

Organisations and communities influence social change essay sample

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This essay considers how organisations and communities affect people's behaviours and influencing social change. Firstly, from a 'management' perspective the focus will look at the 'strong link' of both structure and culture and how this affects people's behaviour to bring about possible social change. Secondly, from a 'psychology' perspective, the essay will focus on how individual's behaviour is affected by the taking on of 'roles' and 'scripts' as well as analysing the evidence from the Zimbardo experiment. Finally, from a 'social science' perspective looking at the consideration of the 'Resource Mobilisation Theory' together with the motivations observed by sociologists with the emergence of 'new social movements'.

From a management perspective organisations identify themselves as a community of individuals who necessitate the need to work together rather than working alone thus enabling them to corporately arrive to a 'fair and consistent way' for economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Charles Handy's (1985) four models of power, task, role and person 'cultures' indicate a very 'strong link' to both organisational structure and 'culture' as a means of control people's behaviour within organisations. A stable structural characteristic of a large organisation contains 'pillars' to function, this is referred to by Handy as a 'Role Culture' There are many spans of control from CEO's down to sales executives that integrate and co-ordinate the organisational needs of authority, responsibility and accountability. Competent delegation from managers can affect individual creativity and initiative.

There is also the possibility of unmanaged abuses of authority and accountability. Hidden cultural patterns of individual behaviours within <https://assignbuster.com/organisations-and-communities-influence-social-change-essay-sample/>

organisations stealthily slide in over time with ' what has always been done around here'. On a positive note this ' culture' can be a good asset for any organisation that can produce good results. On the other hand evidence showed by the ' BBC 2012/13' scandal that the negative behaviour of employees towards young people thus resisting to the ' cultural norms' resulted in a propelled forced social change via the media. This impacted wider culture within this organisation affecting it's employees.

The ' psychology' perspective focuses upon how people form into what is known as social categories, giving names to the ' roles' and ' scripts' known as ' social identities'. Individuals act out these ' roles' such as mother, student, middle-aged, within the confines of organisations and communities and invariably this affects how people behave in the context of a group. At times these ' roles' and ' scripts' conflict and can create stress and overload, particularly if some ' roles' are enforced upon individuals. Erving Goffman (1971) said that ' All the world's a stage' and suggested that these ' roles' and ' scripts' could be defined as the masks that society places upon each individual. Evidence from Goffman has showed that ' roles' and ' scripts' are a necessary part of life and in fact can ' offer a sense of predictability and security' as a way for people to routinely function and work.

The psychological experiment by Philip Zimbardo (1971) took the nature of ' roles' and ' scripts' into an arena of a simulated role play set in a staged prison organisation. Two groups were formed, one group acted out as prisoners and the other acted out prison guards. This interaction and ' role-play' was staged for two weeks but in fact ended after only six days due to

the extreme behavioural changes of normal people who became 'brutal and abusive' with signs of 'emotional disturbance'. It was recorded that nothing conclusive emerged from this experiment due to the 'limited selective evidence'. Zimbardo's critics claimed that the wider culture of the media could have played a large part in the actions and reactions of the individuals who participated in the prison role play. Turner et al. 1994.

From the 'social science' perspective social change can occur through 'social movements' whereby individuals form into larger organisations often with no set rules and collective groups of similar interests to influence social change. These 'social movements' seek to address perceived injustices, political struggles and conflict with the aim of influencing social justice and inequalities. The 'New Social Movement Theory' as augmented by French sociologist Alain Touraine (1981) highlighted the need for 'meaningfulness' of the 'cultural challenges of deep seated conflicts and injustices.

One of the contemporary 'new social movements' the African American Civil Rights Movement USA in the 1960's involved direct action with young people using the modern technologies of communication. The ease of exchanging ideas, plans for action were devised swiftly. 'Resource Mobilisation Theory' highlights the way in which resources needed for publicity together with the resources namely the activists skills themselves. John McCarthy and Mayer Zald stated that 'activity is directed towards goal accomplishment' and 'effective mobilisation'.

In conclusion organisations and communities as seen as a collective gathering of individuals with common joint interests and purpose have the

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potential to create and motivate positive or negative individual behaviours to influence social change. In this context of organisations individuals are presented with the means to learn and observe through misunderstandings, discrimination and unjust treatments. Evidence is seen through the hidden unseen abuses of the ' culture' within the organisation of the ' BBC' whereby social change came as a direct result of the media.

Individual behaviours were challenged and new protocols erected within this workforce. Injustices were deliberately challenged to resist systems instigated by the authorities in the U. K. The anti-poll tax campaign ' played a major part' overthrowing the rule of Margaret Thatcher's and her role as Prime Minister together with the abolishment of this tax. Individual behaviours motivated by injustice influenced and brought about social change their ' activity' being ' directed towards goal accomplishment'. (word count 919)

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