Leadership's Role in Organizational Transformation

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ABSTRACT

The function of leadership in organizational change was examined in this essay. A leader efficiently oversees organizational processes while acting as a catalyst for change. The changes of today are harsh and necessary for survival. Organizations these days are more aware of the value of change and are more equipped to adjust to the present as well as the future. In order to examine the opinions of scholars in the fields of leadership, change, and organization leadership roles that include the leader's ability to relate to both staff and clients and understanding what constitutes change for the organization, this chapter adopted a qualitative approach and made use of secondary data from journals, textbooks, and other forms of literature. It breaks down the several facets of competencies, such as skills and the ability for leaders to adapt to change, and views leaders as the best source of guidance. Leadership was separated out as a distinct idea that requires careful consideration. It was suggested that in order for leaders to maintain their abilities, attitudes, and interpersonal strength and to keep up with current trends, they might need to undergo ongoing training and retraining.

Keywords: Leadership, Organizational Change, Leadership Role.

Introduction:

Organizations now operate in a fiercely competitive environment due to changes, which has made work inside them more complicated and interdependent and necessitated increased resilience and agility. It's difficult to be robust and agile at the same time. Therefore, in their attempt to satisfy these seemingly conflicting sets of internal and external demands, businesses may find themselves making the error of attempting to please everyone. Tension between internal and external needs makes it harder and harder for an organization to stay focused and to leverage that purpose across the entire organization. Ironically, rather than fewer strategic leaders, this circumstance demands that firms employ more people in strategic leadership roles. Undoubtedly, some people are more responsible and have more opportunities to impact their business than others. Becoming perpetual learning engines is the greatest strategy for firms to prosper in the face of this new reality. Organizational strategy, to put it practically, refers to the goals, strategies, and methods used to achieve success that should be continuously developed, put into practice, reviewed, and improved.

According to Sharma and Jain (2013), leadership include the oversight of an educational institution's finances, academic personnel, and physical space. The idea of university effectiveness refers to how well an institution's organizational goals are achieved. Talent management, leadership development, organization design and structure, measurement and scorecard design, change and transformation implementation, utilizing smart technology and smart processes to manage the company's human capital, and formulating the larger HR agenda are just a few of the important areas that the organizational effectiveness group directly addresses. The OE group performs several or all of the aforementioned functions if an organization has policies and initiatives in the aforementioned fields.

The abilities and attitudes of a leader that support higher performance are known as leadership competencies. Organizations can more effectively identify and nurture their future generation of leaders by implementing a competency-based approach to leadership. Researchers have developed global competences and essential leadership competencies. On the other hand, new leadership competencies ought to be developed in response to future company trends and strategies. While all businesses need some leadership skills, in order to gain a competitive edge, an organization must also identify the unique leadership qualities that set it apart from the competition.

THEORETICAL DEFINITIONS

Leadership

The word "leadership" has English roots; the verb "lead" means "to guide, to direct," and the adjective "leader" means "chief, guide, head, commander, captain, pioneer" (Redhouse, 2005). Both academic and popular literature have extensively studied the concept and range of applications of leadership. Eleven main categories are identified as the "focal point of the group process, art of assuring obedience, influencing, behavior, form of persuasion, relation of power, means of achieving goals, result of interaction, differentiation of roles, activator of a structure and combination of different elements" (Bass, 1990) under which leadership can be defined in an infinite number of ways. According to Dubrin (2012), leadership is the capacity to inspire confidence and support in those who must accomplish organizational objectives. Leadership involves directing individuals inside an organization to ensure that they are motivated, inspired, and following through on organizational objectives in a proactive manner (Hill & McShane, 2008). Realizing the objectives of the organization is the major responsibility of the leaders. Accordingly, leadership is the ability to guide a group of individuals toward the completion of a work or the achievement of a goal using a variety of morally sound methods (Rowe & Guerrero, 2011). Being a leader means having the ability to persuade others to accomplish the desired outcomes, which makes the organization more cohesive and consistent (Sharma & Jain, 2013).

