

# Factors influencing employee affective commitment



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In this era of globalization there is a dynamic business world which demands continuous change. Change in an organization is undeniable. Organizations have to make changes either due to external or internal factors. In the process of adaptation of change adaptive leader provides new roles, responsibilities, values and the ways of working to his employees. No doubt it is quite uneasy for employees to adopt change (Heifetz. R, & Laurie, 2001). In order to manage these changes, understanding the process of change management is very important for the success of organization in the continuously changing business environment (Lowder, 2009).

Change is defined as “ making something different in some particular way” (Randle & Flamholtz, 2008, p. 3 ) Change is anything which is different from norms. “ Organizational change refers to activities associated with planning, designing, implementing and internalizing tools, procedures, routines, processes, or systems that will require people to perform their jobs differently” (Mourier & Smith, 2001, p. 212). For successful implementation of change employees have to adopt new roles, new values, new relationships and new approaches to work. There are many different types of changes on the basis of different criteria. As Dunphy and Stace (as cited in Rafferty & Simons, 2006) define four types of organizational changes, → Fine-tuning change, incremental adjustment, modular transformation and corporate transformation. Fine-tuning change means small changes adopted in the strategy, structure and the process of an organization.

Background of the study

When leader applies change in an organization he should not only check the performance of the firm but also check that how much employees are committed to change, because change has direct impact on employees (Heifetz. R. & Laurie, 2001). If employees are committed they will support the change initiatives. Can commitment to change be obtained and, if so, will that help the implementation efforts (Parish & Cadwallader, 2008). There is a need to understand how employees perceive change. How organizational change can be supported by employees commitment (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). There is growing interest in estimating the role of employees' commitment in the success of organizational change (Parish & Cadwallader, 2008). To get employees commitment, leaders of an organization should understand the factors which enhance commitment to change.

In Pakistan there are no significant research study conducted regarding change management. This study is conducted for sports goods manufacturing sector of Pakistan. In manufacturing sector transformational changes are usually considered to be capital intensive. In Pakistan sports goods manufacturing sector is labor intensive. So both fine tuning change and employee commitment can be measured in this sector by this study.

### Significance of study

This study tries to explain the role of affective employee commitment for the success of organizational change. Basically this study is an attempt to fill the gap by adding new factors in the model which was proposed by Noble & Mokwa, (1999) and then used by Parish & Cadwallader, (2008). This study tests their model by adding new factors like self autonomy, trust in

coworkers to add some knowledge in the literature. This study also provides factors responsible for successful implementation of fine tuning change in sports goods manufacturing sector of Pakistan.

### Broad Problem Area

In Pakistan there is lack of research regarding change management practices. Major areas in which change management has implemented are federal board of revenue of Pakistan and irrigation system of Pakistan. There is a need of change in sports goods manufacturing sector of Pakistan for its progress in all over the world .

There is gap for measuring organizational change with respect to employee commitment to organizational change Parish & Cadwallader, (2008) and this study fills up that gap by adding some new factors from different studies.

### Research objective

Main objective of this study is to measure the factors which can influence employee affective commitment to fine tuning change in sports goods manufacturing organization of Pakistan.

### Delimitations of the study

Due to constraints of time, geographic area and little experience in the field of research this study limits itself to sports goods manufacturing organization in Sialkot.

### Literature review

Change management is a painful process for almost any organization. In the form of change leaders and followers both take it as challenge. Changes in societies, markets, customers, competition, and technology around the globe are forcing to clarify their values, develop new strategies and learn new ways of operating (Heifetz, R. & Laurie, 2001).

### Types of organizational changes

There are many types of organizational changes on the different basis Dunphy, & Stace (as cited in Rafferty & Simons, 2006) define four types of organizational change on the basis of level of change, content of change, and the impact of change. Level of change means either the change is on big level or small level. Content of change means either changes is due to external factor or internal factors. Four types of changes are four types of change including → fine-tuning change, incremental adjustment, modular transformation and corporate transformation. Fine tuning changes are done on small level of an organization usually at departmental or divisional levels. Incremental adjustments are those which are not radical but direct modifications in firm's strategy, structure and management process. Modular transformation refers to realignment of one or more departments or divisions. Corporate transformation refers to change that is done on corporate level and revolutionary in its impact. In many cases fine tuning change has positive and significant consequences as compare to other types. Employees are more adoptive and show commitment towards fine tuning change (Rafferty & Simons, 2006).

