

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATION: REASONS AND HOW TO OVERCOME IT

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ABSTRACT

The objective behind this paper is to explore the main sources of resistance to change and how that resistance affects the whole organization. Employees' duty and overseeing resistance effectively are basic essentials for forceful change management. This paper implements qualitative approach to observe the employees' resistance to change in one of the government organizations working under the Ministry of Industries of Pakistan. This is a qualitative study in which a sample of 10 interviews have been conducted from the managers, deputy managers and executives working in this government organization. As indicated by Kurt Lewin's force field analysis, this study shows, a manager looking for to "push" the procedure of organizational change must put all push to decrease the impact of preventing forces while expanding the impact of main driving forces and along these lines work with resistance of employees towards change.

KEY WORDS

resistance, organizational change, qualitative, employees

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1 INTRODUCTION

The modern age of development of mankind during an era when changes in all circles of life are quickened, the requirement for fast adjustment and most extreme expectation of future changes emerges. Forms happen so quickly that even the extreme advancements are such for a brief timeframe. While actualizing

focused methodologies, organizations are continually compelled to screen the progressions occurring available and must watch activities of rivals all together not to linger behind in the transient and be in front of everybody in the long haul. Steady changes have turned into a target need for everybody, although

for the individuals who would prefer not to change.

In this way, Pakistani organizations must utilize the world experience of progress management in their practices and in everyday operations. Residential organizations need to reexamine their financial, organizational, social and mental parts of management and business.

Organizations basically work as open frameworks and are liable to outer impact, so they have to change and adjust to the economic situations. The pre-requisites to change originate from inside the organization as necessities and desires of employees and from outside as expanded rivalry, mechanical advancements, new enactment and the weight of social components.

It is also possible that the organization neglects to roll out the fundamental improvements, terms of vital changes. For instance, in the most recent decade of the 20th century from the rundown of the main twenty organizations in Europe inside five years fifteen organizations vanished (got to be out of business sector). This was the outcome that the organization did not foresee and did not wish to notice changes in the outer environment. Notwithstanding, there are likewise different numbers expressing that 50 to 70% of all hierarchical changes started in 1980–1990 neglected to accomplish its objectives. As indicated by appraisals of M. Hammer, American master on rebuilding organizations, out of 32 billion dollars spent by organizations on these procedures, 20 billion have been squandered (Shermet, 2010). At the end of the day, not each change prompts a positive result. All things considered, there is no option for change. Regardless of the high risk of disappointment, organizations need to continually search for, execute and oversee change.

There may be many reasons of showing resistance like due to fear of insecurity, lack of freedom or being afraid of unknown or having less knowledge. The management should understand the possible reasons of such resistance while implementing change processes in the organization (Asgarkhani and Patterson, 2012). Such type of resistance can be reduced by developing proper communication channels among the organization (Yılmaz and Kılıçoğlu, 2013).

Employees' perspective and their connection to organizational changes assume a characterizing part and significance in the changing occurring in the organization. It is known, that a critical test to the usage of organizational changes or projects of progress is resistance to change. It is the restriction to any progressions and changes in organizations showed by workers in this or other structure. It is imperative to say that individuals oppose not just awful or destructive, in their perspective, changes additionally to those that clearly appear to be sure and not harming. Along these lines, workers may have numerous reasons and intentions not acknowledge changes and oppose them.

Resistance from change has many faces for example absent from duty, failure to complete assignments on time because employee don't want to do, or damaging new machines deliberately so that new things will not work properly (Carr and Brower, 2000).

In this way, it is intelligent to consider organizational changes through the model (Lewin, 1951; Yılmaz and Kılıçoğlu, 2013). Its base is in the position that the comprehension of the progressions includes the mindfulness and the idea of security. In his model, Lewin offered conversation starters like what forces lead to the foundation and support of a parity or what sort of components in the organization that "pushes" to changes.

