The Influence of Educational Leadership in Successful Change Management in Education Office of Wolaita Zone

Mulatu Dea Lerra*

Wolaita Sodo University, Department of Educational Planning and Management, Email:
mulatudea83@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the influence of educational leadership in successful change management in Wolaita zone some selected woreda education offices. The target populations for this study were from Wolaita zone woreda educational offices. In Wolaita zone, there are 22 woredas/districts and 3 city administrations; among them three woreda education offices and one city administration education office were selected through simple random sampling and purposive sampling respectively. Therefore, total population of the study was 230; among them 63 expertise, 6 educational office leaders, 40 supervisors and 121 principals were selected by purposive sampling method. In order to collect data, questionnaires, was employed. This study was carried through descriptive survey design. The study revealed that the leader's ability to influence the followers was poor and leaders not playing their leadership role appropriately. The finding also shows strong effect of leadership on successfully implementing change management process in the sampled study areas. Thus, one can recommend that leaders should motivate follower and change agent by being role mode land participatory. The leaders should develop and institutionalize appropriate strategy to implement change in the institutions.

Key Words: Leadership, Change, Management, Change Management

Introduction

As can be seen from various literatures, change is an integral part of both human and social development and a natural phenomenon which every social entity has to witness in the cause of survival (Ann-Louise, 2015). Globally, no sector is left untouched with the wind of change. All sectors have been forced to respond to the new trends by adopting new ideas and processes (Barber, Donnelly, & Rizvi, 2013). Thus, to successfully manage the change, there is need for the leaders to understand change management process as well as exhibit appropriate leadership styles. Change management is a structured approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state, to fulfill or implement a vision and strategy (Sheldon, 2011). This is a desired or planed change. Whereas, transitioning individuals, teams and organizations from current state to undesired future state this is called emergent change. Generally, change is an organizational process aimed at transforming of employees, organizations and current existing environment (Keruboh, 2013). It helps people to accept and embrace changes in their current environment. Change management means defining and adopting corporate strategies, structures, procedures, and technologies to deal with change stemming from internal and external conditions (Sheldon, 2011).

Change management is a vital part of any project that leads, manages, and enables people to accept new processes, technologies, systems, structures, and values. It is the collection of activities that helps people transition from their present way of working to the desired way of

working (Sheldon, 2011). This implies that managing change needs, leaders' role to acquire the required out comes unless it may be going out of control and leads to undesired out comes. There for leaders have incomparable role for the successful change management. It is also important to recognize, that leadership is all about human behavior.

The pressures for change come from all sides of that through globalization, changes to the funding and regulatory organization or regime, doing more with less, improving the quality of student learning and the learning experience (Fullan., 2011). This implies that every environment surrounding us pushes to face change; no environment is constant between any time intervals i.e. there are repaid changing technological, political, economic and social environment that needs skillful change management and appropriate leadership styles.

The world is very dynamic; therefore, introducing change is necessary to ensure future success. Changes are very important for institutions to repositioning, renewal, reorganizing and systematic and sustainable development (Fullan., 2011). As important to Fullan, organizations that need to achieve competitive advantage, the fear or the fight against change has to be replaced by leader's effort to master the power of change (2011). From this point of view, the one can understands that, leaders must strive to cascade desired change through their organization structure. Structural changes are happening everywhere, so it is understandable that transformations are interactively manifested in the field market demands, technological achievements and managerial knowledge.

There are various challenges of change management, for instance, resistance to change that comes from a fear of the unknown or an expectation of loss the front-end of an individual's resistance to change is how they perceive the change the back-end is how well they are equipped to deal with the change they expect (Keruboh, 2013). As Keruboh, change is inevitable in nature and every aspect of work in this world face change willingly or unwillingly (2013). Attah (2017) underscored that, the success of any change intervention depends on the leadership of the organization. Consequently, it is vital to note that leadership is an enabler of any type of change in the organization.

It is Obvious that organizations require effective leadership for the successful implementation of any change intervention. effective leaders focus on three critical activities namely the creation of a compelling sense of vision, the arousing of subordinates toward the organization vision and the implementation of change (Yukl, 2013). They influence followers to think not only of their own interest but the interest of the organization, leadership occurs when followers are influenced to do what is ethical and beneficial to the organization (Callen, 2010). Taking advantage of followers for personal gain is not part of leadership. Leaders need to provide direction, with the input of followers, they set challenging objectives and lead the change ahead to achieve them (Attah,2017).