### Employee commitment

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“ The extent to which a person identifies with and works toward organization-related goals and values” (Noble & Mokwa, 1999, p. 54). In the context of organizational change another definition is “ a force (mind-set) that binds an individual to a course of action deemed necessary for the successful implementation of a change initiative” (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002, p. 476).

### Affective, continuance and normative commitment

For deeply understanding the concept of commitment, Meyer & Allen, (1991) gave a three component model having three categories of employee commitment, affective, continuance and normative commitment Meyer & Allen, (1991) defines affective commitment (AC) as employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization in other words employees stay with a firm because they want to.

Continuance commitment (CC) means that the employee is very much aware about the cost to leave the organization in other words employees stay with a firm because they need to. Normative commitment (NC) means feeling of obligation to continue employment in other words employees stay with a firm because they ought to. Some categories of commitment were also discussed by Bennett, (2000) in different way.

Three psychological bases for organizational attachment are compliance commitment, identification commitment and internalization commitment. Compliance commitment (continuance commitment) means the employees are committed to the organization because there are high monetary and social costs to leave the organization. Identification commitment (affective

commitment) is commitment based on an emotional bond with the organization and the person's desire to be affiliated with the organization. Internalization commitment (Normative commitment) is internalized norms shared with the organizations goals, values and mission. When change affects an organization's core values employee's internalized organizational commitment will be eroded. Since internalized commitment can be associated with other behaviors key to the change process this can have serious implications to an organization (Bennett, 2000).

On the basis of above three components model of commitment Herscovitch & Meyer, (2002) proposed a three-component model of commitment to organizational change and suggested that it has advantages similar to those demonstrated in the organizational commitment literature (e. g. improved ability to predict employee behavior). Therefore, affective commitment to change refers to a desire to support a change; continuance commitment to change is based on recognition that there are costs associated with resisting change, and normative commitment to change reflects a sense of obligation to be supportive. To measure the employees commitment to change there are different factors proposed by several researchers. Some of them are discussed here.

Factors influencing employee commitment to organizational change

Participation

Employee participation refers to a process in which influence is shared among individuals who are hierarchical unequals. In participation process subordinates equally share decision making authority with their superiors  
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(Wagner, 1994). Many researchers have found that employee participation in decision making process is very important for the success of change as it reduces the resistance to change. Participative management encourages employees to participate in the process of making those decisions which directly affect their working environments ( Erturk. A, 2008). In many organizations change process badly failed because top management not involved their employees in the change process decisions. Lack of employee participation leads to unawareness of change so middle and lower level employees could not manage themselves with change. Employees don't get enough time to socialize themselves with change (Stanleigh, 2008). Employee participation not only provides task clearance but also gives self satisfaction and learning to employee. Employee participation can be used as tool by which top management can reduce resistance to change (Tonnessen, 2005). Participation increases the job performance by reducing role conflict and role ambiguity (Rafferty & Simons, 2006). From above point of views I can propose that there is positive relationship between employee participation and employee commitment.

### Trust in superiors

Trust has been defined as the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action even in the absence of monitoring or controls (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Rafferty & Simons, 2006). Trust in seniors decreases the fear of change and manage the mindset of employees (Cheramie, 2008). Basically changes are initiated and driven by senior organizational leaders and employees take these changes as a risk for <https://assignbuster.com/factors-influencing-employee-affective-commitment/>



themselves (Klein, 2004) in such situation trust in top management is very much important to keep the employees on the correct track by telling them the benefits of change. I propose that there is a positive relation between trust in top management leaders and employees job commitment.

