

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE: A CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL REVIEW

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Abstract: The organisational change is a phenomenon which has gained attention from theoretists and practioners alike. The paper analyzes the notion of change, oragnizational change and types of change. The paper is of theoretical nature. Several authors have perceived organisational change as a “response” to an organisation’s internal and/or external environment. The paper investigates different perspectives of emergent change basing on Kanter et al., (1992) Kotter (1996) and Luecke (2003). The author highlights that these three models have some common features: a development of vision and leadership. On the other hand Strobel (2015) refutes the argument that there is “one best way” that can be applied in all situations and organisations, when managing change, and promotes the idea of “one best way” for each situation and organisation individually. Moreover the drivers and types of organizational change are presented. Several forces driving organisational change have been identified and they basically involve factors with regards to both the internal and external environment of an organisation.

Keywords: change, organisational change, forces of change.

Introduction

Organisational change is a concept of a great importance that has attracted researchers’ interest for many years, and without doubt is crucial for enhancing and improving organisational effectiveness and/or ensuring organisational growth (Cummings and Worley 2014; Swanepoel 2008). According to Rieley and Clarkson (2001), organisational change is an integral part of organisational strategy, whilst Burnes (2004) argues that it is an ubiquitous and dominant feature of organisational life. The word “change” could be characterised as multidimensional with multiple meanings because it refers to and is synonymous with concepts such as “transformation, development, metamorphosis, transmutation, evolution, regeneration, innovation, revolution and transition” (Stickland 2002, p.14). The aim of this paper is to review and describe the concept of organisational change as it has been defined in the relevant literature.

1. The process of change

One of the earliest and most influential planned approaches to managing change is that of Lewin (1947) who described the three stages of change as Unfreezing, Changing and Refreezing. He argued that the first phase of unfreezing is characterised by a change of preparedness, and prior learning, behaviours and

assumptions are not applicable anymore. Therefore, he stated that due to the fact that the existing status quo is challenged and broken down, stress associated with change is extremely likely to be observed. Concerning the second stage, it is the phase of transition for individuals from their current to the new state. Negative emotions such as dissatisfaction, which were caused during the previous stage, motivate people to change. Finally, the third stage is that of refreezing, in which change is now permanent, individuals adjust to the new conditions as new beliefs, attitudes and behaviours are established. It should be noted that Lewin's model acknowledges that, in order new culture, behaviours, attitudes, processes and structures to be successfully adopted, the old ones should be discarded (Todnem 2005; Bamford and Forrester 2003).

Building on Lewin's work, several scholars such as Bullock and Batten (1985), and Cummings and Huse (1989) developed models in order to further contribute to the understanding of the process of organisational change. However, and despite the fact that the planned approach was for many decades the dominant framework (Bamford and Forrester 2003; Burnes 2004), since 1980s, it has received a lot of criticism. Burnes (2004) and Todnem (2005) summarise the weaknesses of the planned approach as follows:

- I. It assumes that the conditions in which organisations operate are constant, and their transition from one stable state to another can be achieved via pre-planning.
- II. It does not incorporate and is not applicable for rapid and transformational changes.
- III. It ignores situations, such as crises, where drastic approaches and measures/actions are required.
- IV. It ignores important concepts of organisational life such as organisational conflict and politics or at least it presumes that they can be easily addressed.

As a response to those critics, the emergent approach was developed. This approach emphasises the unforeseeable nature of organisational change and perceives it as a constant, adaptation process to changing conditions (Burnes 1996; Burnes 2004; Dawson 1994). A key assumption underlying this approach is the deep understanding of the organisational culture, strategies, structures and members, as all these factors can either facilitate or obstruct organisational change (Burnes, 1996). In contrast to the planned approach and instead of providing pre-planned steps, the emergent approach focuses on facilitating change and change readiness (Todnem, 2005).

Nevertheless, and although being against the "pre-planned" philosophy of planned change, various proponents of the emergent approach such as Kanter, Stein and Jick (1992), Kotter (1996), and Luecke (2003), have suggested a set of practical, predefined actions for organisations, so as the successful adoption and implementation of organisational change to be achieved (See Table 1.1).