Thusly, Levin called developments towards change as "driving forces" and blocking developments towards accomplishment of an objective as "hindering forces" (Lewin, 1951). If there should arise an occurrence of fairness of these forces – the organization can hold a steady position.

In this manner, usage of changes at an organization includes either an expansion in the estimation of main thrusts, or a decline in constraining upsetting strengths or some mix of collaborations that prompt the infringement of their equalization.

According to Lewin (1951) managers are looking to "push" the procedure of organizational change must put all endeavors to lessen the impact of hindering forces while expanding the impact of driving forces and along

these lines work with resistance of employees towards change. He expressed that resistance to change was the norm of the organization, subsequently working with faculty, clarifying them the change methods and new standards was essential (Wanberg and Banas, 2000).

It is important to say that Kurt Lewin's field theory was the beginning stage in the utilization of the term resistance to change in

the 1950s and 1960s (Lewin, 1951). From that point forward resistance to change was considered as a component of progress procedure in organizations and was analyzed by hierarchical advancement and management researchers. Resistance is characterized as limiting strengths that restrict any adjustments in organizations (Lewin, 1951).

2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to examine why employees shows resistance towards change, what type of changes were seen in employees behavior while implementing change in the organization, what are the main causes of such behavior and what steps should organization take to

reduce the effect of such resistance. This study enquires about the employee's behavior during implementation and even planning the anything new or changes in the organization which effects the whole organization and causes resistance in implementing change in the organization.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Resistance is something that influences the change process by deferring or backing off its starting, impeding or preventing its execution, and expanding its costs (Ansoff, 1991). What's more, it can be any behavior that tries to keep the present state of affairs (Maurer, 1996). Resistance is not negative ideas all in all, since change is not naturally helpful for organizations (Waddell and Sohal, 1998).

Organizations face resistance in many forms such as employees strikes, arrogant behavior or by harming new technologies or machineries (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Resistance of employees is sometimes created because of inefficient management or because of few managers. If management did not use appropriate behavior with their employees, it may create resistance to change (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Sometimes organizational factors also become a cause of resistance and ultimate failure of new techniques and organization too (Mlay et al., 2013).

Organizations developments in an organization are focused and requesting as much organization alongside the difficulties and resis-

tance they confronted in the prologue to advancement. A few researchers further remarked that bleeding edge employees known as inter-functional in executing advancement in the management industry (Wilson et al., 2012). Seemingly it is unpredictable on the grounds that management development reasons, outstanding effect on employee's parts requiring changes in behavior which suits the consumer's tendencies.

Resistance affects the investment at which an improvement is acquired. It influences the emotions and conclusions of workers in any respect phases of the reception technique. It sways effectiveness, charming, and organizations. Impenetrability to change can heighten if individuals sense that they have been ensured in an advancement of adjustments that have had inadequate support to pick up the predicted results. In ultra-cutting edge turbulent times considering headway is a forceful need in light of reality that this wonder contributes enormous impact on organization and organizations. Thusly, to make the improvement unmistakable, the management needs to set a stage to

fit the changes inside the earth all together that the management can hold next to each other on advancement and the resistance with a higher hand.

Advancement and new pursuit improvement may begin as an arranged choice of the most astounding administration or it might include pretty much mid-level individuals as they need to take the activity to take care of an issue in new courses or to build up a proposition for change. Very fruitful organizations permit both, and even authority top administration choices to embrace an improvement exertion advantage from the unconstrained innovativeness of those underneath (Schuler and Jackson, 1987).

Kurt Lewin's force field analysis model, a manager seeking to "push" the process of organizational change must put all effort to reduce the effect of hindering forces while increasing the effect of driving forces and this way work with resistance of employees towards change (Kunanbayeva and Kenzhegaranova, 2013). Dean and Linda Anderson resent two diverse methodologies towards change in which one differences the other. Both methodologies have at last extensive effects and pioneers and their own particular achievements (Anderson and Anderson, 2002).

