

Human Resources as Tools and Catalysts in Ensuring Organizational Development and Change Management for Organizational Excellence: An African Experience

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the analysis of human resources as tools and catalysts in ensuring organisational development and change management for organisational excellence in an African perspective and experience. The implications of human resources as tools and catalysts in ensuring organisational excellence on the performance of organisations in Africa are crucial. There are many challenges that organisations of Africa are facing as a result of neglecting human resources implications. The challenges they are faced with, among others, include limited supply of high quality services, understanding organizations, leadership and management change, the scope of change in an organizational setup, understanding organizational purpose, alignment of organization to its vision and mission statements, routine and positive messages, and managing organizational change. These are seen as major setbacks in ensuring organisational development and change management for organisational excellence.

Keywords: organizational development; management change; high quality services, leadership and management change, scope of change in an organizational setup, understanding organizational purpose, alignment of organization to its vision and mission statements, routine and positive messages, managing organizational change.

1.1 Introduction

This paper examines human resources as tools and catalysts in ensuring organizational development and change management in Africa. Africa for some time now has been influenced by political and governance issues that influence and affect the manner in which human resources are operating in organisations in order to bring the most needed changes in the workplaces.

Leaders and managers of organisations could be successful in steering organizational change, because this is their job, but it should be noted here that significant organizational change takes place when an organization changes its overall strategy for success, or when it adds or removes a major section or practice in the very nature of its operations and the services it renders within its environment or outside its environment.

It also occurs when an organization evolves through various life cycles, just like people must successfully evolve through life cycles. For organizations to develop, they often must undergo significant change at various points in their development. That's why the topic of organizational change and development has become widespread in communications about business, organizations, leadership and management.

1.2 Statement of the problem

African organisations have a limited capacity in understanding the aspects of human resources as tools and catalysts in their settings. Organisations need to ensure that they foresee the supervision and management of the staff when it comes to get involved in the tasks they perform. Organisations and governments of Africa are seriously undergoing crises in the management and supervision of employees.

Furthermore, organisations are keen to ensuring that organizational development takes part, but have limited understanding on the operations of human resources as tools and catalysts for organisational performance, development and excellence. It is imperative that management change be seen as vital in the organisation, but organisations seem to have dark clouds on management change in the process. Expectations of the organisations of Africa are to receive reports of high quality services as a result of committed and involved human resources, but this is not coming forth. Leadership and management change is another aspect that has a marked significance of the manner the leadership and management can see change as vital and try to support this change, but support for change is not perceived. It is necessary that the organisations are abreast with the scope of change in organizational setups, but change comes as a surprise and was not expected. Many human resources practitioners are not kept abreast with the information regarding the understanding of the organizational purpose nor the alignment to the organizational vision and mission statements. Organisations are not disseminating routine and positive messages that are necessary for the operations of human resources and that of managing organizational change.

1.3 Orientation of the research paper

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to human resources as tools and catalysts in ensuring organizational development and change management for organizational excellence in an African perspective and experience. The paper is aimed at providing information that would help organisations of Africa to utilise human resources to achieve best results in terms of performance and supporting changes that organisations go through. The search for knowledge and insights was key to this paper in order to help organisations understand how to address change in the organisation with the skills of human resources.

2. Literature review

Where the quality and success of research is needed, literature review becomes a principal factor. Literature review is a reflection of the time and effort that were invested in developing research ideas and concepts, which is a stage of planning that includes becoming familiar with the literature aimed for satisfying the subject under study. The probability of having a good research idea is higher for an investigator who has experience and knowledge of the literature regarding the topic under study. The aim of a literature survey is to determine whether the research idea is worth pursuing regardless of the fact that the research has been previously conducted or not, or whether new publications may have shown some significant problems with the research idea. The purpose of literature search is to maximize the usefulness of research results by integrating them into the specific research topics (i.e., the results of others working in the same area) and into broader biological topics and disciplines. However, it is vital that one should put a specific research project in a broader context that needs to have a familiarity with the literature outside a specific research topic, knowledge of current projects of other investigators, and lastly, but not least, a historical perspective of the research problem and general topics. Libraries at universities and individual reprint libraries are sources of review articles, book chapters on research topics and techniques, and articles on related topics of interest (Reis-Lehrer, 1995).