Similar to leadership, management is a method utilized to successfully accomplish organizational goals (Bohoris&Vorria, n.d). It may be argued that there are distinctions in the methods used by leaders and managers, despite the fact that both groups have similar objectives. The experiences and developments of 268 people have led to the discovery of new leadership philosophies, including charismatic, transformational, and interactive leadership. Transformational and transactional leadership theories are among the most thorough approaches to organizational change.

These days, the biggest worry for businesses and organizations is leadership and its role. According to Conger (1992), leaders are people who set the direction for a working group of people, win the group's commitment to the direction, and inspire members to follow through on the direction's goals. There are several perspectives and ideas that can be applied to the term "leadership." Traditionally, leadership has been seen as a set of traits that the leader possesses or as a social phenomena resulting from relationships with other groups. These ideas may elicit differing perspectives of what constitutes leadership. The question of whether a leader gains followers by their actions or beliefs, or if leadership stems from personal traits, is one that is often debated (Grint, 2004). Additionally, Grint draws attention to leadership position issues by examining the question, "Is the leader a person in charge?" with actual authority to make decisions or carry them out, or just the person in front of them who follows their instructions on behalf of another person. According to recent studies, leadership is the process by which one person persuades a group of people to pursue a single objective (Northouse, 2004). Another perspective on leadership compares it to the Abominable Snowman, who leaves his footprints everywhere yet never appears.

To put it briefly, a leader is someone who is in charge, has the authority to make decisions, and can also put those decisions into action. Alternatively, a leader is a process that consists of a set of other authoritative processes about organizational, personal, or social processes of influence for which groups, teams, or organizations can do more to improve their capacity. In addition to personal traits, the choice of a leader is influenced by social and cultural elements as well as their background and experiences in life (Bolden, 2010).

Organizational Leadership

Being an organizational leader is not a gift that some people possess while others do not. Additionally, it involves more than just the boss giving orders and then observing how well they are followed. Instead, an organization's leadership is its management's capacity to understand employee needs and business objectives, bring people together to work in a better environment toward shared objectives, and secure the company's benefits (Sansom, 1998). An organization's development and maintenance depend heavily on its organizational leadership. It can support

individuals and teams in overcoming obstacles and contributing to the organization's objectives in a meaningful way.

According to Ololube (2017), an organization's leadership is someone who can drive change within it through its strategy and vision (Dunphy & Stace cited in Senior & Fleming, 2006).

These days, with business trends shifting quickly and customer demands rising, leadership is becoming increasingly important. Organizations that are able to anticipate key changes and adjustments ahead of time and establish the necessary commitment and ideal environment for workers and teams to comprehend and successfully implement these changes are in dire need of strategic leadership. The efficacy of the organization as well as its continued existence depend on the leaders' decision (Bass, 1990; Burke & Cooper, 2004).

Just as implementing strategic business processes is necessary to achieve corporate goals, leaders play a crucial strategic role in ensuring the success and sustainability of organizations. There are traces of this leadership everywhere—from resource allocation to alignment, from perception to future focus, from form commitment and team motivation to achieve the organization's goals, to confirming the sustainable growth (McGuire, 2003).

Change

As a result, the word "change" is typically understood. According to the Sansom and Reid Oxford Children's Dictionary (1994:195), the simplest meaning of change is to become something different. According to VanderMerwe (1991), the Latin term for better is where the word change originates. Generally speaking, the definition of change is to modify, improve, or transform whatever already in existence by adding new elements or making a trade-off with something else. Most changes are prearranged, and some people object to them. First, the response considers what needs to change and what has to be given up. The majority of authors believe that because giving up is more limited, respondents focus more on what they must give up than what they can gain. Various resources are employed or have the potential to be employed in order to effect changes based on the environment and natural processes. Changes are always implemented for the right reasons, and the goal of the endeavor is always the topic of attention.