Change procedure can be sorted from multiple points of view that incorporate formative changes, transitional changes and transformational changes. Formative changes are either arranged or developing. It upgrades or redresses the current perspectives concentrating on the change of an expertise or procedure. Transitional changes are done to get the fancied state which might be not quite the same as the current one. Such changes are arranged or might be radical. Transformational changes are radical in nature. It requires a movement in presumptions and results as far as structure, procedures, society and technique in an organization (Anderson and Anderson, 2010).

The organization cannot achieve their strategic goals unless their employees are convinced (Schraeder, 2009). The organization should have all information about all the consequences and causes of resistance while implementing change (Asgarkhani and Patterson, 2012). Pre-

vious studies also show that resistance to change is also dependent upon the emotions and irrational ideas of the employees are positively dependent upon the behavior towards change implementation. It also determines the intervention strategy for the management to reduce the employee's resistances towards change (Bovey and Hede, 2001). Individuals do opposes to change as they feel that it will make them lose their worth or force. People resist not only to bad or harmful but it also resist to those changes that seem positive and not damaging as employees may have many reasons and motives not to accept changes and resist them. Therefore implementation of change management practices involves either an increase in the value of driving forces, or a decrease in limiting hindering forces or some combination of interactions that lead to the violation of balance in any organization. Resistance to transform from the workers of an organization can turn into an obstruction to flourishing (Toosy, 2006).

For that the change management process must be comprehended and afterward the explanations behind resistance to change should be figured it out. Once the reasons are known then we can take out the main driver of the resistance.

Much of the literature focuses on the process of change management. Particularly in private sector of developing countries like in Pakistan are largely under researched area. In past studies, performance of individual organizations is observed by researchers which do not cover all population. This study will be helpful for efficient allocation of the change management practices in the organizations to get better outcomes from implementation of changes at an organization level that would involves either an increase in the value of driving forces, or a decrease in limiting hindering forces or some combination of interactions that lead to the violation of balance. In spite of the plenitude of studies on resistance to change, there are very few studies focused on the management practices of government organizations especially when it comes to resistance to change (Hornstein, 2010).

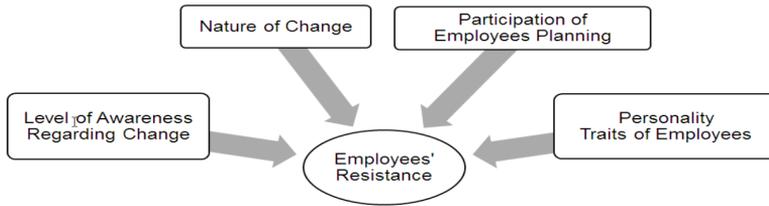


Fig. 1: Themes

The main focus of this study is to explore why employees shows resistance whenever something new is going to be happened in the government organizations and how the organization can reduces such resistance; by understanding employees' expectations and how these expectations can help organization to improve efficiency of the man power. Based on review of literature relationships were developed in this study showing factors that were important for the employees which would increase their loyalty towards organization.

Following propositions were developed on the basis of the previous literature:

1. Level of awareness regarding change is linked with the resistance of employees towards change.
2. Nature of change which is going is associated with resistance of employees towards change.
3. Employees' participation in change planning process is associated with the resistance of employees towards change.
4. Personality traits of the employees is linked with the resistance of employees towards change.

4 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Philosophy of Research

As this paper was on the subjective matter of the topic, research paradigm selected was constructivist as constructivism accepts that the importance of encounters and occasions are built by people, and along these lines individuals build the substances in which they take part (Charmaz, 2006). This study is also based on inductive reasoning approach as this study was concerned with the observation of the employees' behavior when something new is implemented in the government organization (Creswell, 2012).

4.2 Population and Sample Size

Target population for this paper was the employees in government organization. The perfect sample size was under 10 individuals. According to experts of qualitative research, it was suggested that the number of participants

may vary from 5 to 50 in qualitative studies (Dworkin, 2012). For this situation, the aggregate participants who report are twelve and ten are considered to be included in this paper.