2.1 The scope of change in an organizational setup

The fact that changes in the value network of service delivery could impact the quality of the services dictates that it is indeed, desirable for changes to be put under control. This change normally includes changes that take place at the strategic and tactical levels, and those at the operational level. Changes may also result among the suppliers and customers, and those changes within the service provider organization itself. Those changes under control could occur at any time throughout the life-cycle of the service (Falkowitz, 2012). Furthermore, Falkowitz (2012) stated that it is curious to note that the scope of change control remains a major open question in many organizations, because there are many issues underlying the decision on scoping change control and these are the following:

- the historical use of change control in an organization
- the desire to start with operational changes in production
- the inability to progress change control beyond the initial scope
- a deep divide between application development and production management
- a single change control process is not applicable to the full enterprise

2.2 Understanding Organizations, Leadership and Management Change

To understand organizational change and begin leading successful change efforts in an organization, the change agents who are in this regard human resources should have a broad understanding of the scope of the

change effort, which includes understanding the basic systems and structures of organizations and their exact terms and roles of operations. It is imperative therefore that the understanding of leadership and management of the organizations is crucial as well (Moti, 2005, Ulrich, 1997; Ulrich, 1998).

Organisations should be able to understand the power of positive business communication in positive terms, be it communicating policy information to employees, advertising products and services of the organisation to prospects or giving a presentation about the strategic objectives to shareholders, communicating positively is essential. A successful job is only well done if the intended audience understands the message in the manner it was intended to reach them and is interpreted as such (Pauwe & Boon, 2009).

2.3 Understanding Organizational Purpose

The organisation should get straight to the point of what it wants to achieve in order to give positive results faster than moving in circles. Organizations should note that customers, shareholders and employees are ever busy with many responsibilities of the organization and even at work after working hours. If the organisation requires more time and effort in decoding its message, it will confuse and frustrate its employees and stakeholders. The organisation should ensure that the messages it sends out are clear and simple in order to get the best results it needs. When the message giver paraphrases responses and makes follow-up questions he will make it simple and clear for the audience to digest and react to. This shows those you are communicating to that you are actively listening to what they are also presenting to you and are able to interpret those responses as intended.

2.4 Alignment of organization to its vision and mission statements

Strategic objectives of the organisation are embodied in its vision and mission statements so that these goal-oriented statements give employees, stakeholders, customers or prospects an understanding of what the organization intends to achieve in the long end. Organisations portray their commitments to values such as honesty, integrity and fairness in these profound statements to give everyone an understanding of what the organization wishes to accomplish. When the vision and mission statements are designed to inspire and motivate employees and stakeholders; they become clear tones of positive business communication (David & Scott, 1998).

2.5 Routine and positive messages

Positive business communication is motivational to employees and inspire others to action that will advance the company's objectives. When customers are inspired they will represent or patronize the organisation in the same way employees and managers are to be inspired to improve their productivity. Positive reputations of the organization create the desire in the prospects of the organisation. The marketing and sales departments must become experts who position the organization in attracting new customers in a business environment. In the same way, mid-level managers and the executives of the organization should be encouraged to use group forums and electronic communications that are full of humorous and congratulatory messages to employees and stakeholders of the organization in order to create an environment where employees and stakeholders feel inspired and valued.

There are two specific types of messages that the organization uses to help inform, motivate and reward individuals.

The first type of message is a **routine message**, which provides information regarding the: **who, when, what, where, why** and **how** of daily happenings in the workplace.

The second type of message is a **positive message**, which focuses on a type of communication that provides good news, acceptance or congratulations in the workplace.

2.6 Considerations

Before meetings are hosted, it is important to first provide an agenda of what will be discussed so that participants are clear on the purpose of the meeting. Employees should be engaged and included in a discussion at all times about the ways that must be pursued to fulfil the company's vision and mission statements. Managers of companies should encourage feedback to determine ways in which a positive business communication loop can be maintained and should also pay close attention to how the management team communicates with team members. The more involved the organisation in fostering positive business communication environment, the more successful it will be in promoting a significant corporate culture.

2.7 Positive Organizational Psychology

Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB) is defined as *"the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed, and effectively managed for performance improvement in today's workplace"* (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59).

Positive Psychology aims to shift the focus in psychology from dysfunctional mental illness to mental health, calling for an increased focus on the building of human strength.

The levels of analysis of positive psychology were summarized by (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59) to be at the subjective level (i.e., positive subjective experience such as well-being and contentment with the past, flow and happiness in the present, and hope and optimism into the future); the micro, individual level (i.e., positive traits such as the capacity for love, courage, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, spirituality, high talent, and wisdom); and the macro group and institutional level (i.e., positive civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship such as responsibility, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and a strong work ethic).