Table 1. A comparison of three models of emergent change

Author	Name of the model	Description of the model
Kanter et al. (1992)	Commandments for executing change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse the organisation and its need to change 2. Create a 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 institutionalise change
Kotter (1996)	Eight-stage process for successful organisational transformation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing a vision and strategy 2. Establish a sense of urgency 3. Creating a guiding coalition 4. Empowering broad-based action 5. Communicating the change vision 6. Anchoring new approaches in the culture 7. Generating short-term wins 8. Consolidating gains and producing more change
Luecke (2003)	7-steps change model	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mobilise energy and commitment through joint identification of business problems and their solutions 2. Develop a shared vision of how to organise and manage for competitiveness 3. Identify the leadership 4. Institutionalise success through formal policies, systems and structures 5. Focus on results not on activities 6. Start change at the periphery, then let it spread to other units without pushing it from the top 7. Monitor and adjust strategies responses to problems in the change process

Source: Adopted by the author from Todnem (2005, p. 376)

At this point, it should be noted that Kanter, Stein and Jick's (1992), Kotter's (1996), and Luecke's (2003) models have some common sequences of actions such as the development of a vision and the establishment of a strong leadership. Alike the planned approach, the emergent approach has also been criticised. Its two key weaknesses are i) being a comparatively new approach, there is a lack of consistency and diversity of techniques (Henderson, Gulati and Tushman 2014; Wilson 1992); and ii) due to the fact that its supporters come from a wide range of backgrounds (Bamford and Forrester 2003; Khosrow-Pour 2013) it comprises of a heterogeneous group of approaches and models that seem to be more united in their criticism

towards the planned approach rather than to an agreed alternative (Bamford and Forrester 2003; Dawson 1994).

As a response to both the planned and the emergent approach, the “situational” or “contingency” approach was developed. According to Dunphy and Stace (1993), two organisations cannot be alike, and thus the situational variables they face are also different. Therefore, this approach refutes the argument that there is “one best way” that can be applied in all situations and organisations, when managing change, and promotes the idea of “one best way” for each situation and organisation individually (Strobel, 2015). Nevertheless, this approach has also received criticism for relying too much on the role of situational variables, and ignoring organisations’ and managers’ role and influence over them (Burnes, 1996).

Having reviewed the three key approaches of organisational change, the main drivers and types of organisational change are presented in the following paragraphs.

2. Managing Change: Forces and types of organisational change

The concept of organisational change has been examined from various and different perspectives. Some typical categorisations are in terms of:

- the forces for change
- the types of change.

As change is unavoidable in organisational life, the above are going to be analytically discussed in the following sections.

2.1. Forces for organisational change

According to Lewin’s force-field analysis model, an organisation is an open system which consists of forces encouraging change (driving forces) and forces resisting changes (restraining forces). Organisational change occurs when the driving forces are stronger than the restraining forces (Lewin, 1951). Several forces driving organisational change have been identified (see Dawson 2003; Mohrman 1989; Morrison 1998; Senior 2002), and they basically involve factors with regards to both the internal and external environment of an organisation.

As far as internal forces for change are concerned, Senior (2002) identified the purchase of new technological equipment, changes in HR policies such as redundancies, cut of overtime work, changes in administrative structures such as reengineering, power reallocation among departments such as the strengthening/ wreaking of some of them, changes of the organisational and/or marketing strategy, and internal redesign in terms of a factory or a group of jobs as the key internal factors that force organisations to change. Also, by focusing on the internal environment of organisations, Frohman (1997) classified organisational needs and individual initiative as the key forces of internal change. Organisational needs were also suggested by Coulson-Thomas (1992) whose findings revealed that the main

challenge that managers face is to make businesses more flexible and responsive. Whereas, other internal forces for change include employees' job dissatisfaction, absenteeism and managerial conflicts (Kreitner and Kinicki 2003; Leavitt 1964; Robbins, De Cenzo and Coulter 2014; Zoogah and Beugré 2012).

