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Diagnosing resistance to organizational change

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Abstract:

Resistance to organizational change is often viewed as a major problem, that is, resistance must be defeated if we want successful change. While it can be said that resistance is useful for knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, it cannot be simply eliminated, as managing resistance to organizational change adopts stages and strategies to reduce resistance.

In this paper, we relied on collecting the necessary information (theoretical literature) to know resistance to organizational change and how to manage it, We touched on the need for change, the challenges of change, change strategies, and steps for change, then what resistance to change is, its diagnosis, and how to reduce it? using solutions, strategies, and previous studies, and the change curve model. And finally, evaluation study between different models of change .

Keywords: Resistance Change, Organization Change, Curve Change, Models ,Strategies.
JEL Classification: M10,M19.

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Introduction

Due to the rapid developments and changes that the world is witnessing today, including the financial crisis in 2008, the Arab revolutions in 2011, the oil crisis in 2013, and diseases and epidemics in 2019, the map of the world has changed, and change has become necessary, especially in big organization after the financial crisis.

The idea of keeping up with new global developments and the sustainability of the institution became an obsession. This is why the idea of change of all kinds arose, whether a radical change or a slight change, as change results in fierce resistance from employees, so the organization faces two difficulties: the first is organizational change that is most appropriate to keep pace with global developments, and the second is facing resistance to change, which is considered a major obstacle to any organization.

Given the importance of change within the organization, the appropriate atmosphere must be provided and precise policies must be adopted in the field of organizing, planning, and managing organizational change, in order to confront resistance to change, which is an obstacle to every organization, whether it is large and long-established or new and modern.

It can be said that organizational change is inevitable and necessary for organization, as it is a continuous and unstable process of renewal and development, as it is appropriate for the internal and external environment of the institution and the change in individuals and organizations alike, while knowing the dimensions, models and causes of change and giving quick and effective solutions that suit the changes taking place.

1- Need for change:

The life of organizations is unstable and depends in its fundamentals on change throughout the ages and times, as the world witnessed major developments and changes from the Arab revolutions, the oil crisis and natural disasters. These factors greatly affected the policies of the institutions, so they became dependent on continuous change to keep pace with rapid developments and give the company the permanence.

1-1- The first definition:

Organizational change is “a response and a natural result of the change that occurs in organizations, and the ability to adapt and respond, and it is a state of finding adaptation and environmental balance to the changes that occur in the surrounding environment (Poulot, 1997, p. 340)

1-2- The second definition:
Organizational change is "the process of tangible change in the behavioral pattern of employees and bringing about a radical change in organizational behavior to comply with the requirements of the organization's internal and external climate and environment, and that the final outcome of changing the organization's behavior is its development and development." (Wind, 1999, p. 18)

The need for change appears as a result of factors internal or external to the organization. Internal factors are those that stem from the possibility of organizational disturbances occurring, and include those data represented by attempts at change, such as changing organizational goals, low productivity, high costs, and an unfavorable organizational climate. External factors refer to those forces present in the organization's external environment that would exacerbate the uncertainty with which the organization must cope, and include change in knowledge, technology, or economic opportunities, the structural framework of political forces, environmental considerations, and ideological-cultural factors. (Wind, 1999, p. 18)

2- The challenge of change:
One of the most important challenges that the organizations faces is maintaining its activity and leadership in its field of work, and thus organizational change has become a challenge to maintain the institution's Economic position.

The organization is unstable because Change is met with resistance to change. The organization cannot guarantee its stability due to internal and external pressures, Most changes occur due to changing external environment, for example, a dynamic environment exerts more change than a stable environment.
Some changes in an organization are highly dependent on other internal or external changes, so responses to each have to fall into place exactly on time, or there can be a backlog of missed deadlines and opportunities. (Lee, 2003, p. 17)
Lewin ' s (1951) classic work suggests phases of change (unfreezing – changing– refreezing).
These and other similar models and variations on these models share the assumptions that these phases of change are singular, proceed linearly, map the process within a given organization, and result in either routinization of use, some variant of use, or nonuse. (Lewis, 2019, p. 32)

2-1- Change is inevitable!:

Change is nothing new in business. Most businesses are accustomed to continual change. What is new, is the scale of change affecting business. It has become commonplace for business to experience radical, dramatic, far-reaching and fundamental change. So much so, that what is regarded as life-changing, is now largely a matter of perception. To some(Organization personnel), a new line of business, or the outsourcing of non-core activities, might be a dramatic change; to others, such changes may be viewed as routine. (Johnson, 2011, p. 33)

3- Strategies for change:

For a successful change, an effective strategy must be adopted to ensure the workflow. Researchers have adopted two basic elements:

3-1- Organizational change:

There are two approaches to organizational change (logic and emotion) that can be illustrated in Table1 (S.Cohen, 2002, p. 11).