4.3 Sampling Technique

We have used convenience sampling technique (Bryman, 2004) in this study as the cost and time required completing this sampling was less. It allows you to complete the sample size in a lesser time and gather vital information relating to the participant views. This procedure may yield data poor cases since cases are picked basically in light of the fact that they are anything but difficult to get to, instead of on a particular methodology/basis. Examining colleagues, relatives or neighbors just in light of the fact that they are "there" is a case of comfort inspecting (Creswell, 1998).

4.4 Data Collection Tool

Creswell (2012) states that the essential strategy for data collection is one-to-one interview developed in the basis of previous observations.

Permission was taken from the participants to record their interviews that take approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Notes were also taken to record their gestures during interview.

Semi-structured interviews will be performing among employees of Government organization at all the hierarchical levels. The questionnaire was adopted from Kunanbayeva

and Kenzhegaranova (2013). Observation would be used as an additional tool to get a better understanding of the answers. Independence between the participants and the researcher will scrupulously respect. An interview guide provided a reliable, comparable qualitative database for the research. The information sought in this study had the potential to be intricate and multi-factorial; therefore, the semi-structured interview allowed the participants to supply some direction with open questions and also allowed for the measurement of specific dimensions through indicators.

5 DATA ANALYSIS

All the ten interviews were transcribed after all the data collection to get accurate and exact views of all the participants. Oliver et al. (2005) stated that “transcription is a technique of data presentation, and this representation can affect how data are conceptualized”. All the transcriptions were then thematically analyzed

through latest version of the NVivo software that is QSR NVivo 11-plus.

“The searching tools in NVivo allow the researcher to interrogate her or his data at a particular level. This can, in turn, improve the rigor of the analysis process by validating (or not) some of the researcher’s own impressions of the data.” (Welsh, 2002)

6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Being a researcher it is very important to give respect to all the participants and keep them aware about all the pros and cons of the study and their participation (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Here in this section key ethical issue of study discussed below.

6.1 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Primary consideration was given to all the participant’s confidentiality and anonymity. It was assured to all the managers and executives that all personal information would not be disclosing to anyone and will only be seen by the researcher and the supervisor of this study.

6.2 Ownership and Interpretation

Ownership and interpretation were considered to be very important while dealing with ethical issues on the qualitative study (Creswell, 2012). Because ownerships means who owns data and interpretation means who owns the interpretations. Being a researcher it is the primary responsibility of the researcher to be honest with the data and with the participants and will not share with any other person.

6.3 Withdrawal from participating in the study

All the participants were given full right to withdraw from the interview whenever he/she wants and in case of withdrawal of any individual, after his/her withdrawal, all the data will be destroyed.

7 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Five themes have been identified after the thematic analysis through NVivo software. These themes were named as Employees' response; Level of awareness; Participation of employees in planning and implementing change; Personality towards; and Planned and purposeful change. These themes has been reported in the Tab. 1.

Tab. 1 clearly show all the themes emerged after the thematic analysis and their frequencies. According to this, the theme with the highest frequency is the last one which is Planned and Purposeful change with frequency of 48, which shows that participants shows more resistance when there were not a purposeful change. Because if they see that organization is implementing something new which did not have a clear purpose or it was not a planned change, employees show more resistance.

The second theme with the highest frequency is Employees response after the thematic analysis which is 43 shows that all the happenings

will ultimately affect the employees' response. If anything new is going to implement in the organization it will create resistance by employees. Employees' response includes their behavior towards change at every step of change formulation and implementation in the organization.

The third highest frequency is of two themes which are of participation of employees in planning of change and personality traits of employees. The frequency of these two themes is 22, which indicates that participation of employees in planning and implementing change and personality traits of employees are equally important and can help to reduce the resistance by employees towards change.