Fred Luthans conducted a research in organizational behaviour in 1999 and concluded that designing work settings that emphasize people's strengths in which they can be both at their best selves and at their best with each other is fundamental to organizational growth and performance. Employees who are satisfied and find fulfilment in their work and roles in the organization are more productive. Luthans further states in his research findings that such employees will always be less absent at their workstations and will demonstrate greater organizational loyalty at all times. The field of positive organisational behaviour is still in its infancy stages and further research pertaining to precise antecedents, processes, and consequences of positive psychological behaviour is highly needed in many organisations today. However, the challenge is to provide a sound understanding of the real impact of positive states for organizational functioning and how these states could be promoted and harnessed within organisational set-ups (Conaty & Ram, 2011; Hope-Hailey, Gratton, McGovern, Stiles & Truss, 1997).

2.8 Managing organizational change

Organizations can learn to coach employees to set challenging, measurable, personally valuable goals, as well as realistic pathways and approach strategies to accomplish these goals and overcome obstacles. By using strengths and achieving growth, positive psychological capital can enhance job-satisfaction and performance. Managing organizational change entails the process of planning and implementing change in organizations by minimizing employee resistance and cost to the organization while at the same time maximizing the effectiveness of the change effort (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59; Armstrong, 2006).

It must be clearly spelt out that managing the challenge of change is a powerful responsibility and it is not easy, but is always expensive. When an organization fails to recognize the need to change and not working to build commitment to that change, it becomes more costly for such an organization. The organization should invest in time, energy and money, which will benefit everyone, i.e. the employee, management, and the organization. Those who advocate change can enhance the implementation and installation of that change. It is vital to mention that employees will be capable of returning organizational investment in themselves through increased productivity and personal growth (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59).

2.9 Organizational change theory

Managers should understand that change in the organizational setting is a constant feature and to remain stagnant and set in familiar ways while competitors are reinventing themselves at every level is to threaten the future of your organization. Importantly for managers, the objective would be to scale down, tighten up and implement alternative operational strategies that are streamlining processes while at the same time, supporting staff and maintaining the culture of the organisation (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59).

Perpetual change

Smaller companies are normally more vulnerable to economic downturn than their bigger companies, as a result, employers will ask for more from the employees in order to maintain constant levels. By downsizing, shifting responsibilities or changing operational course of action for the company, entails that companies are more inclined to scale-down their structures, equipment, products or services in order to minimize expenditures incurred in the process and work towards maximizing profits for their survival in a competing environment (Luthans, 2002a, p. 59).

Changing lenses

Steve Kline, Jr., has discussed some key elements in organizational change theory – lenses by explaining that while the strategic and political lenses are most commonly employed where organizational change occurs; the cultural lens will also play a role in eliminating frequently cited responses by resorting to: *"but this is how things have always been done."* In his explanations, he notes how bottom line goals drive the strategic lens with little consideration of employee significance in exchange for the flow of tasks in the organisational setups. At most, the political lens strives to define the elements of power and influence in the hierarchy of the organization. Kline further mentions in his 2001 Article entitled *"Products Finishing,"* that the cultural lens deals directly with the type and extent of organizational change management that applies policies that have already "shaped employees' assumptions and have affected their future actions." These cultural lenses as identified by Kline (2001) are the following:

- **Psychology**

With so much downshift and change occurring within the small business environment, employees can find themselves confused and frustrated if they feel threatened by these modifications. Kurt Lewin, whose legacy as the founder of modern social psychology is universally recognized, instilled a fresh perspective into addressing organizational change by making the transition less painful. Learning a new approach takes people out of their comfort zones and can induce undue anxiety; as such, Lewin's philosophy, according to Professor Edgar H. Schein, mitigates fear to the point where it becomes overshadowed by benefits and opportunity a staff of two, four or 10 people can reap from such change.

- **Navigating change**

In Navigating Change, W. Gary Gore provides a succinct and common-sense path to follow in learning to lead self and, as a result, others. He draws upon the metaphor of a map and compass to communicate the absolute necessity of aligning ourselves with our desired destination and having an incremental plan to get there. Gore states that our life is a journey of navigating circumstances and obstacles over which we have little or no control. The only control we have in life is how we choose to respond to those circumstances. He passionately puts forth the ethos of 100% Responsibility as a basis for living our lives and leading our self.