Table1 : approaches to organizational change

Analysis-Think-change (logic)	See-Feel-change (emotion)
1-Give people analysis Information is gathered and analyzed. Reports are written,and presentations are made about problems,solution,or progress in solving urgency,teamwork, Communication,momentum slippage,or other key problems within the eight steps(kotter's steps for change).	**1-Help people see** Complling,eye-catching,dramatic situstions are created to help others visualize problems,solutions,or progress in solving complaceny,strategy,empowerment,or other key problems within the eight steps (kotter's steps for change).
As a result…	**As a result…**
2-Data and analysis influence how to think. The information and analysis change people's thinking.Ideas inconsistent with the needed change are dropped or modified.	**2-Seeing something new hits emotions.** The visualizations provide useful ideas that hit people at a deeper level than surface thinking.They evoke a visceral respong that reduces emotions that block change and enhances those that support it.
3-New thoughts change behavior or reinforce changed behavior.	**3-Emotionally charged ideas change behavior or reinforce changed behavior.**

Source: (S.Cohen, 2002, p. 11)

3-2- Table analysis :(table 1)
We notice from the table1 that the researchers divided it into logical change and emotional change, where logical change depends on analysis, ideas, finding solutions, and working in a team, and emotional change depends on creating exciting connections and situations to help others visualize problems and self-satisfaction within Kotter's eight steps to change.

3-3- Leaming tactic for changing:
In dealing with specific individuals or groups of individuals, managers can employ many tactics to implement an organizational change. These tactics include: (Phyllis F.schlesinger, 1979, p. 337)
- Persuading people about the change's merits.

- Forcing or coercing people to accept the change without resistance.

- Offering people some compensation in lieu of what they will lose due to the change.

- Supporting people emotionally or with education to help them accept the change.

- Scaring people into accepting the change.

- Asking people to participate and help in designing or implementing the change.

- Co-opting people-making them feel as if they are participating.

4- Steps of change:
4-1- kotter's eight-step model:
Kotter first presented his eight-step model in the 1996 book 'Leading Change' (Kotter J. , 1996) . This model outlines a series of steps that organizations can adopt to enhance the probability of accomplishing successful transformational change. The initial four steps focus on unfreezing the organization's existing culture. This involves creating a strong sense of urgency for change, forming a robust group or coalition to guide the change process, crafting a compelling vision of the future, and effectively communicating that vision. Subsequently, steps five, six, and seven are aimed at realizing the change by eliminating obstacles, attaining short-term victories, and solidifying achievements.
Kotter's Eight-Step Model, developed by renowned change management expert John P. Kotter, is a widely recognized framework for managing organizational change. (Kotter J. P., 1995, pp. 59-67)

4-1-1- eight-step: (kotters, 2015)
1. Creating an Urgency
2. Forming Powerful Guiding Coalitions.
3. Developing a Vision and a Strategy.
4. Communicating the Vision.
5. Removing Obstacles.
6. Creating Short-Term Wins.
7. Consolidating Gains.
8. Anchoring Change in the Corporate Culture.

4-2- Kanter's ten-step model: (Kanter, 1992, pp. 59-67)
1.Analyze the organization and its need for change.
2.Create vision and common direction.
3.Separate from the past.
4.Create a sense of urgency.
5.Support a strong leader role.
6.Line up political sponsorship.
7.Craft an implementation plan.
8.Develop enabling structures.
9.Communicate, involve people, and be honest.
10.Reinforce and institutionalize the change.

4-3- six-step model:(indeed, 2023)
Here are six steps to a successful change management process:
1.Identify the goals and develop a strategy.
2.Determine how the change will impact the organization.
3.Assemble your change management team.
4.Develop your strategy.
5.Implement your plan.
6.Perform a post-transition review.

4-4- McKinsey 7-S -step model: (Durai.J.Poornima, 2008, p. 195)
There are seven shared values that make up the McKinsey 7-S Model, which include:
1.Structure.
2.Strategy.
3.System.
4.Shared Values.
5.Skill.
6.Style.
7.Staff.

4-5- Lewin’s three step model :

Kurt Lewin identified three stages of change associated with the force field analysis. Lewin’s three step model of Unfreezing, Movement and Refreezing. Kurt Lewin cited in Robbins and Judge argued that successful change in organizations should follow three steps: unfreezing the status quo, movement to a desired end state, and refreezing the new change to make it permanent. (Lewin, 1947, pp. 5-41)

5- What is resistance to change?