A broad classification of external forces for change involve: i) Political forces that have a direct impact on businesses and interrelate with changes in the economic environment (Senior, 2002). For instance, government's new policies concerning issues like taxation and new legislation concerning the rights of employees are key political drivers for change (Bainbridge 1996; Mohrman 1989). War is also included in this category (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2003); ii) Economical forces which involve government economic policies such as corporate taxation, exchange and employment rates, competitors and privatisations (Senior, 2002). Therefore, fluctuations in business cycles such as changes in the level of national and international economies can force an organisation to introduce some changes (Dawson, 2003); iii) Social-cultural forces of change which include all factors that have an impact on how businesses are set up and managed as well as on how they operate and attract employees (Senior, 2002). Some characteristic examples are business ethics, demographics, firms' and employees' ability and willingness to move, and changes in lifestyle. Further examples of social drivers for change are the introduction of new currency and demographics (Dawson 2003; Kondalkar 2010) and iv) Technological forces that alter the way business is done (Bainbridge 1996; Fallik 2013) and involve technological advances such as new IT equipment and new production processes (Senior, 2002). Boddy and Gunson (1996) identified four main trends: availability of software, databases and hardware, as well as communications technology. As such, technological forces often have a significant influence on the shape of society and businesses (e.g. Internet).

Dawson (2003) expanded the list of the external forces of change by adding i) the growth and expansion of a business, which demands more complex organisational mechanisms and thus is likely to force an organisation to introduce more changes, and ii) globalisation that reinforces the need of an organisation to cope with competitive pressures in the domestic as well as in the international market. In the 1990s, due to the combined influence of the opening of Communist Bloc countries to the market economy and the Information and communications technology (ICT) revolution "goods and capital, with a few exceptions, underwent massive globalisation" (OECD 2013, p. 48). However, globalisation has led to increased competition thus, competition is another external driving force suggested by several researchers (Bainbridge, 1996; Mohrman, 1989; Morrison, 1998; Pascale, Millemann and Gioja, 1997). As Bainbridge (1996) suggested, competition changes market's equilibrium, whereas Kaestle (1990) stated that marketplace dynamics along with information technology are the drivers for change. Moreover, Jick (1995) argued that competition and the pursuit of competitive advantage force organisations to change. In addition, Pascale, Millemann and Gioja (1997) found competitive pressures and the

rapid rhythm of change as accelerators of organisational change, whereas Ezzamel, Lilley and Willmott (1996), and Morrison (1998) argued that competition, new markets, new customers and new technologies are the key drivers for change. One not very frequently cited driver for change is fashion. The view that organisational change is a trend was supported by many researchers, especially in the 1980s, who stated that the attempts of Western managers of declining organisations to adopt policies and practices which would enable them to imitate the success of Japanese businesses (Ouchi 1981; Pascale and Athos 1981).

In summary, the key driving forces for change identified in the literature are various internal and external factors such as social, cultural, political and economic factors, technological advances, competition, globalisation, new markets, new customers and customers' expectations. However, in a multifaceted concept like organisational change, apart from the existence of several factors that are the driving forces for change, there are also many different types of change which are identified in the literature and are presented in the next section.

2.2. Types of organisational change

In the organisational change literature, several types of organisational change can be identified. In this part, some of these types are presented with regard to the different criteria/characteristics of change.

In terms of the depth and extent of change, organisational change is classified as strategic and non-strategic (Pettigrew 1987; Rajagopalan and Spreitzer 1996; Tichy 1983; Van Wart 2015) or according to DeWit and Meyer (1998) strategic and operational. The latter refers to alterations aiming to enhance organisational performance, whilst strategic changes result in modifying the orientation of a business in terms of its mission and vision (Bouchlaghem 2012; Dievernich, Tokarski and Gong 2014). Furthermore, in the early 1990s, Smith and Tranfield (1991) divided organisational change into morphogenic, which aim to find out new organisational forms which will be more suitable for the business because, as Botes (2005) argued, in this case disturbance is perceived as internal noise, whilst morphostatic changes regard disturbance as information about external conditions and thus, minor changes are made in order to maintain the current state.