Box 1: The three keys to navigating change by William Bridges (1991)

"You are the most change-averse change management consultant I've ever met," my friend teased me as I bemoaned the shifts in my work and personal life. Touché. It's true, I don't exactly embrace change with arms open wide. Yet I've spent part of my career advising clients on how to lead big organizational changes. In a way, my aversion to change makes me perfect for this work: **I understand how uncomfortable, confusing, and lucky change can be.**

Yet it's not so much the change itself that is uncomfortable, but the process of transition. **Change has to do with circumstances. Transition is the internal shift that we make in response to that change,** as we let go of how things used to be and adjust ourselves to the way things are now.

One thing that has helped me navigate change – both my own and that of my clients – is understanding **the 3 phases of transition**, as identified by noted author and expert William Bridges. These are: Endings, the Neutral Zone, and Beginnings.

In this three-part blog series, we'll take a look at each of the three phases, and what we can do in each one to navigate change well and land on our feet. **Let's start with Endings.**

In order for something new to begin, something else must end. While our instinct may be to just jump into the new situation, we are better off first **acknowledging what has ended** – particularly anything that has to do with a change in our identity. Dealing with the losses will help us get closure on the past and learn from it – which can make our transition more smooth and productive.

Identify the lenses

Often, changes are good. **Yet even when we welcome a change, endings can be difficult**, because there are losses associated with them. For example, if you are promoted to manager at work, you may be excited about greater levels of responsibility, higher pay, and new challenges. However, you must also let go of things like:

- the camaraderie of your former teammates (who now report to you),
- the content of the work you used to do (which you were pretty good at and enjoyed),

- the habit of working certain hours (which may be greatly expanded with the new managerial role), and
- the feeling of competence you got from doing your former work (which was familiar and satisfying).

Focusing solely on your new role as manager without first acknowledging that you are giving something up in this transition may create problems for you later on. In fact, after thirty years of studying change and transition, William Bridges points out that **the failure to identify and get ready for endings and losses is the largest difficulty for people in transition.** In my own life, moving from Washington, DC to Manila, Philippines was a huge change. I was excited for a new adventure – both personally and professionally – but there were also losses. I had to let go of things like my close-knit and supportive group of friends, knowing my way around town, and feeling “at home” in the culture. Not unexpectedly, I missed the sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from the job I had left behind. More surprisingly, though, I found that I missed the *identity* that had accompanied that job – being seen by those around me as competent and accomplished.

Help Yourself to End Well

When you find yourself grappling with an “ending,” William Bridges suggests some helpful questions to ask yourself:

Now that this change has occurred, **what old ways of doing things must I give up?**

What have I lost?

What needs do I have that **will no longer be met?**

How can I meet those needs **in other ways?**

Because of this change, **what parts of myself** and the way I see myself are now out of date?

How can I **grieve these losses?**

What can I do to **symbolically say good-bye?**

Acknowledging the losses, and creating a way to symbolically or ritually let go of them, can help us to end well and move on to the next phase of transition: the Neutral Zone.

Have you experienced an ending before a new beginning? What have you let go of? What are you still struggling to let go of?

Change is hard. Most of us resist it, yet every great beginning was marked by great change. Here’s another fact:

Change happens whether it’s resisted or not. Try this quick exercise: Hold on to something, anything, with both hands. Now, try to reach for something else while still gripping your original object — you can’t. By holding on tightly to one thing, it’s physically impossible to reach for the next. Change is like going on an expedition: It can be a trudge or a hike. Take it all in and enjoy the view, or focus on the faults — it’s absolutely a choice. Here are some lessons from William Bridges to be learned about encountering change, some by resisting it and some by jumping into it with two feet.

1. Embrace it: Change can bring lots of things — including new ideas, people and opportunities — and when focus is being put on all the sadness and panic it’s easy to miss the good stuff. Also, the beginning of change, like a new job or moving to a new neighbourhood, is a great time to observe and listen to the surroundings. Once the regular day-to-day starts to take over, that opportunity will likely be hard to come by.

2. Know it won’t always feel “different”: A good friend once told me that doing something 30 times makes it a learned behaviour or habit. That’s helped me so much over the years when facing big change... knowing that I can have a countdown clock from 30, 29, 28 and so on, all the way down to one. I’ve used this strategy a number of times, from helping my daughter deal with changing schools to dealing with a change in my relationship and, although it doesn’t work for every situation, I’ve found where it does apply, and it’s pretty amazing.

3. Take on one change at a time: I’m one of those people who decides to change everything at once. Why not? In for a penny, in for a pound, right?Um, not advisable. In the midst of major change, I now know I’m not always seeing things clearly, especially if that change comes with grief or other major mood-changing emotions. It’s not always possible, because sometimes change begets change, but I’ve found doing one major thing — work, home, a relationship — at a time is advisable. If I’m really hungry for a tangible manifestation of change,

I do something that's not permanent — like mix up my look with a different haircut (not too drastic) or hair colour (not permanent) or change my make up or nail polish.