Any action or series of activities with instructions to do something different or modify something might be considered a change. It always takes commitment and guidance to make changes. Although not all changes are good, there are a number of strategies to increase the commitment to bringing about particular kinds of changes (Daniel-Kalio&Ololube, 2019). The idea of change has an impact on many facets of existence. According to the philosopher Herakleitos (n.d.), everything is subject to change, and the only thing that remains constant is change itself. Aside from people, economic, societal, political, technological, and legal institutions are always evolving. Businesses must track and even anticipate the changes that are happening in the world around them in today's competitive business environment, and adjust their plans and strategies

accordingly to gain a lasting competitive advantage. Although such quick change can occasionally result in tensions within businesses, it can also be extremely stressful for people. In order to react to change effectively, companies must therefore comprehend what variables influence change, how they should respond to change, and how to initiate and manage the change (Daniel-Kalio&Ololube, 2019).

According to Singh, cited in Goswami (2015), change is the process by which people, groups, and organizations react to dynamic internal and external factors that alter the current facts. It is also the process of addressing the process of changing from the desired condition to the current condition.

Organizational Change

On the other side, organizational change is associated with raising performance standards within an organization. It typically results from the proactiveness of the organization's leadership, from incidental developments, or from a crisis. Organizations will always require a highly competent management team to initiate change and see that it is implemented successfully, regardless of the circumstances (Ebongkeng, 2018). According to Markovic, referenced in Goswami (2015), organizational change management is the use of new processes or technology to reorganize a corporate environment with shifting requirements or seize emerging business possibilities. Numerous elements can contribute to change, and these factors can be broadly divided into two categories: internal and external.

Change can be implemented reactively and adaptively, or in an unexpected way, or proactively and as intended to create the future (Attah et al., 2017). There are two approaches to planned change: incremental change and drastic transformation. Every organization may occasionally make small adjustments to better accommodate evolving circumstances. These adjustments could involve a wide range of choices and activities. For instance, organizational structure may change, responsibilities held by members of the organization may be redefined or created, activities may be reorganized, systems or procedures may be modified or discontinued, or new ones may be introduced (Dawson referenced). The goal of a radical transformation is to drastically alter the organization's style. This kind of change entails altering cultural components including values, attitudes, and beliefs. Unless there is a cultural shift, all efforts to bring about a drastic transformation may fail (Roberts & Hunt cited in Bubshait et al. 1998). Moreover, according to Kerber and Buono (2005), the task's complexity and the socio-technical uncertainty serve as the primary guiding principles for each of these modifications and approaches. The task's difficulty reflects the system's complexity, the quantity of essentially distinct components, and the level of differentiation within the organizational system where the change will be implemented.

Managed change may guarantee the best possible use of scarce organizational resources if it can be implemented in a routine, relatively basic context and if the change incorporates well-known

and recognized actions. To establish integrity and credibility in this situation, the change expert or strategist must communicate in an ethical and compelling manner Because if the organization's members don't trust the individual executing the change and their communications, they will be less inclined to accept it. The task's intricacy ultimately determines the outcome of intended transformation. Whenever a work becomes more complex, it is advisable to utilize a planned change method. Additionally, it is the socio-technical uncertainty that matters for guided transformation. Managers may not be able to carefully plan the change process and may not be able to guide change in a meaningful way even in simple situations faced if the future condition or the solution for the change is unknown. In such a situation, it would be more suitable to use a strategy as opposed to managing change. There are three phases to the organizational change process. Being prepared for change is the first step, which shows that the organization's members are open to and supportive of change. Adoption occurs at the second stage. At this point, things have changed, and the staff members have adapted to the new procedures. Nevertheless, at this point in the adoption process, it is still a trial, and employees reject the change. The institutionalization stage, which is the third stage, involves reinforcing the change until workers accept it as the standard and internalize it. Required actions are then taken to ensure that the adoption stage may resume (Armenakis& Harris, 2002).