Edmonds (2011) believes that a leader who is able to effectively achieve some good results can gain the trust and admiration of the followers and inadvertently change their values, beliefs and attitude. An effective leader lives the value of the organization and set an example as an inspiring role model; honesty/truthfulness, integrity, self-confidence, energy/persistence, knowledge of the task. to (Edmonds, 2011). It is about arousing human potential and allows for leaders and

followers to be united in pursuit of high level goals common to and accepted by all parties involved (Coetzee, 2012).

To put in a nutshell, leadership can be seen as motor of vehicle to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of change implementation in any organization (Shvindina, 2017). Effective leaders know that the successful implementation of change begins with attending to the human aspect. Therefore, leadership is about the leader' ability to influence people and allowing them to change perceptions, behaviors, attitudes and finally action. Effective leadership is one of the most essential parts of the overall strategy for organizational success and sustainability of business in the face of problems. This is because leaders control and take charge of the operations of an organization and good leaders are able to set optimistic goals and objectives while steering the operations of the organization toward those goals through effective strategies (Attah, 2017).

Influencing is the process of a leader communicating ideas, gaining acceptance, and motivating followers to support and implement the ideas through change (Yukl, 2012). Kotter (2007) states that influence is the essence of leadership and it is also about the relationship between leaders and followers. Thus, leaders and followers often change roles through the influencing process.

According to Attah (2017), the major debates in organizational changes relate to the contributions made by organizational leaders. Leaders have major role to play in the management of change in every establishment and they can shape organizations by influencing and directing the beliefs, style and values of those inside and outside the organization. This study tried to assess the influence of leaders in change management process in Wolaita Zone education institutions.

Theoretical Overview: Change and Leadership

To be an advocator of change, education sector leaders have to exhibit appropriate leadership styles because as Baesu and Bejinaru (2013), change success has been found to be dependent on the leadership style of a leader. Through appropriate leadership, change leaders would be able to 'influence and ultimately change the behaviors of employees, teams and the organization at large' (pp.147). According to Skakon, Nielsen, Borg and Guzman (2010), leaders have to act as role drivers as well as role models in any successful change program. Likewise, leadership styles and leaders' participation are determinants of success in organizational change program (Oreg, Vakola & Armenakis, 2011). Steven, Medea & Thai-Son (2015) identify four leadership styles related to change process: Laisses-faire, transactional, transformational and change-oriented. In relation to change process, Laisses-faire leaders' try to avoid change and when change finally occurs they eschew their responsibilities. Such leaders are found to be away physically and emotionally from their followers. This kind of leadership style cannot bring expected positive result of handling change in education sector (Steven, et al., 2015).

Transactional leadership style is also known as managerial leadership. The major focus of the style is on planning, supervision and group performance. Leaders who exhibit this style focus more on tasks; attempt to meet material and psychological needs of the employees in exchange for desired services or behaviour (Ann-Louise, 2015). Such leaders are concerned about day to day transaction in the organization (Steven et al., 2015). They seek compliance through rewards and punishment approach. However in relation to change process, the leadership style appeals only to the satisfaction of lower-order of individual need (Ann-Louise, 2015).

As stated by Bass (2008) Transformational leadership style is characterized with four factors known as four 'I's: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual simulation and individualized consideration. The style focuses on meeting organizational needs, satisfies individual higher needs and evokes relationship oriented behaviour (Golm, 2009). Generally, it means empowering followers by instilling confidence in them. By exhibiting this style the leader will be able to achieve both the organizational and employees' objectives (Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013).

Leaders adopting this style act as role models build trust and develop team by ensuring shared vision. They also instill pride and confidence in their followers, empower them through training, attend to their psychological and emotional needs and convince them on the need to change the status quo (Oreg et al., 2011). In managing change, transformational leadership style has been found to be more effective compared to transactional leadership style (Brandt, Laitinen & Laitinen, 2016). It is wider in scope and most appropriate for transitional period (Oreg et al., 2011). Transformational leader as a change leader performs the following roles: create a feeling of urgency, provide a precise guidance, determine a vision for the change program, share the change vision with the employees, give authority to the workers to act in line with the vision, plan short term gains to celebrate the success, institutionalize new approaches in the organization (Saylı & Tüfekçi, 2008; Ikinci, 2012).