4. Look at the past (but don't stare): Reminiscing is fine, but time is needed to get some distance and adjust to new circumstances and situations. It's hard to move into another phase with one foot still in the past, so letting go is important. In addition to staring, I should also add not glaring either — letting go of past hurts is important to embracing change, and personally I've found resentment has kept me from being open to moving on.

5. Have a counterbalance attack ready: Again, this may not always apply or be easy to see, but often times even though change brings a fair share of stress, it's for a positive reason. When I try to keep that in perspective — especially when I feel the anxiety creeping in — it helps to counterbalance until the feeling passes. Even when the change wasn't my doing, I can try to separate the message from the mess. Most of the time it's seeing how strong I really am, what I'm capable of and an opportunity for personal growth. What's happened for me over time is that I've encountered sudden change a number of times in various areas of my life, and now it's not as destabilizing as it once was because I know I've been able to survive and thrive through it before. That's now part of my counterbalance attack.

Box 2: Five ways identified by Luthans (2002) in which positive psychology can improve the workplace

There are five ways identified by Luthans (2002) in which positive psychology can improve the workplace and these are:

1. Strengths, virtues, and self-determination

Research shows that employees who are fully engaged in the work they do, and have a sense of intrinsic motivation, are likely to perform better and have better work outcomes. Self-determination offers freedom and autonomy for workers to flourish and become absorbed in the work they do best. This involves employees uncovering their signature strengths and having the freedom to use them. These traits also lead people to experience flow, where they are fully engaged in a productive challenge. This is a state where time seems to fly by, and we feel like we're "in the zone."

2. Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to identify and regulate emotions in ourselves and others, and has implications for both internal and external customer relationships. Emotional intelligence allows us to recognize our own personality tendencies, and to better understand the personality traits of others so we can most effectively interact with them. More specifically, EI is the ability to manage counterproductive emotions, such as stress and anger, and ultimately begin to harness more positive feelings such as optimism, hope, and creativity, so we can stay motivated and perform up to our potential.

3. Psychological capital and positive organizational behaviour

Positive Organizational Behaviour (POB) has examined how to apply human strengths, resources, and psychological capacities to improve performance in the workplace. There are four basic capacities that are typically related to job satisfaction and performance and these are: self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resiliency. With regards to higher levels of these states, people are more confident, better able to manage stress and adversity, have a higher level of motivation and drive, and are likely to pursue growth and development. They also build upon each other to increase Positive Psychological Capital or the maintenance of these positive capacities.

4. Level of innovation and change

A major factor in a healthy organizational culture is the fit between an organization's values and the disposition and values of the employees. A specific value is to examine on the continuum where your organization falls between change and stability. Some organizations are prone to change where others are much more stable and stagnant. How employees respond to change and innovation is important to consider in order to have a good fit with personal and organizational culture. Having a good fit will help employees be energized, have a positive attitude, and feel safe and secure in their role.

5. The virtuous organization

A healthy organizational culture is regarded to have an excellent fit between an organization's values and how employees display their values on the organization. Specific values are used to examine the continuum scale in which the organizations are operating characterised by change and stability. Managers should take into account that some organizations are prone to change while others will be much more stable and stagnant. It is also vital to examine how employees respond to change and innovation in order to have a good fit with personal and organizational culture. When an organization has a good fit between itself and its employees, employees will be energized by having positive attitudes and feel safe and secure in the roles they perform.

2.12 LEADING WITH VALUES

How to engaging people

Human beings are multi-dimensional. They have soul, spirit, head, heart, a will for self-realisation, aspirations and physical needs. The way their potential develops depends on how much of those dimensions are called upon and how well they are put into synergy. When you motivate an individual with monetary incentives, ego gratification or promises of pleasure, you only engage a small fraction of their entire potential – and their involvement and performance is of that level only. How can you engage more of your people and, more importantly, how can you put more of yourself, more passionately, more intelligently, more effectively, to work for good?(Luthans, 2002).