The theme with the lowest frequency is of level of awareness that is Level of awareness have frequency of 18, which indicates that level of awareness of change among employees is more or less important to create resistance to change.

8 INTERPRETATION OF THEMES

8.1 Planned & Purposeful Change

The most highlighted theme among all the interviews is planned and purposeful change. It shows that if management is going to do any change in the organization, it should be purposeful and planned too; otherwise spontaneous changes may create ambiguity and fear among employees. And in this case they will definitely show resistance to this change, a mentioned by one of the participant:

- *"Some things should be changed after some-time. But these changes should be for the betterment of company and for the welfare of employees otherwise employees will not support any such change."* (Participant 5)
- *"If I feel new things can create risk for my job security, I will not support such change."* (Participant 9)

- *"... Favorable changes are accepted open handedly."* (Participant 2)
- *"... but it should be positive change which increase productivity of organization."* (Participant 8)

If any of the employees perceived that new things can harm them, they will not support the change and if employees perceived that new things will teach them something new they will support it.

8.2 Employees Response

The second most reported theme is employee response, and it indicates that anything happen in the organization will affect the employees' response in a positive or negative way depending upon the nature of the change and what are the perceptions of this change in the minds of the employees. It is noteworthy

Tab. 1: Qualitative Data Analysis

Participants	A: Employees' Responses	B: Level of Awareness	C: Participation of Employees	D: Personality Traits towards Change	E: Planned and Purposeful Change
Participant 1	7	3	2	4	6
Participant 2	5	2	1	3	7
Participant 3	3	2	3	1	6
Participant 4	5	1	2	3	7
Participant 5	3	1	4	3	6
Participant 6	3	1	2	2	3
Participant 7	3	2	1	1	4
Participant 8	3	2	2	2	4
Participant 9	4	3	4	1	3
Participant 10	7	1	1	2	2
Total	43	18	22	22	48

that it is also important that how management communicate about change with the employees; if the management communicates properly it will definitely give positive feedback from the employees.

As referred by participants:

- *“Before implementing any change, manager must ensure that all employees are ready for change. It can be done their involvement ... then they train their department subordinates and take feedback about that change ... if feedback is positive then it can be assumed that nobody is disagree with change.”* (Participant 8)
- *“Sometimes new policies are just made and imposed on us, without any prior communication will create a feeling of irritating means we are the one who will work on all these new thing and we remain ignorant how we can support or be a part of that change.”* (Participant 10)
- *“If my supervisor intimate me about new things it will make me easy to understand and cope with that change otherwise it will become very difficult for me to handle things ... sometimes make very weird situation ... very complex ... obviously then I resist to it.”* (Participant 6)

Employees felt satisfied and show positive response to change when they are previously informed about that change and their views and feedback were also considered while implementing that change.

8.3 Personality Traits of the Employees

The third highest frequency theme is Personality traits of the employees, which indicates that if someone is naturally very active and adventurous, that one individual will support new things and if someone is very reluctant, he/she will hesitate to try anything new.

As referred by participants:

- *“And be optimistic even though I might not be currently happy. I will learn new skills and also look for ways to help others cope with change.”* (Participant 6)
- *“Yes because I m very much optimistic person I want change in anything which is associated with myself.”* (Employee 2)
- *“Yes I support to change because without change businesses would likely lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the needs of customers ... and as a employee new and better change help in completing projects properly.”* (Employee 8)

The above statements clearly shows response towards change is also dependent upon the personality traits of the employees. If someone is enthusiastic, he will support change, and take new things as a challenge. If someone is very pessimist, he will show resistance towards change and may create hurdle while implementing change in the organization.

8.4 Participation of Employees in Planning and Implementing Stages of Change

This theme is also important as if the management involve employees in the decision making process in the organization, employees feel confident and it will also increase loyalty and honesty of employees with the organization and with management as well.