According to Steven et al. (2015) transformational leadership style is further noted to comprise key elements of change oriented leaders. Education institution leaders thus need to exhibit transformational leadership style when implementing change. This can be manifested by turning their institution to learning organization. Thus one can understand that learning organization will be able to quickly adapt to any change introduced in the institution. This can be done by allaying workers fear on change through exposition to knowledge and skills necessary to cope with eventual future change. Hence, the workers would be able to foresee the future change, embrace and work along with it.

Statement of the Problem

Attah (2017) confirmed that the world is very vibrant and therefore, introducing change is necessary although not enough for ensuring future success. Changes are compulsory for institutions on shifting, renewal, rearranging and systematic development. Institutions that want to achieve competitive advantage, the fear or the fight against change has to be replaced by efforts to master the power of change (Callen, 2010). Structural changes are happening everywhere, so it is understandable that transformations are interactively manifested in the field market demands, technological achievements and managerial knowledge (Mullins, 2005).

Bennett (2012) identifies various challenges of change management, for instance, resistance to change that comes from a fear of the unknown or an expectation of loss the front-end of an individual's resistance to change is how they perceive the change the back-end is how well they are equipped to deal with the change they expect. Change, whether incremental or quantum, can create significant challenges and displacements in organizations due to the difficulty of many individuals, groups and institutions to adapt to change. Organizational success, and indeed survival, as Wong (2009) contends, is dependent on the ability to respond to and manage

environmental changes, and the identification and development of strong leadership to guide the process.

Unsuccessful change efforts occur due to many shortcomings that include: failure to generate a sense of urgency; failure to establish a powerful guiding coalition; no clear vision or strategy to direct the change effort; ineffective communication of the change vision to all stakeholders; failure to identify and eliminate obstacles to change; failure to create and recognize short-term achievements; celebrating success prematurely, causing stakeholders to lose focus; failure to firmly incorporate the changes into the corporate culture (Kottler, 2008).The costs of such shortcomings manifest themselves in failed implementation of new strategies or initiatives. Therefore, to minimize the risk of failure and of being overawed by the impact of change, the change effort must be guided by committed and resilient role models, who must plan strategically if they are to lead the organization successfully.

The Ethiopian government launched massive civil service reform programs throughout the country since 2010; all public institutions are compelled to re-engineer their services to become responsive, efficient and effective of their performance. another initiatives of the study were there are so many programs and plans which is prepared for the country change management and transformation such as growth and transformational plan, strategic plan of education sector, education policy roadmap 2018, the presence of basic program of change management and the pursuit of government for national development and organizational change. In addition, the local and regional governments provided wide access for development of human aspect through continuous training and learning. The essential role of leadership in any organization has been pointed out all expected organizational activity was also underlined but the result of the exercise of creative leadership was not attained objective of the organizations. Moreover, education organizations are places of determining the future fate of the national and local demands that of its attendants and produce skilled and trained human power that could solve the problem of a country (Rein Coetzee, 2012).

A number of studies have been conducted on change management in schools in the country and internationally. Studies have also been done Internationally, Duke (2011) of the United Kingdom undertook a study to examine planning and change management within United Kingdom National Health Service (NHS) multisite hospital. Another study by Oakland (2007) on quality management in learning institutions in South Africa. Another study was done by Owen and Valeskey (2011) studied in Germany on change management and change processes in German University of the Great fields. Another study Oreg, Vakola, and Armenakis, (2011) studied change management intervention and the resistance to change in a complex organization in India. In Kenya, studies have been done by Harvey, (2010) on school change management in Ikolomani, based on poor direction and incompetence by principals and head teachers found out that poor change management was because of incompetent staff because many teachers were untrained and employed by the Board of Governors.

Locally, Tensae (2016) contributed his work on Practices and Challenges of Change Management: in Geosynthetics Industrial Work; Alemu, Teka, Kitila, Gebretsadik, Shiberu (2018) have an article entitled "Contribution of Change Management for Continuous Improvement of Public Hospital: The Case of Adama Hospital Medical Collage; Hiyab Gebretsadik (2018) have an article on "The Determinants of Resistance to Change Management Process in CBE, Addis Ababa District. As compare the above all, all deals with the practices and challenges of change management and the contribution of change management on the

organization performance. This research quite different and looking in different lens on the role of leadership in change management and expected to fill the gaps of local research.

Despite various policy initiatives introduced by the Ethiopian government, their implementation level at different echelons of management of education institution is not promising in Wolaita Zona Administration. Thus, this research came up with the major objectives of exploring the role of leaders in change management selected education offices. Hence, the study was guided by the following basic questions:

1. To what extent leadership influence the change management and implementation process in Woreda education Offices in Wolaita Zone?