Responses to change, change messages, or even just the possibility of change can come in four different forms for organizations (Daniel-Kalio&Ololube, 2019). They are listed below:

- **Withdrawal:** This behavior is associated with the belief that nothing has changed and that things will always go on as they always have.

- **Resistance:** This behavior includes rejecting the change outright, postponing its implementation, being uncooperative, and other ways to sabotage it.

- **Acceptance:** This refers to grudgingly accepting the change in light of the fact that it is unavoidable.

- **Adoption/Embracing:** This entails accepting new opportunities with a positive outlook and genuinely offering to help bring about the new order of things.

Organizations are required to constantly adjust to the changes they encounter and adjust to their surroundings. Companies that are unable to adjust to this transformation may eventually find their continued existence threatened (Waddell &Sohal, 1998).Due to the fact that change initiatives are essential to an organization's survival and success, management must pay equal attention to employee needs as well as organizational requirements in order to minimize resistance to change and guarantee that members of the organization adopt the changes. At this stage, disregarding the needs of the staff could be a very bad decision. Neglecting people throughout the planning and execution of organizational transformation would likely result in a

very stressful process for all staff members, and the negative effects of this situation will be borne by the companies as a financial burden (McHugh, 1997). Numerous studies have demonstrated that the human element plays a crucial role in the success of change, and that no matter how well a change program is designed, it cannot be implemented successfully without the approval of people.

In a nutshell, organizational change is the deliberate attempt by the management, leadership, and organization to move the organization in the direction of improvement. The process of change may have numerous driving forces, such as internal or external pressures, as well as technological, social, or economic ones. Furthermore, the innovative ideas and vision of an organization's leadership may also be the driving force behind the process of organizational change.

Leadership's Function in Organizational Transformation

Organizations are putting more and more pressure on individuals at all levels to be strategic in order to adapt to changing internal and external organizational needs. We're sure you can think of coworkers who could benefit from developing their strategic skills, even if you haven't been told that you need to be more strategic. But there isn't a clear or defined way to get there. It might have some similarities to learning to surf. You're in the midst of a chaotic situation where projects and business problems are whirling around you like waves. Even if you choose one, you're not exactly sure which one requires your greatest efforts (which waves to catch) might not be able to find your balance and ride it to a satisfactory conclusion (Etzioni et al., 2006).

Leaders should evaluate a candidate's competencies to those that require additional development in order for them to succeed in a leadership position when choosing and fostering leaders. Organizations may hire, train, and promote leaders more intelligently by evaluating their present capabilities and comparing them to the skills required to fill a leadership position. Organizations must consider both their unique strategy and desired business outcomes when shaping the development of leadership competencies, in addition to future business trends. Organizations can successfully build a leadership brand by developing competency models that represent the business's future strategy and the outcomes that are significant to stakeholders (i.e., customers, shareholders, investors). According to Daniel-Kalio and Ololube (2019), a leadership brand has a reputation for producing outstanding managers with a certain set of skills who are specially suited to meet the needs of investors and customers. Researchers have discovered that an organization's share price will rise when investors are confident in its leadership talent. Organizations can obtain a competitive edge by developing a distinctive leadership brand through leadership competencies that yield outcomes for stakeholders (Ololube, 2017).

Ololube (2017) classifies leadership abilities into four main categories: business, interpersonal, strategic, and cognitive. The four skill categories differ according to the corresponding management levels within a company; this is known as the "strataplex" model. More than a

thousand new mid-level and senior managers were used in the model's testing by the researchers. The findings demonstrated that more leadership abilities were needed at higher organizational management levels. Cognitive skill was the most crucial ability at all leadership levels. The ability to pick up new information and discover fresh approaches to problem-solving makes this skill the cornerstone of all leadership abilities. It's interesting to note that the two most crucial abilities to have when advancing into top leadership positions were business and strategic abilities because it provides empirical evidence that leadership abilities do vary throughout management tiers on the professional ladder, this research is significant.