In terms of the origin of change, organisational change is categorised as planned and emergent (Benn, Dunphy and Griffiths 2014; Brown and Osborne 2012; Weick 2012; Wilson 1992). They suggest that planned changes are predicted and thus the process of their analysis and implementation as well as their direction are pre-defined. According to Myers, Hulks and Wiggins (2012), as well as Van de Ven and Poole (1995), the main aim of these changes is to guarantee that a business adjusts to its needs. Planned changes could be generally defined as intentional actions, following conscious reasoning aimed to ensure that an organisation can meet the demands of its internal and external environment. Whereas, emergent

changes are unpredictable and there are no precise and clear a prior intentions for change (Boje, Burnes and Hassard 2012; Orlikowski 1996; Weick 2000).

In terms of the order of change, Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch (1974) classified change into first-order and second-order. First-order refers to incremental alterations which are continuous and daily (Weick and Quinn, 1999), and do not have a significant impact on the existing organisational system (Alas, 2014; Bartunek and Moch, 1987; Dana, 2006; Levy, 1986; Parrett and Budge, 2012). Second-order change is defined as radical, multidimensional and multileveled change that is characterised by major alterations that transform the entire organisation (Chapman 2002; Greenberg and Baron 2008; Huber 2013). Porras and Robertson (1992) categorised organisational change as developmental when it is first-order and planned; evolutionary when it is first-order and unplanned; transformational when it is second-order change and planned; and revolutionary when it is second-order change and unplanned.

In terms of the timing and extent of change, organisational change is classified into developmental, transitional, and transformational change (Ackerman 1997; Jick and Peiperl 2003; Wood et al. 2015). Beckhard (1992), and Gottwald and Lansdown (2014) describe transformational change as a radical change in which from the previous state a new one is developed. Also, Iles and Sutherland (2001) asserts that transitional change refers to the passage from the current to a new future state. Developmental change aims to contribute to the further development of existing features of a business by mainly improving processes or skills, and thus that type of change is both people-oriented and process-oriented (Ackerman 1997; Dievernich, Tokarski and Gong 2014).

In terms of its intensiveness, change is divided into incremental and radical (Burnes 1992; Goodstein and Warner 1997; Wang 2012) or incremental and quantum (Greenwood and Hinings 1993), or according to Nadler and Tushman (1995) and Senior (2002) incremental and discontinuous. Incremental change is the result of planning and leads a business to “slow death”, whilst radical change is deep and leads to irreversible transformation (Quinn 2010). Also, Badarch (2014), and Cao, Clarke and Lehaney (2000) described radical changes as a thorough review of all aspects of a business and argued that incremental changes refer to routine and continuous alterations that are necessary for a business so as to adapt to its environment. According to Nadler and Tushman (1995), as well as Samuel (2011) these changes are small but aim to improve the overall function of a business. It is also argued that incremental changes involve minor adjustments within the existing business model (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington 2008; O'Connor and Netting 2009). At this point it should be noted that Burnes (2004) distinguished between incremental and continuous changes. He suggests that incremental change refers to the fact that separate parts of a business focus on solving one problem and achieving one objective individually at a time, whilst he described continuous change as the ability of a business to constantly and substantially change, so as to adjust to the rapid and fast changing rhythm of change.

Furthermore, in terms of the intensiveness of change, Dunphy and Stace (1993) classified organisational change into four categories: 1) Fine-tuning which refers to small strategic, structural, people or process-oriented adjustments that happen at lower levels within a business; 2) Incremental changes which are characterised by direct efforts to alter the strategy, the structure and the processes of a business and that occur at higher levels; 3) Modular transformation changes which refer to the considerable reclassification of divisions and departments of a business and thus, they involve structural changes; and 4) Corporate transformation changes that describe drastic changes in the strategy of an organisation that have an impact on the entire business and thus, they refer to strategic changes.