Design, Method and Material

Design and Source of Data: This study used descriptive survey design with quantitative approach in data collection and analysis (QUAN). Various sources of evidence were used to triangulate the data, thereby increasing the credibility of the results of the study. Consequently, relevant information was generated from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from office leader, woreda education office expertise, some selected principals and supervisors. Secondary data were collected from education reform documents, educational office strategic plan, educational offices annual plan and annual performance appraisal documents.

Sample and sampling Techniques: The target populations for this study were from Wolaita zone woreda educational offices. In Wolaita zone, there are 22 woreda and 3 city administration; among them three woreda education offices and one city administration education office were selected through simple random sampling and purposive sampling respectively. Therefore, total population of the study was 230; among them   63 expertise, 6 educational office leaders, 40 supervisors and 121 principals were selected by purposive sampling method and Yemane (1970) formula. In order to collect data, survey questionnaires, was employed.

Reliability and Validity: The reliability of the data collection techniques or analysis procedures was yield consistent findings (Lewis, 2009). The survey questionnaires were tested with in pilot selected woreda which is Sodo town, Wolaita zone administration. In the woreda randomly selected supervisors, woreda education leaders, principals and expertise were answered the survey questioners. According to Ordha (2005), the internal consistency reliability Cranach's Coefficient of Alpha was used for the questionnaires. The pilot test result was computed statistically by using SPSS computer program version 23 and the result was 0.807 Cranach's coefficient of Alpha and which is reliable. Regarding validity, the questionnaire was given to advisor, education office senior expertise, experienced workers who was commented to appropriateness of the questionnaire to measure important aspects of the study. Based on the feedback, issues which were suggested to be improved were re-phrased and others were scrapped from the list of items as suggested by the above bodies.

Data Analysis: The quantitative data obtained from questionnaires were edited, categorized and tabulated which is ready for analysis. After this, the data were deeply analyzed, systematically organized and interpreted using statistical tools ANOVA and regression. Finally, the major findings and conclusions of the study were reported and possible recommendations were forwarded.

Ethical Consideration: All participants included in the study were clearly informed about the purpose of the study and their willingness and agreement was secured before filling up the questionnaire and conducting interview. The study also maintained the confidentiality of the identity of each participant. Respondents were interviewed in a secured place to ensure comfort and privacy. Respondent had an absolute right to refuse participation in this research and respondents were not obliged to answer any question that they do not want to answer; the right and willingness of the respondents were respected.

Regression Analysis

The study tries to establish to what extent leaders influence on the followers in order to facilitate the organizational change process. The leaders influence for successful change management using multiple linear regression analysis. The dimensions were described in the following section.

The regression model was: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \varepsilon$
Whereby Y is successful change management,
β_0 = Regression constant,
$\beta_1 - \beta_7$ = regression coefficients,
X_1 = Conflicts within the change implementations are avoided by using win-win approach.
X_2 = Your leaders create favorable environment for employees change management process.
X_3 = Concerned staff members were take part in planning and the leaders are participator.
X_4 = Change implementation create resistance but managed by your leaders.
X_5 = The leaders take corrective measure for weak performance.
X_6 = The leaders take corrective measure for weak performance.
X_7 = There are temporarily created policies, procedures and rules to facilitate change implementation in the organization
ε = Model's error term.

Table 1. Model summary

Model summary				
Model 1	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error
	$.882^n$.	.789	.784	.497

According to Table 1, R square is 0.784 which shows that 78.4 % of the dependent variable is being explained by independent variables. This depicts that the model accounts 78.4 % of the variations in influencing leaders the change resistance while 22.6% remains unexplained by the regression model.

Table 2. ANOVA Result

ANOVA[a]

Model 1		Sum of the square	Df	Mean Square	F	sig
	Regression	1.656	7	6.237	95.746	0.0464[b]
	Residual	47.687	193	.047		
	Total	49.343	200			

Dependent variable; successful change management. (Predictors (Constant)

The ANOVA statistics presented in Table 2 was used to present the regression model significance. An F-significance value was 95.746 at Df (7,193). Calculated p-value was 0.0464 which was less than 0.05 (P < 0.05) which show the result statistically significant which was established showing that there is a probability of less than .05 of the regression model. Thus, the model was significant.