Most essential, to be successful in the upper echelons of management and leadership, one needs to develop business acumen and strategic skills. When managers advance into more senior leadership roles, other competencies become necessary, and HR professionals need to consider this. Managers' Fairness Views on High Potential Identification Procedures: High potentials are frequently thought of as potential future leaders of a company. As such, the identification of high potentials is a crucial part of an organization's leadership development and succession planning processes. According to Mitchell (2012), the key qualities utilized to identify high potentials were decision-making ability, communication skills, flexibility, results orientation, and strategic skills.

An organization's leaders can be successfully chosen, developed, and promoted with the usage of leadership competences. When developing leadership competencies, a few things should be considered, like business strategy and emerging trends. Every business strategy is unique, and HR professionals should use theirs including the global business strategy to inform how competencies are used in the selection and development of leaders. The company will maintain a competitive edge by successfully equipping its leaders with a distinct set of talents.

How to Encourage Organizational Change

Match Personal Preferences to Group Objectives: Regardless of where you work, it's likely that your company has broad transformation objectives that it is striving to achieve. According to Goswami (2004), executives should consider these objectives and determine how each individual employee may help achieve them rather than passively waiting to be told what to do. For example, if your firm recently disclosed that it is purchasing another to expand its product range, one of your personal goals may be to find out more about that business, its clients, and its operations. You might even request a presentation from your manager outlining your thoughts on how these results will affect your team. You're exhibiting commitment and a desire to assist when you draw the connection between your daily activities and how they might benefit the wider change project. With this knowledge, you can suggest more effective ways to carry out the tasks you currently perform, which is beneficial for any kind of technology or company-wide process change (Ololube, 2017).

Learn To Live With Ambiguity: Change is usually accompanied by uncertainty if you're not in charge of things (and occasionally, even if you are). For example, it's possible that the lack of answers from the leadership stems from unresolved details. Executives may withhold information for legal reasons as well. The lesson here is that sometimes it's better to accept ambiguity. Of course, you should voice any worries or suggestions you may have, but after that, stay concentrated on the current task. Tell your management about the potential consequences in a kind but strong manner, though, if you believe that uncertainty is creating a disruptive work environment or if you witness executives putting off important decisions.

First, Recognize Your Leadership Style: You are a leader even if your business card doesn't have a catchy title. Additionally, every leader has unique talents and a distinct style. Determining your style, how other people perceive it, and how to use it to your advantage are all worthwhile endeavors. Four sorts of leaders are typically identified by leadership assessments: the strong, silent type; the joyful and optimistic type; the data-driven type; and the loud and proud type. You might possibly embody more than one of them. Either way understanding your personal leadership style can help you lead upcoming change projects, mentor peers and staff and efficiently manage the organization. Having information will also enable you to distinguish between various leadership philosophies.

Modify Yourself: There's an old proverb that states that an excessive number of chefs can taint the soup. In a similar vein, having too many leaders during a transition can lead to disarray and confusion. Instead of attempting to assume a leadership role if you are unable to formally influence the change, seize the chance to alter your own mindset, actions, and beliefs. This can be achieved by making realistic goals for oneself and then asking colleagues, managers, and sometimes even customers for input on them. Keep in mind that making changes in an organization and in yourself are quite similar. You need to be very clear about the things you want changed, how you want the change to happen, and the precise actions and deadlines you want to meet.

Impact what you are able to Change: You have the power to shape the course of the change even if you aren't the one in charge. Furthermore, your status as "one of them" can even strengthen your arguments with other staff members! If your only goal is to improve productivity and job satisfaction, providing thoughtful, timely feedback to your colleagues is an excellent way to earn their trust and respect. Fostering an environment of transparency among your peers can assist you in influencing change, since understanding the goals and interests of others will enable you to articulate how the change project will fulfill their requirements. Remember that setting an example for the behavior you desire to see in others is another excellent approach to affect change.