As referred by participants:

- *“Only selective employees took part in decision making process which sometime makes other employees felt inferior.”* (Participant 5)
- *“Management show biasness in this regard...they take advises of just their of owned closed relative employees which make other employees ignorant.”* (Participant 6)
- *“There always remain conflict of ideas among employees and management, as management just think about their self interest not what is better for the employees.”* (Participant 8)

It is obvious if someone will not be asked about their opinion he/she will feel inferior and will not support anything in the organization. It is the responsibility of the management of organization to make all employees participate in all the decision making process. It will allow all the employees to show their creativity and be confident and make loyal to the organization.

8.5 Level of Awareness

The lowest frequency theme is Level of awareness, means all employees have well awareness about the change going to implement in the organization. Mostly participants indicates that it will become easier for them if they are well aware about the new things, otherwise more or less it will become the reason for resistance against change.

As referred by participants:

- *“No, mostly changes are not properly aware to all employees.”* (Participant 1)
- *“Only top management is aware about the new things, whether changes are minor or major, lower or middle layer managers are not are of these things ... which may sometimes create resistance as employees feel ignorant by the management.”* (Participant 3)

If employees are not aware of things happening in the organization it will ultimately create feeling of ignorant or can also affect the self esteem of the employees.

Fig. 2 shows the themes emerged after the thematic analysis through NVivo software. It shows that Employees response towards change theme is associated with four other themes which are Level of awareness, Planned and purposeful change, personality traits of the employees and Participation of employees in planning and implementing change. Level of awareness theme is linked with employees' response theme. Planned and purposeful change theme is linked with employees' response theme, participation of employees in planning and implementing change them and Personality traits of the employees theme. Participation of employees in planning and implementing change is linked with employees' response theme, Personality traits of the employees theme and level of awareness theme. Personality traits of the employee theme is linked with employees' response theme, Participation of employees in planning and implementing change and Planned and purposeful change theme.

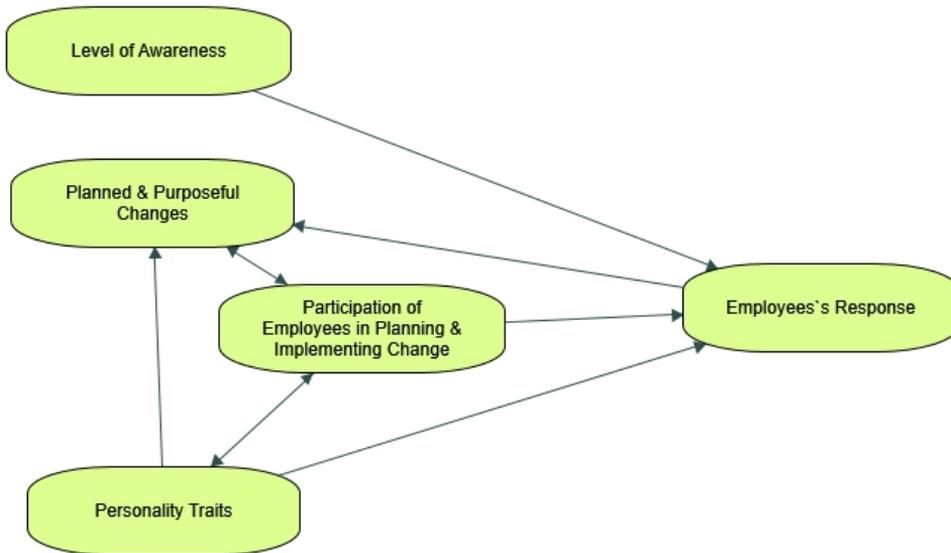


Fig. 2: Concept Map

9 DISCUSSION

The research shows that the spontaneous changes make employees afraid of new things and risks. The management should take necessary steps to make new things purposeful for their employees (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Otherwise the management of the organization have to face resistance from their employees (Asgarkhani and Patterson, 2012). If new things and technologies that will lead to change the organization should be properly communicated among all the employees in the organization

(Yılmaz and Kılıçoğlu, 2013). By communicating about new changes with employees the management can get positive response along with the some positive feedbacks from their employees. If the organization will not do so their employees will felt harmed and negatively will be spread all over the institution (Mlay et al., 2013). Employees response towards change is also effected by their personality traits of individuals.