Table 3. Regression Coefficients

Coefficients

Model-1	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T value	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.778	.499		1.560	.120
Concerned staff members were take part in planning and the leaders are participatory	.064	.054	.184	1.184	.023
Change implementation create resistance but managed by your leaders	.043	.028	.109	1.522	.013
There are temporarily created policies, procedures and rules to facilitate change implementation in the organization	-.022	.027	-.058	.801	.424
Your leaders create favorable environment for employees change management process	.017	.026	.047	.651	.516
conflicts within the implementation are avoided by using win-win approach	.460	.078	.426	3.590	.000
The direction of the implementation is influenced by resistance of followers	.860	.065	.093	1.306	.019
The leaders take corrective measure for weak performance	.001	.027	.003	.048	.962

a Dependent variable: Successful change management.

Source: survey Data, 2020

From the findings in Table above the multiple linear regressions equation becomes:
Y= .778 + .064X1 + .043X2 + -.022X3 + -.017X4 + .460X5 + .860X6 + .001X7

From the model, when other factors remain constant, staff members were take part in planning and the leaders are participator, change implementation create resistance but managed by your leaders, conflicts within the implementation are avoided by using win-win approach, the direction of the implementation is influenced by resistance of followers, there are temporarily created policies, procedures and rules to facilitate change implementation in the organization, your leaders create favorable environment for employees change management process and the leaders take corrective measure for weak performance are at zero, leaders influence becomes 0.778.

Holding other factors (concerned staff members were take part in planning and the leaders are pa rticipator, change implementation create resistance but managed by your leaders, conflicts within the change were looked for and try to be solved, the direction of the implementation is influenced by resistance of followers, there are temporarily created policies, procedures and rules to facilitate change implementation in the organization, your leaders create favorable environment for employees change management process and the leaders take corrective measure for weak performance) is constant; a unit increase in staff members were take part in planning and the leaders are participator would lead to .064 increases influence on successful change management. A unit increase of change implementation creates resistance but managed by your leaders would lead .043 increases in influencing successful change management.

 A unit increase of conflicts within the implementation is avoided by using win-win approach would lead .460 increases influence on successful change management. A unit increase of the direction of the implementation is influenced by resistance of followers would lead to .860 increases in leaders' influence on successful change management. A unit increase of temporarily created policies, procedures and rules to facilitate change implementation in the organization would lead to .022 increases on successful change management. A unit increase of leaders creates favorable environment for employees change management process would lead to .017 increases on the successful change management'. A unit increase of the leaders take corrective measure for weak performance would lead to .001 increases on the successful change management.

From the above information, it is possible to infer that the important issue for successful change management was conflicts within the implementation are avoided by using win-win approach, change implementation resistance, direction of the implementation is influenced by resistance of followers and the concerned staff members were take part in the planning and the leaders were participatory. Thus, it is highly characterize transformational leadership styles as the literature reveald.

Conclusion

The study also assessed the influence of leadership in successful change management sampled in the Woreda/district education offices. As explained in different literature reviews, leaders play great role for any organization success and failure hence leaders' status, leaders' role, and leaders' level of influence in the light of leaders' behavior, approach, skill, competence and basic reform tools implementation. Based on the analysis of the data, leaders' motivation to followers in order to facilitate the organizational change was poor. leaders were not created the favorable environment for employees but which was crucial for successful change management, leaders not followed win-win approach during conflict resolution in their organization, the change

resistance were not managed therefore the last five years of change management and change implementation result were poor. According to leaders behavior leaders give attention for employee but the organizations rule were not secured. Change management tools were not consistently used to implement change management systematically. Choosing different implementation of change management by itself didn't a solution to overcome the organization problem. Above, leaders were not role-model for followers and leaders don't minimized risks but managing risk was the leaders' number on task. Moreover the findings clearly show strong effect of leadership for proper implementation of change in the sampled study areas. The study concludes that there is strong relationship between the leadership and successful change management implementation process.

Policy Implications

Depending on the results of the study and the review of related literature, the following recommendations are put forward. Educational leadership is different from others by its unique feature therefore to get successful change management in the educational organization, educational leaders should motivated all the followers without any bias and leaders should convince with follower about benefit. Educational leaders should improve change management basic programs facilitating knowledge, educational leaders should be role model for their followers, and they should walk their talk. Finally, leaders needed the ability to manage the change resistance through discussion, leaders have to solve conflicts by using leadership ability, educational leaders should be participator even in all issue of the organization and educational leaders should put clear implementation direction of organizational change process. Besides, further study and due attention should be given to educational leadership by responsible bodies so as to address the gaps more adequately and to invest for the future betterment of the coming generation.

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