In terms of the tempo of change, Weick and Quinn (1999) categorised change into episodic, which is caused either by external (e.g. changes in technology) or internal factors (e.g. changes in human resources) and is mainly planned, and continuous which refers to on-going, small changes that take place at the same time, accumulate and can create a major change.

In terms of the need for change, Ibbs, Wong and Kwak (2001) classified organisational change into required changes which are essential and must be made so as the organisational objectives can be achieved, and elective changes which include modifications that can improve the effectiveness of a business, even if they do not meet the aims of the organisation. Also when considering the impact of change, organisational change is divided into beneficial and detrimental (Construction Industry Institute 1994; Jabri 2012). According to Ibbs, Wong, and Kwak (2001), and Knoblen (2008) beneficial change refers to alterations that influence a project with a positive way such as cost reduction, whilst detrimental change occurs when alternatives are not adequate, and not only do they have a negative impact on a project but also they reduce organisational value.

In terms of the level of change, Burnes (1992) and Metelsky (2009) classified change into individual level, group level, inter-group and organisation level. At the same time Kanter, Stein and Jick (1992), as well as Grieses (2010) identified three types of changes which are addressed at three different levels of analysis: i) at a macro-evolutionary level changes of identity refer to alterations in the relationships of a business with its environment; at a micro-evolutionary level changes of co-ordination involve internal changes made in a business which may have an impact on aspects such as its size or its culture; and iii) at a revolutionary level changes of control which can influence the distribution of power, power relationships as well as methods which can be used in order to change the control of resources.

Conclusions

By taking into account the number and nature of changes which are undertaken in businesses, it could be argued that the term “organisational change” is as broad and generic as the term “change”; as it concerns any kind of minor and major

changes which occur in an organisation including changes in the strategy, structure, processes (Senior, 2002), as well as culture, behaviours, attitudes (Lewin 1947), skills, the performance of employees, and leadership styles (Reardon, Reardon and Rowe, 1998). Therefore based on Beer's (1980) and Senior's (2002) conceptualisation, any kind of organisational change can be defined as a constant process associated with the strategy, structure, processes and the people of a business. Several past studies such as that of Hammer and Champy (1993), Miles et al. (1978), Milgrom and Roberts (1995) and Moody (2010) have recognised and highlighted the importance of that relationship. Most of the classifications reviewed above evolve around these four types of organisational change.

ZMIANA ORGANIZACYJNA – PRZEGLĄD TEORII I KONCEPCJI

Streszczenie: Zmiana organizacyjna jest zjawiskiem, które od dawna wzbudza zainteresowanie zarówno wśród teoretyków, jak i praktyków. W artykule analizuje się pojęcie zmiany, zmiany organizacyjnej i rodzajów zmian. Referat ma charakter teoretyczny. Kilku autorów postrzega zmianę organizacyjną jako „odpowiedź” na środowisko wewnętrzne i/lub zewnętrzne organizacji. Artykuł analizuje różne perspektywy zachodzących zmian w oparciu o Kantera i współautorów (1992), Kottera (1996) i Luecke (2003). Autorka podkreśla, że te trzy modele posiadają pewne wspólne cechy: rozwinięcie wizji i przywództwa. Z drugiej strony Strobel (2015) odrzuca argument, że istnieje „jeden najlepszy sposób”, który może być zastosowany w każdej sytuacji i organizacji przy zarządzaniu zmianami, oraz promuje ideę „jeden najlepszy sposób” dla każdej sytuacji i organizacji indywidualnie. Ponadto w artykule przedstawiono siły sprawcze i rodzaje zmian organizacyjnych. Zaprezentowano również siły napędowe zmian organizacyjnych. Obejmują one czynniki zarówno odnoszące się do otoczenia wewnętrznego, jak i zewnętrznego organizacji.

Słowa kluczowe: zmiana, zmiana organizacyjna, siły powodujące zmiany.

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