Different authors have introduced various types of changes, based on:
- scale (marginal or incremental and drastic or major changes).
- frequency (discontinuous and continuous change).
- planning (planned and unplanned changes). (Sroufe, 2014, p. 21)

Organizational change efforts often run into some Form of human resistance. Although experienced managers are generally all too aware of this fact, surprisingly few take time before an organizational change to assess systematically who might resist the change initiative and for what reasons.

In the context of psychology and sociology, resistance often occurs when individuals or groups oppose change, ideas, or authority. This can be due to a variety of reasons, such as fear of the unknown, concerns about loss of control, or a desire to protect vested interests. Diagnosing resistance in this context involves examining the factors contributing to resistance, including individual attitudes, beliefs, and cultural influences. (Smith, 2021, pp. 45-62)

6- Diagnosing resistance:

Resistance to change usually has many dimensions. It may take on an individual characteristic, meaning that the tendencies of working individuals may Be supportive of change or opposed to it, depending on the individual’s personal vision. Or a collective characteristic meaning resistance The change takes a famine character. Resistance may be covert or apparent, taking into account that dealing with resistance Phenomenon is much better than dealing with secret resistance, due to the difficulty of the responsible party confronting this type. Of the resistance whose members or strategies cannot be known. (Ben Issa, Qureshi, & Maghzi Larafi, 2021)

Trader-Leigh sees development and attempts to implement an obstacle to the success of change. Resistance to change can Meaning of change and the organization to the extent to which how the worker perceives it affects organizational factors and change.

Opposite of change: change or lack of desire to avoid any situation or behavior deliberate neglect also failure to cooperate with, and support for the change delegations. (Ramadani & Seghiri, 2024)

A modification in an organizational entity, such as the technological environment, structure, and processes Administrative work helps achieve goals. (Guamadi, 2019)

One method to diagnose resistance is through careful observation and analysis of behavioral patterns. Identifying signs of resistance, such as passive-aggressive behavior, avoidance, or non-compliance, can provide valuable insights into underlying causes. Surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions can also be employed to gather qualitative data and understand the reasons behind resistance more comprehensively. (Smith, 2021, pp. 45-62)

7- Equation for successful change: (Pietersen, 2002, p. 191)

$$\text{Change} = D\times V\times P > C$$

The first factor, Dissatisfaction (D), refers to the recognition that the current state of affairs is no longer satisfactory or fulfilling. It reflects the desire for improvement and growth, acting as a catalyst for change. Without a sense of dissatisfaction, individuals and organizations may remain complacent and resistant to change, hindering progress and innovation.

The second factor, Vision for the future (V), represents having a clear and compelling vision that inspires and motivates change. A well-defined vision provides direction and purpose, creating a sense of shared goals and aspirations. It enables individuals and organizations to envision a better future, giving them the necessary focus and determination to overcome obstacles and drive meaningful change.

The third factor, the Process (P), encompasses the strategies, plans, and actions necessary to bring about the desired change. Change rarely occurs spontaneously; it requires careful planning, effective communication, and collaborative efforts. The process should be inclusive, involving stakeholders at various levels, to ensure a smooth transition and the eventual realization of the envisioned change.

The final component of the equation, the level of resistance or obstacles (C), represents the barriers that individuals or organizations face when attempting to bring about change.

In conclusion, the equation "Change = D × V × P > C" provides a valuable framework for understanding and navigating the complexities of change. Dissatisfaction, vision, and an effective process must collectively outweigh the level of resistance or obstacles for meaningful change to occur. By recognizing and utilizing these factors, individuals and organizations can embrace change, drive innovation, and ultimately succeed in today's rapidly evolving world. Understanding this equation serves as a powerful tool for facilitating change and fostering growth and development.

8- The change curve model:(KUBLER-ROSS)

The change curve model, also known as the Kübler-Ross model, describes the change process as a lifecycle with five stages based on the grief model developed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in 1969. This model is utilized in various contexts, particularly to assist organizations in identifying the process that employees will undergo during changes. The different stages of the change curve provide insight into the employee's perspective, enabling managers to comprehend why employees behave differently at each stage of the curve. This understanding helps anticipate the need for change management and prepares leaders to navigate the various stages (Lindblad, 2022)

Table2 : The Phase of KUBLER-ROSS change curve

STAGE	Mental State	Reaction	Approach	Communications
(of those affected by change)			(for those leading change)	
DENIAL	Looking for Evidence of Status Quo	Disbelief; Fear	Information; Support	Face-to-Face; Create Alignment
RESISTANCE	Recognizes Things are Not in Their Control; Survival Mode	Anger, Depression	Reassurance; Validate Past, Explain Improvements	Maximize Communication; Spark Motivation
EXPERIMENT	Exploration; Fight or Flight	Acceptance; Curiosity	Guidance and Direction; Time and Support to Explore	Develop Capability
ACCEPTANCE	Learning How to Work/Be in a New Situation	Feeling Positive	Personal Support; Engagement in Teamwork	Share Knowledge; Status Updates