10 CONCLUSION

This study highlights the main reason of employees' resistance to change in government organizations. The finding of this study reveals that management plays a vital role in reducing the resistance by proper communication. If employees have enough confident on the management of the organization they will definitely support management at every step of

change formulation and implementation process in government organizations. Another reason of the employees' resistance is the personality traits but again if management convinces every employee that every change is betterment of the employees, they will support management at every step.

11 LIMITATION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study there is issue of generaliability arises due to small sample size, as the data was collected from ten employees only. In future increasing the sample size may be affected the

results of the study. Furthermore quantitative study done in this issue may positively support the results obtained in this research which is qualitative research.

12 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Particularly in private sector of developing countries like in Pakistan are largely under researched area. In past studies, performance of individual organizations is observed by researchers which do not cover all population. This study will help to explore impact of implementing new processes in the Government setup of the Pakistan and also helpful for efficient allocation for the change management practices in the organizations. This study will facilitate the management of the public sector organizations to overcome the issue of implementing change processes. This study will be helpful for efficient allocation of the change management practices in the organizations to get better outcomes from implementation of

changes at an organization level that would involves either an increase in the value of driving forces, or a decrease in limiting hindering forces or some combination of interactions that lead to the violation of balance. The findings of this research helps in implementing the balanced approach regarding factors causes resistance for change management practices and by developing a strong organizational culture that must be creative and does not contain any political constrains. It tells how organizational management can manage the change that will lead to prosperous outcomes not just for the company but also for the employees and other stakeholders too.

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14 ANNEX

14.1 Interview Protocol

The interview protocol for the in-depth interviews with the government employees was developed from a review of the relevant literature and was available. The researcher used the protocol for the interviews to guide the participants. The Interview Protocol used to conduct the face-to-face in-depth interviews with the government employees was approved by the Superior University. The interviewer followed a topic guide to make the discussion and interview flow in a systematic and natural way, and to facilitate appropriate probing.

14.2 Initial Interview Protocol for Government Employees

1. Introduction

The interviewer introduces her role, aim and the format of the interview. After thanking the participant, the interview process will be introduced. The participant will be advised of what is expected of him/her. The ground rules of the interview will be established e.g.:

- All information and discussion will be treated confidentially.
- Participant will be informed about the purpose of the interview.
- Participant's opinion is valuable.
- The duration of the interview.

- Participant will be informed about the best way to get in touch with the interviewer, later if he/she wants to.
- The recording arrangement etc.

The participant will be asked to introduce him/herself and express any questions or concerns before the interview process starts. After answering all the questions and concerns, the tape recorder will be switched on and the interview will start.

2. Discussion Questions

The participant will be asked to answer the following questions:

- Are you satisfied with the level of your awareness about the changes taking place in your company?
- How do you cope with changes?
- Do you think that changes taking place in your organization are purposeful and necessary
- Do you observe resistance to changes?
- Who should take part in planning and implementing changes in the organization?

- Are there any workers in your company who disagree with the ongoing changes in your company
- What do these changes mean for you personally?
- Why do you work for this company?
- Do you support changes taking place in the company?
- What kinds of changes are planned in your organization?

3. Closing

Explain the next step of the research and how the participant's feedback will be used. Thank the participant again for his/her contribution and ask if he/she has any other questions. If there are no other questions, mark the ending time and turn off the tape recorder. The interview will be dismissed.

Source:

KUNANBAYEVA, D. and KENZHEGARANOVA, M. 2013. Resistance to Change in Organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan: Country-Specific Reasons and Ways to Overcome it. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 28 (2), 223–232.

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