Become an ally of change and an early adopter: When you are not in charge, one of the easiest and most obvious ways to drive change is to be an early adopter and an ally of it. This means that you have to want change to occur and act toward that objective as soon as you have a sound justification for a specific adjustment or modification. Being an ally and early adopter has the advantage of not being perceived as someone who is merely showing support for the change rather, you are actively implementing it and fostering excitement among your team members.

Establish a Community of Peers: Employee councils or frontline personnel are frequently the change agents involved in change initiatives. This group provides top executives with information, suggestions, and concerns so that the change plan can be modified as necessary. Ask to join the change council if your organization has one. If not, volunteer to assist in setting one up. Direct input on how plans, communications, and new projects are received in the field is invaluable for change agents.

Assist Other Workers in Adapting to Change: Not all employees will be as enthusiastic about change as you are. It could be very difficult for certain team members, and they can feel misled, resentful, or taken advantage of. You can assist them in adjusting to the change more easily. First, watch out for telltale signs of someone in need of support, such as low mood or depressive conduct, attacks on fellow team members, or absenteeism. One-on-one assistance or turning a heated argument into a change-making session may be necessary. By actively listening to others, you can also assist them in coping. Seek to serve as a sounding board and aim to assist the other person in being less emotional and having more thoughtful conversations (Mitchel, 2012).

Promote Peer Communication: Always keep in mind that the total amount of work done is always more than the whole amount of each individual's contribution levels added together. Ask yourself frequently how you can improve the organization by clearing up uncertainty, accelerating information flow, or interacting with others. There are several ways in which peer and upper management communication facilitates the ease of your work. It determines what is and is not valuable to the company, cuts down on the time needed to do tasks, and boosts output.

Speak Up and Have Faith in the Change: This is more about bringing good ideas to life than it is about self-help! As soon as things begin to shift, begin bragging about how wonderful it will be. If change isn't occurring quite yet, discuss previous successes to elicit the feelings, enthusiasm, and drive your team needs to move forward.

CONCLUSION

The structure and direction that leadership offers are essential for overcoming change within any given business. In any business, it is the responsibility of the leaders to spearhead change, and they should always keep the organization's goals and objectives front and center. Various forms of change have been recognized, such as modifications to administrative practices, goods and services, transportation, and other domains that dynamically impact the internal and external organizational environment. When a change is required, it must be made sure that the organizational and personal contexts accept the change and that the infrastructure requirements are satisfied in order for the change to be implemented. It would also be feasible to eliminate any resistance in such a situation, which could lead to the transformation failing. In order to effectively manage the change at this point, leaders must make sure that the change process is in line with the company's strategies, policies, visions, goals, objectives, values, and beliefs.

They will take the appropriate measures to avoid opposition to change, maintain open lines of communication, and encourage the growth of the abilities and expertise needed for change. Organizational structure variations will also be taken into account in the modification. Due to the fact that every company has a unique structure, changes made in one may not be appropriate for another. When you are managing a change, all differences must be taken into account. Successful changes will be implemented on a regular basis and correctly, taking corporate culture and structure into account.

Suggestions

- ❖ Companies can enhance their worldwide competitiveness by providing frequent training and retraining to employees to adapt to contemporary developments.

- ❖ Organizational leaders ought to regard themselves as the top marketing officers of their establishments, to which both internal and external stakeholders would constantly make reference. Since they represent the universities, it is imperative that they continue with the highest level of efficacy and accountability.

- ❖ Organizational leaders should periodically improve their competencies through conferences, workshops, and seminars. These competencies may include their knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and experience.

- ❖ That the findings of this study can be expanded upon or repeated in order to advance the state of education in Rivers State and beyond at all educational levels and in all institutions.

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