INTEGRATION	Rebuilding; Commitment	Renewal; Forward Action	Encouragement; Support Activities	Acknowledge Progress; Key Messages and Celebrations

Source: (Lindblad, 2022)

8-1- Table analysis: (table 2)

In table2 The change curve Kübler-Ross depicts the emotional journey that individuals typically experience when faced with significant change. It is often applied in the context of personal loss and grief but can also be adapted to understand and manage change in other areas. The curve consists of five stages: Denial, Resistance, Experiment, Acceptance and Integration.

The first stage, denial, is characterized by a refusal to accept or acknowledge the change. People may resist the idea that the change is happening or convince themselves that it will not affect them. This stage is often driven by fear, uncertainty, and a desire to maintain the status quo.

As the reality of the change sets in, individuals move into the second stage of resistance. They may experience frustration, irritation, or even resentment towards the change and those involved. Anger can be a natural response to the disruption and loss associated with change, and it is important to recognize and validate these emotions.

Following resistance, individuals may enter the experiment stage. During this stage, they may attempt to negotiate or find ways to mitigate the impact of the change. Experiment can involve seeking alternatives, making compromises, or trying to regain a sense of control in the face of uncertainty. However, it is essential to understand that experiment may not necessarily lead to a reversal of the change but rather to a better understanding of its implications.

As the change progresses, individuals may enter the fourth stage of acceptance. This stage is characterized by feelings of sadness, loss, hopelessness and retreated. Individuals may experience a sense of grief for what has been lost or fear of the unknown future. It is crucial to provide support and resources to individuals in this stage, as they may require assistance in navigating their emotions and finding ways to cope.

Finally, individuals reach the stage of integration. In this stage, they come to terms with the change and begin to adapt and integrate it into their lives. Integration does not necessarily mean complete agreement or enthusiasm for the change but rather a recognition of its inevitability and a willingness to move forward. This stage marks a transition from resistance to acceptance and embracing the new reality.

9- Evaluation study:

Through the previous study we conclude: We find Kotter based his model on 8 steps, Kanter on 10 steps, McKinsey on 7 steps, and Lewin on 3 steps. All of these models seek to:

1. Increasing the organization’s ability to survive, grow, and adapt to the surrounding environment.
2. Increase the degree of cooperation between the organization’s functions in order to achieve the goals. 3. Helping individuals diagnose their problems and motivating them to bring about the required change.
4. Encouraging individuals to achieve organizational goals and job satisfaction.
5. Detecting, managing and directing conflict in a way that serves the organization.
6. Building an atmosphere of trust and openness between individuals and groups in the organization.
7. Enabling managers to follow the management by objectives method instead of traditional management.
8. Providing the organization with information to help solve the problems it faces.

As for the differences, we note that:

McKinsey paid attention to the organizational structure: The change process must change the organizational structure of the organization and change without resistance and give good results.

As for Kotter, he adopted guiding procedures and adopted 8 stages related to the individual’s behavior

Kanter stressed the necessity of change within a continuous, endless wheel consisting of 10, relying thus on the skills of the leader on the one hand and the competencies of individuals on the other hand.

We find in the six-step model that it depends on the adopted strategy itself

For Kübler, she developed a model of the change curve consisting of 5 stages through which resistance to change passes from rejection to acceptance.

The simplest model is Lewin's model, which is based on three transitional stages of the organization. He gave an example: the form cannot be changed except by dissolving it and reshaping it.

10- Conclusion:

In this research paper, we have studied Organizational change models and Resistance, Resistance may take another form, such as individuals taking actions that contradict or oppose the change process. Resistance may be positive when the proposed change is negative, that is, when the benefits achieved from it are less than the costs paid. Resistance is negative when the results of the change are positive and its impact on individuals and the organization is large compared to its costs.

Despite the positive aspects of change, organizations still suffer from resistance to change, and this is considered an obstacle to the organization. The diversity of change models indicates that resistance varies from one organization to another and from one individual to another. Change management is one of the most important challenges Business organizations face, considering the models for change and planning they require, and avoiding resistance to achieve the desired results, in order to activate the responsibility of both the individual and the organization towards organizational change.

Finally, it can be said that the change process will not be successful unless three conditions are met: the ideal model, the skill of the leader, and qualified individuals.

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