering the above mentioned tables and according to the coefficients, all four components of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and pattern maintenance are significant (p-value <0.05).

Table 4: Step wise regression coefficients of attitude towards organizational change

Model	Correlation	Coefficient of	Adjusted coefficient	Significance
	coefficient R	determination of determination R ²		level
		\mathbb{R}^2		
First	0.614 ^a	0.377	0.375	0.000

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Second	0.686 ^b	0.471	0.467	0.000
Third	0.715°	0.511	0.507	0.000
Fourth	0.747 ^d	0.560	0.555	0.000

At the first step, adaptation variable was used in the equation. The multiple correlation coefficient was 0.614; coefficient of determination and adjusted coefficient of determination obtained 0.377 and 0.375, respectively indicating that 37.5% of dependent variable adjustments (attitude towards organizational change) are explained by adaptation. At the second step, goal attainment variable was analyzed in the equation. It intensified multiple correlation coefficients to 0.686; further, coefficient of determination and adjusted coefficient of determination were also increased up to 0.471 and 0.467, respectively. They explain 46.7% of dependent variable adjustments (attitude towards organizational change). Integration was applied in the third step. Multiple correlation coefficients variable was 0.715; and coefficient of determination and adjusted coefficient of determination increased to 0.511 and 0.507, respectively. The three variables explain 50.7% of changes in the dependent variable of attitude towards organizational change. At the fourth step, pattern maintenance variable was added to the equation. Then, multiple correlation coefficient equaled 0.748; and 0.560 and 0.555 were obtained for coefficient of determination and adjusted coefficient of determination, respectively. Operations were stopped in four steps. In fact, the four variables explain 55.5% of changes in the dependent variable of attitude towards organizational change. According to the aforementioned and regarding the above table, regression equation may be written as follows:

$$y = 59.729 + 0.3X_1 + 0.195X_2 + 0.178X_3 - 0.263X_4$$

Y = attitude towards organizational change

 $X_1 = adaptation$

 $X_2 = goal attainment$

 $X_3 = integration$

 X_4 = pattern maintenance

According to the results obtained from Beta coefficients, it is observed that "adaptation" more contributes in explaining the dependent variable of "attitude towards organizational change" than the variable of "goal attainment", which plays a larger role than



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"integration". Moreover, independent variable of "pattern maintenance" shows a negative effect on the dependent variable.

According to the above table, the final model is attained as follows:

Attitude towards organizational change= 59.73 + 0.3 (adaptation) + 0.195 (goal attainment) + 0.178 (integration) + 0.263 (pattern maintenance)

The model demonstrates that any changes in "adaptation", "goal attainment", and "pattern maintenance" variables may lead to 0.3, 0.195, and 0.178 units of (positive) changes and 0.263 negative changes in the dependent variable of "attitude towards organizational change".

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Present organizations, in particular governmental and semi-governmental organizations with almost old traditional systems largely concerned with conventional and hierarchical management, assume that organizational survival depends upon the critical issue of change and evolution. Thus, it is necessary that management and employee adopt required measures to recognize organizational change and effective factors of change acceptance. Organizational culture is of effective factors of accepting organizational change thereby changes are facilitated and new orientations are created in the organization. Staff behavior, emotions, attitudes, and perspectives can be figured out by investigating aspects of organizational culture; further, the probable response to the considered evolutions would be predicted and directed.

Research hypothesis results revealed that organizational culture significantly influences employee attitude towards organizational change in Zabol Medical Science University. In other word, the higher the organizational culture is, the more the employees are ready to change. This finding demonstrates the relationship between organizational culture and employee attitude towards change.

Organizational culture is counted as the present age management necessity and of achievement requirements. Significance of organizational culture results from its effect on staff behavior and attitude. In general, organizational culture influences all organizational dimensions, management commitments, and employee orientation. Any general change would occur through culture change. In organizational view, culture is interpreted as a strong chain leading to organizational survival (Korte and Chermack,

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2007). This finding is consistent to the findings of other researchers. Mirkamali and Zeinalipour (2009), in state universities, uncovered that organizational culture is of main factors of organizational change management. Amiri (2010), in physical education departments, revealed that more appropriate organizational culture would decrease staff resistance to organizational change. Results of Mohammadpour zarandi et al (2014) also indicated that there is a positive significant correlation between organizational culture and change readiness of Shahr Bank employees. Also, Jurado et al (2014) suggested that successful organizational change depends on the culture. However, it is inconsistent with the results of Yaghoubi farahani et al (2014) where they rejected the significant effect of organizational culture on facilitating organizational innovation.

Respecting to adaptation, it is necessary to mention that adaptation as one dimension of organizational culture predicts staff readiness to organizational change. In this regard, high adaptable organizations are able to find some ways of meeting change requirements, identify organizational context, to respond to current stimuli, and to surpass prospective changes, as these organizations are directed by customers, take risks, learn from mistakes, and enjoy the potential and experience of change. They continuously improve organization capability to value customers.

Respecting goal attainment, it is worth to notify that successful organizations have defined a clear perception of goals and orientations such that organizational goals and strategical objectives are explicitly defined and organizational perspective are planned. Some organizations, today, have to change their mission; thus, strategy, structure, culture, and behavior are essential. In such condition, the powerful leadership outlines organizational vision and creates a culture to cover the vision. Organizational departments with different functions may properly cooperate to achieve common goals; therefore, organizational boundaries may stay integrated.

In term of integration, it is noted that almost often effective organizations are integrated, too; moreover, staff behavior originates from fundamental values. Leaders and followers have well achieved expertise to reach an agreement (even when they are in contrast), and organizational operations are well coordinated. Such organizations enjoy distinctive, strong culture and adequately influence staff behavior. Integration refers to the fact that organization members share the values consisting their identity and expectations. Staffs



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are able to agree upon critical disparities such as agreement at low levels as well as the ability to agree at other levels. It leads to staff readiness for change and aids the organization to be sufficiently prepared against changes.

Regarding the component of pattern maintenance, any system requires as much equilibrium as possible. System specific values and culture creation and preserve are of critical key basics of equilibrium for any system and structure. Organizational pattern maintenance is considered as one dimension of organizational culture representing that the organization endeavors to maintain the pattern and existing values as much as possible. So, if such culture exists in an organization, employees' readiness to change would decline showing higher resistance to change.

Finally, it may be stated that organizational changes would lead to change in organizational structures in addition to rebuilding and adjusting communication. According to Brook et al (2015), culture contribution in organizational change processes is often underestimated. However, it is noticed that achievement of change process largely depends on employee inclination to adapt to new workplace. Change scholars have focused on the significance of identifying the priorities or the factors facilitate change, on change readiness among involved individuals through influencing their attitude towards change. Managers would have had no difficulties in planning if no change occurred. Change is an organizational fact to be considered as management obligation. Scholars evaluate the present management environment turbulent and claim that employees must be enabled to simply adapt to permanent changes and new workplace turbulences.

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