Attaching Value to leadership

In a world in which ruthless exploitation and competition, self-serving behaviours and instability seem to be the norms, value based leadership holds a number of extraordinary promises that any sensible leader would dream of: self-managing employees; lesser need for supervision and control; greater respect between people; increased enthusiasm and dedication to the task; service oriented mentalities; more genuine corporate culture; socially responsible and environmentally friendly work practices; reputation of reliability, fairness and honesty; team bonding; more humaneness in relationship; trust and loyalty; enhanced integrity and accountability; enhanced decision making which contributes to the vision whilst building on trust; greater commitment of team members, customers and shareholders; increased flexibility and 'intelligence'; enhanced performance; better integration work / personal life; clarity of purpose, mission and vision; increased job and personal satisfaction through a deeper sense of meaning; increased self-esteem; role modelling in society; potential legacy; etc. The list could be longer(Luthans, 2002).

Box 3: Leading with values

Moments of truth

Stan Slap – the best leaders inspire their teams by bringing their values to work

The purpose of leadership isn't to increase shareholder value or the productivity of work teams, though effective leadership does these things. Rather, the purpose of leadership is to change the world around you in the name of your values, so you can live those values more fully and use them to make life better for others. The *process* of leadership is to turn your values into a compelling cause for others

Leadership of People

Max de Pree (2017) once compared leadership to being a bus driver whose job is to take people where they want to go – or they get off the bus. In what is now a much more fluid job market, where more and more people acknowledge that they do not leave the organization but they leave their manager, this view will resonate for the many managers who suffer from high staff turnover and loss of talents. Securing the commitment of staff is one of many reasons why modern managers need to understand their people at a deeper level and involve something more than money, incentives, pressure or threats to motivate them

Brian Bacon: What is leadership?

"The common assumption that you become a leader because you have a name card is a myth: you become a leader because people chose to follow you. It requires trust, integrity and character. Character is essential

because at time of failure, people will support someone who has character but they will kick out someone who doesn't. Character is revealed at the time of obstacles.''

Daniel Pink on the surprising science of motivation – TED talks

Career analyst Dan Pink examines the puzzle of motivation, starting with a fact that social scientists know but most managers don't stated: *''Traditional rewards aren't always as effective as we think. Listen for illuminating stories — and maybe, a way forward.*''

Shifting the current

Extracts from an interview with Brian Bacon published in Field notes, November 2004, Issue 7 have this to say:

''Amidst the growing sense of angst and hopelessness we can feel everywhere today, there is an accelerating recognition of the need to find a better way and somehow become part of it. Almost every other day we hear stories about freak hurricanes and other natural disasters, and top scientists are now saying, yes, this is about global warming. People are wondering who is going to turn the tide. Where are the new leaders? People are appalled but feel hopeless and doubt their leader's ability to do much about it. We are right to be appalled by acts of terrorism, but we shouldn't be surprised when there are such colossal imbalances in our society.''

Simon Sinek – How great leaders inspire action

''Simon Sinek has a simple but powerful model for inspirational leadership all starting with a golden circle and the question "Why?" His examples include Apple, Martin Luther King, and the Wright brothers.''

Benjamin Zander – Orchestrating Collaboration

At the Davos annual meeting on leadership; as a fitting close to the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2008, participants explored the power of collaborative innovation in a unique exercise with conductor Benjamin Zander as he stated:

"Inspire people to be at their best and make a difference to the world."

Swimming with the sharks

Brian Bacon, Founder and President of Oxford Leadership Academy, discusses values based leadership and the importance of developing an acute sense of 'self' in order to be able to hold on to values and integrity in a world dominated by greed and all out competition.

''Discipline and freedom are not mutually exclusive, but mutually dependent because without discipline we would sink into chaos.'' **Paulo Coelho**

Box 4: Leadership in organizations: Courtesy of Brian Bacon, Founder and President of Oxford Leadership Academy

Leadership in Organizations

Setting a clear vision means influencing employees to understand and accept the future state of the organization. A unit of young soldiers may not believe in a particular mission ordered by their commanding officer. A good leader will influence the soldiers to perform their duties by explaining the vision and the importance of their role in the outcome. The soldiers will be more apt to follow.

Motivating employees means to find out enough about the needs and wants of employees, giving them what they need and providing praise for a job well done. Being far from home is lonely for a young soldier. A good leader knows this and will communicate with his unit to learn more about their needs and wants. It may be as simple as giving the soldiers a sweet treat for their efforts.

When **guiding employees**, it is important to define their role in the work process and provide them with tools needed to perform and participate in their efforts along the way. Some military manoeuvres are difficult. Often, orders are to perform tasks that involve intricate details, like explaining how to dig a tunnel past enemy lines. A

good leader will explain the tasks, provide the digging tools, direct the work and be available to assist the soldiers if they run into a problem.