### Role autonomy

Role autonomy refers to “ the degree to which employees experience freedom, independence and discretionary decision making in terms of scheduling their work, selecting their equipment they will use, and deciding on procedures to follow (Graham & Nafukho, 2007). When employees report high level of autonomy they believe they are able to act independently and control their own work. Role autonomy refers to the extent to which one has freedom to make job decisions and adjust behaviors accordingly (Noble and Mokwa, 1999). A manager who grants employee autonomy is perceived as sharing control. Under conditions of greater

Autonomy, employees tend to have greater commitment to change (Tonnessen, 2006). Employees who have a sense of autonomy about their role in implementing workplace change initiatives they will develop commitment to change. I propose that there is positive relation between employee role autonomy and employees’ commitment to change.

### Trust In coworkers

Another factor which can be linked with employees’ commitment to change is an individual’s trust in his coworkers. Researchers argued that high level of trust within a work group leads to better understanding of task, improved

performance, high level of corporation within work group and psychological satisfaction (May, Gibson, & Harter, 2004). When there is high level of trust within there is low stress and tension which increase the innovation and performance of employees (Spector & Jones, 2004). When any change comes in the system work group with high level of trust can better understand and response to that change Stanleigh, (2007) explored the relationship of organizational justice and trust for implementing change. They investigated the nature of trust through depth interviews of employees. They found that there is a little difference between trusting and mistrustful employees' perceptions of distributive justice. They claimed that employees who experienced "trusting" emerged to receive an emotion of being respected and esteemed from their societal relations with top management.

### Job motivation

Motivation is an energizing force with implications for employee's behavior (Meyer et al., 2004). We believe that job motivation also influences attitudes. Specifically, it has implications for employee commitment to organizational change. In fact, there is a growing body of literature that supports the positive relationship between job motivation and employees' attitudes toward change (Coopey & Hartley, 2004). Paton and McCalman (2006) argued that organizational success is generated by motivated people. Furthermore, the greater the job motivation the greater the likelihood of employee commitment to the organization and to organizational change (Mathieu and Zajac, 2007; Thorsurd, 2002). Thus, I propose that employees experiencing high job motivation develop employee effective commitment.

## Outcomes of employee commitment to organizational change

There are very few research studies in which researchers attempt to link employee affective commitment with organizational outcome. According to Meyer and Allen, (1991) affective commitment is positively associated with organizational outcomes by using importance, scope, and support from senior management as a factors influencing employees commitment. On the basis of model presented by Noble and Mokwa, (1999) and further used by Parish and Cadwallader, (2008) this study suggests two outcomes of employee commitment to organizational change and these are Perceived implementation success and Individual learning.

### Perceived implementation success

Noble and Mokwa , (1999) identified implementation success as a primary outcome of commitment to a change and defined it as the extent to which an implementation effort is considered successful by the organization. Although researchers often evaluate strategic success from the viewpoints of managers Noble and Mokwa, (1999), it is valuable to consider nonmanager perspectives as well. Implementation can be effective only when employees are committed (Paton & McCalman, 2000). In fact, Conner and sPatterson, (2001) labeled the lack of employee commitment as the “ most prevalent factor contributing to failed change projects. I propose that affective employee commitment to change is positively related with implementation success.

### Individual learning

Learning has been defined as a knowledge-creation process in which information interpretation leads to a change in behaviors (Lehesvirta, 2004). Learning is part of the change process. For example Gibb and Scott, (2003) found that firms change by solving problems as they arise and by learning from the problem-solution process. Employees committed to change efforts are more likely to learn from the process. Loyal employees want to contribute to and see the results of their efforts, and they can do so through learning Teare and Rayner, (2002). When employees learn from being involved in an organizational change, they consider that learning to affect the success of the implementation. I propose that affective employee commitment to change is positively related with individual learning.

Proposed model

Employee participation

Role autonomy

Trust in senior leaders

Job motivation

Employee affective commitment to fine tune change

Individual learning

Implementation success

Employee affective commitment to fine tune change

Implementation success

Individual learning

Limitation of the study

Some limitations of this study that could lead to future research are following. For this study data gathered from sports goods manufacturing organization of Pakistan. The same study can also be conducted for services sector of any country. Model of study emphasis on fine tuning change and employee effective commitment it can further expand by adding two other types of employee commitment change, continuance and normative commitment. Other factors which could influence are organizational culture and leadership style.