Building morale involves pulling everyone together to work towards a common goal. Let's face it - fighting in a war is stressful. Soldiers are often placed in high-stress situations. This can cause the unit to lose their focus or, worse yet, shut down emotionally. A good leader will let the soldiers know how much their work is appreciated. A simple gesture like throwing an impromptu party to recognize the unit's small victories can reignite the soldiers' spirits.

A leader's role A leader's role in an organization can be formally assigned by his or her position, like manager or department head, and it can also be informally assumed by an employee who possesses a certain charisma that attracts others to follow. A **formal leadership** role is an officially assigned position given to someone based on his or her ability to perform the job. It generally involves organizing and directing people to perform tasks, like the job of commanding officer (CO) in the military. The CO holds the highest level of authority over his unit. He is in charge of everything, from deciding how to fight the enemy to overseeing the day-to-day tasks of his soldiers.

3. Methodology

This paper used the exploratory research methods. The need for situation analysis helps in clarifying the nature of the problem. It must be noted that the dimensions of problems are diagnosed so that research projects under study are prowess in nature. Exploratory research helps by way of setting priorities for the research under study and in some cases; exploratory research provides an orientation for the researcher when gathering information on a subject matter that little is known of. It can also happen that although a research project has not been planned as yet, it is obvious that information regarding an issue is needed before one can diagnose the appropriate problem. Exploratory research is mainly used to gather new ideas

3.1 Research design:

This paper employed a research design that entailed that a plan specifying how one intends to fulfil the goals of the study was ascertained. It is vital to mention here that the need for research designs are important, because they tend to produce significant and correct conclusions as were shown in the study. The research design contributed to the systematic observation of the research question or the problem under study.

Reis-Lehrer (1995) states that for a research project to be successful, the “beginning” must be correctly defined as a precise statement of goals and justification. Once this has been accomplished, the steps should be applied in a sequence, which makes it necessary for writing a research plan and to execute it successfully. It is now easier for the research project to identify and organize general ideas that are required. Although data may be collected in the field, substantial effort should have been invested in the conceptual and logistical framework of a project. This chapter discusses the steps that should result in a well-designed and integrated research plan. A research plan consists of two general areas: research concepts and context (Table 1) and research logistics (Table 2). How well a research project is planned and how well the steps in the plan are integrated can make the difference between success and failure. The process of writing a research plan should start as soon as possible in the development of research ideas.

3.2 Research population

Polit and Hungler (1999:37) state that population is an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that are representative of a set of specifications in the study area. In this study, the population was comprised of employees from the public sectorial ministries.

3.3 Sampling procedures

This study employed a non-probability sampling method, which entails that not every element of the population in the study area got an opportunity to participate in the study (Burns & Grove 2001:804). A sample of 40 respondents was selected for interviews. The researcher used a stratified random sampling procedure to select the respondents of the study. This technique was preferred because it was aimed at ensuring that a fairly equal representation of the variables for the study was achieved. It was primarily based on government employees in Namibia. The selection of staff was done using a simple random sampling, which was done by writing out the names of the staff members on a piece of paper which was then folded and thrown into a basket for reshuffling purposes. After the reshuffling process had been properly administered, the researcher then

selected an element, recorded it and put it back in the basket until the required number was obtained. This technique was applied by the researcher to select 40 respondents for the study in their different portfolios.

3.4 Data collection procedures

The researcher conducted interviews using personal or face to face interviews, structured and unstructured questionnaires on the directors, deputy directors, and chief administrative officers and attended their meetings, as well. Informed consent was obtained from the permanent Secretary of each respective ministry and the selected respondents before personal interviews were conducted. A personal interview was used as the data-collection method and a face-to-face setting took place between the interviewer and the interviewee. The researcher used semi-structured interviews and the responses were recorded on a tape-recorder and then transcribed. An interview schedule was designed in which the directors (10), deputy directors (10), chief administrative officers (10) and employees of human resources (10) participated in personal, structured and unstructured interviews. These research instruments were pursued and found valuable in getting information in the study area (Burns& Grove, 2001).

3.6 Data analysis

The data collected from the field were analysed and statistically weighted in order to answer the research questions. Thorne (1997) defines analysis of data as an explicit step in theoretically interpreting data collected by using specific strategies to transform the raw data into a process form of data. For Bogdan and Biklein (1982) “analysis of data involves working with data, organizing it, breaking it down, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what a researcher will tell others”.

Data collection from interviews was tape-recorded and then transcribed. The data was examined carefully. The researcher classified the similar responses and entered them into themes and categories that corresponded. McMillan & Schumacher (1993) stated that qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organizing data into categories and in which patterns among the categories are identified. In addition, categories and patterns come from data collected instead of being imposed on the respondents, before data had been collected. This entails that after the data had been collected, the researcher edited interview records, based on the categories of various respondents of the study. The researcher then examined the interview transcripts and documentary notes. Thereafter the researcher then identified the patterns and organized the data into categories.

3.7 Findings

- The study found out that there is limited capacity in understanding the aspects of human resources as tools and catalysts in their settings.
- It was discovered that there are deficiencies in supervision and management of the staff when it comes to get involved in the tasks they perform.
- The study found out that organisations are keen in ensuring that organizational development takes part, but have limited understanding on the operations of human resources as tools and catalysts for organisational performance, development and excellence.
- It was discovered further that management change is unwelcome in the process where the organisation tries to implement change.
- The study found out that reports of high quality services expected are not received as expected because of lack of commitment and involvement from the part of human resources,
- It was discovered that the leadership and management do not see change as vital and do not support this change.
- The study found out that organisations are not abreast with the scope of change in the organizational setups,
- It was discovered that many human resources practitioners are not kept abreast with the information regarding the understanding of the organizational purpose nor the alignment to the organizational vision and mission statements.
- It was also discovered that organisations are not disseminating routine and positive messages that are necessary for the operations of human resources and that of managing organizational change.

3.8 Conclusions

Overall, the study found out that indeed there is limited capacity in understanding the aspects of human resources as tools and catalysts in their settings. Deficiencies in supervision and management of the staff when it

comes to get involved in the tasks they perform are present. Organisations are not keen in ensuring that organizational development takes part. Organisations have limited understanding on the operations of human resources as tools and catalysts for organisational performance, development and excellence. Although the human resources try to bring in change, the leadership and management are lax in accommodating that change. The leadership and management expect reports of high quality services from human resources, but instead, a lack of commitment and involvement from the part of human resources is prevalent. In some areas, the leadership and management do not see change as vital and do not support this change. While it stands to be that organisations should change for the better through the use of human resources, it is evident that these organisations are not abreast with the scope of change in the organizational setups. The trend is such that many human resources practitioners are not kept abreast with the information regarding the understanding of the organizational purpose nor the alignment to the organizational vision and mission statements. Overall, it is evident that organisations are not disseminating routine and positive messages that are necessary for the operations of human resources and that of managing organizational change.

3.9 Recommendations

The following recommendations would be of value if they are put in place:

- The organisation should devise strategies of engaging human resources and the leadership and management into training and development to address the limited capacity in understanding the aspects of human resources as tools and catalysts in their settings.
- It is recommended that the leadership and management should task operational managers to ensure that human resources are supervised and managed in the performance of their tasks and duties
- The staff should be continuously monitored and reminded of getting involved in the tasks they perform on a continual basis.
- The leadership of the organisation should ensure that organizational development takes place by putting managers to tasks and evaluating the day activities being performed.
- The leadership and management should instil training and development to human resources that address the limited understanding on the operations of human resources as tools and catalysts for organisational performance, development and excellence.
- The leadership and management should ensure that they support the proposed management change and that they influence and ensure it is implemented.
- Training on each specific job and technology needed for the job should be provided to human resources reports in order to achieve high quality services expected
- The leadership and management should ensure that motivational strategies are pursued and promoted in the organisation in order to address lack of commitment and involvement from the part of human resources,
- The leadership and management should be trained, encouraged and prepared to see change as vital and in the process steer it themselves by giving their full support to it.
- The leadership and management together with human resources should be encouraged to keep abreast with the scope of change in the organizational setups,
- It is indispensable that the leadership and management keep human resources practitioners abreast with the information regarding the understanding of the organizational purpose and the alignment to the organizational vision and mission statements.
- The leadership and management of the organisations should by far and by all means try to disseminate routine and positive messages that are necessary for the operations of human resources and that of managing organizational change.

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Conclusion

This paper focused on the understanding of the operations of human resources as tools and catalysts for organisational performance, development and excellence. The paper discussed in details, the functions of human

resources department, the theory, practice, roles, the positive and negative aspects of human resources management and strategies aimed at improving human resource practitioners' value to the organization. The paper further identified and analyzed the functional areas of human resource management in order to give an in-depth knowledge in human resources management of an organization. Issues relating to the challenges facing human resources in organisations, leadership and change management, leading with values, and positive organizational psychology have been extensively discussed to pave an understanding of human resources as tools and catalysts for organizational performance and excellence in the African perspective.

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